

# **ELF vs. LaRa in the Communication of Dutch and German League of Legends Players**



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## Abstract

This thesis investigates and compares the effectiveness of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and receptive multilingualism (“lingua receptive”/ “LaRa”) in online spoken conversations developed between Dutch and German players of the game “League of Legends”. As similar studies conducted in the past used quite artificial tasks, a need for a research project that uses an authentic, but cognitively demanding, task for assessing the effectiveness of these modes in the communication of speakers with different native tongues occurred. Consequently, authentic data from interactions of Dutch and German players who interacted using the two aforementioned modes while playing were qualitatively analyzed and compared. Expectations towards, and feedback about the L2, the task, the feelings experienced during L2 interactions, as well as the result and duration of each game were used as the main effectiveness indicators. Nationality of players was also taken into account for the analysis. It was found that L1-L2 interactions were more effective than ELF dialogues in this context, surpassing the expectations of players, who were disappointed by their limited ELF communication. Even though both national groups opted for LaRa, the Dutch seemed to be more positive about their communicative experience compared to German participants, who were mostly negative about communicating in English. As opposed to the excitement with which players embraced the LaRa mode, the ELF mode was treated with indifference. Foreign-accented speech was one of the main factors impeding comprehension in English, whereas code-switching difficulties associated with the use of LaRa were easily overcome by participants, indicating that the degree to which they hinder the success of an L1-L2 interaction is overestimated. Young gamers seemed to be willing, excited, and ready to try different communicative modes, a finding that invites us to reevaluate the omnipresence of English as a Lingua Franca in intercultural communication.

## 1. Introduction

This thesis investigates the use of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and receptive multilingualism (“lingua receptiva” or “LaRa”) in spoken interactions between Dutch and German League of Legends players, and seeks to answer whether the one is more effective than the other in this communicative context. This is a topic relevant to the ongoing debate among researchers of Communication Science about the potential superiority of LaRa over ELF, and the feasibility of replacing ELF interactions with the L1-L2 (native language-second language) communication mode under certain circumstances.

A need for an investigation of this type was observed after considering the increasing communication opportunities between Dutch and Germans nowadays (trade, education, etc.), but also after looking at previous studies which compared the effectiveness of ELF and LaRa in their communication. Two notable studies are those of van Mulken and Hendriks (2015) and Blee et al. (2014), with implications for tertiary education and multinational corporations respectively. Their opposing findings, however, render LaRa and ELF effectiveness in interactions of Dutch and German speakers an open question. One of the main arguments of this thesis is that these studies made use of quite artificial communicative tasks (map drawings, maze quizzes, pictures for “spot-the-differences” tasks) and attempted to generalize to fields that cannot be directly linked to the tasks completed by participants, while showing a preference for a quantitative approach when it came to views of subjects about their communication (see more in 2.2). It is thus expected that an original communicative task such as gaming will result in more reliable findings.

At this point, it is considered necessary to clarify the meaning of the basic terms involved in the study. Starting from ELF, this is undoubtedly a central topic in, among other fields, linguistics, and communication science nowadays. English as a Lingua Franca is regarded by many researchers as a phenomenon with no historical equivalent, despite the use of Latin as a lingua franca in the past, as it is the global default lingua franca today. A lingua franca is characterized as a contact language, which means that it is a “vehicular language between speakers who do not share a first language” (Mauranen, 2018: 7-8). According to Seidlhofer’s definition (2011: 7), ELF refers to every interaction where speakers with different native language backgrounds

communicate using the English language, not only as a matter of choice, but often as their only available option.

However, another option could be receptive multilingualism, which is a different communicative mode for intercultural interactions, “in which interactants employ a language and/or a language variety different from their partner’s and still understand each other without the help of any additional lingua franca” (Rehbein et al., 2011b: 248-249). The latter characteristic of LaRa is why Braunmüller calls it a form of “unmediated” communication (2013: 215). Receptive multilingualism can occur in a number of cases, varying from communication developed in institutional environments (educational, professional, etc.) to interactions that take place in border regions (e.g. Dutch-German border) or between different generations (Rehbein et al., 2011a).

Except for the terms defined above, in order to better comprehend how these types of communication can be applied in the communication of gamers, it is essential to explain some basic aspects of the specific game used in this study. According to its website,

League of Legends is a fast-paced, competitive online game that blends the speed and intensity of an RTS [real-time strategy] with RPG [role-playing game] elements. Two teams of powerful champions, each with a unique design and playstyle, battle head-to-head across multiple battlefields and game modes. (“What is League of Legends?”, 2016)

To make this clearer, in a League of Legends (LoL) game, there are two opposing teams, most usually consisting of five players, and other times of two, three, or even an unequal number of players (e.g. three vs. two). Depending on the map (“battlefield”), players are normally distributed in three or (rarely) two different lanes, or even only one lane (“ARAM” game, which is also quite frequent). The primary goal of each team is to reach the other side of the map, which is the base of the opposing team, and destroy it. The team that manages to destroy the enemy base first wins the game. To achieve this, teammates have to cooperate, develop, and follow strategies, or exchange ideas, tips, and knowledge about what would be most effective towards victory. Subsequently, communication is a central aspect of the game, and can be crucial to its outcome.

After explaining all relevant terms, it might be useful to outline the way in which the main question about the effectiveness of ELF and LaRa in the communication of

Dutch and German LoL gamers was answered. To begin with, Dutch and German university students or recent graduates who play LoL were recruited as participants. Based on their language skills, as well as their gaming skills, they were divided into teams of two. Each team consisted of one Dutch and one German gamer, playing against another team of a Dutch and a German. In each game, the first team (ELF team) had to communicate in English, whereas in the second one (LaRa team) both players were communicating using their native languages (Dutch and German). Their conversations were oral, and the software product of every couple's preference was used for their calls. Before and after the game, a semi-prepared interview took place, where players were asked questions about their comprehension expectations, attitude towards their L2 and the assigned task on the one hand, and their communicative experience (comprehension, feelings, views on task) on the other. Data were derived from the answers and remarks of the players, that were qualitatively analyzed, and, secondarily, the outcome of the game.

The way in which the effectiveness of the two communicative modes was examined is indicative of how effectiveness was perceived and defined in this study. More specifically, this concept was connected to the three factors examined in the questions after the game: views on comprehension, feelings during interaction, opinion about the task. In cases where there was positive feedback concerning these three factors, communication was thought to be effective. All of the above were combined with the outcome and the duration of the game, assuming that an effective interaction would most likely lead the two interactants to victory, in a short period of time. The fact that claims about effectiveness were not restricted to the result of the game (victory for effective, and defeat for ineffective communication) aimed at accounting for extraneous to communication factors which could affect the result (e.g. differences in gaming skills, occurrence of technical problems). It was furthermore expected that this definition of effective communication would provide the detailed image of effectiveness in gaming communication that this study intended to investigate. Thus, an ideally effective interaction in the context of this study is one that results in a favorable, and preferably quickly obtained, outcome (i.e. victory) for the two interactants, who understand each other without problems, feel comfortable, and are positive towards the completed task.

The objective of this thesis is to investigate and compare the effectiveness of ELF and LaRa in the communication of Dutch and German speakers while using gaming as an authentic communicative task. It also intends to provide a more detailed understanding of the communicative experience from the viewpoint of the subjects, by adopting a qualitative approach. On a more general note, this proposal aims to highlight the significance of using real-life communicative tasks for evaluating the effectiveness of communicative modes, and wishes to encourage the conduct of larger-scale research projects that will adopt a similar view.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1 ELF vs. LaRa: Advantages and disadvantages

Over a decade ago, the High Level Group on Multilingualism (Commission of the European Communities, 2007) encouraged research on receptive multilingualism, in an attempt of investigating more possibilities of communication in Europe. In spite of this, which of the two modes should be preferred in intercultural interactions remains unanswered, due to the fact that they appear to have certain advantages and weaknesses.

Starting from ELF communication, it is evident from its wide use that it displays certain advantages. This communicative mode can be used in many international domains. In fact, Graddol (1997: 8) lists eleven such domains: international organizations and conferences, scientific publications, economics and trade, advertising, audiovisual cultural products, tourism, academic education, safety, law, interpretation and translation, technology, and, last but not least, internet communication. In addition, it has been claimed that, unlike non-native speakers who interact with native speakers in the L1 of the latter, ELF speakers are no longer trapped in a state of linguistic imbalance, since both are not fluent at a native language level. As will be demonstrated below, this claim has been questioned, due to the fact that ELF interactants usually have different levels of English proficiency, which can be associated with linguistic power (van Mulken & Hendriks, 2015).

