UNIVERSIDAD DE LA RIOJA

TRABAJO FIN DE ESTUDIOS

Título

Los videojuegos como recurso didáctico para la enseñanza de la cultura británica: Discovery Tour: Viking Age

Autor/es

José Ramón Viguera Martínez

Director/es

LUISA FIDALGO ALLO

Facultad

Escuela de Máster y Doctorado de la Universidad de La Rioja

Titulación

Máster Universitario de Profesorado, especialidad Inglés

Departamento

FILOLOGÍAS MODERNAS

Curso académico

2021-22

TRABAJO DE FIN DE MÁSTER

Los videojuegos como recurso didáctico para la enseñanza de la cultura británica: *Discovery Tour: Viking Age*

Video games as a didactic resource to teach British culture: *Discovery Tour: Viking Age*

Autor: **Viguera Martínez, Jose Ramón**

Tutora UR: Fidalgo Allo, Luisa

MÁSTER:

Profesorado, Inglés

Escuela de Máster y Doctorado

AÑO ACADÉMICO: 2021/2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Culture is often neglected in EFL teaching. Therefore, research on culture and its relevance concerning language teaching, the possible benefits (both in linguistic aspects and affective variables) of using increasingly relevant video games, to teach EFL and culture, and the use of Assassin's Creed in teaching has been analysed. Founded on this theoretical basis, an educational intervention innovative proposal based on the use of Discovery Tour: Viking Age as the main didactic resource to teach Viking and Anglo-Saxon culture in an EFL classroom has been designed. Always guided by the teacher, the proposal is centred on students experiencing culture playing the video game, followed by several team and class discussion activities fostering reflection on the content. A raise in motivation towards the subject is an additional expected result.

Keywords: EFL, culture in language teaching, video games, *Discovery Tour: Viking Age*, Viking and Anglo-Saxon cultures.

RESUMEN

A menudo se descuida la cultura en la enseñanza del inglés. Por ello, se ha analizado la investigación sobre la cultura y su relevancia en la enseñanza de idiomas, los posibles beneficios (tanto en aspectos lingüísticos como en variables afectivas) del uso de videojuegos, cada vez más relevantes, para enseñar inglés y cultura, y el uso de *Assassin's Creed* en la enseñanza. Partiendo de esta base teórica, se ha elaborado una propuesta innovadora de intervención educativa basada en el uso de D*iscovery Tour: Viking Age* como recurso didáctico para la enseñanza de la cultura vikinga y anglosajona en un aula de inglés. La propuesta se centra en que los alumnos, siempre guiados por el/la docente, experimenten la cultura jugando al videojuego, seguido de varias actividades de discusión en equipo y en clase que fomentan la reflexión sobre los contenidos. Se espera un aumento de la motivación hacia la asignatura.

Palabras clave: inglés como lengua extranjera, cultura en la enseñanza de idiomas, videojuegos, *Discovery Tour: Viking Age*, culturas vikinga y anglosajona.

1. INTRODUCTION

The teaching of culture is a part of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) that can be argued is not developed properly in the Spanish educational system. There may be different reasons behind this such as that it is often not given much attention, or its implementation is not well planned. This is not an insignificant fact since as it is detailed in the theoretical framework, many authors have dealt with the relationship between language and culture, and the general consensus is that they are closely related. Moreover, different legal documents at regional, national, and European levels mention the importance of culture in relation to language, not only for the teaching of EFL (or other languages) as such, but for the very conception of European citizenship. To address this, the dissertation elaborates a proposal in the use of a video game.

Video games are becoming increasingly important in today's society, as the data show. According to the Spanish Video games Association's (AEVI) *2021 yearbook* (2022), video games are one of the most popular audiovisual and cultural leisure options in Spain. Its industry generated 1.795 million euros, up 2,75% on the previous year, and the number of players is estimated at 18,1 million who spend an average of 8,1 hours a week playing video games. Despite what prejudices might lead to believe, the proportion of players by gender is fairly similar with 52% male to 48% female.

Regardless of this, their use is still a *rara avis* in the Spanish educational reality even though the Minister of Education and Vocational Training Pilar Alegría mentions that "the creation of virtual worlds and user motivation strategies (...) which are at the base of gamification processes are today important pieces in (...) innovation and creativity methodologies" (AEVI, 2022).

In this sense, The Good Gamer, a project created by AEVI in 2018, has collaborated with administrations, educational communities, and parents to promote the responsible use of video games. On their YouTube channel, they dedicate one of their video podcasts (The Good Gamer, 2021) to the subject of video games in education, in which professionals from the education sector and the video game sector explain why video games are suitable for learning and discuss some real cases in which they have begun to be incorporated into the classroom to teach different subjects.

As it can be seen, video games' impact is demonstrable in Spain as well as that of the video game *Assassin's Creed* (AC) *Valhalla* (Ubisoft, 2020), which achieved record revenues for the franchise and was the eleventh best-selling video game in Spain and the seventh of those released in 2020 (AEVI, 2021). Henceforth, this is a case of a successful video game, and every player who owns this game enjoys free access to *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* (Ubisoft, 2021), on which this dissertation is based. Therefore, the significance of both video games in general and *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* specifically is demonstrated.

Thus, the remainder of the work is organised as follows. Section 2 points out the main objective as well as some additional objectives of this proposal. Section 3 explains the theoretical foundation of this dissertation focusing on the necessity to teach culture in EFL teaching, on the gains that can be achieved when using video games as a didactic resource in an EFL classroom, on the teaching of culture as well as the possibility to use *AC* in educational contexts. In Section 4, an educational intervention is proposed based on the theoretical framework, which implies an innovative approach such as the use of *Discovery Tour: Viking Age,* and related to the curriculum. Section 5 points out the benefits to be achieved and the advantages and disadvantages in terms of feasibility. Finally, Section 6 discusses the completion of the objectives outlined in section 2 as well as the competencies acquired in the development of this dissertation and some additional contributions.

2. OBJECTIVES

The main objective is the elaboration of an educational intervention innovative proposal based on *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* to provide a better students' understanding of Viking influence on British culture as well as to raise students' motivation and engagement about learning culture in the English classroom.

In order to achieve this objective, the following additional objectives are set:

- To analyse the teaching of culture in the EFL classroom.
- To analyse the use of video games in the EFL classroom.
- To analyse story-based teaching in the EFL classroom.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section provides the theoretical basis for this dissertation. To achieve this, authors, and research on the field of the use of video games in different educational areas have been explored, reviewed, and analysed. This field is also known as game-based learning since it combines video games and education (Tsai & Fan, 2013). Likewise, a game is where players in an artificial competition interact following a set of rules resulting in a measurable outcome (Salen & Zimmerman, 2004, as cited in Ebrahimzadeh & Alavi, 2017). Being more specific, Esposito (2005), in his attempt to find a short and simple definition of what a video game is, defined it as a "game which we play thanks to an audiovisual apparatus and which can be based on a story" (p. 2).

Therefore, this section has been divided using the following structure. Section 3.1 revolves around the importance and necessity to incorporate culture in EFL teaching according to Spanish and European legal frameworks and research. Section 3.2 deals with the uses and benefits of using video games for educational purposes regarding EFL acquisition, the affective variables that are greatly influential in EFL teaching and learning, the importance of narratives when using video games for teaching and some guidelines for their use derived from research. Section 3.3 focuses on teaching culture through the use of video games, focusing first on how video games recreate culture and then on the actual use of video games to teach culture in EFL. Lastly, in section 3.4 the use of *AC* games in education has been analysed, starting with the *AC* series in general, continuing with the Discovery Tour versions and ending with the specific game Discovery Tour: Viking Age.

3.1 Why it is important and necessary to incorporate the cultural component in the EFL classroom.

3.1.1 Attending to the legal framework

The *Ley Orgánica 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre, para la mejora de la calidad educativa* (LOMCE) points out in its preamble the need to master one or more foreign languages and how this is a deficiency in the Spanish education system. The LOMCE marks plurilingualism as an aspect on which special emphasis should be placed with the aim of transforming the education system, based on

the policies of the European Union, which establishes plurilingualism as an essential objective for the construction of the European project.

Regarding the Spanish educational legal framework, the importance of culture and its relationship with language can be observed in the *Orden ECD/65/2015, de 21 de enero*, where seven key competences are established. Apart from having two key competences specifically addressed to culture such as Cultural awareness and expression and Social and civic competence, the relevance of culture in linguistic competence is made very clear. *Orden ECD/65/2015, de 21 de enero* indicates that Competence in linguistic communication is a way of perceiving cultural diversity which implies a factor of enrichment for the competence itself and which acquires particular relevance in the case of foreign languages. Furthermore, it has a socio-cultural component including the dimension referring to knowledge of the world and the intercultural dimension. Therefore, to develop Competence in linguistic communication, it is particularly relevant to apply an intercultural approach to language teaching and learning.

In the context of the Autonomous Community of La Rioja, it can be observed how in the *Decreto 21/2015, de 26 de junio*, in the introduction to the 'First foreign language (English)' subject, it is mentioned that this subject is characterised by "a plurilingual and intercultural profile" (p. 13726). Thus, this subject aims at mastering a foreign language in its entirety, which entails knowing, appreciating, and valuing different languages and cultures (*Decreto 21/2015, de 26 de junio*).

Furthermore, this can be noticed in the European legal framework. As early as 1997, the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe published a study, later updated in 2009 (Coste et al., 2009), started to focus on the 'plurilingual and pluricultural competence', naming it as a single competence consisting of two components but showing a holistic and multiple nature. The European Observatory for Plurilingualism in its European Charter for Plurilingualism (2009) states that plurilingualism (and consequently, pluriculturalism) is a fundamental source of the sense of European citizenship. It is through language and the cultures expressed through language that the citizen, without knowing it, becomes aware of his or her citizenship and begins to exercise it. Similarly, both languages and culture, as a single entity, are part of Europe's identity which is built on its ancient and modern cultures and languages.

In order to address the importance of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism, the charter mentions different aspects to put the focus on. Regarding curriculum, the charter points out the necessity to revise educational curricula regarding social sciences and foreign languages so that the specific intercultural dimension of Europe is satisfactorily taken into account. It is also necessary to encourage interdisciplinary work by teachers so that pupils can see how the culture they acquire is perceived in other countries where other languages are spoken. To achieve this, the implementation of more innovative pedagogical methods is proposed as well as paying more attention to writing and teaching the history of European nations and cultures.

3.1.2 Attending to research

Many authors have pointed out over the years the inseparability of the concepts of language and culture. This can be observed in the coinage of concepts such as *culturelanguage*, *languaculture*, *linguaculture* and *language-and-culture* (Friedrich, 1989; Liddicoat et al., 2003; Papademetre & Scarino, 2006; Risager, 2005; respectively, as cited in Ho, 2009). Authors differ in the kind of relationship between language and culture but all of them agree that they are closely related (Ardila-Rey, 2008; Liddicoat et al., 2003; Mitchell & Myles, 2004): some of them stress the connection between them in the field of semantics (Byram, 1989) or cultural rules in communication (Kramsch, 1993) whereas other authors argue that they are synonyms (Tang, 1999), that "language is the carrier of culture and culture is the content of language" (Kuang, 2007, p. 75) and Muir (2007) even states that language is merely a cultural product. Brown's (2007) reflection is noteworthy since he states that language and culture are "intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture." Therefore, "the acquisition of a second language, except for specialized, instrumental acquisition (…), is also the acquisition of a second culture" (pp. 189-190).

Some scholars establish a distinction between big "C" culture and small "c" culture. Big "C" culture refers to those aspects of culture that can be considered disciplines in the sense that they are large topics (Peterson, 2004) that can be grouped into different collections of data, facts and statistics (Lee, 2009). Some of these disciplines mentioned by the authors are the arts, history, geography,

business, education, political issues, society's legal foundation, festivals, customs and cognitive processes of a target speech society. Conversely, small "c" culture refers to common everyday life aspects that are "the invisible and deeper sense of a target culture" (Lee, 2009, p. 78). Aspects of small "c" culture mentioned by the authors are attitudes, beliefs and assumptions, gestures, proxemics, clothing, food, or hobbies.

Finally, a positive aspect of the teaching of culture in an EFL classroom is its effectiveness in the increase of motivation in learners, which as Purba (2011) notes has a deep effect on every learning process. This author states the necessity of learners to acquire geographical and historical knowledge but always in an active manner, not only hearing the knowledge from the teacher. Henceforth, he points out some recommendations for the introduction of culture in an EFL classroom such as the use of authentic materials to induce discussions about cultural behaviours and norms, the use of literature as a source of insights into other cultures without the necessity to travel to that place and the use of films to provide learners opportunities to observe behaviours that are not apparent on texts.

Although its importance is clear from all the studies and laws mentioned that stipulate the need to teach culture and language because of its indivisibility, it is an aspect that is not being given the necessary importance in the teaching of English in the Spanish education system. It is not being done properly, or at least not to the extent necessary to develop the plurilingual and pluricultural competence asked by the different European, Spanish, and regional documents, either because it is being relatively left out or because of a lack of knowledge about history.

