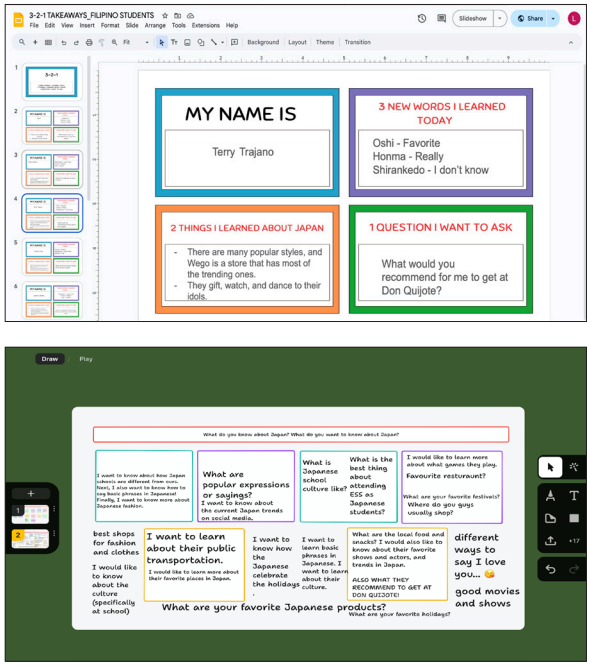
Figure 3

Students' Outputs Using Google Slides (Top) and Padlet Sandbox (Bottom)



In writing the students' key takeaways, both Google Slides and Padlet Sandbox offer an effective, collaborative virtual space for immediate data collection and visible shared insights. For example, during the forum part of the session, the students shared what they knew and what they wanted to know more about their partner school's culture or country using the interactive whiteboard of Padlet Sandbox. Here, the students posted their ideas, which later became the springboard for the topics they presented at the second meeting. Of interest is the fact that the slides within the application are fully customizable, so students got to use digital sticky notes or graphic organizers to share their contents or ideas.

On the other hand, the Google Slides used during the reflection phase were pre-formatted with sections where the students can type in the new terminologies they have learned, some significant learning points from the presentations, and any remaining questions. We called this the "3-2-1 Exit Cards", which can be used to gauge students' level of understanding and provide the presenters with immediate feedback.

Conclusion

In essence, it is important to note that the success of COIL projects does not only rely on the number of web tools used, but on the strategic selection and implementation of the ones that best support the goals of cross-cultural activity; in a highly interconnected world, the deliberate use of technologies can transform the learning process and offer invaluable experiences to the students when used effectively.

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Improving Vocabulary Acquisition Through a Video Game Inspired Mechanic: Guided Inductive Reasoning

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Although gaming may be considered a universally passive activity, there are inherent game mechanics employed within *Chants of Sennaar* (Rundisk, 2023), *Tunic* (Tunic Team, 2022), and *Heaven's Vault* (Inkle, 2019) that, in the correct contextually constructed system, possess the ability to rapidly heighten language acquisition. These games utilize a fictitious language created by the developers as the centerpiece of their puzzle worlds. The task of these games is to uncover the meaning of these languages through pragmatically crafted situations that provide the player with an investigative and curiosity-inspiring experience. This is similar to the experience of a foreigner visiting a country that does not speak their language or a child learning their first language. These games pose a clever and effective teaching method

(i.e., guided inductive reasoning) that could be applied to the classroom.

Even though the ideal situation would be to simply utilize this mechanic in a video game uniquely created for a learner's target language, crafting a game is a tall ask for any language teacher. Therefore, Language Reactor (n.d.), a web browser plug-in software for language learning, stands in as a substitute which allows students to employ guided inductive reasoning practices in these games. In this article, I will be discussing where the guided inductive reasoning game mechanic can be seen in *Heaven's Vault* (Inkle, 2019), the application of the guided inductive reasoning game mechanic in my English courses.

Inspiration for Use in the Classroom

Heaven's Vault has players become an archeologist that uncovers the meaning of a fictitious hieroglyphic-based language through the use of contextual clues. For example, in Figure 1 the player has stumbled upon a hieroglyph and by examining the small clay figure and past clues found, the player can begin to make guesses about the meaning of this hieroglyph. After learning the information, the player can then add this information to a journal to help understand future words. In Figure 2 at the end of the illuminated hieroglyphic string, the "goddess" suffix or radical can be seen. In this moment, the player takes a symbol and traces it through a character representation and compounding understanding that the hieroglyph root for goddess and pilgrim is the same. I was then inspired to expand on this concept and utilize the game's mechanic as an excellent tool for my students' language learning journeys. However, I quickly realized that there would not be an easily playable game that combines the goals of my class with the accessibility of video games.