Turning to receptive multilingualism, it is equally necessary to present its strong points. Productive skills are in a more advantageous position in LaRa communication, as L1 production requires less effort (Blees et al., 2014). According to Rehbein et al.

(2011a: 258-259), a notable benefit of its use is the fact that it encourages inference-making, does not deprive speakers of plurilingual repertoires, and promotes the use of idiomatic speech. In this sense, as interactions take place in the native language of both sides, communication becomes “deeper”. Furthermore, it promotes cultural and linguistic diversity, preventing speakers of certain linguistic backgrounds from being in a disadvantageous position, and offering them more opportunities (e.g. integration).

Despite its advantages, ELF is often characterized as a double-edged sword. That being said, ELF communication undoubtedly requires more effort compared to communication in one’s L1, and lowers the quality of what is being conveyed, as interactants lose the native language proficiency advantage. Speakers need to use more explicit strategies for meaning negotiation, depending on discourse expectations (roles, turns) and proficiency level. Comprehension might also be impeded due to differences of expectations on the pragmatic level (Blees et al., 2014: 174-175). Decreased refinement might damage the effectiveness of interactions, and it has been proven that communicating a message in ELF requires additional time (Hincks, 2010). Furthermore, proficiency level might sometimes determine the dominant speakers of ELF interactions, placing them in an advantageous position over their less proficient interlocutors (Baker, 2017).

Receptive multilingualism also comes with some disadvantages, as the complex cognitive processes that its use is connected to, such as code-switching, can result in slower processing. These processes are not required in ELF interactions, something that benefits comprehension. It should be noted at this point that, for the case of LaRa interactions, the term “change of language” has been defended over the term “code-switching”, with the justification that interactants do not radically change codes, but switch between two languages that are simultaneously in use (Beerkens, 2010: 34). Apart from these weaknesses, there are practical limitations associated with the use of LaRa, namely ideological and political prejudices that affect the attitude of speakers towards a certain L2, as well as the dominance of ELF, and the convenience this possibility offers (Braunmüller, 2013). This brings us back to our original question: Which of the two communicative modes is more effective?

## 2.2 ELF and Lara in the communication of Dutch and Germans

The Dutch and the German languages are two closely typologically related languages, and, since the Netherlands and Germany are neighboring countries, the occurrence of the border region type of LaRa mentioned in 1. seems plausible. Nevertheless, Ribbert and ten Thije (2007) observe that LaRa communication is rarely used between Dutch and Germans. Consequently, they stress that a situation similar to the one at the Goethe-Institute in Amsterdam, where a number of communicative modes are used, including LaRa in Dutch and German, but excluding ELF, is an exceptional case. As opposed to the situation in the Scandinavian countries (Zeevaert 2007), where mutual intelligibility brings different countries closer, and provides a fertile ground for the use of LaRa, the relationship between the Netherlands and Germany has not always been amicable, taking into consideration recent historical events, notably World Wars I and II. Studies like the one of Jansen (1993), also known as the “Clingendael studie”, postulated that the Dutch had a very negative attitude towards Germans a few decades ago. When it came to language “prestige”, however, they believed that German was one of the most important foreign languages, whereas the German side did not show similar appreciation for the Dutch language (Nelde, 1998). Nowadays, this relationship has significantly improved, resulting in a large number of border-crossing activities, such as trade, that bring citizens of the two countries in constant contact (Beerkens, 2010: 38-39).

After the improvement and stabilization of the relationship between the Netherlands and Germany, this area seems ideal for applying and examining the possibilities of LaRa. It is now not only the Dutch that speak German, but also more and more Germans who learn the Dutch language. This has resulted in a shift in the language constellation between the two countries (Ribbert & Thije, 2007: 76), which renders the option of receptive multilingualism more plausible.

Two previous studies that attempted to answer the question about the effectiveness of ELF and LaRa using Dutch and German participants were those of van Mulken and Hendriks (2015) and Blee et al. (2014). The first study attempted to find differences between ELF and L1-L2 interactions with regards to their effectiveness, and communication strategies used. Effectiveness was defined as a) “the number of communicative goals achieved within a delimited time span” and b) “the number of

words required to achieve communicative goals” (van Mulken & Hendriks, 2015: 407-408). The interactions analyzed were the result of the communication of 30 Dutch and 30 German participants trying to detect 10 differences between two pictures in both ELF and L1-L2 (within-subject design) via online chat. The findings of this first study suggested that conversations in Dutch and German were significantly more effective than ELF interactions.

On the contrary, the results of the second one indicated that ELF interactions were significantly more successful. First of all, Bles et al. (2014) criticized the aforementioned study, as they were skeptical about whether computer-mediated interactions would yield similar results to the ones coming from spoken dialogues. In addition, they supported that it did not report on three factors that are crucial when dealing with effectiveness: proficiency, attitude, and experience. Thus, they recruited 16 Dutch and German bachelor students as participants and provided them with map drawings, asking them to guide their interlocutor to an imaginary meeting point, or find it based on their interlocutor’s instructions, depending on the role they were assigned. The tasks also included maze solving in ELF and LaRa. This time, participant feedback on proficiency, attitude, and experience in the three languages used was provided, and taken into account. The differences in results in relation to those of van Mulken and Hendriks (2015) described above were attributed to low(er) L2 proficiency of speakers involved in LaRa conversations.

Nevertheless, it was observed that, in both studies, communication of participants was developed around artificial problem-solving tasks based on maze quizzes, imaginary maps, and finding differences between pictures showing objects. An interaction shaped on the basis of these tasks and under overtly experimental conditions is considered to be quite artificial and “forced”. This could have had an impact on the motivation of participants as well, as the tasks were not challenges they would have to face in real life. Moreover, findings were generalized to domains that were not directly relevant to the tasks; van Mulken and Hendriks (2015) used “spot-the-differences” tasks and argued that their results could have implications for language policies in multinational corporations, whereas Bles et al. (2014) used map drawings and maze quizzes for drawing indications about which mode would be more effective for the communication of students in an international university classroom. Finally, there was a strong focus on a quantitative approach of analyzing participants’ opinions, that could

have led to a number of valuable views of the subjects about their communicative experience being neglected.

### 2.3 ELF and LaRa in gaming communication

It should be noted that this is not the first time that ELF in the communication of online game players is investigated. Iaiá (2016) studied ELF variations in the communication developed between gamers with different native languages, using data from their written chats. In spite of examining in-game chats, the author used Conversation Analysis, which is usually preferred for the study of face-to-face, oral communication, but justified his choice with the claim that these chats display similarities with spoken conversations. The findings of this study indicated that the characteristics of ELF interactions in gaming do not differ significantly from the general features that have already been observed in (spoken) ELF conversations. Similar to real-life intercultural conversations, strategies of cooperation, politeness, and meaning negotiation were followed. In addition, several specific characteristics were identified (e.g. omission/decrease of punctuation marks). English as a Lingua Franca was actively selected by gamers at an early stage of the game, and standard English structure was often influenced by the native languages of the players, something that did not significantly impede the effectiveness of the communication (or successfully transferring their intentionality, as he put it). Finally, “ALFA” (“Analysis of Lingua Franca in Audiovisual texts”), a new model for analyzing ELF variations in video game corpora was proposed (read more about the “ALFA” model in Iaiá, 2016: 95-102).

As demonstrated above, ELF in gaming communication has already started being examined. However, communication of gamers in LaRa (L1-L2), seems to be underinvestigated, as no relevant studies could be found. This implies that this could be the first time that receptive multilingualism in the communication of gamers is proposed and examined. Studies like the one of Friedrich and Diniz de Figueiredo (2016), although not directly relevant, could be mentioned instead. Even though these researchers discussed digital English, they argued that code-switching, which, as has already been stated, is considered to be an integral part of LaRa, appears more often in oral communication, due to its informal, impermanent, and synchronic character. These features are shared by informal online interactions, even written ones, where an

immediate response is expected (“synchronous communication”) (Friedrich & Diniz de Figueiredo, 2016: 52). As a consequence, code-switching is a process which is not extraneous to online communication circumstances, something that could work in favor of the use of LaRa in the gaming communicative context.

#### 2.4 Motivation for this study

Due to all the reasons discussed above, an attempt of finding a naturally occurring communicative task and manipulating it as little as possible was made. It is supported that online gaming offers such an environment, as players from different countries gather in real-time, and are required to communicate as teammates in order to achieve a common goal. It is thus clear that gaming is a highly competitive and cognitively demanding communicative task, which often has to do with space, just like the aforementioned tasks of previous studies.