3.2 Uses and benefits of the use of video games in education

Since the beginning of the 21st century, there has been an increasing amount of interest and literature on the use of video games in education. Already in 2005, Shaffer et al. mentioned the potential the new virtual worlds created by video games possessed as effective situations for learning since students could experience roles that would be impossible for them to experience in any other set of circumstances. As Soyoof and Jokar (2014) stated, video games can be considered facilitators for the learning of history, culture, and language. Before

that, Piaget (1951) already noted how important play is in learning and acquiring new skills (1962), and recent research continues to confirm it (e.g., Campbell & Twenge, 2015; Chudacoff, 2007; de Freitas, 2014; Gray, 2011; Twenge & Campbell, 2008, as cited in de Freitas, 2018).

3.2.1 Video games and EFL acquisition

Regarding research about video games in EFL teaching, Reinhardt and Sykes (2012) noted that the academic benefits that can be achieved using common games are impossible to attain through video games designed for L2 learning purposes. They differentiate between those approaches that use video games specifically designed for L2 learning purposes, which they name as game-based, and approaches that use common games, which they name as game-enhanced. Furthermore, research about the use of video games and movies has shown positive results in terms of higher language learning outcomes when comparing them to classroom practice (Cole & Vanderplank, 2016). Finally, and as Reinders and Wattana (2015) noted, introducing students to video games in class can lead to students discovering a tool for practising English whenever and as much as they want outside of the classroom context, which can be "a tool for lifelong learning" (p. 51) for them.

Vocabulary acquisition and retention are the most EFL linguistic aspects associated with the use of video games in an EFL classroom. The possibility offered by video games to associate words with pictures, experiences or dialogues is the main reason for deeper and better English vocabulary learning (Ebrahimzadeh and Alavi, 2017; Gee, 2012) as they help players situate meaning rather than when students only can associate words with other words (Gee, 2012). Furthermore, and related to an older interest in the role of play in first language (L1) acquisition, this can be linked with what Vygotsky's work stated: "play allows children to make meaning based on resources (real or imagined) in their immediate (…) even in the absence of fully developed language ability" (Reinders, 2017, p. 331). In this sense, context and meaningful communication are provided by the use of a narrative, which as stated by Seach (2007) are important factors in the development of language in children.

Successful results in L2 acquisition have been found in research about the use of video games and language learning such as higher vocabulary acquisition

using different types of video games (de Haan et al., 2010; Milton et al., 2012; Ranalli, 2008; as cited in Reinders & Wattana, 2015), an improvement in terms of reading efficacy and reading skills in university students (Lu et al., 2011; as cited in Reinders & Wattana, 2015). Regarding the listening skill, there has been different research on the skill showing positive results. Anderson et al. (2008) and de Haan (2005) found that Asian students showed significantly better listening scores after programs using video games. Correia et al. (2011) and Yudintseva (2015), found listening comprehension to be a facilitator when learning a new language through video games. Soyoof and Sedighi (2013) found video games to be a drive of language learning and particularly listening comprehension, and Hsu et al. (2013) pointed out the subtitle option as a reason for video games improving the listening skill.

In his study's literature review, Parsayi (2018) noted that studies had found positive results about the use of video games in reading skills both in general literacy (Franceschini et al., 2013, as cited in Parsayi, 2018), and spelling (Shokri & Abdolmanafi-Rokni, 2014, as cited in Parsayi, 2018) as well as in students' vocabulary acquisition (Aghlara & Tamjid, 2011; Ashraf et al. 2014; Smith et al. 2013; Uzun, 2009, as cited in Parsayi, 2018). Moreover, video games can provide a great amount of L2 input (Reinders, 2017), which as Krashen (1982) explained is part of the foundations of L2 acquisition; and/or *comprehensible* target language input (Soyoof & Jokar, 2014). Parsayi (2018) noted that the option to use subtitles in video games not only developed better listening skills but gamers' reading skills could be improved as well.

Sundqvist (2009, 2011) carried out studies with secondary education learners about outside-of-school activities and L2 acquisition and it was found that second language acquisition could be linked more strongly with more active activities such as playing video games or using the internet than with more passive ones such as the likes of listening to music or watching TV/films/series. In this sense, Frasca (2003) explained that video games 'simulational' nature is what differentiates them from mere 'representational' media. He defines to simulate as "to model a (source) system through a different system which maintains to somebody some of the behaviors of the original system" (p. 223).

3.2.2 Video games and EFL affective variables

Nevertheless, research has not focused only on L2 acquisition but also on the affective factors or variables that facilitate or interfere in L2 learning such as motivation, attitude, anxiety, or self-confidence. Krashen (1981) linked those students with low affective filters (this is motivated, self-confident, positive, and with low anxiety students) with better foreign language acquisition, better comprehensible input reception and the ability to concentrate on foreign language learning. Henceforth, a positive aspect of video games is the ability to lower these affective filters (García-Carbonell et al., 2001). Video games lower the affective filter by engaging learners. Moreover, video games can result in hours of practice by placing lower-level skills inside larger, more motivating, and engaging problems (Gee, 2012).

Soyoof and Jokar (2014) explained in their study that in foreign language classrooms the connection students establish with a new setting determines the quality and degree of communication between students and teachers. This is, learners must face a series of filters when communicating and emotions such as "anxiety, fright, confusion, embarrassment, disappointment, aversion, in short deep emotional discomfort" (Arnold, 1999; Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Povlenko, 2005; Valdes, 1986; as cited in Galetcaia, 2008). In the same study, Soyoof and Jokar found in their data analysis that video games play a pivotal role in enhancing language learning by lowering language learning barriers. Soyoof (2018b) noted that some of the main advantages provided by the use of video games in language learning are engagement and motivation whereas it is also needed to develop a sense of self-confidence which is another effect of video games according to Sevin and Decamp (2016).

Soyoof's (2018b) analysed L2 confidence (L2C) and concluded that using video games can improve learners' self-confidence since learners found video games both extrinsically and intrinsically motivating as the narrative provided a suitable opportunity for learners to engage with the language and facilitate L2C. This is in line with Soyoof and Talei (2013), who noted that video games have the ability to build intrinsic motivation from extrinsic motivation. Mercer (2014) defined the self as a "coherently organized dynamic system encompassing all the beliefs, cognitions, emotions, motives and processes related to and concerning oneself" (p. 163) and noted that learners' self-

confidence varies according to the learning situation and each learner's personality characteristics. Thus, as Soyoof (2018b) and Richards and Renandya (2012, as cited in Soyoof, 2018b) note, EFL learners can grow their self-confidence as they succeed in their EFL use. Regarding L2C, Sampasivam and Clément (2014) found a high correlation between motivation and L2 acquisition scores.

Furthermore, based on students' experience, several features of language learning applicable to successful second language acquisition have been linked with the use of video games such as "learner autonomy, motivation, engagement, preparatory skills, availability of independent tutorial support, graduated learning/skills demands, task-based learning, risk-taking, intuition, and creativity" (Soyoof, 2018b, p. 147). Research has pointed out as well that video games can play a facilitative role in language learning (Higgins et al., 2012).

In their meta-analysis, Vogel et al. (2006) found that the main positive effects of video games in educational contexts were those regarding the affective variables of students. Similarly, Dalton and Devitt (2016) stated that a positive attitude among students regarding the use of video games in education was found to be a common trait. Several studies have found that motivation is an aspect affected by the many affective variables that can be found in video games and are aimed at motivation (Reinders, 2017; Soyoof & Jokar, 2014) In this sense, Parsayi (2018) found that video games are better than novels in terms of the ability of learners to feel identified with the protagonist.

However, it must be taken into account Whitton's (2007, 2011) stance that video games should not be used only for motivational purposes because video games may not be motivational for the totality of students. This is in line with Ebrahimzadeh and Alavi (2017) who noted that some students may not enjoy playing a video game, but they could still appreciate the ambience by only watching, and reduce in this way their anxiety resulting in better language learning motivation. Students interviewed in Soyoof's study (2018a) commented that when involving students' feelings, their learning was deeper. This is in line with Csikszentmihalyi's (1991) flow theory and suggests that the ability of video games to provide an intriguing atmosphere and systematic feedback "persuade language learners to maximise their participation".

3.2.3 Importance of narratives in the use of video games in an EFL classroom

Soyoof (2018b) stated that the plot quality of a game is an important factor based on Väisänen's (2018) findings. Väisänen detected that video game stories were what held students' interest in a game and even caused them to return to them for multiple playthroughs as well as that playing video games in English was motivational for weaker EFL learners, particularly for single players. This former finding agrees with what Reinders and Wattana (2015) pointed out about video games being a life-long tool for L2 learning. The Artifice's (2017) online article about the relationship in video games between storytelling and interactivity explains that a video game's narrative (or storytelling) foundation needs to be matched with interactivity. This is also needed to reach the state of 'flow'. This is, a state in which people "experience profound creativity, enjoyment, and a total involvement with the activities, and in terms of video game playing the play would be sustained through the positive rewarding experience (which does not necessarily happen in general learning experiences)" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, as cited in Parsayi, 2018).

As Lucas (2015) commented, two important elements in the success (or lack of) of a video game are the storytelling and the plot. Players absorb the narrative through the different activities and through these experiences video games have the ability for players to identify with other people and their situations in life (Gee, 2011) since adopting the identity of an on-screen character, players 'live' their lives, taking decisions and operating inside them (Gilbert, 2019).

In this sense, Carlquist (2002) claimed that video games consisted in *playing* stories rather than *reading* them and Mukherjee (2015) agreed with this with the description of video game consoles as 'storyplaying' devices rather than storytelling ones. The story narrated by video games is told in narrative video games through both missions and cutscenes which serve to advance the plot (Gilbert, 2019). Gilbert explained that even though most of the time a video game narrative does not change, players controlling a character (or a variety of them) take decisions on how to engage with the story and the virtual world.

3.2.3 Guidelines for the use of video games in education

Even though it was a scarcely-explored research topic at the time, Shaffer et al. (2005) already noticed the need for a guide or a teacher during this experience of new worlds so that students do not become lost while wandering through them. Similarly, in their meta-review of instructor-support in-game environments, Wouters and Van Oostendorp (2013) found that learning was improved when instructors backed students in game-based learning environments. These results are similar to those reported by Schullo et al. (2005, as cited in de Freitas & Neumann, 2009) who reported that the changing role of the tutor is still key in the learning process. Higgins et al. (2012) noted as well that technology worked better in education when it supplemented normal teaching rather than when it was a substitute for it.

On a similar note, Lynch et al.'s (2015) study concluded that to complement the learning experience it was needed to discuss what is fictional and what is not after playing a video game and similarly, Lee and Probert (2010) concluded that for maximizing student learning, video games needed to be combined with other kinds of activities such as teacher lectures, background readings, class discussion and critical analysis.

In her review, de Freitas (2018) found that games were more effective in learning compared to traditional methods and they were better when combined with face-to-face interaction. She agreed with previous research such as Vogel et al. (2006) who associated games and interactive simulations with cognitive gains, and Connolly et al. (2012) who linked playing computer games to a "range of perceptual, cognitive, behavioural, affective and motivational impacts and outcomes" (p. 671).

In previous research, de Freitas (2014) pointed out another requirement which is the necessity of using a cross-disciplinary approach to successfully use a game-based approach. Similarly, Higgins et al. (2012, p.4) in their report identified different trends in the use of technology in education: firstly, that technology was more effective when used in pairs or groups; that it was better to introduce technology in a short but intensive manner since its use over a longer time may not be as effective, and lastly, that it was necessary to devote at least a whole session to the introduction of a new technology. Another key aspect for

de Freitas (2018) is the need to find a balance between amusement and game playability and between learning outcomes and assessment.

3.3. Video games and the teaching of culture

3.3.1 How video games recreate culture

Vandewalle (2020) stated that video games offer players the possibility to learn about antiquity, a statement that can be applied to every historical period or moment as there are games based in several different historical periods. Video games revolve around history because it provides a context that feels verisimilitudinous by mobilising players' previous knowledge but at the same time is adaptable and can be modified (Metzger & Paxton, 2016). This last aspect is what makes video games different. Even though video games may share audiovisual features with films and series, they deserve special attention because of their singularity. As Metzger and Paxton (2016) explained, the unique way learners engage with the world and its past through video games is that they not only observe history but engage in an active way in simulations, repeat it or even alter history. This is because video games possess what is known as dynamic interactivity, which means that the game narrative changes according to the player's doings and reactions to game elements. This is how video game outcomes change based on learner's gameplays and different narratives are experienced.

Chapman (2016) makes a distinction between 'conceptual' simulation video games whose design is focused on the historical process (Chapman, 2016; MacLeod, 2021) and can recreate complex real-world connections in ways that are nearly impossible for static words and images (McCall, 2011) and realist simulation video games. Realist simulation video games are usually based on a certain historical period and reference to events, people, and monuments from that period (MacLeod, 2021). Henceforth, the narratives in these games tend to be more structured than in 'conceptual' simulation video games (Chapman, 2016).

However, Champion (2011) noted that the value of photo-realism may have been overemphasised sacrificing cultural presence. Cultural presence is understood as to feel that a virtual environment is or has been occupied as a place. The author explained that this is problematic since in some cases the

relationship between photo-realism and interactivity is difficult and photo-realism may suggest an authoritative knowledge on the designers of the video game that they may not have had

As Champion (2011) explained, culture is "an interactive process of observation, instruction, and participation" (p. 202), and it is needed to be understood as such to replicate culture properly in a virtual environment. He uses the example of a medieval house which is a representation of an idea as well as the uses and intentions based on the notions the society of that historical period had of inhabitation, social identification and possession. It is not enough to visualise the house or navigate through them, but it is needed a certain extent of social learning and culturally specific embodiment.

