

Micro-Paper 52: *Isotypes*



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Defining the Term

ISOTYPES (International System of Typographic Picture Education), created by Otto Neurath, Marie Neurath and Gerd Arntz, was first a method to express statistics, politics and economy concepts in a pictorial way. Since ISOTYPES are images designed based on direct [visual](#) experience, the goal is to convey concepts that viewers can easily grasp. In this sense, ISOTYPES refer to the most representative characteristics of an object (shape and orientation), action or concept (objects directly related to them).

For example, if one were to represent the action “To cut” through an ISOTYPE, one would seek the mostly likely icon that people relate the most to this action, in this case, a pair of scissors. Conversely, if one wished to relate the action “To cut wood” is to be related, an axe would be a likely choice. ISOTYPES are used to express an idea regardless of the language and academic or social background.

In the context of [videogames](#) and virtual spaces, where a wide range of cultures, languages and background are constantly interacting, ISOTYPES are used to replace or complement the written or spoken word.

Connecting it to LSLP

In line with our understanding of Language-as-Victory ([LaV](#)), ISOTYPES will let #TeamLaV understand how semiotic and [aesthetic](#) elements of the communication complement and encourage the different interactions in a game. Additionally, ISOTYPES will help us to recognize how these elements build [gamer identity](#) and its further preferences while shaping its interactions within virtual environments.

For the purpose of our current research, we have realized that elements such as characters, playability, graphics and design become representative elements of a specific game or genre. Therefore, ISOTYPES will not only be images that represent an idea or action, but also any elements that directly relate players to a specific game or genre and let them feel identified with it.

Expanding Second Language Research

Understanding how gamers-as-second-language-users interact inside virtual environments can help language teachers to properly [apply games](#) inside the classroom. Even more, it provides information on how gamers constitute their identity and what semiotic and aesthetic aspects encourage them to learn a second language within virtual environment.

References

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