Apart from the aforementioned reasons, there are several special features of the chosen game (and similar games) that render it suitable for the purposes of this project. As was already highlighted in 1., communication is central for the outcome of the game, as collaboration is a key factor, and complex strategies are often formed and followed by teammates. Furthermore, it is evident that LoL is closely related to space. Gamers are required to keep in mind where certain features of every map, teammates, and enemies are located at every moment. There is also a skill called “positioning”, which refers to the skill of locating oneself (more accurately, since this is a role-playing game, one’s character) at the most strategically suitable spot, in order to avoid attacks or be more effective against enemies. There are several positioning guides available online, which can provide a deeper understanding of what this is about (e.g. Mackey, 2013). Thus, spatial aspects are also involved in this study, following the experiments of van Mulken and Hendriks (2015), and Bles et al. (2014).

It is furthermore interesting that the game works with “regions” or “servers”, which refer to geographical regions: “Europe West”, “Europe Nordic and East”, etc. (see all ten current servers in Nancymon, 2018). This implies that it is more likely for Dutch players to come in contact with German players (and not, for example, Polish, who usually play in the “Europe Nordic and East” server), since they both belong to the Western European server. The gaming environment guarantees the strong motivation

of the participants to communicate effectively in order to achieve their common goal, i.e. winning the game. Besides, a high degree of collaboration in gaming communication has already been observed (Iaia, 2016: 77). Another reason that led to the selection of this game was its popularity almost worldwide, as well as its potential for professional play (professional teams and tournaments/championships). These special characteristics are believed to render findings even more useful and interesting for a wide audience, from communication researchers to casual or professional gamers.

### 3. Methodology

As stated above, this thesis explores and compares the effectiveness of ELF and LaRa in the communication of Dutch and German LoL gamers. The careful design of the project is considered to be crucial for obtaining reliable results, as both communication and gaming are highly complex, and cognitively demanding processes. (Read more about communication and cognition in Fussell & Kreuz, 1998, and about gaming and cognition in Eck, 2010; Perron & Schröter, 2016.) As a result, it deserves special attention.

#### 3.1 Participants

##### 3.1.1 Age and gender

Concerning the recruitment of participants, there were many characteristics that needed to be taken into account. First of all, as what is being assessed is communication between Dutch and German players, it was important to find native speakers of the Dutch and German languages. These subjects were young adults, from 18 to 25 years old, who were university students or recent graduates. There were 12 participants in total (six Dutch and six Germans) with an overall mean age of 21.58 years. The mean age of the four participants who played the first game was 21, for the second game the average age was 22.25, and, finally, the players of the third game were 21.5 years old on average. The age and characteristics of participants was in concordance with the official statistics of the game, according to which, 85% of LoL players worldwide are between 16 and 30 years old (Lyons, 2012). Considering the university and graduate student limitation, as well as any potential communication issues caused or enhanced

by the generation gap (“intergenerational communication”: Hummert, 2015) between, for example, an 18 and a 30-year-old, age boundaries were restricted. The same source found that 60% of all LoL gamers were enrolled in or had completed their studies in a tertiary education institution, a finding that further justifies the criterion of having a relationship to academics mentioned above.

As for the gender of participants, there were three males and one female gamer in each game. The fact that fewer participants were female (about 33% of the total) was not random. It was found that 15% of global gamers in 2017 were women between the ages of 21 and 35 (“Distribution of video games worldwide in 2017, by age group and gender”, 2017). Statistical evidence about the distribution of gamers in different game genres indicates that only 10% were female for the case of MOBA (Multiplayer Online Battle Arena) games, a category where LoL can be classified (“Distribution of gamers playing selected game genres worldwide as of January 2017, by gender”, 2017). Even more specifically, according to the second annual release of the League of Legends infographic, from the 32 million monthly active LoL players, over 90% were male (Lyons, 2012).

### 3.1.2 Second language proficiency

Additionally, subjects were recruited on the basis of their self-reported linguistic proficiency in their L2. In particular, for Dutch and German gamers who were asked to communicate in English, the minimum requirement was B2 level. For players who conversed in Dutch and German, knowledge of their L2 (German for the Dutch, and Dutch for the Germans) was minimally at A2 level. These minimum proficiency requirements were presented to participants before recruitment in the form of prerequisites, for efficiency purposes. The final number of participants was largely dependent on availability, due to these elaborate language requirements, as well as time restrictions.

## 3.2 Procedure

Recruitment took place by posting a request for Dutch and German LoL players with the aforementioned characteristics on Facebook groups about gaming and LoL fans in

Western Europe, as well as Germany and the Netherlands specifically. There was no reimbursement for participation.

After finding players who were willing to voluntarily participate, a few questions about their level in the game were asked. Based on their answers, there was an attempt of forming opposing teams of similar gaming competence. In this way, the possibility of any differences in gaming skills affecting results was minimized. Tiers and divisions of players were used as a measure of gaming competence. In LoL, there are seven tiers/leagues (from lowest to highest: bronze, silver, gold, platinum, diamond, master, challenger), each with five divisions (from highest to lowest: I-V, except for the last two tiers), where gamers are placed based on their performance in competitive games (LoL Smurfs, 2018). All four players of the same game had a maximum difference of two tiers. For instance, in the first game, all participants were at the platinum or diamond tier, and silver or bronze players were not allowed to join this game. Those were placed in a different game with teammates and opponents of similar gaming competence.

Following the formation of teams, and right before the game, gamers were informed about the language(s) they would have to use during the spoken conversation they were about to have with their teammate while playing. They communicated through a call using the software product of their preference (Skype, TeamSpeak, Discord). In other words, throughout the game, the two teammates of each team were required to communicate with each other orally, not making use of written chats (game chat or other). This type of communication is used very often between teammates, and it is also preferred by professional players.

As for the game, it was a normal 2v2 game, which means that each ELF team, consisting of one Dutch and one German participant conversing in English, played against a LaRa team, consisting of one Dutch participant speaking in Dutch and one German replying in German. No matter which map players decided to use (“Summoner’s Rift”, which is a 3-lane map, or the one-lane “Howling Abyss” map), they were asked to play together in one single lane. This was expected to give them more opportunities of close collaboration, and, subsequently, communication. The experiment was repeated three times. This means that there were three games, with a

total of six gamers communicating in LaRa, and six players communicating in ELF. The distribution of players per game is demonstrated in Figure 1 below:

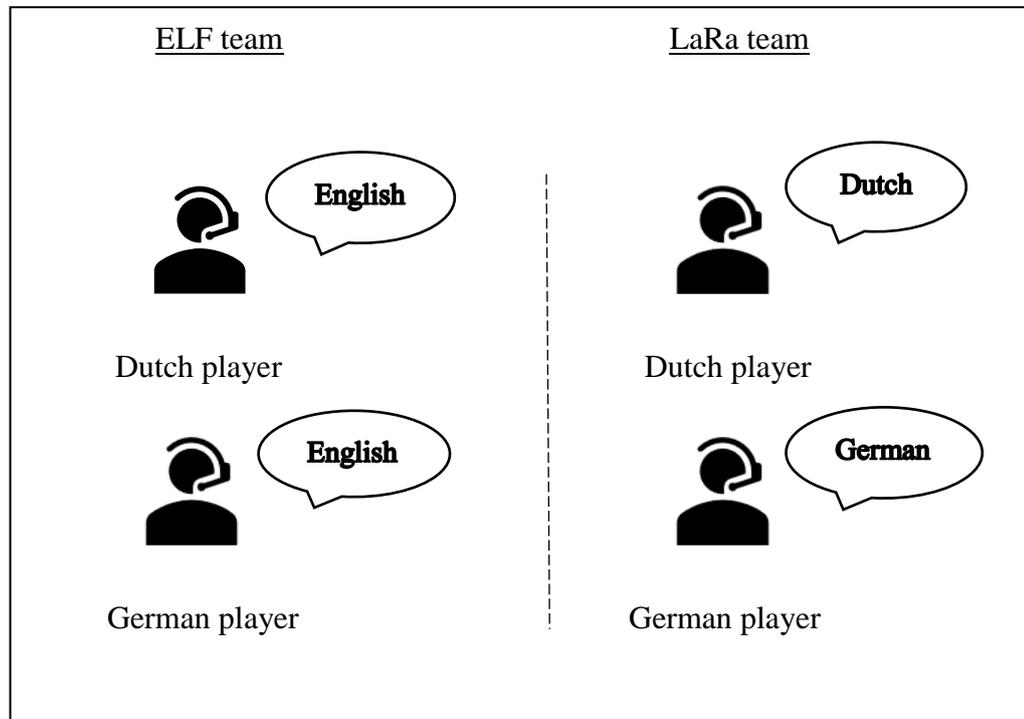


Figure 1. Distribution of nationalities and languages spoken per game and team.