3.3.2 Teaching culture in EFL using video games

Regarding the research on cultural knowledge in an EFL classroom, Kiss and Weninger (2017) after studying the function of visuals in this area by semantically analysing students' responses identified three types of meaning students elaborated on their semiotic processes which are universal, cultural (and subcultural) and individual. They also cited the research carried out by Risager (2011) in which three areas of language teaching where culture is important were identified which are: the content, usually provided by language teaching materials, the learners, their development of knowledge, and their competence in communicating between cultures and the context, which is the situation of language and cultural teaching in education and society in current society.

More precisely, Newton et al. (2010) pointed out six teaching strategies as the bases of intercultural communicative language teaching. They advocate for the integration of culture from the start of language learning, authentic social interaction to engage learners, the development of an approach to culture and language culture based on exploration and reflection, comparing, and connecting explicitly languages and cultures, giving recognition and attention to different learners and learning context and changing the focus from native-speaker competence to intercultural communicative competence. These teaching strategies were confirmed in Soyoof's (2018a) study with six Iranian male EFL language learners.

Tschirner (2001) explained that to understand another culture's semiotics, human activities, signs, and expressions have to be observed. Therefore, the use of images and graphical information are not suitable enough resources to acquire a deep understanding of the target language culture (Soyoof, 2018a). Henceforth, this cultural learning can be assisted using video games where players interact with the culture and are engaged with it as video games can supply learners with a way to experience L2 culture inside the game and engage them in an enthusiastic manner (Soyoof, 2018a).

3.4 The use of *Assassin's Creed* in teaching

3.4.1. The Assassin's Creed saga

The *AC* saga has been praised for the historical settings appearing in the game regarding their immersivity (Spring, 2015; Makai, 2018), the feeling of authenticity they transmit (Boutonnet, 2016), and by historians for the accuracy in their recreation (Whitaker & Andress, 2015; Whitaker & Glass, 2013). Similarly, Politopoulos et al. (2019) noted that it can be observed in the core of the *AC* series a significant fondness for the past than can be noticed in the fact that Ubisoft employs a full-time historian and consults regularly with experts (Copplestone 2017, as cited in Politopoulos et al., 2019).

AC games are considered to establish a connection between the locations players can observe on the screen and the historical realm (Mochocki, 2021), as well as between the game's historical depiction and the larger historical rhetoric (Chapman, 2016). In the game, designers recreate historical landmarks, the vegetation and animals of that period, banal and sacred objects, techniques, and different traditions and languages (MacLeod, 2021) based on academic research.

Following Chapman's (2016) distinction, it can be said that *AC* (and *Discovery Tour*) video games fall in the category of realist simulation video games since they show accurate depictions (Chapman, 2016). Chapman notes the importance in the *AC* saga of characters that appear in the game and cannot be controlled by players (known as NPCs in the video games field). They interact with and 'live' in the real-world environments recreated in the games, which include parts such as "the art, architecture and the more basic aspects of life such as indoor lighting, furniture and utensils", that "put a player into a historical moment" (Spring, 2015, p. 6).

Majewski (2017) points out the *AC* saga as a great example of commercial video games that explore heritage-related topics. Reinhard (2017) stated that *AC* games can be considered archaeological sites noting that all the uses and appeals of archaeological sites described by Holtorf (2005) could be applied to an *AC* game such as *AC Unity*'s (Ubisoft, 2014) virtual environment as they can be applied to the real environment. This video game is a release of the *AC* saga based on the French Revolution. These uses and appeals of archaeological sites mentioned can be found in Annex 1. Reinhard (2017) continues to explain that in the case of open worlds, games that allow the player to wander through the map freely, such as those of the *AC* saga, this correlation between virtual and real environments is even bigger.

Using Metzger and Paxton's (2016) framework for the analysis of historical deployment in video games, the *AC* games historical deployment feature what Metzger and Paxton coins as critical historical deployment, borrowed authenticity, and legitimation. The two former ones make the games unsuitable for their use in an educational environment. Critical historical deployment is characterised by the use of counter-narratives and puts emphasis on new perspectives, often counterfactual, to overemphasise the player's control over the past. As the authors explain, the *AC* games offer a representation of an alternative history depicting historical events in a different manner involving members of the 'Assassin's brotherhood', and they use the example of an *AC* game, based on the American Revolutionary War, in which George Washington depends on Ratonhnhaké:ton, also known as Connor, the Native-American assassin protagonist of the game. Regarding borrowed authenticity, it consists in the use of historical characters or settings, but with gameplay that could be transferred to any historical period or fantasy setting. The authors used the example of *AC IV: Black Flag* (Ubisoft, 2013), based on the colonial Caribbean, in which the main gameplay mechanics of killing, hiding, running from enemies, or climbing could be transported to another historical period or fantasy environment.

Concerning Frasca's (2003) comments about video games 'simulational' nature, in *AC* games it can be exemplified with a sea voyage that either in a novel, a painting or a film, is merely a representation whereas in a sea voyage in *AC Odyssey* (Ubisoft, 2018), a game based in 5th century BCE Greece, the different

elements of the sea voyage are also represented but the learner interacts with them and is responsible for the events of the voyage (Vandewalle, (2020).

Castiñeiras (2021) pointed out that even though it has been praised for its accuracy, the *AC* series also commits historical mistakes and anachronisms, but these only occur in an occasional manner and they do not overshadow all the positive aspects of the quality of its depictions in terms of fidelity and technical power. In this sense, Vandewalle (2020), in his analysis of video games within the context of learning, signals that the vivid representation of the Athenian agora in *AC Odyssey* is a better visualisation for learners than a static image. Therefore, it can be said that it shows a greater cultural presence. Another possible benefit the author comments on is the possibility for players to establish contact with classical languages texts which students may not be used to encounter.

Gilbert (2019) carried out a study to examine how playing *AC* games on their own had influenced perceptions of students regarding historical periods and characters. In her findings, the author highlights that: students valued how they were more aware of the existence of different perspectives in history after playing the video games and the connection they felt with historical figures. Using a narrative structure, *AC* video games changed students' perspectives on time periods and motivated reflection on the impact of history on students' contemporary identities (p.25). However, the author found as well that students did not leverage all the opportunities video games provided them to engage critically and they did not notice instances when the understanding of aspects they felt interesting could have been extended by studying history in a more academic way.

In this sense, the author notes the need to teach students ways to critically analyse representations in video games (and media, in general) and show them the constructed nature of this media and this would be useful not only for the media that could be used in a classroom but for the media students consume on their own. Gilbert highlighted that for students the mere presence of different points of view was irrefutable proof of the objectivity and impartiality of the video game. Therefore, the author concluded that this study was "evidence for the validity of narrative video games with historical settings as a (…) window on historical experience" since "the narrative structure of *AC* can and does exercise a profound impact on students' historical imaginations" (p. 23) and students

showed eagerness for experimenting history in a new immersive and empathetic manner

3.4.2 Discovery Tour

To analyse the effect of *Discovery Tour* on students, an article by a historian who was part of the team that designed the first *Discovery Tour* release is dealt with. Perrine Poiron (2021) is a historian who worked in the development of the first *Discovery Tour* release, based on ancient Egypt. She notes how *AC* developers wanted since the beginning of the series the video games to be an entertaining educational historical experience. At one point, teachers and professors started to ask for a combat-free, non-violent, without narratives version of *AC* so that it became suitable for an educational context since because of the violence depiction, the saga has been consistently rated as Mature 17+ (suitable for ages 17 and over) in the Entertainment Software Rating Board (known as ESRB) and Adult 18 (only suitable for adults) in the Pan-European Game Information (known as PEGI), the main video game content rating systems in the United States and Europe respectively. This can be observed with *Discovery Tour: Viking Age,* whose original game *AC Valhalla* is classified as PEGI 18 and ESRB Mature 17+, whereas this standalone educational version is classified as PEGI 7 and ESRB Everyone.

Due to technological limitations, that was not possible at that time but, nevertheless, Ubisoft started to question the educational world in the search of information about preferences regarding length or whether to create a separate game or only a mode inside a usual *AC* video game (Poiron, 2021). Eventually, for the 10th anniversary of the original *AC* game, Ubisoft decided to introduce the Discovery Tour mode in the *AC Origins* (Ubisoft, 2017) game, and later it was sold as a stand-alone version which could be bought without the original game for a more reasonable price.

Poiron notes how the historical research team hired historians and experts on the historical period of that certain game, the Ptolemaic Egypt, to provide scientific and up-to-date information with academic insights. She points out that one of the strengths of this *Discovery Tour* release was the museum documentation that can be observed through the game. Maxime Durand (2018), the head of the *AC* historical research team, stated in an interview that after

removing violence and narratives the main objectives were to allow the player to access the original game's full map of Egypt to be able to travel and wander through the map without constraints and then, create compelling and short and very visually attractive tours that were "curated by historians and adapted by us, by our writer, to be very accessible".

Using Metzger and Paxton's (2016) framework, in *Discovery Tour* releases previous to *Discovery Tour: Viking Age*, critical historical deployment and borrowed authenticity were cast aside to transform the usual violent video games into a video game appropriate for educational purposes. Nevertheless, *Discovery Tour* games were criticised for being not interactive enough and being closer to observing history than experiencing it (Mol, 2018, Walker, 2018, as cited in Politopoulos et al., 2019). Therefore, as well as into legitimation, previous *Discovery Tour* games fell into the category of antiquarian historical deployment since the emphasis is placed on historical accuracy and its accuracy-emphasised representations limit the gameplay. This agrees with Champion's (2011) statement about the difficult relationship between photo-realism and interactivity.

Politopoulos et al. (2019) explained the problem of using *AC* and the previous *Discovery Tour* video games in a classroom. The former is acclaimed by scholars for the accurate and detailed worlds they present in their games which contributes to public recognition and comprehension, but these video games show two faces: "one of a virtual heritage tourist, mouth wide open in wonder at the beauty of the past; the other of a time-traveling murderer" (p. 322). Therefore, the *Discovery Tour* versions of these games keep the accuracy in their representations without the creative elements added to provide a more interesting gameplay: Ubisoft allowed the players to explore the carefully recreated worlds they designed for their original games but at the expense of narratives and interactivity (Politopoulos et al., 2019).

McLeod notes that there is no general agreement among historians around the *AC* games because they add aspects to their narratives closer to fantasy or fiction than to academic history. Nevertheless, as Chapman (2016) claims: "counterfactualism, anachronism, and the loss of historian's authority, do not necessarily indicate a lack of useful discourse" (p. 47). Poiron points out how in the case of some non-historically-accurate situations, these inaccuracies were

pointed out to students in *Discovery Tour*, and in this way, the right information can be provided to them.

Regarding research about the actual implementation of *AC* and *Discovery Tour* games, the article published by Université de Montréal Nouvelles (2018) shows the results of the test carried out by didactics professor Marc-André Éthier on 330 students in nine Montreal-area schools using the Discovery Tour mode of *AC Origins*. The results of the study are satisfactory as the students have increased their knowledge on the assessed aspects which are information about the library of Alexandria. Commenting on these results, *AC* creative director Jean Guesdon claims that the results confirm that the objective of using the interesting content the *AC* saga was providing in their games in class for educational purposes has been achieved. Jean-Pascal Tremblay, the history teacher in charge of the test adds that it is always a challenge to motivate high school students to learn and because of this, the more tools teachers have, the better. He claims that there are ways to integrate games into lessons and to use the cinematic sequences of video games to hold students' attention, given that the more teachers manage to surprise students, the more motivated students will be.

MacLeod (2021) notes that the use of video games like *AC* is more valuable when used as an addition or complement to more traditional in-classroom activities. Therefore, she agrees with research previously commented (Shaffer et al., 2005; Wouters & van Oostendorp, 2013; Schullo et al., 2005, as cited in de Freitas & Neumann, 2009; Higgins et al., 2012). Regarding the proper implementation of *AC Origins* in her sessions, MacLeod notes that the success of the activity surprised her. They discussed the *Discovery Tour* content in the classroom and MacLeod found that students usually reluctant to participate, contributed to the discussion and that reserved students that participated more frequently in those sessions than they usually did.

After this, she was asked to give a guest lecture on the topic of digital games for a class on Egyptian and Near Eastern archaeology for which she used the original *AC Origins* game since there was no tour for the pyramid she was going to focus on. Therefore, she recorded her own walk-through of the pyramid on the video game and used it in the lecture alongside a similar walk-through of a project created by Harvard University and after a discussion she allowed students to explore the pyramids in turns using *AC Origins*. She carried out a survey about

this lecture with 31 respondents who provided thoughtful responses. All of them thought that video games offered benefits in teaching, and the majority of them (25 students) made reference to the engagement provided by video games. Positive aspects commented were that games offered immersion and the possibility to 'sense' the past, that it was easier to recall details when interacting with them in games, to connect with "other non-academic interests and that video games "even could trick you into learning".

