

## Micro-Paper 65: Lore



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### Defining the Term

Videogames depict an imaginary world in which players interact with other players and elements of the game's environment. To do so, designers create a set of [intertextual](#) references that players acquire and master throughout their gaming experience. Game designers define these references as Lore. The gaming community has adopted the idea of Lore to name the narrative elements that come along the game's purpose.

Lore can appear by default, when game creators establish it for players to discover, or by [design](#), when gamers themselves create it during play by reinventing an existing element of the game. Lore, therefore, enables players to participate and build the game's narrative, as well as placing themselves meaningfully in the game.

It is important to distinguish Lore from story (i.e. the succession of current events in the game) since Lore refers, primarily, to the previous events and features that justify and explain the story itself. Lore provides background and understanding of the game logic. In that sense, Lore also refers to the history of the characters, locations, weapons, environment and other elements in the game. Although Lore is not necessary to win the game, it does provide a richer and more complete experience once it is understood.

### Connecting it to LSLP

Since the incorporation of Lore integrates a deeper layer into the [gaming](#) experience, it encourages stronger commitment with the game for players must not only play the game, but also know the game. Furthermore, acknowledging Lore could influence role and character selection of a game, hence, transforming the gamer's [identity](#).

Our gaming literacies research has included the analysis of how Lore influences the gaming experience as part of our [Language-as-Victory](#) (LaV) framework. We find that Lore gives us the possibility

of grasping the nuances that involve [identity](#) and meaning-making within the gaming experience. Therefore, Lore becomes another layer to analyze phenomena such as [fan fiction](#), commitment and [connoisseurship](#). Although these phenomena appear in to spaces outside the videogame itself, they are still part of the videogame environment and Lore.

### Expanding Second Language Research

Commitment is a factor that strongly mobilizes learning through videogames. However, commitment does not specifically relate to the resolution of learning a language. Commitment is also oriented to knowing a game's lore. In this sense, gamers are more likely to research, watch videos and participate in forums, even if they are in a [language](#) different to the [gamer's language](#). This disposition integrates both the desire for victory and the strategies mentioned in LaV and language learning. In other words, Lore is a motive to engage in interactions that generate learning.

Finally, because Lore is both known and built, it is a proper element to explore and develop [communicative competence](#) in students. In fact, studies on Lore in MMORPG have shown that lore does not only develop linguistic skills, but [aesthetic](#) and cultural aspects of the gamers.

### References

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