It should be noted that, in the beginning, a 5v5 game took place. However, it became clear that the initial design was unnecessarily complex. There was miscommunication related to finding a common time for all participants, explaining the rules, etc., that was attributed to the large number of participants, and the design was changed to the one described above. The 2v2 design guaranteed the close and undistracted collaboration of each couple of teammates. It also rendered communication of different couples more easily comparable, not only to the communication of different conversation partners within the study, but also to the interactions analyzed in previous studies using couples, like those of van Mulken and Hendriks (2015) and Blee et al. (2014) mentioned above.

### 3.3 Materials

Interviews taken before and after the game constituted the main source of data. In the first game, the possibility of also taking the video and a recorded and/or transcribed version of the full conversation between teammates into account was examined. The

need of qualitatively analyzing conversations was also stressed by Blee et al. (2014: 190). After scrutinizing their content, and comparing it to the answers of players, it was concluded that no additional or relevant to the research question information was provided. It was therefore decided to exclude the analysis of the content of interactions from the design, and only collect data from interviews of players.

There were two semi-prepared interviews taken right before and right after the game. These interviews were taken using the Facebook Messenger chat, as participants were also recruited through Facebook groups. This was expected to create a more informal and friendly environment, which would encourage them to share their observations and remarks. The overall tone of the interviews was friendly and casual, and (gaming) abbreviations or neologisms (e.g. “gg”, which is short for “good game”) frequently used by young online game players were used, with the aim of enhancing the naturalness of the discussion, and extracting more information.

More specifically, each interview consisted of three main questions. Questions asked before the game assessed comprehension expectations from the upcoming interaction in English or Dutch-German, attitude towards the task, as well as general attitude towards the L2. After the game, participants answered questions about their communicative experience (comprehension, feelings during their communication, views on the task). Questions were based on the questionnaires developed by Marianne Starren and Annika Schiefner on SoSci for French and Dutch participants of a similar study conducted in Radboud University during the academic year 2017-2018. However, interviews were not limited to preselected questions (see Appendix), but included the discussion of remarks that were interesting and relevant to the research question. This was possible due to the vivid interest and eagerness of some participants to talk about their communicative experience.

Finally, the outcome and duration of each game were also taken into account. This means that the victory or defeat of a team was used as an indicator for more or less effective communication respectively. Similarly, a victorious result achieved in a period of time shorter than the average game duration was considered as an index of even more effective communication. These criteria were not strict, but were used as additional, subsidiary to the interview answers factors, as the result and duration of a

game can sometimes be affected by irrelevant to communication factors, such as gaming competence.

### 3.4 Method

Every participant completed the task once (between-subject design). It is believed that fulfilling the elaborate preconditions for participant recruitment (L2 proficiency, gaming skills) a priori justified following this design. A qualitative approach for analyzing the answers provided was followed. The objective of this choice was to gain a more detailed understanding of the perspective of subjects.

## 4. Results

According to Youssef (2005) the major components of communication are the following: sender, receiver, message, and feedback. Due to the fact that every interaction is dynamic, and thus changes in time and space, “no single aspect of communication can be meaningfully understood apart from the other elements” (2005: 2-3). Keeping in mind this uniqueness of interactions, information provided by each couple of teammates (sender and receiver) before and after each game is presented in sections 4.1-4.3, as it reflects their expectations, attitude towards their second language, as well as their views on the specific dialogue (message, and feedback) they had during a certain game. What follows in section 4.4 is a summary of the answers described in previous sections of this chapter, and an attempt of categorizing and comparing them in different respects (communicative mode, time of interview, game result and duration, and nationality of players).

### 4.1 Game 1

As previously mentioned (3.2), the first game differed from the two games that followed, as it was a “5v5”, which means that there were ten players in total. However, the communicative task was assigned to two couples, each consisting of one Dutch and one German gamer, as was the case for the rest of the games. The other six players (three Belgians, two Germans, one Swiss), who were also matched and placed in teams

based on their gaming skills, functioned as their teammates/enemies, and did not have access to their online call. In this respect, their communicative experience was identical –and thus comparable– to the one of the four couples that participated in the second and third game.

Even if the composition of the two couples and the communicative circumstances were the same, differences in the number of players for each team resulted in several problems. Due to the large number of gamers, there was a significant deal of miscommunication until the point when everyone fully understood, and was available to fulfill their role within the task. For instance, some players did not realize that two of their teammates (the subjects of the study) were required to be on a separate call and attempted to enter their call, whereas others were late for the start of the game, delaying the procedure. These problems resulted in a delay of about 1.5 hour, which caused dissatisfaction and negativity among some of the participants.

In the abbreviations that follow, each number stands for a certain game (e.g. “1” for Game 1), and each letter for the nationality of every participant (“G” for German, and “D” for Dutch). For example, “ELF 2D” refers to the Dutch player of the second game who communicated with his German teammate using English.

#### 4.1.1 ELF team 1

Unlike the rest of the games, the ELF team of the first game (ELF 1) achieved victory. This game lasted for 26 minutes, which means that the online dialogue between players of the two couples had the same duration. The game took place at the three-lane map “Summoner’s rift”, where the average time of a game is approximately 30 minutes (League of Graphs, 2018).

Looking at each gamer individually, this team’s German player (ELF 1G) admitted that she had sometimes felt uncomfortable while communicating in English in general (“sometimes [I feel] weird”). She attributed this to the fact that, during ELF interactions, she usually did not “have every word in [her] mind”. She then pointed out that, as a native speaker of German, she had often felt that she could express more information and thoughts in her native tongue, rather than in English. Her answer to questions about comprehension underlined the moderate character of her expectations,

as she made the modest statement that she believed she would be able to understand “the most” in English. Interestingly, as this German player had a notable level of Dutch language knowledge, she found the fact that she would have to communicate with her Dutch teammate in English (and not Dutch) “weird”, but had a positive attitude towards the task overall.

Her Dutch teammate (ELF 1D) appeared to be more positive both about the task and his comprehension expectations, claiming that understanding and communicating in English was generally easy for him. He added that his previous ELF interactions had generally made him feel comfortable, something he mainly attributed to his education. “My high school education was bilingual, so I am fluent in English”, he postulated in his before-game interview.

In spite of the favorable for this team outcome of the game, player ELF 1G remained insecure about her communicative performance in English. More specifically, when asked about her communication with ELF 1D, she answered “I don’t know, I tried”. Her feedback concerning her feelings during the call was more positive, as she claimed that she had felt comfortable. Nevertheless, her justification focused on individual/personal traits of her teammate (“good”, “friendly”, “relaxing voice”). Finally, her attitude towards the completed task was also positive, as she characterized it as “really really funny”.

On the contrary, player ELF 1D’s high expectations before the game did not seem to be fully met. This is evident by the fact that he evaluated his communicative experience with his German teammate as “fairly good”. Subsequently, he explained that he faced some difficulties understanding her at times, as, in his point of view, her accent was “a bit heavy”. However, his positive attitude towards the task was maintained, and he claimed that he had felt comfortable during the call.

#### 4.1.2 LaRa team 1

As opposed to ELF 1, the members of the LaRa team of the first game (LaRa 1) did not manage to lead their team to victory. The miscommunication problems mentioned above (4.1) mostly concerned this team. The two players failed to follow the instructions at first, and started having an online call in which all their teammates were

present. The request of starting a new call delayed the procedure, and caused some irritation to the German player, which nevertheless seemed to subside after the task started.

To discuss this in more detail, the Dutch participant of the duo (LaRa 1D) was favorably disposed towards the task, which he found fun. When asked about his attitude towards interactions in German, he argued that studying at a European school encouraged him to switch between different languages (including German), and a situation similar to the one of the task was something he had been used to. Despite this, he appeared to be a little skeptical about comprehension issues that could occur, as he found that his German was “a bit rusty”, but, even so, he seemed to be optimistic overall.