There were other mixed answers such as the necessity to discuss the historical inaccuracies and the fact that if they were not discussed when playing historical video games, it could hinder future learning, uncertainty over the use of video games for deeper projects, the need to assess carefully what video game to use especially taking into account the representation of violence and that students should be given access to play them in the educational centre facilities and not be asked to buy the games. Regarding negative comments, two respondents stated that in their opinion games were at least no better than written resources when exploring research questions and another one noted his/her reluctance about the credibility that using *AC* as an academic source would have in professors. Later on, MacLeod reused the materials she used for the lecture for her own course sessions and her students agreed that the *AC* version could not be as accurate as the pyramid walk-through on the Harvard University project, but they were more engaged and immersed in it

3.4.3 Discovery Tour: Viking Age

Following Champion's (2017) definition, *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* is a history-themed video game since it is an example of "activity-based virtual environments that attempt to reveal the culturally specific ways in which people created, modified and experienced past environments" (p. 111). Designers attempt to represent not only the appearance of cultural artefacts but the signification, importance, and latent presence of those who designed and used them (Champion, 2015).

According to Metzger & Paxton's framework (2016), *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* with its change of approach using a narrative and being more interactive, falls only in the category of legitimation. This type of historical deployment is present in all *AC* standard games, previous *Discovery Tour* releases, and

Discovery Tour: Viking Age. This kind of historical deployment puts emphasis on legitimising the video game as a historical text by referencing expert impact on game design or designing game elements to integrate, replicate, or imitate historical informational resources. Ubisoft tends to show game producers in their promotional YouTube videos explaining their discussions with professional history experts and their research and effort put into designing the game as close as possible to historical references (Metzger & Paxton).

Despite not being designed for L2 learning, in video games such as *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* English plays a secondary role that is important because players need English to manipulate game items as well as to move forward and through the quests. Furthermore, players have to communicate within the game, as when they have to choose a dialogue option when communicating with NPCs (Ebrahimzadeh & Alavi, 2017).

Therefore, it is intended to implement what Lave and Wenger (1991, as cited in Filsecker & Bündgens-Kosten, 2012) coined legitimate peripheral participation (LPP onwards) and consists in learning in contexts that have not been created for the purpose. of learning, but to serve an extra-learning purpose. This is, to acquire EFL knowledge using a game that was not intended for this purpose.

Furthermore, and in this case, regarding the teaching of culture, there is a strong link between LPP and the concept of community (Filsecker & Bündgens-Kosten, 2012), and at the same time community is linked to culture, since culture is defined as "the arts, beliefs, customs, institutions, and other products of human work and thought considered a unit, especially with regard to a particular time or social group" (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011).

Henceforth, students will acquire a better understanding of the activities of Norse and Anglo-Saxon communities in 9th century Britain and their meaning to their cultures (Filsecker & Bündgens-Kosten, 2012) by playing *Discovery Tour: Viking Age*, where the whole communities that appear in the game are inside the game with NPCs with whom the player interacts with and characters that can be controlled by the player such as Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda, a couple of Norse merchants, brother Ealric, an Anglo Saxon monk and the Anglo Saxon King Aelfred.

In line with what was commented in section 3.2.3, an aspect educational games lacked and characterised common video games was the complexity in

terms of complex plots including a great number of characters and plot variations (Reinders, 2017). Even though previous releases of *Discovery Tour* were acclaimed for the accurately reconstructed worlds, at the same time they were criticised for the lack of interactivity (Mol, 2018; Walker, 2018; as cited in Politopoulos et al., 2019) and even compared to a museum visit with scarce actions available (Politopoulos et al., 2019).

Because of this, *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* changed its approach and it is a story-based video game that provides a narrative that serves as a thread for all the academic content with elaborate storylines with multiple characters (Thorsteinn, Gunnhilda, Brother Ealric and King Aelfred among others) and plot twists such as Thorsteinn forgiving Björn, who had betrayed him, in order to have a sailor to travel to Britain from Norway or Björn betraying Thorsteinn again and being guilty of Thorsteinn's death. Likewise, de Freitas and Neumann (2009) noted that the narrative thread usually found in video games is motivational. These findings show that *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* is a proper choice for teaching since the main difference between this video game and the previous *Discovery Tour* releases is that it is the first story-based *Discovery Tour*. Moreover, despite this change, one of Durand's objectives when starting to design these new games for educational purposes, which was full access to the map of the original game, is maintained since players can access every region of Norway and Britain depicted in the game even in those regions where there are no quests.

Regarding Gilbert's (2019) statement about players being able to take decisions on how to engage with a history (even though most of the times narratives do not actually change), in *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* the player assume different roles such as Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda, Brother Ealric or King Aelfred, and can take different choices that change the plot slightly (whether or not to use a horse before sailing to Britain, an event that was thought to bring bad luck in Norse mythology) but it reaches always the same outcome (their journey may be calmer or stormier, but all the times they reach Britain successfully).

Regarding Champion's (2011) comments about designers' possible lack of authoritative knowledge, in the case of *Discovery Tour: Viking Age*, there are some examples of this due mainly to the scarcity of physical remains of 9th century Britain and as an example, designers explain how they were inspired by a French

church to recreate the Isle of Ely monastery appearing in the game for which they did not have any remain to base their depiction on.

Continuing with Champion's medieval house example noted in Section 3.3.1, the same can be noted about an Anglo-Saxon or Norse house in the case of *Discovery Tour: Viking Age*. Therefore, these ideas, uses and intentions based on their notions of inhabitation, social identification and possession can be seen through a culturally specific embodiment such the playable Norse and Anglo-Saxon video game protagonists and social learning such as the protagonist and non-playable characters (known in the video game field as NPCs) actions in the environment and how they interact, as well as through the information provided by the game via the codex.

Regarding the use of museum information, this is also one of the strengths of *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* since its developers have collaborated with museum partners that have contributed with images of real artefacts. In an article on the Ubisoft Montréal website (2021), the publisher explained these collaborations. The British Library authorised Ubisoft to use manuscripts and illustrations related to the Viking Age. The Réunion des Musées Nationaux, under the authority of the French Ministry of Culture, has supported Ubisoft and granted access to artefacts such as the Bayeux Tapestry or the Sutton Hoo helmet.

Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT) manages 23 museums and takes care of two and a half million heritage objects. Through the selection of some rare objects of their collection, access to the daily lives of Winchester is provided to the players. The selection includes the extraordinary Winchester Reliquary which is the only remaining British holy relic from that time. The York Archaeological Trust is in charge of the Jorvik Viking Centre in the UK and interprets the archaeology of York's Coppergate dig. Their findings add authenticity to the Jorvik environment and show the relevance of Jorvik as a trade, religious and political centre during the Viking Age. The National Museum of Denmark artefacts appearing in the game show the importance of honour, kin and social relationships as well as the fascinating crafting abilities and aesthetics of Norsemen. Finally, the Preston Park Museum & Grounds brought the opportunity to developers to show two important artefacts from the Viking Era: "the new Anglo-Scandinavian culture that emerged from funerary art, and one of only two near-complete Viking era helmets in the world; the Yarm Helmet".

4. EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION INNOVATIVE PROPOSAL

The possibility to use a powerful context for learning and the possibility of experiencing new roles is the reason behind the use of a video game such as *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* which according to Chapman (2016) and MacLeod (2021) is a realist simulation video game. By experiencing the roles of Norsemen and Anglo-Saxons, students are expected to learn the impact of Vikings on British culture in the powerful context of 9th century Norway and Britain.

Furthermore, students can observe original texts and learn about Old Norse and Old English and how Norse and Anglo-Saxon languages interacted and influenced each other. Moreover, by the use of the Codex, Ubisoft includes encyclopaedic information about the topics covered in the video game and are categorised in eight fields: war and politics, daily life, religion and magic, myths and legends, science, law and justice, art and culture, and trade and economy. Therefore, regarding cultural content, both big "C", since it includes arts and history and geography among others, and small "c" culture, since it includes information about common everyday life aspects (Lee, 2009; Peterson, 2004) are included.

Regarding Purba's (2011) recommendations, this proposal utilises authentic materials for inducing discussions about cultural topics and, using a video game that combines insights about other cultures without having to travel to another place and shows students behaviours not apparent on texts, complies with the characteristics he pointed out when recommending the use of literature and films.

Sessions will be carried out in the computer labs and in sessions using the video game, each team requires a high-performance PC on which to run and play the game, and at least one computer of basic performance on which to search for possible doubts about the vocabulary they encounter and to take notes on relevant information for their final work. In addition, an agreement should be reached with the different school departments in charge to allow students to have the possibility to come to the computer lab in the afternoons (from 4 to 7 p.m. for example) on school days for different reasons such as needing to make progress with quests because they have not had time in the session or to work on their final project. The sessions devoted to preparation and work on the final outcome will not require a high-performance computer.

4.1 Participants

This proposal is designed for a first year of Baccalaureate class which is composed of 25 students in their subject of 'first foreign language: English' in a public high school placed in an average socio-economic level neighbourhood in Calahorra. The students' English level is average even though there are students with high-level and others with a lower level than their classmates. Of these, four students have foreign origins, but this circumstance does not affect their English level. Students are arranged in five teams of five students and a week before the beginning of the proposal students will be asked about their motivation towards playing video games in general and about *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* so in the case that there are multiple students who do not enjoy playing video games, they are distributed among the different groups so that they do not all end up in the same team.

4.2 Objectives

Throughout the two school years in which Baccalaureate is divided, the 15 Baccalaureate stage objectives stated in article 33 of *Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación* (LOE), which was modified by *Ley Orgánica 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación* (LOMLOE), must be accomplished. In this case, this project aims to accomplish the next objectives:

Stage objectives addressed in this didactic proposal
a) Exercise democratic citizenship, from a global perspective.
b) Consolidate a personal, affective-sexual and social maturity that allows them to act in a respectful, responsible and autonomous way and to develop their critical spirit.
c) Promote effective equality of rights and opportunities for women and men, analyse and critically assess existing inequalities, as well as the recognition and teaching of the role of women in history and promote real equality and non-discrimination.
f) Express fluently and correctly in one or more foreign languages.
g) Use ICT with competence and responsibility.
h) Know and critically assess the realities of the contemporary world, its historical background and the main factors of its evolution.
j) Know and critically assess the contribution of science and technology in changing living conditions, as well as strengthening sensitivity and respect for the environment.
l) Develop artistic and literary sensitivity, as well as aesthetic criteria, as sources of training and cultural enrichment.

Table 1. Stage objectives addressed in this didactic proposal.

Furthermore, this didactic unit aims to accomplish its own didactic objectives such as:

Didactic objectives
Understand the Viking impact on British culture.
Learn about different aspects such as politics, daily life, religion, and mythology among others of Anglo-Saxon and Norse culture.
Analyse Anglo-Saxon and Norse culture to point out their similarities and differences.
Understand, memorise, and correctly use vocabulary related to Norse and Anglo-Saxon culture.
Understand information from encyclopaedic entries about Norse and Anglo-Saxon culture.
Understand the video game oral text (with the aid of subtitles).
Summarise information about different fields of Norse and Anglo-Saxon culture selecting the important information and expressing their similarities and differences.
Discuss orally aspects of different fields of Norse and Anglo-Saxon culture.
Give an oral presentation about different fields of Norse and Anglo-Saxon culture.
Raise students' motivation

Table 2. Didactic objectives.

4.3 Competences

In the second article of *Real Decreto 1105/2014, de 26 de diciembre*, competence is defined as the "ability to apply in an integrated way the contents of each teaching and educational stage, in order to achieve the appropriate performance of activities and the effective resolution of complex problems" (p. 12368). Moreover, seven different key competences are established. These key competences are explained and divided into different aspects or components in the first appendix of *Orden ECD/65/2015, de 21 de enero*. Of these seven competences, the focus of this proposal is on Competence in linguistic communication (CLC), Social and civic competence (SCC), and Cultural awareness and expression (CAE).

CLC is inherent to the teaching of a language and the "result of communicative action within given social practices, in which the individual acts with other interlocutors and through texts in multiple modalities, formats and media using a multilingual repertoire, partial, but adjusted to the communicative experiences experienced throughout life" (p. 6991). According to what was explained in section 3.1.1, CLC is enriched in this proposal by allowing students to get in touch with cultural diversity. The fragment about texts in multiple modalities, formats, and media play an important role in this proposal given that a video game, which

is a medium that is not usually used in Spanish education, is used. This connection between CLC and social events in which the student produces as well as receives messages leads teachers to use active methodologies. Therefore, CLC is worked in this unit through teamwork and the use of a video game, which can be considered a form of Task-Based Language Teaching (Soyoof & Jokar, 2014; Soyoof & Talei, 2013) in which quests are different steps of the video game that must be completed and from which students acquire information for the elaboration of a common piece of work.

In the video game, students will find vocabulary and grammar related to Viking (or Norse) and Anglo-Saxon culture which, together with the vocabulary and grammar that will be covered in the other activities of the sessions as well as implicit phonetic, orthographic and orthoepic instruction, will address extensively the linguistic component of this competence. Furthermore, by working on the four communicative skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) and the different aspects involved in them, the pragmatic-discursive component, related to the communicative act and its implications, and the strategic component, related to the strategies and skills used to overcome the different difficulties found in the reception and/or production of the communicative act, are addressed as well.

Nevertheless, given the very important cultural nature of this didactic proposal, apart from the linguistic component which is the ultimate aim of a foreign language subject, the most relevant component of this competence, is the socio-cultural one, which includes two dimensions: one referring to the knowledge of the world and the other one referring to the intercultural dimension. This way, the student is offered "a means of knowledge and contact with cultural diversity, which is an enriching factor for their own competence, and which is particularly relevant in the case of foreign languages" (p. 6991).