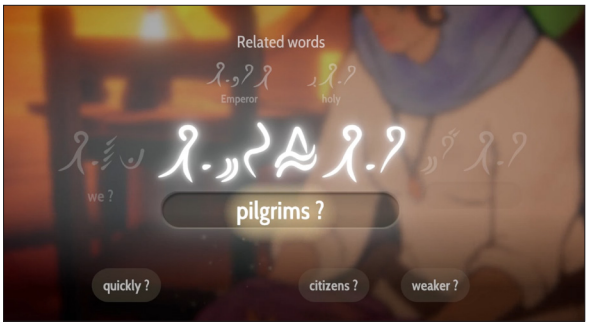
Figure 1

Discovery of The Word "Goddess"



Figure 2

Discovery of The Word "Pilgrim"



Application of Guided Inductive Learning in The Classroom

Student Background

In the period from April 2025 to December 2025, I taught three English courses for native Japanese-speaking students. The first class was an elective English course for non-English focused majors with 26 students aged between 18 and 19. Their skills ranged from CEFR level A1 to B1. The remaining two were identical courses required for the students' majoring in English communication. The 20 students were sophomores aged 19 to 20 with CEFR level skills ranging from A2 to B2. After seeing how *Heaven's Vault* employs an investigative word construction game mechanic, I began to utilize this in assignments. I taught new words and techniques to understand them in a similar manner to how players figure out the hieroglyphics in *Heaven's Vault*. I constructed the lessons around the connection between English prefixes and suffixes to Japanese radicals. This aided my Japanese students in acquiring the English vocabulary, as having this analogy bridged the gap of an unfamiliar linguistic concept (e.g., English prefixes and suffixes) to something students were familiar with (e.g., radicals). This allowed learners to then infer the meaning of new words from previously seen ones. For example, in the Japanese word for goddess (女神), the second kanji in the word (神) uses a radical, or the root of the meaning for god/goddess (礻; see Figure 3). In the Japanese word for pilgrim (巡礼), in the second kanji (礼), the radical for god/goddess is used once more (礻; see Figure 4). I used this idea of exploring and figuring out meanings and started having students do in-class work and weekly vocabulary acquisition assignments with this mentality and practice in mind.

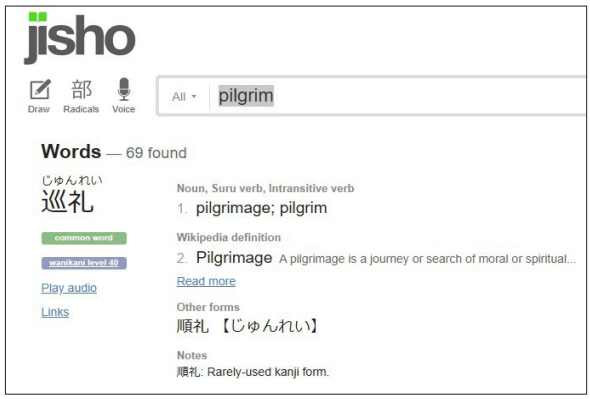
Figure 3

Kanji for "Goddess"



Figure 4

Kanji for"Pilgrim"



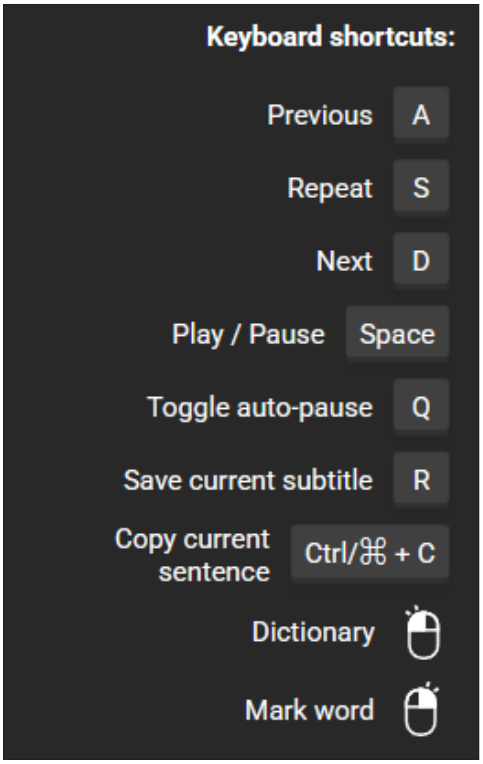
Language Reactor

Currently, there may not be any narratively driven video games that employ the idea of guided inductive reasoning with a real-world language focus. However, Language Reactor does use a similar idea to that of pattern recognition, an element of guided inductive reasoning. Formerly known as *Language Learning with Netflix*, it is a free Google Chrome internet browser extension with an optional subscription pro plan that allows the learner to transform their YouTube videos, Netflix shows, books, and websites into an opportunity to develop real-world comprehension with authentic contextual language use.

The highlight of this internet browser extension is that the subtitles and playback controls (see Figure 5) are a treasure trove of opportunities to learn natural speech patterns, vocabulary, and grammar. These playback controls allow learners to effortlessly scrub through videos to collect vocabulary through immersion in genuine content that a native speaker consumes, providing a situation wherein the learner does not feel frustrated or embarrassed to repeat unprocessed sentences. This allows learners to gain more confidence in their acquired knowledge, which can be used in spontaneous real-life conversations or in the classroom. To increase student success in utilization of Language Reactor, it was used as a warm-up activity in the class. This helped students tremendously in familiarizing them with the playback system, account creation, and helping other issues that happened outside of class.