The German player of this couple (LaRa 1G) was also positive about the task and the dialogue that would follow, although he did not seem to trust his Dutch language skills as much. This is exemplified by phrases like “I don’t speak Dutch much. I just understand it alright”. Even though the call had not started yet, he had already started making plans for improving his communication with his Dutch teammate in case of failure (“If he is speaking too fast I can say: Please, can you speak more slowly?”). Moreover, this participant provided plenty of feedback about his attitude towards interactions in Dutch. He argued that they usually require paying additional attention, but he generally preferred using different languages over using his mother tongue or English. He elaborated this view by adding that he would use English for “something more important, like a job”, but under different circumstances, like the one of gaming, he would opt for using a different L2, with English being the “backup” solution.

After his call with the German gamer, player LaRa 1D evaluated the overall communication as being fairly good, although “weird” at first. He justified this characterization with the observation that he wanted to switch to German “by instinct”, but admitted that he then got used to this type of communication. His views about comprehension throughout the call were positive, as both players could understand each other, and develop strategies in an attempt of preventing victory of their opponents. Defeat was attributed to higher gaming skills of the enemy team, and not miscommunication issues. Another remark shared by the Dutch gamer of the LaRa 1 team was that, in the beginning of the game, his German teammate asked him to speak

more slowly. (Note that, interestingly, as was demonstrated above, this was the strategy the German player was planning on using even before the game.) What was more striking to LaRa 1D was the fact that, after following his teammate's request, he realized that he also started speaking German more slowly, even though he was not asked to do so. Finally, the Dutch gamer replied that he felt "comfortable enough" during the task, which he found fun.

The German participant did not provide any answers after the game. This can be explained by the fact that the task was delayed, causing some negativity, as well as the fact that he had repeatedly stated that he had been sleep-deprived. However, as shown above, it is not difficult to extract some information about his communicative experience and attitude from the answers of his teammate. It seems that he faced some difficulties understanding his teammate's Dutch at first, and thus requested that the latter started speaking more slowly. Player LaRa 1D concluded that they both "had fun and laughed", so it is assumed that his attitude towards the task remained positive. Another remark the Dutch gamer made is in concordance with the fact that the German player generally perceived gaming as a casual communicative setting, based on his answers in the before-game interview. More specifically, he stated: "We understood that the game was not about winning or anything but about helping you". Motivation of these two players for winning the game was hence lower than expected, something that might have had an impact on their performance.

## 4.2 Game 2

From this game onwards, the 5v5 design was substituted with a 2v2 design. This means that each team consisted of one German and one Dutch player, with no other teammates. After these changes, the entire task ran more smoothly and had a shorter duration. The second game took place at the one-lane map "Howling abyss", where games usually last for about twenty minutes (Mansoor, 2017). This game had a duration of 15 minutes.

### 4.2.1 ELF team 2

The ELF team of this game (ELF 2) was defeated by the opposing LaRa team. The German player (ELF 2G) was positive towards the task. She appeared confident of

communicating comprehensively with her teammate using ELF. In addition, she answered that she had generally felt comfortable in previous conversations she had had in English. The views of her Dutch teammate (ELF 2D) were equally positive, and almost identical to those of the German player.

After their call, gamer ELF 2G observed that comprehension was not impeded by the use of English, but the amount of information exchanged was limited (“we didn’t speak so much”). Furthermore, according to her, communication did not seem to be very “deep”, but was restricted to general comments about the game (“we just said things like ‘oh that hurt’”). In general, the German player thought this was a fun experience.

The answers of the Dutch player right after the game were in agreement with the German gamer’s remarks. In particular, he replied that their communication was “alright”, as they were able to understand each other, but also made comments about it being limited (“she understood everything I communicated fine, but didn’t offer much in return”). The Dutch player attributed this to his German teammate’s communication and/or language skills. The assumptions he came up with varied from low communicative competence while gaming (“I don’t think she is used to communicating while gaming”) to insufficient proficiency in English (“There was a clear level difference in English, of course. This could’ve led to her not being able to reply or not being confident enough to reply”). It should be noted that, judging by her answers before and after the game, which were written in English, player ELF 2G was indeed laconic. She oftentimes replied giving one-word answers. In general, the Dutch player evaluated their communication as understandable and sufficient, but nothing more.

#### 4.2.2 LaRa team 2

The players of the second LaRa team (LaRa 2) managed to win the game. In this case, the German subject (LaRa 2G) was very positive towards the task, which he found “interesting”. Concerning his expectations about comprehension, his answers demonstrated a guarded optimism in relation to his understanding of Dutch. However, he was less certain about whether his Dutch teammate would be able to understand his German or not (“I will understand him I guess, but if he does we’ll see”). When asked about his interactions in Dutch, LaRa 2G replied that he had generally felt confident in

the past, but added that he had never tried something similar during an online call or in a gaming setting before.

The Dutch participant of LaRa 2 (LaRa 2D) was not only positive towards an interaction in Dutch and German, but, unlike the rest of the gamers examined up until this point, he seemed to find it neither surprising nor challenging, but natural. More precisely, he characterized communicating in this way as “easy”, and referred to his receptive skills in German being stronger than his productive skills. Lastly, this gamer claimed that he had generally been comfortable in settings where he was required to communicate in German.

Following the game, player LaRa 2G gave positive feedback about his conversation with LaRa 2D during the game. He specifically mentioned that they were able to communicate “very easily”, and that neither him nor his teammate seemed to experience any difficulties understanding each other. This German gamer made some enthusiastic comments about his interaction with his Dutch teammate (notably: “it worked amazingly well”). He also said that he had felt comfortable during their online dialogue, and that he thought the task was fun. One additional remark he made reflected his strong motivation to lead his team to victory, which he associated with increased speech production (“I was motivated to beat [player ELF 2D] so I tried to be as communicative as possible”).

Similarly, LaRa 2D’s answers were very enthusiastic. This is characteristically demonstrated by the adjectives he used in order to describe his communication with his German teammate (“super”, “fun”, “nice”). This participant insisted on stressing how surprisingly natural interacting in Dutch and German felt, as shown by the following remarks:

- “What surprised me was that I was able to understand him perfectly fine, just like when I’m talking to someone in Dutch. I didn’t really notice any difference.”
- “Didn’t have to think about what he said or what I should say.”
- “Everything I/he said came naturally, I think. That’s what surprised me the most I guess.”

Additionally, he confessed that, in the beginning, as he was recruited on the basis of his German language skills, he was concerned that he would be asked to speak in German. As soon as he received the instructions for the task and realized that he would be speaking his native language, he felt relieved. In general, he claimed that everything was clear and comprehensible, and evaluated the task as fun, adding that it made him feel “extremely comfortable”.

### 4.3 Game 3

The third and last game, which was also a 2v2 game in the one-lane “Howling abyss” map, lasted for 23 minutes. Similar to the second one, there were no miscommunication or technical issues. Once again, the team that communicated in Dutch and German defeated the ELF team, more information for which is provided below.

#### 4.3.1 ELF team 3

Starting from the ELF team of this game (ELF 3), when the German participant (ELF 3G) was informed that she was required to communicate with her Dutch teammate in English, she expressed the opinion that speaking to a non-German speaker in English and vice versa was the type of communication she would expect in a similar situation. She seemed to be confident enough that she would be able to understand her teammate, unless his accent was “too strong”. She also stated that she had generally felt comfortable in previous ELF interactions she had had, and justified it by sharing that she had been in a relationship with a native speaker of British English for a long time.

The same questions were answered by the Dutch player of ELF 3 (ELF 3D) in a restrained manner. Communicating using English was received neither enthusiastically nor negatively, as the subject thought this was “fine”. Moreover, this player was not certain that mutual understanding would be achieved. Thus, he reluctantly presumed that would be the case (“I think so”). Nevertheless, he was slightly more confident about his English language skills in general, as he claimed that ELF interactions had not caused any serious communication problems or feelings of discomfort to him before.

Following the game, the first member of ELF 3 did not seem completely satisfied with her interaction with the Dutch player. She explicitly stated that it was “okay”, and focused on his accent as being the main factor impeding communication. According to ELF 3G, her teammate had accent and speech clarity issues, that often hindered comprehension from her side (“He has a bit of an accent so sometimes it was hard to understand him”, “He just didn't speak so clearly sometimes. But then I just asked him to repeat it”). From the last comment, it is apparent that the strategy she used in order to resolve miscommunication had the form of an explicit request for repetition. Except for these remarks, she thought that their conversation was generally “nice” and made her feel comfortable.