Finally, there is a personal component in this competence that is addressed by attempting to raise motivation which is a key aspect of language learning (Krashen, 1981; Sampasivam and Clément, 2014) and that according to different authors mentioned in the theoretical framework it can be raised by using video games (Connolly et al., 2012; Reinders, 2017; Soyoof, 2018b, Soyoof & Jokar, 2014). Moreover, according to Soyoof and Talei (2013), the extrinsic motivation brought using a video game can be turned into intrinsic motivation.

SCC is the "ability to use knowledge and attitudes about society to interpret social phenomena and problems in increasingly diversified contexts" (p. 6998). Regarding social competence, it is of crucial importance to understand different codes of conduct and generally accepted practices in different societies and environments, as well as their tensions and processes of change to know and analyse different cultures in order. Therefore, it is important to acquire "basic concepts relating to the individual, the group, work organisation, equality and non-discrimination between men and women and between different ethnic or cultural groups, society and culture" to understand the interculturality inherent to European society based on different cultural and national identities that are in a constant dynamic and changing socio-cultural process in interaction with the European one. Henceforth, dealing with eminently cultural issues, all these aspects are addressed in this proposal.

In the same way, by covering this cultural topic the civic competence is addressed as well since this competence includes "knowledge of contemporary events and major developments and trends in national, European and world history, as well as an understanding of social and cultural processes of a migratory nature involving multicultural societies" (p. 6999). Therefore, to be able to accept differences, be tolerant and respect the values, beliefs, cultures, and personal and collective history of others, it is necessary to understand and comprehend collective experiences and the organisation and functioning of past and present societies.

CAE consists of "knowing, understanding, appreciating and valuing with a critical spirit, with an open and respectful attitude, the different cultural and artistic manifestations, using them as a source of personal enrichment and enjoyment and considering them as part of the wealth and heritage of peoples" (p. 7001). The development of this competence involves "personal attitudes and values of interest, recognition and respect for different artistic and cultural manifestations as well as valuing freedom of expression, the right to cultural diversity and dialogue between cultures and society" (p. 7001). Henceforth, by observing and analysing Norse and Anglo-Saxon culture and life as well as the relationship between them students acquire the knowledge to be able to access the various manifestations of cultural heritage (cultural, historical-artistic, literary, philosophical, technological, environmental, etc.) on a European scale

concretised in artistic-cultural manifestations of everyday life (housing, dress, gastronomy, applied arts, folklore, festivals) and the "existing relations between these manifestations and society, which implies an awareness of the evolution of thought, aesthetic currents, fashions and tastes, as well as of the representative, expressive and communicative importance of aesthetic factors in everyday life" (p. 7001).

4.4 Contents

The contents of this didactic proposal have been selected from the *Decreto 21/2015, de 26 de junio*, which states the contents that must be covered in each school year of the Baccalaureate stage (pages 368-389). These contents are divided into four blocks for each communicative skill: the first one about listening, the second one about speaking, the third one about reading and the last one about writing. The contents that are emphasised in this didactic proposal are:

Didactic proposal emphasised contents	
Socio-cultural and sociolinguistic aspects: social conventions, registers, customs, values, beliefs and attitudes.	Sound, accentual, rhythmic and intonation patterns as well as graphic patterns and spelling conventions.
Comprehension strategies	
- Use of previous knowledge about the type of task and topic - Comprehension type differentiation. - Hypothesis formulation and inference about content, context and meaning from meaningful, linguistic and paralinguistic elements comprehension. - Hypotheses reformulation based on new elements understanding.	
Planning strategies	**Execution strategies**
- Conceive the message clearly, distinguishing its main idea(s) and basic structure. - Adapt the text to the addressee, context and channel, applying the appropriate register and discourse structure in each case.	- Express the message clearly and coherently, structuring it appropriately. - Readjust the task or message after assessing the difficulties and resources available. - Build on and make the most of prior knowledge. - Compensate for linguistic gaps by means of linguistic procedures.
Communicative functions	
- Description and appreciation of physical and abstract qualities of people, objects, places, activities and processes. - Narration of specific and habitual past events and description of present states and situations. - Exchange of information, indications, opinions, beliefs and points of view. - Expression of knowledge and certainty - Establishing and managing discourse communication and organisation.	
Syntax-discourse structures	**Common oral and written vocabulary (reception and production)**
- Expression of logical relationships: cause; purpose; comparison; result/correlation; indirect style; temporality. - Assertion. - Expression of time - past and present, aspect - punctual; durative; habitual and modality - factuality. - Expression of existence; entity; quality; quantity; space and spatial relations; temporal relations and manner.	Description of people and objects; time and space; states, events and happenings; activities, procedures and processes; social relations; language and intercultural communication; science and technology; history and culture.

Table 3. Didactic proposal emphasised contents.

4.5 Methodology

This proposal is an instance of game-based learning since it combines video games and education (Tsai & Fan, 2013). Similarly, *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* is an adaptation of a common game for educational purposes but not for L2 learning, and since it has not been designed for the specific purpose that it is going to be used, the approach of this dissertation can be considered to use a game-enhanced approach (Reinhardt and Sykes, 2012).

The different guidelines and recommendations pointed out in the theoretical framework have been followed. Therefore, in this didactic intervention proposal, a cross-disciplinary approach (de Freitas, 2018; European Observatory for Plurilingualism, 2009) is used by teaching a fully cultural topic, whose contents are usually linked to the subject of history or social sciences, in English and which is related to British culture. This is as well in line with the *European Charter for Plurilingualism*, since it contributes to paying more attention to writing and teaching the history of European nations and culture.

Furthermore, since technology is more effective when used in pairs or groups (Higgins, 2012), teamwork is implemented, and students are divided into different teams. Concerning teamwork, all team members are encouraged to play the game and it will be ensured that team members spend a similar time using the video game. Nevertheless, as Whitton (2007, 2011) stated there may be students who do not enjoy video games in general or specifically *Discovery Tour: Viking Age*. Therefore, those students who prefer it, do not need to actually play the video game but only watch their teammates playing. This follows what Ebrahimzadeh and Alavi (2017) pointed out about students that may not enjoy playing a video game but could still appreciate the ambience by only watching and reduce in this way their anxiety resulting in better language learning motivation.

Even though this project is based on reception through the video game and production through team and class discussion, the grammar required by the curriculum will not be neglected, as explicit mention and explanation of the content will be made throughout the project. Special attention will be paid to the structure and use of the passive voice, a grammatical voice of importance in this proposal given that students will encounter it in the video game and will have to use it in the portfolio.

Finally, addressing the *European Charter for Plurilingualism* (2009) proposal to implement more innovative pedagogical methods, Soyoof (2018b) mentioned task-based learning as a feature of successful second language learning that could be linked with the use of video games. Going further, it can be said that *Discovery Tour: Viking Age,* which follows a structure of quests that have to be completed to reach the end, can be compared to Task-Based Language Teaching, being the quests the different steps that must be completed in a task to reach the final outcome.

4.6 Distribution of the sessions throughout the academic year

This proposal has been designed to be implemented in a short but intensive time according to Higgins et al. (2012) recommendations. Thus, this proposal is set to be carried out at a time during the school year that allows for the greatest number of consecutive sessions without interruptions due to holidays or long weekends. Nevertheless, it must be always considered the context of an educational centre in which cultural activities or social education workshops can cause the teacher to miss a session at any given time, but if this happens during a period without holidays or breaks, this incidence may be easier to solve.

Therefore, as the English subject in the first year of Baccalaureate is assigned four weekly sessions (Decreto 21/2015, de 26 de junio) and this proposal consists of 12 sessions, it will cover three whole weeks. Analysing the usual school calendar, four periods have been found in which there are usually four consecutive weeks of uninterrupted school days: a period from the beginning of the school year in September to mid-October, another period from the beginning of November to the beginning of December, another one that includes the whole of January from the return of the Christmas break and February, and a final period from the beginning of May to the second week of June.

Of these, the January-February period is considered the most suitable one. If it was implemented at the beginning of the school year, it may suggest to students that the proposed dynamic would be held throughout the whole school year. The last one is not considered suitable because of the proposal's intention to boost motivation and attainment in the subject that if it was held during the last months of the school year would not be fully exploited. The two remaining options are convenient regarding the aspects commented previously, however, the January-

February option is considered the most suitable for the implementation and more specifically after the Christmas holidays. This is because this time period is in the middle point of the school year (at the beginning of the second term) and in a period, when it is often difficult for students to be motivated and to recover the rhythm of work and effort prior to the Christmas break.

4.7 Activities, timing, materials and resources

In every session of this proposal a time slot of 5 minutes is given at the beginning of the session to allow students space to ask any possible doubt and to give instructions on what will be done in that session. This time is used as well to allow the students to get settled in the computer lab and for the computers and the game itself to load. All the eight different quests in which the game is divided are about 30 minutes long. An overview of the quest provided by the game is included on the tables.

The first session of the didactic unit is used as an introduction to the controls and mechanics of *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* (D.T.: V.A. in the tables) following Higgins et al.'s (2012) guidelines about the need to devote at least a whole session to the introduction of a new technology. From this point on, sessions will focus on the reflective and exploratory approach to culture and the use of explicit comparisons and connections between languages and cultures. The former will be fostered in its exploratory side by the use of a video game that as has already been explained allows students to experience culture rather than observe it. Regarding the reflective side as well as the comparisons and connections between languages and cultures, the final outcome of the proposal revolves around the comparison and connection of Norse and Anglo-Saxon cultures in different areas. Consequently, the 'off-gameplay' activities carried out during the sessions will be centred on this aspect.

Different authors in the theoretical framework pointed out the importance of teacher guidance (Schullo et al., 2005; Shaffer et al., 2005; Wouters and Van Oostendorp, 2013) as well as the need to complement the use of video games (Higgins et al., 2012; MacLeod, 2021) with other kinds of more traditional classroom activities (Lee and Probert, 2010) based on face-to-face interaction (de Freitas, 2018). Therefore, sessions in the didactic intervention proposal are designed so students do not spend the whole session playing the video game.

Beyond the attention provided to the possible students' doubts while using the video game, which may be technical or about the content, the sessions are designed to end with a period for reflection and thinking on what has been seen in each session. Furthermore, the teacher is supposed to have played the video game before so that he has knowledge about its content, mechanics, and controls.

After each session, students will be asked to fill in individually at home a summary of what they have learnt, indicating what they found interesting and useful and what they did not, which they should compile as a portfolio to hand in at the end of the proposal. After the first session, they will answer the question of what they think is their level of knowledge about Viking culture in general and about its impact on British culture and whether they feel motivated towards the activity they are going to carry out in the next weeks. Thus, at the end of the portfolio, they have to assess their knowledge about Viking culture in general and its impact on British culture, whether they found the activity motivating and whether they think they will be more motivated towards the subject for the rest of the school year and finally, highlights and areas for improvement of the proposal.

Session 1:

Activity 1	Time	Interaction
Introducing the proposal	20 minutes	Teacher → SS | SS → Teacher
Materials	Aim and description	
	The proposal is explained to the students. Teams are divided and instructions about how the proposal is organised in terms of timing, assessment, objectives, the contents covered by each team and final outcomes are defined and space for asking doubts is provided.	

Table 4. Session 1. Activity 1.

Activity 2	Time	Interaction
Getting started	35 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – Free play	The aim is to become comfortable and familiar with the gameplay. Therefore, time is given to learn how to play and get used to the video game controls. After watching the introduction, students abandon the first quest which starts automatically. Then, students explore the video game menus using the tutorial. The teacher shows students how to play and how to customise the controls if there are students who need it like left-handers as well as the accessibility options available.	
Homework	Portfolio: - Level of knowledge about Viking culture in general and about its impact on British culture. – Motivation for the proposal	

Table 5. Session 1. Activity 2.

Session 2:

- Activity 1: Introduction. (5 minutes).

Activity 2	Time	Interaction
Honour and oath-keeping	33 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 1st quest: Oaths and honor	Students complete the first quest. The focus is on the significance of honour and oath-keeping in Viking culture. By experiencing it through the embodiment of Thorsteinn, students observe and understand the significance of a person or clan's honour, the structure of "the Assembly" and the ways of settling feuds and justice in Viking culture.	
Quest overview	**Setting:**	866 CE, Stavanger, Norway
	Character:	Thorsteinn (Norse merchant)
Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda are a young, ambitious couple who want to catch the attention of Harald Fairhair. The day before Thorsteinn's first raid, a jealous rival threatens all their plans. Bjorn accuses them of oath-breaking on false claims. After collecting evidence, Thorsteinn beat Bjorn in a verbal joust before the Assembly. The couple's reputation is restored, and Bjorn is sentenced to exile.		

Table 6. Session 2. Activity 2.

Activity 3	Time	Interaction
Team discussion	10 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
	To establish explicit comparisons and connections, teams discuss similarities and differences between the process of settling feuds in ancient Scandinavian society and modern society.	

Table 7. Session 2. Activity 3.

Activity 4	Time	Interaction
Class discussion	7 minutes	T → SS	S → T	S → S
Materials	**Aim and description**	
	Students engage in classroom discussions on the significance of oath-keeping and/or in Viking culture and in modern society	
Homework	Portfolio: - Summary of what has been learnt in today's session. – What has been interesting and useful and what has not been.	

Table 8. Session 2. Activity 4.

Session 3:

- Activity 1: Introduction. (5 minutes).