Figure 5

Language Reactor Playback Controls



Note. The keyboard shortcuts are seen in the options when enabling your Language Reactor settings.

In-Class Assignment and Homework Application of Game Mechanics

Warm-Up in Class

During lectures, we would often start with a 10-to-15-minute warm-up video that I selected from a YouTube channel called Learn English with Bob the Canadian (2025) that is focused on teaching students practical English words, phrases, and idioms (see

Figure 6). Students would get into groups of two-to-four with pencils and notebooks ready. We would then watch the video by Learn English with Bob the Canadian video with Language Reactor's subtitles enabled. While watching this video, students would then write down 10 words that they heard in the video and/or read from the captions that they did not understand or know previously. After finishing the video, students in their groups would discuss the vocabulary amongst themselves to discern their meanings. Students were then encouraged to utilize their previously written notes and their intuition to infer the meaning of the new words from past experiences with familiar prefixes and/or suffixes. Each group of students would then select five words from their group members' lists to write on the board for the class to review again. After reviewing all of the new vocabulary from the board, students were tasked with writing the new vocabulary word list into their class journals to be used for in-class games.

Figure 6

Language Reactor Example of English Subtitles for English Learners



Note. This is a screen capture from Learn from Bob the Canadian with Language Reactor enabled.

Application of a New Vocabulary Game

In class, a game that was colloquially called "Guess What" was played frequently. To begin this game, students were given four small slips of blank paper and were then asked to write one vocabulary word from the warm-up activity that they had learned on each of the blank slips of paper. Afterwards, all students were split into two large teams. After collecting all of the slips of paper, I would then shuffle them together into a deck and draw one slip. With this slip, I would create hints or clues that refer to the word itself. For example, "funny" on the card could end up having a clue of "when I laugh, I thought something was…". Students then yell out their guesses to what is on the card, and the first person saying the correct answer is awarded the point for their team.

This game has a few practical benefits for students. The main concept is having students be on the receiving end of linguistic circumlocution or understanding how to implement different kinds of strategies with the purpose of defining an idea or concept when pressed for language abilities (Hedge, 2000). As circumlocution allows language learners to communicate semantic content that is beyond their current linguistic knowledge, its value as a tool for functional communication is undeniable. Furthermore, it helps to strengthen the memory of the new vocabulary and creates opportunities for students to recognize that the words used in the game are synonyms for familiar words that they already know. Students have self-reported that they quite enjoyed the game because it prompted the use of their already established knowledge and reminded them of their progress with English acquisition. Another level of enjoyment was created through student participation as students themselves created the game and I was actively participating with them as well.

Weekly Homework

Students were tasked with a weekly language journal with the goal of having at least five new phrases or words that they discovered while watching content in English. Using Language Reactor, students alternated weekly with choosing a show that they are interested in (e.g., an American cartoon) or something that they have seen before in Japanese but now dubbed in English. By having students rewatch something that they have previously enjoyed and fully understood, they will be less focused on comprehending story beats, and more focused on the new vocabulary or grammar.

An element of these assignments was having students search for key prefixes and suffixes. Like *Heaven's Vault*, students began to recognize the words that they were initially unfamiliar with were becoming increasingly less obtuse to grasp. For instance, (see Figure 7) a student found multiple new words with the prefix *in-* and then gave the context for the new words in their vocabulary journal. The student then created example sentences to practice the newly learned words. Although the grammar was not correct, the inherent meaning of the sentence was largely understood. In the courses, I try to emphasize functional language over formatting of the sentences.

Figure 7

Student Vocab Log Example

	A	B	C
	Word:	Where did it come from?	What is the definition?
	incorporate	long business English conversation(0:44)	to include
	integrate	long business English conversation(0:45)	toghether
	contingency	long business English conversastion(1:05)	chance
	indicator	lomg business English conversastion (6:57)	index
	estimate	lomg business English conversastion(9:52)	valuation

	D	E	F
	Japanese translation	What is the context?	-Your own Sentence-
	盛り込む	Have the report from finance been incorporated into the presentation?	My story incorporate by her.
	構める	I'll have them integrated by the end of today.	I integrated them one of the team.
	偶然	Is there a contingency plan in case we run over time?	I acrossed this town contigency.
	指標	How are we tracking against our key perfomance indicator?	This indicator is his life point.
	見積もり	we use more conservative estimates for each-related expenditures.	I was calculate my house estimate.

Note. The tags are comments that I made while correcting the sentences.

Conclusion

Gaming as a medium for learning is seemingly in its infancy. Although the idea of using guided inductive reasoning in the classroom was initially inspired by a video game, more applications and developed tools could be specifically applied for classroom use. I see no difference to their inclusion compared to other computer assisted language learning (CALL) methods. Emphasizing that learning can be a fulfilling experience while also being enjoyable is how a classroom environment flourishes. In class, my lessons, and research, I like to keep the idea in mind and remind myself that "[i]t is in playing and only in playing that the individual child or adult is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self" (Winnicott, 2005, pp. 72–73).

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