The Dutch player of the same team was also not entirely satisfied with the interaction he had with the German gamer in English. He characteristically gave the following answer: “It whas [sic] not that bad, but it can be better”. It is noteworthy that, as can be clearly observed in his answer quoted above, as well as in the rest of his responses, his (written, and potentially oral) English proficiency level was not very high, and certainly not as high as the one of his teammate. This observation is in agreement with the remarks of the German player about him failing to communicate everything clearly. The atmosphere of the task generally created positive feelings to this Dutch gamer, who emphasized on the friendly character of his teammate in order to justify his positive feedback.

#### 4.3.2 LaRa team 3

The gamers who constituted the victorious LaRa team of the third game (LaRa 3) provided some interesting feedback on their communication during the game. To begin with, the German player (LaRa 3G) was surprised when informed about communicating in German and Dutch, but rapidly embraced the idea with excitement (“For real? That sounds pretty cool actually”). When asked about his comprehension expectations, he was optimistic overall, but appeared to be a little skeptical about two points: on the one hand, unawareness of his Dutch teammate’s German skills; on the other hand, additional concentration needed for the maintenance of the L1-L2 situation (“It’ll probably take some concentration to not just talk in Dutch”). In the end, the German

player asserted that communicating in Dutch had always made him feel comfortable in the past.

Similar to player LaRa 2D, the Dutch gamer of the third LoL game (LaRa 3D) was not surprised at all by being asked to use the L1-L2 communicative mode with his partner. On the contrary, he supported that this “sound[ed] like the best option”. After being asked to provide his reasoning, LaRa 3D replied that, in general, he had been used to asking any German teammates he had had in the past to communicate in a type of L1-L2 mode. The only difference was that, in spite of asking them to use their native language (German), he usually replied in English, making use of ELF as his L2. He furthermore estimated that replacing English with Dutch would be an even better option, as it would be easier for him to speak in Dutch. The Dutch gamer supported his assumption claiming that he would be able to directly express himself in his mother tongue, avoiding a stage of translating his thoughts into English.

“I usually ask Germans to talk in German to me. And then I reply to them in English. But replying in Dutch is even better [...] since that’s easier for myself. [...] Don’t have to translate it to English.”

As a consequence, LaRa 3D was positive towards the task, and thought that neither he nor his German teammate would find understanding each other difficult.

Following the game, LaRa 3G acknowledged that, opposite to his expectations, he felt no urge for switching to Dutch. Not only did he not experience any difficulties concerning his communication with his teammate, but he also managed to understand and follow strategies that would help them achieve victory through cooperation. This can be exemplified by the following quote from his post-game interview:

“[LaRa 3D] has good strategies so he always told me what we were gonna do. And I played into his thinking.”

The German player also felt comfortable during the task, which he found fun, and even gave compliments on the study.

His Dutch teammate seemed to be satisfied with their communication as well. More specifically, he answered that they did not face any problems understanding each other. Their interaction caused feelings of relief to the Dutch player. “I was actually feeling relieved we were able to communicate properly and set up plays together”, he admitted.

It is also evident from this reply that he also appreciated –and perhaps was surprised by– the fact that the two players were able to communicate effectively enough in order to plan and proceed to strategic moves together. His only negative remark referred to the fact that there was an urge for switching to English at first, but, subsequently, as the players started getting used to L1-L2 communication, they managed to overcome this difficulty. According to this Dutch participant, the task was fun, and made him feel comfortable. His answers were completed with the statement that he would like to practice this communicative mode again in the future.

#### 4.4 Categorization and comparison of results

The views of all 12 participants based on their answers to the interviews before and after the game were thoroughly investigated. This created the need of forming different categories for classifying the results described above, with the intention of presenting them in a clear and intelligible manner.

Tables 1.1 and 1.2 provide a complete overview of the findings discussed in sections 4.1-4.3 (including their subsections). In Table 1.1 the character of the answers of all players about the three factors (general attitude towards interactions in L2, comprehension expectations, attitude towards task) examined in the interviews taken before the game are demonstrated. For the sake of brevity, the character of the answers is classified in three categories: positive, negative, and neutral (not clearly or entirely positive or negative, indifferent), signified by the symbols (+), (–), and (=) respectively. The same is valid for Table 1.2, this time for the answers provided after the game. In both tables, the outcome each player achieved along with their teammate (victory or defeat) is also provided, accompanied by the duration of each game, and therefore each interaction (in minutes). Information about the game, team/communicative mode used, and nationality of each gamer can be found under the category “Player”, as abbreviations explained in 4.1, and introduced in sections 4.1.1-4.3.2 are used.

Table 1.1

*Character of answers provided in before-game interviews and game outcome.*

Player	Comprehension expectations	Attitude towards interactions in L2	Attitude towards task	Outcome and duration of game
ELF 1G	=	–	+	Victory (26')
ELF 1D	+	+	+	Victory (26')
LaRa 1G	–	+	+	Defeat (26')
LaRa 1D	=	+	+	Defeat (26')
ELF 2G	+	+	+	Defeat (15')
ELF 2D	+	+	+	Defeat (15')
LaRa 2G	=	+	+	Victory (15')
LaRa 2D	+	+	+	Victory (15')
ELF 3G	=	+	=	Defeat (23')
ELF 3D	=	+	=	Defeat (23')
LaRa 3G	+	+	+	Victory (23')
LaRa 3D	+	+	+	Victory (23')

Table 1.2

*Character of answers provided in after-game interviews and game outcome.*

Player	Views on communication (comprehension)	Feelings during interaction	Views on task	Outcome and duration of game
ELF 1G	=	+	+	Victory (26')
ELF 1D	=	+	+	Victory (26')
LaRa 1G*	(–)	(+)	(=)	Defeat (26')
LaRa 1D	+	+	+	Defeat (26')
ELF 2G	–	+	+	Defeat (15')
ELF 2D	=	+	+	Defeat (15')

LaRa 2G	+	+	+	Victory (15')
LaRa 2D	+	+	+	Victory (15')
ELF 3G	-	+	+	Defeat (23')
ELF 3D	-	+	+	Defeat (23')
LaRa 3G	+	+	+	Victory (23')
LaRa 3D	+	+	+	Victory (23')

\*Results from player LaRa 1G are placed in brackets as they are only assumptions/approximations based on the feedback of his teammate (LaRa 1D).

Beginning with a few general observations, Table 1.1 shows that all gamers were favorably disposed towards the task, with the exception of the two ELF players of Game 3, who were quite indifferent about it. Similarly, Table 1.2 illustrates the same positive trend, which means that the positive view on the task was maintained after the game. Findings presented in Table 1.1 indicate that the attitude of all participants, except for ELF 1G, towards interactions in their L2 (English for ELF players, and Dutch or German for LaRa gamers) was positive. The same applies to the feelings of the players during their interaction in both English and Dutch-German, according to their positive feedback (Table 1.2).

Opinions seem to have been more divided about the expected or achieved level of comprehension. The relevant questions before and after the game had the least positive score compared to the rest (six and five positive replies before and after respectively, whereas all other four questions had a positive score from 10 to 12). It is important to break this result down into ELF and LaRa players, in order to have a clearer image of their views about their comprehension expectations and feedback. No significant difference seems to exist between ELF and LaRa gamers before the game concerning this aspect. However, results found in the second column of Table 1.2 suggest that a clear difference between ELF and LaRa gamers was formed after the game. More specifically, ELF players provided no entirely positive answers about the comprehension level achieved between them and their teammate. They did, nevertheless, reply neutrally and negatively three times. On the contrary, players who communicated in Dutch and German provided five positive answers, and only one negative, which was the hypothesized reply of player LaRa 1G. The feedback of LaRa

gamers about comprehension was thus much more positive compared to the one provided by players who communicated using ELF.

Concerning the outcome of the game in relation to the character of the answers provided, it seems that the two factors were not directly correlated. This means that positive expectations did not necessarily lead to a victorious result, and vice versa. For instance, the two ELF players of the second game had nothing but positive views and expectations, but were still defeated by the LaRa 2 team (Table 1.1). The same holds for after-game answers, which could still be positive or negative, regardless of the game result. An example of this is the entirely positive feedback player LaRa 1D gave about his interaction with LaRa 1G and about the task, even though his team did not achieve the desired result (Table 1.2). Overall, LaRa players achieved victory over ELF players in two out of the three games. This means that 4 out of 6 gamers (nearly 67%) who communicated using Dutch and German won, whereas 2 out of 6 ELF players (approximately 33%) were victorious. The duration of the games did not seem to provide very important information, as the length of the games not deviate much from average times. The largest and most notable deviation was approximately five minutes and occurred in the case of the second game, indicating that victory might have been achieved more easily than usual.