Activity 2	Time	Interaction
Anglo-Saxon Christian life	30 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 2nd quest: Through faith and fire	Students complete the second quest. The focus is on early Medieval Anglo-Saxon Christian life, through a monastery. By experiencing it through the embodiment of Brother Ealric, students observe and understand medieval Christianity and monastic life.	
Quest overview	Setting:	870 CE, Isle of Ely, Anglo-Saxon Britain
	Character:	Brother Ealric (Anglo-Saxon monk)
Brother Ealric is on his first day at the Isle of Ely, ready to integrate himself into the monastic life. After having been shown around the monastery and how it functions, his quiet peace is broken by a Viking raid. After the Abbess's sacrifice, Brother Ealric flees alone with a valuable relic in hostile territory trying to reach King Aelfred's court.		

Table 9. Session 3. Activity 2.

Activity 3	Time	Interaction
Parts of a monastery	20 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 2nd quest: Through faith and fire	Summarising the main information, teams write a short essay pointing out the main parts or buildings of the monastery and writing down the functions of each building in a few words. Feedback will be provided via a learning virtual environment.	
Homework	Portfolio: - Summary of what has been learnt in today's session. – What has been interesting and useful and what has not been.	

Table 10. Session 3. Activity 3.

Session 4:

- Activity 1: Introduction. (5 minutes).

Activity 2	Time	Interaction
Longboats	30 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 3rd quest: Seaworthy	Students complete the third quest. The focus is on the Viking longboat, its construction, the science behind it and the mythology around seafaring. By experiencing it through the embodiment of Thorsteinn, students observe and understand the significance of seafaring and longboats in Norse culture, from how they were built to the mythology and imagery around it.	
Quest overview	**Setting:**	870 CE, Alrekstad, Norway
	Character:	Thorsteinn (Norse merchant)
Thorsteinn returns home after five years of raiding. Reunited with his wife, he wants to give up raiding and build a life with her. But to do so, he needs Harald's permission, who is not willing to let him leave. Without his permission, Thorsteinn orders the construction of a longboat, collecting the materials needed and choosing an animal for the prow. After restoring the relationship with Harald, Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda sail to Nottfall to finish the voyage preparation.		

Table 11. Session 4. Activity 2.

Activity 3	Time	Interaction
Team discussion	10 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 3rd quest: Seaworthy	To find the main information, students write down a list with the parts that went into building Thorsteinn's longboat, along with the materials and their properties. Feedback will be provided via a learning virtual environment.	

Table 12. Session 4. Activity 3.

Activity 4	Time	Interaction
Class discussion	10 minutes	T → SS | SS → T | SS → SS
Materials	**Aim and description**	
	Students engage in classroom discussions with each team commenting on what animal they have chosen for their prow and why based on the imagery, symbolism and/or mythology.	
Homework	Portfolio: - Summary of what has been learnt in today's session. – What has been interesting and useful and what has not been.	

Table 13. Session 4. Activity 4.

Session 5:

- Activity 1: Introduction. (5 minutes).

Activity 2	Time	Interaction	
Seafaring	24 minutes	Students in groups	
Materials	**Aim and description**		
D.T.: V.A. – 4th quest: Into the west	Students complete the fourth quest. The focus is on the show students the techniques and traditions of Scandinavian seafarers during the Medieval period. By experiencing it through the embodiment of Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda, students observe and understand cultural aspects and details of seafaring activities.		
Quest overview	**Setting:**	871 CE, Avaldsnes, Norway	
	Character:	Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda (Norse merchants)	
In a race against time and the elements, Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda must gather the final people and provisions - and a new navigator - if they are to reach England before the winter storms arrive. With the help of Bjorn – an enemy turned friend – and a new crew, they are set to depart with the uncertainty of whether the couple and Bjorn's differences will finally be forgotten in the new lands they will inhabit			

Table 14. Session 5. Activity 2.

Activity 3	Time	Interaction
Team discussion	10 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 4th quest: Into the west	To understand the main information about Ancient Scandinavian Navigation, teams have to write down the answer to three questions: Who was the most important person on the crew and what skills did he/she possess? How did ancient Scandinavian navigators find their way across the sea? What supplies were prepared before sailing? Feedback will be provided via a learning virtual environment.	

Table 15. Session 5. Activity 3.

Activity 4	Time	Interaction
Class discussion	6 minutes	T → SS | S → T
Materials	**Aim and description**	
	Students are asked to share their answers and the teacher clarifies correct knowledge orally.	

Table 16. Session 5. Activity 4.

Activity 5	Time	Interaction
Team discussion	10 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 4th quest: Into the west	Using the game map, students are asked to identify and describe the navigation route Thorsteinn took. Feedback will be provided via a learning virtual environment.	
Homework	Portfolio: - Summary of what has been learnt in today's session. – What has been interesting and useful and what has not been.	

Table 17. Session 5. Activity 5

Session 6:

- Activity 1: Introduction. (5 minutes).

Activity 2	Time	Interaction
Anglo-Saxon and Viking clash	28 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 5th quest: A barter for peace	Students complete the fifth quest. The focus is on the influence of Anglo-Saxon people's religious beliefs on political decisions and Anglo-Saxon warfare. By experiencing it through the embodiment of Ealric, students observe and understand the extent to which Christianity influenced society aspects beyond religious beliefs and distinct aspects of military operations.	
Quest overview	**Setting:**	878 CE, Chippenham, Anglo-Saxon Britain
	Character:	Brother Ealric (Anglo Saxon monk)
Brother Ealric, now a confidant of King Aelfred, has been Guthrum's hostage at Chippenham for 5 months. Aelfred has besieged the Dane's army and to win his freedom, Ealric must convince Guthrum to seek peace, which Guthrum is reluctant to do. Ealric convinces Guthrum to be baptised and with his safe return with the Isle of Ely's relic, he gives new support to Aelfred's political ambitions. After the baptism, the stage is set for a new era of peace and prosperity between the two Christian kings.		

Table 18. Session 6. Activity 2.

Activity 3	Time	Interaction
Class discussion	10 minutes	T → SS | S → T | S → S
Materials	**Aim and description**	
	Students engage in classroom discussions about monasteries' role and duties and their influence on society. To induce discussion, the teacher asks if the role of monasteries went beyond worship and religion and about the influence of Christianity over political decisions.	

Table 19. Session 6. Activity 3.

Activity 4	Time	Interaction
Team discussion	12 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 5th quest: A barter for peace	Teams have to write down the answers to the following questions: What were the different ranks of soldiers in the Anglo-Saxon armies? Which animals were used in the military and why? Furthermore, they have to list the aspects of military operations they have learned from the game. Feedback will be provided via a learning virtual environment.	
Homework	Portfolio: - Summary of what has been learnt in today's session. – What has been interesting and useful and what has not been.	

Table 20. Session 6. Activity 4.

Session 7:

- Activity 1: Introduction. (5 minutes).

Activity 2	Time	Interaction
King Aelfred	33 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 6th quest: Aelfred's legacy	Students complete the sixth quest. The focus is on the significance of Aelfred the Great. By experiencing it through the embodiment of Ealric and Aelfred himself, students observe and understand the significance of King Aelfred's aspirations and his social reforms during the 9th century.	
Quest overview	**Setting:**	878 CE, Runcwuda Abbey, Anglo-Saxon Britain
	Character:	Brother Ealric (Anglo Saxon monk) and King Aelfred (Anglo-Saxon king)
To hold the Vikings at bay, Aelfred needs Ealric's testimony to overcome Aelfred's biggest obstacle: the noble men of Witan, who seek to curb Aelfred's power. After convincing the Winchester bishop to support Aelfred, the Witan agreed to follow King Aelfred's plans. Wessex will build burhs to protect its people. Meanwhile, Brother Ealric rides toward Jorvik, where he can guide more Danes towards the Christian faith.		

Table 21. Session 7. Activity 2.

Activity 3	Time	Interaction
Team and class discussion	17 minutes	Students in groups | T → SS | S → T | S → S
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 6th quest: Aelfred's legacy	The teacher leads firstly a team discussion followed by a classroom discussion about three questions: What goals did King Aelfred have for his kingship? What reforms did he make or plan to make? Whose support did King Aelfred seek when trying to promote his new plans?	
Homework	Portfolio: - Summary of what has been learnt in today's session. – What has been interesting and useful and what has not been.	

Table 22. Session 7. Activity 3.

Session 8:

- Activity 1: Introduction. (5 minutes).

Activity 2	Time	Interaction
Jorvik	33 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 7th quest: New life new lands	Students complete the seventh quest. The focus is on the significance of Jorvik (Viking name of York). By experiencing it through the embodiment of Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda, students observe and understand the trading and economic prowess of the city and the factors that worked in its favour for it to become a centre of trade.	
Quest overview	**Setting:**	885 CE, Jorvik, Anglo-Saxon Britain
	Character:	Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda (Norse merchants)
14 years have passed. Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda have made a name for themselves in the bustling hub of trade between Vikings and Anglo-Saxons known as Jorvik. Trygg, their former slave, is to be wed to an Anglo-Saxon woman, a union that has raised tempers on both sides. Despite this, they are married by Brother Ealric. Returning home, Thorsteinn finds Bjorn who seeks his help and both leave together aiming to solve Bjorn's problem. Thorsteinn disappears and as the days turn to years, Gunnhilda is bereft.		

Table 23. Session 8. Activity 2.

Activity 3	Time	Interaction
Team and class discussion	17 minutes	Students in groups | T → SS | S → T | S → S
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 7th quest: New life new lands	Teams are asked to write down a list of all the trade and economic activities that they have observed while playing the quest. This is followed by a class discussion on what factors favoured Jorvik so that it gained importance in European trade.	
Homework	Portfolio: - Summary of what has been learnt in today's session. – What has been interesting and useful and what has not been.	

Table 24. Session 8. Activity 3.

Session 9:

- Activity 1: Introduction. (5 minutes).

Activity 2	Time	Interaction
Mythology	32 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 8th quest: Where fates align	Students complete the eighth quest. The focus is on helping students understand the basic ideas of Norse mythology. By experiencing it through the embodiment of Thorsteinn, students observe and understand deities such as Thor and Odin and significant concepts like sacrifice to wisdom and unalterable fate.	
Quest overview	Setting:	Unknown Time Period, Jotunheim and Asgard
	Character:	Thorsteinn (Viking merchant)
Thorsteinn awakens in Jotunheim, his memories gone. Thor explains to him that it is Loki's fault and guides him to the well of Mimir, where to remember his past, he will have to sacrifice his future. After meeting Odin and reaching Asgard, Thorsteinn meets Freyja and has to accept that he has forever been bound by fate. At long last, Thorsteinn and Gunnhilda are reunited in the field of Folkvangr. The Viking's journey has come to an end.		

Table 25. Session 9. Activity 2.

Activity 3	Time	Interaction
Team discussion	8 minutes	Students in groups
Materials	**Aim and description**	
D.T.: V.A. – 8th quest: Where fates align	Teams write down the major deities they have found through the quest noting their characteristics, metaphysical meanings, and legendary stories. Feedback will be provided via a learning virtual environment.	

Table 26. Session 9. Activity 3.

Activity 4	Time	Interaction
Class discussion	10 minutes	T → SS | S → T | S → S
Materials	**Aim and description**	
	Students engage in a classroom discussion about the quest story, where Thorsteinn sacrificed his chance to enter Valhalla to know the truth, only to learn of his death. Students then discuss the concept of fate according to Norse mythology.	
Homework	Portfolio: - Summary of what has been learnt in today's session. – What has been interesting and useful and what has not been.	

Table 27. Session 9. Activity 4.

Session 10:

- Activity 1: Introduction. (5 minutes).

- Activity 2: Teamwork (50 minutes). Students can devote the whole class to preparing and working on the essay and the oral presentation that will be used to assess them along with the portfolio. Regarding the essay, each team has to write a 1.500 words essay summarising the information about different fields of Norse and Anglo-Saxon culture they have observed in the video game and to which they can return, selecting the important information and expressing their similarities and differences. Therefore, and following the video game categorisation, a team will write an essay about war and politics, another team will write about daily life, a third team will write an essay on 'religion and magic' and 'law and justice', a fourth team will write about 'myths and legends' and 'art and culture' and the last team will centre their essay on science and 'trade and economy'. Concerning the oral presentation, teams will present a summary of the main information of their essay in a 10 minutes oral presentation in class. About the portfolio, from this session students can already finish it with the last part: they have to assess their knowledge about Viking culture in general and its impact on British culture, whether they found the activity motivating and whether they think they will be more motivated towards the subject for the rest of the course and finally, highlights and areas for improvement of the proposal.

Session 11:

- Activity 1: Introduction. (5 minutes).

- Activity 2: Teamwork (50 minutes).: Students can continue preparing and working on the essay and the oral presentation.

Session 12:

This session is devoted to the oral presentations so there will be 5 oral presentations of 10 minutes each covering the whole class.