Examining the findings illustrated in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 in comparison, it is firstly shown that the overall character of answers given by players of ELF teams, as well as by LaRa players in the beginning of the task, remains almost the same after the game. More specifically, in the first interview, there were 12 positive answers, five neutral, and one negative for the ELF mode. In the interview taken after completing the task, ELF had a score of 12 positive, three neutral, and three negative replies, which is slightly worse than its previous score. Similarly, LaRa gamers shared 15 positive, two neutral, and one negative views and expectations before the game, and 16 positive, one neutral, and one negative afterwards. Excluding the hypothesized evaluation of player LaRa 1G would result in an impressive 100% positive feedback for the L1-L2 mode. In any case, the after-game score of LaRa was slightly improved compared to the already positive score it had before the game. This information is displayed in Figure 2 below:

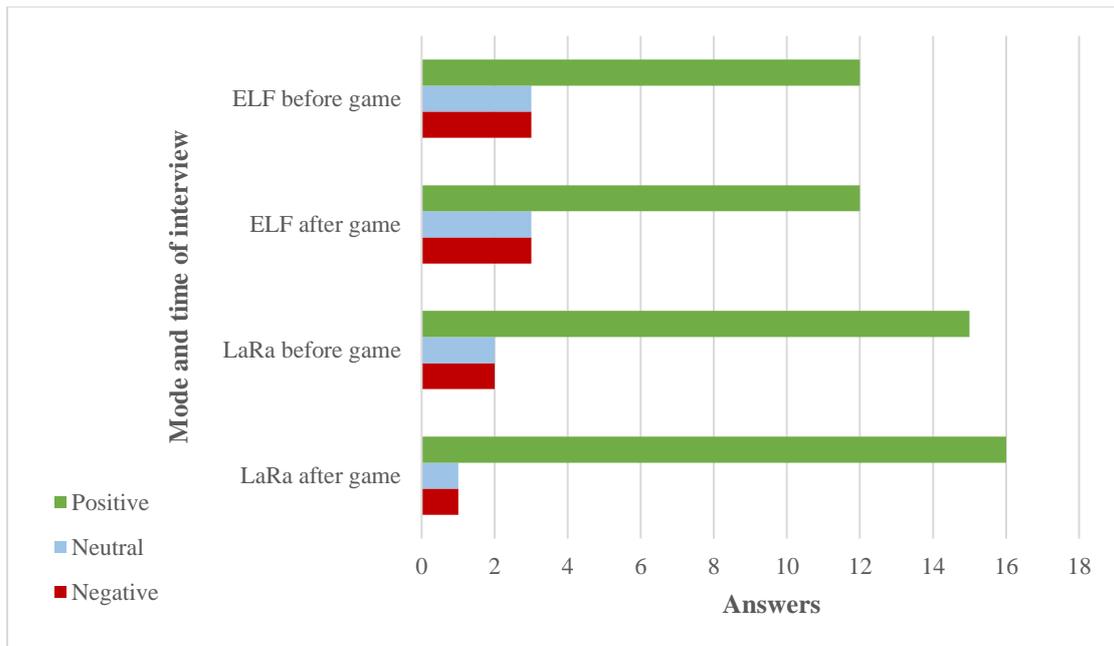


Figure 2. Number of positive, neutral, and negative answers for ELF and LaRa before and after the game.

After taking a look at Figure 2, it is furthermore evident that the L1-L2 communicative mode received more positive answers than the ELF mode both before and after the game. The total of positive, neutral, and negative replies for the ELF mode remained constant after the completion of the task, whereas the score of LaRa was slightly improved. This is indicated by the increase of positive answers, as well as by the reduction of neutral and negative remarks.

Adopting a different perspective, Figure 3 and Figure 4 explore the possibility of nationality (Dutch or German) as a factor affecting expectations, views, and feedback about communication using ELF, LaRa, or different L2s (English, Dutch, German).

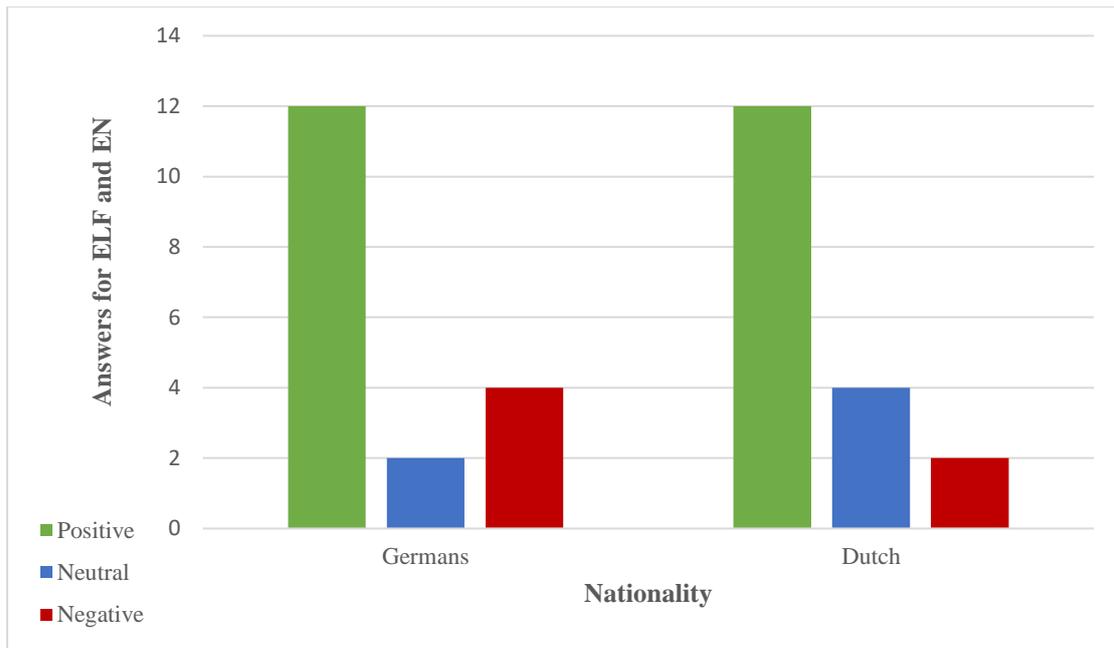


Figure 3. Character of answers provided by German and Dutch players for ELF and English as an L2.

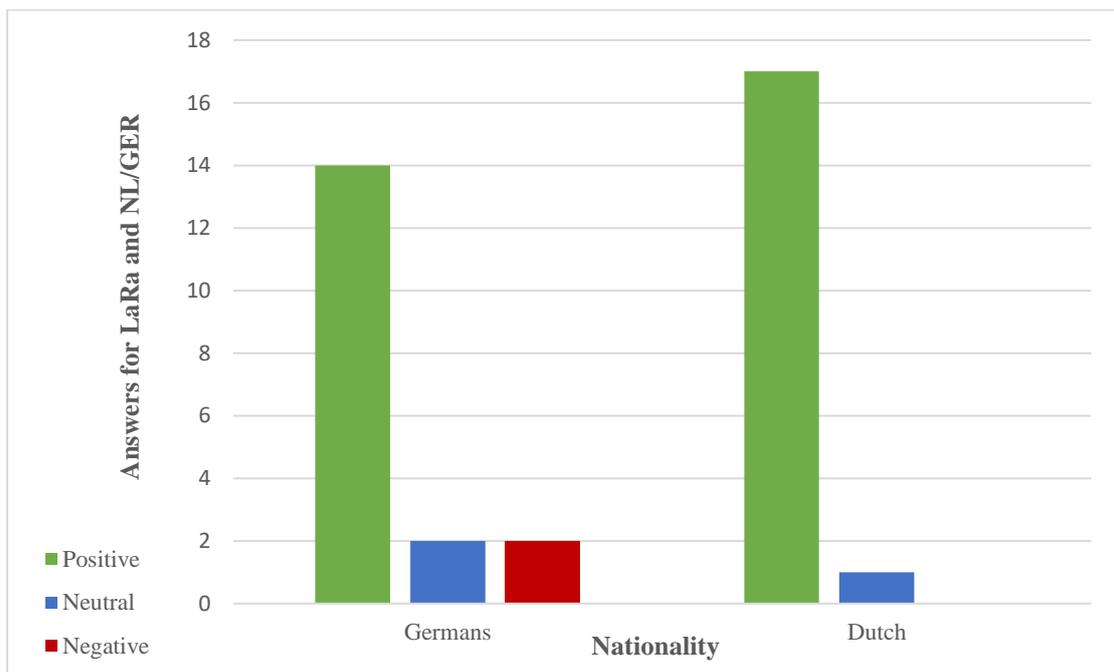


Figure 4. Character of answers provided by German and Dutch players for LaRa and Dutch/German as an L2.