4.8 Assessment

The assessment criteria and learning standards used in this proposal has been selected from *Decreto 21/2015, de 26 de junio*:

Block II. Speaking	Block IV. Writing
Assessment criterium: Can produce coherent, well-structured texts on academic subjects, in a formal register, making appropriate use of the most common cohesive devices, and showing reasonable control of expressions, structures and frequently used vocabulary, both of a general and more specific nature.	Assessment criterium: Write clearly structured texts on an academic subject, describing with enough detail; writing in one's own words and organising coherently information and ideas, using elements of cohesion and coherence and a commonly used lexicon, or a more specific one according to the context of communication.
Learning standard: Delivers well-structured presentations of some length on an academic subject with sufficient clarity to be followed without difficulty for most of the time and whose main ideas are explained with reasonable accuracy, and answers supplementary questions from the audience clearly and at normal speed.	Learning standard: Can write short reports giving relevant information on an academic topic, describing in sufficient detail situations, people, objects and places; narrating events in a coherent sequence; explaining the reasons for certain actions, and offering brief, justified opinions and suggestions on the subject.

Table 28. Assessment criteria and learning standards.

Therefore, and regarding the final outcomes already explained, they will be assessed following the rubrics that can be found in Annex 2 and the assessment percentages are distributed in the next form:

Final outcome	Percentage
Essay	40 %
Oral presentation	30%
Reflective portfolio	30 %

Table 29. Assessment percentages.

4.9 Attention to diversity

In terms of possible adaptations to issues of diversity and inclusivity, video games are a medium that provides possible solutions to this. Therefore, Discovery Tour: Viking Age offers possibilities to use it with the least possible discomfort for all kinds of diverse functionalities. If a student is hearing impaired, subtitles are a

very common feature in video games. Furthermore, this game offers the possibility to include closed captions for noises and sounds beyond the dialogue itself. If the problems are sight-related, the game offers the possibility to use text-to-speech functionality in all its menus. Regarding colour-blindness, the game has a colourblind mode with three different versions for different kinds of colour-blindness such as Deuteranopia, Protanopia, and Tritanopia. In addition, Microsoft's video game brand XBOX launched the XBOX adaptive controller that can be used in XBOX consoles as well as in Windows systems. This adaptive controller is "designed primarily to meet the needs of gamers with limited mobility" and works as "a unified hub for devices that helps make gaming more accessible" (XBOX, n.d.). Hence, a wide range of devices can be connected to the controller allowing the player a great amount of customisation to design a controller that is perfectly adapted to its characteristics.

5. DISCUSSION

This proposal aims, in the order that has been argued in the theoretical framework, to achieve the following benefits through the use of an innovative didactic resource such as a video game: teaching the cultural aspect of the English language required by the curriculum and by European bodies in the EFL classroom, an increase in the amount of L2 input received leading to an improvement in receptive skills as well as increased vocabulary acquisition and retention, a boost in students' motivation, and by experiencing it in the game, a deep understanding of Viking and Anglo-Saxon cultures.

An aspect that cannot be ignored when talking about possible disadvantages of using video games as a didactic resource is the suspicion that part of society has historically experienced towards them. Video games have been linked with causing violence in young people, being one of the main negative advertisements that they have received (de Freitas, 2018), despite the fact that research has been unable to demonstrate this attribution consistently (e.g., Elson & Ferguson, 2015, as cited in de Freitas, 2018). Therefore, even though *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* is a non-violent combat-free version (Ubisoft Montréal, 2021), it would not be surprising that there might be misgivings about the appropriateness of using it in an educational setting among students' parents and/or high school directors (Reinders, 2017) given that it is an age group much less used to video games (around 36% of people aged 35 and over play video games in Spain) than students (around 76% of people aged 24 and younger play video games in Spain) according to AEVI's data (2022).

When ICTs are involved, technical problems can never be ruled out. Therefore, the teacher needs to have some knowledge and interest in video games, computers, and ICT in general. As already mentioned in the proposal, the teacher should have played *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* before carrying out the proposal to be able to help students who have doubts and/or problems when using it and to be able to carry out the first session in which he/she should teach the students the different options in terms of game controls and accessibility options.

Another potential disadvantage is the expense involved (Reinders, 2017). In terms of hardware, five computers with high graphics performance are required, which the institute may not have and which would significantly increase the cost.

Headphones may also be required, but this is a much lower-priced item and is an everyday item for adolescents so it is highly likely that they will be able to use their own. Regarding software, games can be expensive. Furthermore, Ubisoft has not yet implemented an option to purchase a global licence for high schools, an addition that would be very useful and would facilitate teams of fewer students or even the option to experience the video game on an individual basis. Therefore, it is necessary to purchase individual licences and create Ubisoft Connect accounts for each computer intended to use simultaneously. Regarding the price, a positive aspect is the possibility to buy the game as a standalone version without the need to buy the original game, which reduces the price considerably. As of June 2022, in the Spanish official online Ubisoft shop, *AC Valhalla's* price is 60€ whereas the price of *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* is 19,99€. Moreover, it is common for online shops to offer discounts so these prices can be much lower depending on this.

To address this, the main advantage of this proposal in terms of feasibility is its adaptability. Of course, the proposal would have to be changed to a greater or lesser extent depending on the needs dictated by the school's equipment or its economic capacity. The number of students per team can be changed adapting to the number of computers or licences available without losing the essence on which the proposal is based. In larger groups, discussion activities could focus on the preparation of a debate as a final outcome. On that note, if teams had fewer students, the time each student would have to participate in team discussions may be increased and the content for the final outcomes can be divided into smaller topics (e.g., the eight topics of the video game codex). In an extreme case, although the aspect of students experiencing the culture would be lost, the teacher could even record his or her own playthrough and use it in class as a film that could also induce discussion but losing the benefit mentioned previously.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Analysing the objectives set out in section 2, the main objective has been achieved. An educational intervention innovative proposal based on *Discovery Tour: Viking Age* has been designed that can provide students a deep understanding of the Viking influence on the British culture through the activities included and the methodological approach implemented according to the different guidelines and information provided in the theoretical framework and the curricular documents. It is thought that the proposal will raise students' motivation and engagement and it is designed so it can be checked since reflection on these elements is part of the portfolio requested as part of the assessment.

In addition, in order to give a theoretical foundation to the proposal, research on the teaching of culture in the EFL classroom as well as its role in the Spanish educational context has been analysed. The use of video games in the EFL classroom has been analysed in terms of both purely linguistic aspects and affective variables has also been analysed as well as the importance of narratives in the use of video games in an EFL classroom. Henceforth, the additional objectives of the dissertation have also been achieved.

Analysing the competences fortified through the elaboration of this dissertation, it can be pointed out that experience in educational intervention planning and design has been gained, the curriculum has been concretised and transformed into a series of activities in which didactic methodologies have been developed and applied, in order to innovate in the teaching and learning processes by using a video game such as Discovery Tour: Viking Age as the central piece around which the proposal revolves.

Therefore, this dissertation has tried to bring innovation to the field of didactics. The use of a video game can cause suspicion, but the choice of a non-violent video game can combat the usual prejudices towards them as well as contribute to the construction of a culture of peace necessary in an educational centre and in society as a whole. Similarly, the fact that students control in the video game a Viking woman such as Gunnhilda who is active and not dependent on her husband (she gathers the crew they need to set sail for Britain in a quest in the game) can help to break down prejudices in the search for gender equality.

7. REFERENCES

AEVI. (2021). *La industria del videojuego en España en 2020: Anuario 2020*. [The video game industry in Spain in 2020: Yearbook 2020]. https://rb.gy/vmv23a

AEVI. (2022). *La industria del videojuego en España en 2021: Anuario 2021*. [The video game industry in Spain in 2021: Yearbook 2021]. https://rb.gy/0xndns

Anderson, T.A.F., Reynolds, B.L., Yeh, X.-P., & Huang, G.-Z. (2008). Video games in the English as a foreign language classroom. In M. Eisenberg, Kinshuk, M. Chang & R. McGreal (Eds.), *2008 Second IEEE international conference on digital game and intelligent toy enhanced learning* (pp. 188-192). IEEE. https://doi.org/10.1109/DIGITEL.2008.39

Ardila-Rey, A. (2008). Language, culture, policy, and standards in teacher preparation: Lessons from research and model practices addressing the needs of CLD children and their teachers. In M.E. Brisk (Ed.), *Language, culture, and community in teacher education* (pp. 331-351). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Boutonnet, V. (2016). Historical agency and videogame play: A case study of Assassin's Creed 3. In J. Wojdon (Ed.), *E-teaching history* (pp. 115-133). Cambridge Scholars Publishing. https://rb.gy/hktdrk

Brown, H.D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Pearson Education.

Byram, M. (1989). *Cultural studies in foreign language education*. Multilingual Matters.

Carlquist, J. (2002). Playing the story: Computer games as a narrative genre. *Human IT, 6*(3), 7-53. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/26339572

Castiñeiras, J. (2021). Game studies. Methodological approaches from the history of medieval art. *Espacio Tiempo y Forma. Serie VII, Historia del Arte*, 9, 419-440. https://doi.org/h428

Champion, E.M. (2011). *Playing with the past*. Springer London. https://doi.org/dgbt97

Champion, E.M. (2015). *Critical gaming: Interactive history and virtual heritage*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315574981

Champion, E.M. (2017). Single white looter: Have whip, will travel. In A.A.A. Mol, C.E. Ariese-Vandemeulebroucke, K.H.J. Boom & A. Politopoulos (Eds.), *The interactive past. Archaeology, heritage & videogames* (pp. 107-122). Sidestone Press. https://rb.gy/ju0miw

Chapman, A. (2016). *Digital games as history: How videogames represent the past and offer access to historical practice.* Routledge. https://doi.org/h47j

Cole, J., & Vanderplank, R. (2016). Comparing autonomous and class-based learners in Brazil: Evidence for the present-day advantages of informal, out-of-class learning. *System, 61*, 31-42. https://doi.org/gqhbhj

Connolly, T.M., Boyle, E.A., MacArthur, E., Hainey, T., & Boyle, J.M. (2012). A systematic literature review of empirical evidence on computer games and serious games. *Computers & Education, 59*(2), 661-686. https://rb.gy/op1mpd

Correia, R., Pellegrini, T., Eskenazi, M., Trancoso, I., Baptista, J., & Mamede, N. (2011). Listening comprehension games for Portuguese: exploring the best features. In *SLaTE 2011* (pp. 5-8). https://rb.gy/wnpbrm

Coste, D., Moore, D., & Zarate, Z. (2009). *Plurilingual and pluricultural competence: Studies toward a common European framework of reference for language learning and teaching.* Council of Europe. https://rb.gy/xsfdef

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1991). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience.* Harper Collins.

Dalton, G., & Devitt, A. (2016). Irish in a 3D world: Engaging primary school children. *Language Learning & Technology, 20*(1), 21–33. https://rb.gy/svbyl8

de Freitas, S. (2014). *Education in computer generated environments.* Routledge. https://doi.org/h4w9

de Freitas, S. (2018). Are games effective learning tools? A review of educational games. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society, 21*(2), 74-84. https://rb.gy/qf9tfo

de Freitas, S. & Neumann, T. (2009). The use of 'exploratory learning' for supporting immersive learning in virtual environments. *Computers & Education, 52*(1), 69-85. https://doi.org/cv3pkk

de Haan, J. (2005) Acquisition of Japanese as a foreign language through a baseball video game. *Foreign Language Annuals, 38*(2), 278–282. https://doi.org/b39srk

Decreto 21/2015, de 26 de junio, por el que se establece el currículo de Bachillerato y se regulan determinados aspectos sobre su organización, evaluación, promoción y titulación del alumnado de la Comunidad Autónoma de La Rioja. (2015). *Boletín Oficial de la Rioja, 85*, 03 de julio de 2015. https://web.larioja.org/normativa?n=2145

Durand, M. (2018, February 13). *Assassin's Creed Origins - Discovery Tour Q&A with historian Maxime Durand* [Interview]. Ubisoft website; Ubisoft. https://rb.gy/gsnbi0

Ebrahimzadeh, M. & Alavi, S. (2017). The effect of digital video games on EFL students' language learning motivation. *Teaching English with Technology, 17*(2), 87-112. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316957816

Esposito, N. (2005, June 16-20). *A short and simple definition of what a videogame is.* Digital Games Research Conference 2005, Changing views: Worlds in play, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. https://rb.gy/mjxbxm

European Observatory for Plurilingualism (2009). *European charter for plurilingualism.* https://rb.gy/fuu139

Filsecker, M. & Bündgens-Kosten, J. (2012). Behaviorism, constructivism, and communities of practice: How pedagogic theories help us understand game-based language learning. In H. Reinders (Ed.), *Digital games in language learning and teaching. New language learning and teaching environments* (pp 50-69). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/h4xb

Frasca, G. (2003). Simulation versus narrative: Introduction to ludology. In M.J.P. Wolf & B. Perron (Eds.), *The video game theory reader* (pp. 221-235). Routledge

Galetcaia, T. (2008). *Through the looking glass of the language ego: The search of the English-speaking self in adult language learners.* [Master's thesis, University of Manitoba]. MSpace. http://hdl.handle.net/1993/3100

García-Carbonell, A., Rising, B., Montero, B. & Watts, F. (2001) Simulation/Gaming and the acquisition of communicative competence in another language. *Simulation & Gaming, 32*(4), 481–491. https://rb.gy/dcxacr

Gee, J.P. (2011). Stories, probes, and games. *Narrative Inquiry, 21*, 353-357. https://rb.gy/iy3t1s

Gee, J.P. (2012). Foreword. In H. Reinders (Ed.), *Digital games in language learning and teaching new language learning and teaching environments.* (pp. xii-xiv). Palgrave Macmillan.

Gilbert, L. (2019): "*Assassin's Creed* reminds us that history is human experience": Students' senses of empathy while playing a narrative video game. *Theory & Research in Social Education, 47*(1)*,* 108-137*.* https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2018.1560713

Higgins, S., Xiao, Z., & Katsipataki, M. (2012). *The impact of digital technology on learning: A summary for the Education Endowment Foundation. Full report*. Education Endowment Foundation. https://rb.gy/bxg84p

Ho, S.T.K. (2009). Addressing culture in EFL classrooms: The challenge of shifting from a traditional to an intercultural stance. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 6(1)*, 63-76.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. (2011). Culture. In *American Heritage® dictionary of the English language, fifth edition*. Retrieved June 25, 2022, from https://rb.gy/ns56ob

Hsu, C.K., Hwang, G.J., & Chang, C.K. (2013). A personalized recommendation-based mobile learning approach to improving the reading performance of EFL students. *Computers & Education, 63*, 327-336. https://doi.org/f4th2n

Kiss, T., & Weninger, C. (2017). Cultural learning in the EFL classroom: the role of visuals. *ELT Journal*, *71*(2), 186–196. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccw072

Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and culture in language teaching*. Oxford University Press.

Krashen, S. (1981) *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Pergamon Press.

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press.

Kuang, J.-F. (2007). Developing students' cultural awareness through foreign language teaching. *Sino-US English Teaching, 4 (12)*, 74-81.

Lee, K.-Y. (2009). Treating culture: What 11 high school EFL conversation textbooks in South Korea Do. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique, 8(1)*, 76-96. https://rb.gy/itle2d

Lee, J.K., & Probert, J. (2010). Civilization III and whole-class play in high school social studies. *The Journal of Social Studies Research, 34*, 1–28. https://www.academia.edu/3013764

Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación. (2006). *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, *106*, 04 de mayo de 2006. https://www.boe.es/eli/es/lo/2006/05/03/2

Ley Orgánica 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación. (2020). *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, *340*, 30 de diciembre de 2006. https://www.boe.es/eli/es/lo/2020/12/29/3

Ley Orgánica 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre, para la mejora de la calidad educativa. (2013). *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, *295*, 10 de diciembre de 2013. https://rb.gy/xbxz9x

Liddicoat, A.J., Papademetre, L., Scarino, A., & Kohler, M. (2003). *Report on intercultural language learning.* Commonwealth of Australia. https://www.academia.edu/26712518

Lucas, P.A. (2015). The video game soap opera: Storytelling and plot development in video games. *The Florida Communication Journal, 43*, 91–102.

Lynch, R., Mallon, B., & Connolly, C. (2015). The pedagogical application of alternate reality games: Using game-based learning to revisit history. *International Journal of Game-Based Learning, 5*, 18–38. https://doi.org/10.4018/ijgbl.2015040102

MacLeod, C.A. (2021). Undergraduate teaching and Assassin's Creed: Discussing archaeology with digital games*. Advances in Archaeological Practice, 9*(2), 101–109. https://doi.org/hxxq

Majewski, J. (2017). The potential for modding communities in cultural heritage. In A.A.A. Mol, C.E. Ariese-Vandemeulebroucke, K.H.J. Boom & A. Politopoulos (Eds.), *The interactive past. Archaeology, heritage & videogames.* (pp. 185-205). Sidestone Press.

Makai, P. (2018). Video games as objects and vehicles of nostalgia. *Humanities, 7*(4), 1-14. https://doi.org/10.3390/h7040123

McCall, J. (2011). *Gaming the past: Using video games to teach secondary history*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203831830

Mercer, S. (2014). The self from a complexity perspective. In S. Mercer, & M. Williams (Eds.), *Multiple perspectives on the self in SLA.* (pp. 160-176). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/h4xc

Metzger, S.A., & Paxton, R.J. (2016) Gaming history: A framework for what video games teach about the past. *Theory & Research in Social Education, 44*(4), 532-564. https://doi.org/gp84dr

Mitchell, R., & Myles, F. (2004). *Second language learning theories* (2nd ed.). Hodder Arnold.

Mochocki, M. (2021). Heritage sites and video games: Questions of authenticity and immersion. *Games and Culture 16*(8), 951–977. https://doi.org/h47n

Muir, P. (2007). Toward culture: Some basic elements of cultural-based instruction in China's high schools. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 4 (4), 38-43. https://www.academia.edu/16443639

Mukherjee, S. (2015). *Video games and storytelling: Reading games and playing books*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137525055

Newton, J., Yates, E., Shearn. S., & Nowitzki, W. (2010). *Intercultural communicative language teaching: Implications for effective teaching and learning.* New Zealand Ministry of Education. https://doi.org/h47p

Orden ECD/65/2015, de 21 de enero, por la que se describen las relaciones entre las competencias, los contenidos y los criterios de evaluación de la educación primaria, la educación secundaria obligatoria y el bachillerato. (2015). *Boletín Oficial del Estado, 25*, 29 de enero de 2015. https://rb.gy/5llhmz

Parsayi, F. (2018). Video games: The interface between language learning and storytelling. *Int. J. of Pedagogies & Learning*, *13*(2), 103-118. https://rb.gy/7njlr0

Peterson, B. (2004). *Cultural intelligence: A guide to working with people from other cultures*. Intercultural Press.

Piaget, J. (1962). The stages of the intellectual development of the child. *Bulletin of the Menninger clinic, 26*(3), 120-128.

Piaget, J. (1951). *Play, dreams and imitation in childhood.* Routledge. https://doi.org/h429

Poiron, P. (2021). Assassin's Creed Origins Discovery Tour. A behind the scenes experience. *Near Eastern Archaeology*, *84*(1), 79-85. https://doi.org/h47r

Politopoulos, A., Mol, A.A.A., Boom, K.H.J., & Ariese, C. E. (2019). "History is our playground": Action and authenticity in *Assassin's Creed: Odyssey. Advances in Archaeological Practice, 7*(03), 317–323. https://doi.org/gf75xr

Purba, H. (2011). The importance of including culture in EFL teaching. *JET (Journal of English Teaching), 1(1)*, 44-56. https://doi.org/10.33541/jet.v1i1.51

Real Decreto 1105/2014, de 26 de diciembre, por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato. (2015). *Boletín Oficial del Estado, 3*, 04 de enero de 2015. https://rb.gy/lxjpbf

Reinders, H. (2017) Digital games and second language learning. In S. Thorne & S. May (Eds.), *Language, education and technology. Encyclopedia of language and education* (pp. 329-343). Springer. https://doi.org/h47s

Reinders, H. & Wattana, S. (2015). Affect and willingness to communicate in digital game-based learning. *ReCALL*, *27*, 38-57. https://doi.org/b2n5

Reinhard, A. (2017). Video games as archaeological sites: Treating digital entertainment as built environments. In A.A.A. Mol, C.E. Ariese-Vandemeulebroucke, K.H.J. Boom & A. Politopoulos (Eds.), *The interactive past. Archaeology, heritage & videogames.* (pp. 99-106). Sidestone Press. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.582927

Reinhardt, J. & Sykes, J.M. (2012). Conceptualizing digital game-mediated L2 learning and pedagogy: Game-enhanced and game-based research and practice. In H. Reinders (Ed.), *Digital games in language learning and teaching. New language learning and teaching environments* (pp. 32-49). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137005267_3

Sampasivam, S., & Clément, R. (2014). The dynamics of second language confidence: Contact and interaction. In S. Mercer, & M. Williams (Eds.), *Multiple perspectives on the self in SLA.* (pp. 23-40). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2016.1274207

Sevin, R., & Decamp, W. (2016). From playing to programming: The effect of video game play on confidence with computers and an interest in computer science. *Sociological Research Online, 21*(3), 1-10. https://doi.org/f9ds9z

Shaffer, D.W., Squire, K.R., Halverson, R. & Gee, J.P. (2005). Video games and the future of learning. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, *87*. 104-111. http://doi.org/10.1177/003172170508700205

Soyoof, A. (2018a). Video game and culture: A case study of EFL student players' views on their acquisition of cultural knowledge and sensitivity. *Int. J. of Pedagogies & Learning*, *13*(2), 93-104. https://rb.gy/6uvvau

Soyoof, A. (2018b). Video games: A springboard for enhancing students' L2C. *Int. J. of Pedagogies & Learning*, *13*(2), 137-151. https://rb.gy/jgubab

Soyoof, A. & Jokar, M. (2014). Video game: A way to reduce inhibition and enhance language achievement. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 98*, 1850-1858. https://doi.org/h4xf

Soyoof, A., & Sedighi, Z. (2013). Video game: A new trend for fostering automaticity. In *Conference Proceedings. ICT for Language Learning.* (120-123). Libreriauniversitaria.it.

Soyoof, A. & Talei, M. (2013). Videogame: A fresh orientation for forging better gamblers. In *Conference Proceedings. ICT for Language Learning.* (116-119). Libreriauniversitaria.it.

Spring, D. (2015). Gaming history: Computer and video games as historical scholarship. *Rethinking History, 19*(2), 207-221. https://doi.org/ghw3j5

Sundqvist, P. (2009). *Extramural English matters: Out-of-school English and its impact on Swedish ninth graders' oral proficiency and vocabulary.* [Dissertation, Karlstad University]. Digitala Vetenskapliga Arkivet. https://rb.gy/c0a2jy

Sundqvist, P. (2011). A possible path to progress: Out-of-school English language learners in Sweden. In P. Benson & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Beyond the language classroom* (pp. 106–118). Palgrave MacMillan. https://doi.org/h47z

Tang, R. (1999). The place of "culture" in the foreign language classroom: A reflection. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 5 (8). https://rb.gy/ipt4mc

The Artifice (2017, February 26). *Story telling and interactivity in video gaming.* https://rb.gy/quuqn8

The Good Gamer. (2021, November 04). *Vídeo Podcast 09: Videojuegos en la educación* [Video Podcast 09: Video games in education] [Video]. YouTube. https://rb.gy/j6fnh9

Tsai, C.W., & Fan, Y.T. (2013). Research trends in game-based learning research in online learning environments: A review of studies published in SSCI-indexed journals from 2003 to 2012. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 44*(5), 115-119. https://doi.org/gd53bf

Tschirner, E. (2001). Language acquisition in the classroom: The role of digital video. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 14*(3-4). 305-319. https://doi.org/10.1076/call.14.3.305.5796

Ubisoft. (2013) *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag.* [Video game]. Ubisoft Montréal.

Ubisoft. (2014) *Assassin's Creed Unity.* [Video game]. Ubisoft Montréal.

Ubisoft. (2017) *Assassin's Creed Origins.* [Video game]. Ubisoft Montréal.

Ubisoft. (2018) *Assassin's Creed Odyssey.* [Video game]. Ubisoft Quebec.

Ubisoft. (2020) *Assassin's Creed Valhalla.* [Video game]. Ubisoft Montréal.

Ubisoft. (2021) *Discovery Tour: Viking Age.* [Video game]. Ubisoft Montréal.

Ubisoft Montréal (2021, September 14). *Deep dive into the history of Vikings and Anglo-Saxons with Discovery Tour: Viking Age.* https://rb.gy/lbqpct

Université de Montréal Nouvelles. (2018, February 16). *En plein dans le mille: utiliser les jeux vidéos pour améliorer l'apprentissage.* [Right on target: using video games to improve learning] Udemnouvelles. https://rb.gy/lo3rbc

Väisänen, A.P. (2018). *Learning English through video games: Finnish learners' experiences.* [Master's Thesis, University of Jyväskylä]. JYX Digital Repository. https://rb.gy/ut9o9j

Vandewalle, A. (2020). Ludendo Discimus: The learning possibilities of video games set in antiquity. *Frons, 40*(3), 40–46. https://rb.gy/kcb9ct

Vogel, J.J., Vogel, D.S., Cannon-Bowers, J., Bowers, C.A., Muse, K., & Wright, M. (2006). Computer gaming and interactive simulations for learning: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Educational Computing Research, 34*(3), 229-243. https://doi.org/cvdbsp

Whitaker, B. & Andress, D. [History Respawned] (2015, January 19). *History Respawned: Assassin's Creed Unity* [Video]. YouTube. https://rb.gy/j6fnh9

Whitaker, B. & Glass, B. [History Respawned] (2013, November 20). *History Respawned: Assassin's Creed IV* [Video]. YouTube. https://rb.gy/b0bvqo

Whitton, N. (2011) Theories of motivation for adults learning with games. In P. Felicia (Ed.), *Handbook of research on improving learning and motivation through educational games: Multi-disciplinary approaches* (Vol. 1, pp. 352–369). IGI Global. https://doi.org/ft4f3z

Whitton, N. (2007). Motivation and computer game based learning. In R.J. Atkinson, C. McBeath, S.K.A. Soong & C. Cheers (Eds.), *ICT: Providing choices for learners and learning. Proceedings ascilite Singapore 2007*. https://rb.gy/myl7b8

Wouters, P., & Van Oostendorp, H. (2013). A meta-analytic review of the role of instructional support in game-based learning. *Computers & Education, 60*(1), 412-425. https://doi.org/ggcw74

XBOX. (n.d.). *Xbox Adaptive Controller.* https://rb.gy/xvpxlr

Yudintseva, A. (2015). Game-enhanced second language vocabulary acquisition strategies: A systematic review. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, *3*(10), 101. https://doi.org/ghhw3d