In general, Figure 3 and Figure 4 do not exhibit very significant differences regarding communicative mode preferences between Dutch and German participants based on the answers they provided. It is shown that both Dutch and German players gave more

positive answers for LaRa compared to ELF. This preference for the LaRa communicative mode is clearer for the case of the Dutch players, as no negative feedback was provided (Figure 4). Germans were generally more negative, as they provided more negative answers for both modes (Figure 3 and Figure 4). Most notably, this is demonstrated in the case of ELF and English as an L2, where Germans gave the largest number of negative replies (Figure 3).

These differences can be detected most notably in comprehension, as shown in Figure 5, which demonstrates the character of answers provided for the two modes based on the nationality of players.

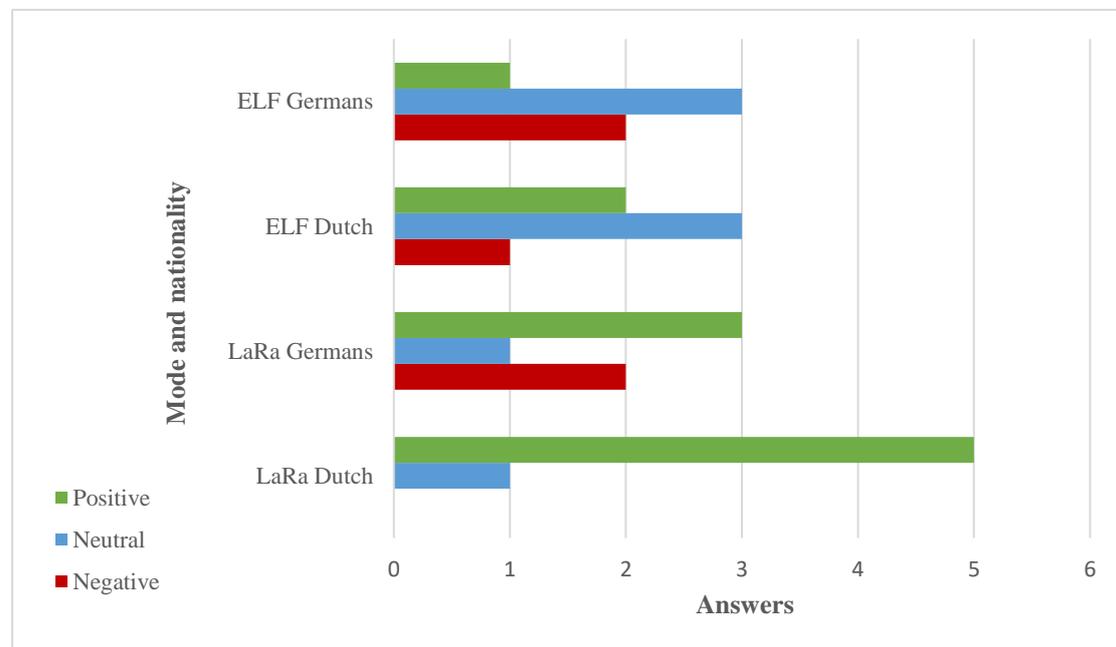


Figure 5. Character of answers provided by German and Dutch players for comprehension in ELF and LaRa.

It is evident that the Dutch were again more positive about comprehension compared to Germans, a difference that was clearer for the case of L1-L2 communication. If we divide answers into before and after game replies for the two modes, it becomes clear that this difference was mostly shaped on the basis of comprehension expectations, rather than views on achieved comprehension levels during interactions. This means that, even if Germans were less optimistic about understanding and being understood by their teammates before the game compared to Dutch participants, they became

almost equally convinced about comprehension through LaRa communication after completing the task. Concerning ELF interactions, the Dutch were again more positive than Germans in the beginning, but they ended up giving feedback about comprehension in their ELF conversations that was similarly negative to the one of the Germans. Therefore, the negative and neutral responses represented in Figure 5 refer almost entirely to the feedback provided by Dutch participants of ELF teams, rather than their initial attitude towards understanding their teammates' English.

To sum up remarks about difficulties encountered, there were some problems that were mentioned more than once. Firstly, participants who communicated in English commented on the strong accent of their teammates as being a factor that impeded comprehension. There were two such cases, and these remarks came from both the Dutch and the German side (ELF 1D, ELF 3G). The two players of the second ELF team characterized their communication as very limited and "shallow". Two Dutch participants (LaRa 1D, LaRa 3D) noted that they needed some time until they felt comfortable with speaking in Dutch and receiving German replies, but both added that this was a difficulty which was easy to overcome. Contrary to lukewarm answers provided for the ELF communicative mode, most participants were very enthusiastic about using the L1-L2 mode during their game.

## 5. Discussion

In order to gain insights about whether ELF or LaRa is more effective in the communication of Dutch and German LoL players, primarily adapting the point of view of the subjects, three games took place, during which participants communicated online orally. These subjects answered to three questions before, and three questions after the game, providing additional information when they desired or when it was considered necessary.

Two of the three factors examined in the before-game interviews were general attitude towards interactions in L2 (English for the players of ELF teams, Dutch for the German players of LaRa teams, and German for the Dutch players of LaRa teams), and attitude towards the task that would follow. Almost all players replied positively to the relevant questions. The same holds for questions about feelings experienced during the

interaction of players with their teammate, as well as for their views on the completed task. The only factor that resulted in divided opinions was comprehension, both before the game, in the form of expectations, and after, in the form of feedback. This means that any differences between the two communicative modes can be mainly attributed to this factor, as the rest were almost the same. Subsequently, it was found that there were no large differences between answers of ELF and LaRa players before the game. However, ELF gamers gave no positive, but only neutral or negative feedback about comprehension after completing the task, while LaRa players shared almost only positive remarks. Therefore, communicating in Dutch and German received more positive feedback than communicating in English overall.

The comparison of both modes in relation to the time of the interview (before or after the task) showed that expectations and views before the game were almost held constant. It was, nevertheless, observed that feedback provided for ELF was slightly more negative after the game. On the contrary, replies of LaRa players in the after-game interviews indicated their slightly improved views concerning LaRa communication.

In the end, results for the two communicative modes were compared with regards to the nationality of participants. No significant difference was detected in terms of mode preference, as both, based on their answers, seemed to opt for LaRa. This preference was clearer in the case of Dutch players, who provided almost exclusively positive feedback about their L1-L2 communication. It could be noted that Germans were in general more negative in their answers compared to the Dutch, especially when it came to ELF interactions.

Individual remarks of participants indicated that ELF communication was limited. Comprehension was often hindered in cases where players had to communicate with a strongly accented interlocutor. Using ELF seemed to be the expected way of communicating with players of different nationalities and native tongues, but this resulted in –even if not negative– quite lukewarm responses and feelings about the task. On the contrary, LaRa players seemed to embrace the task and their communicative experience with greater enthusiasm. Information they provided about their interactions revealed that their communication was much deeper compared to the more limited and shallow ELF dialogues, as they were able to form elaborate strategies and co-construct plans for being more successful, and ultimately winning the game.

Finally, the success of LaRa players was reflected in the outcome of the game. They managed to prevail over their opponents in two out of the three games. In spite of the fact that duration of games did not render very significant results in the end, the game which was the shortest and had the largest deviation from the equivalent average time was the second one, which was won by the second receptive multilingualism team. The superiority of the LaRa mode in terms of effectiveness was further supported by this finding, as rapid victory was associated with easiness and flexibility in communication.

Sections 5.1-5.5 aim to interpret and discuss these results in more detail. In the first section (5.1), findings are seen with respect to attitude towards interactions in L2 in general, and feelings during the completed L2 interactions in particular. Section 5.2 examines participants' attitude towards the task after receiving the instructions, as well as their views about it after the game. The next one (5.3) concerns communication expectations and feedback, focusing on comprehension, while simultaneously investigating the role of nationality. This chapter continues with the discussion of the outcome and duration of the three games in relation to communicative effectiveness (5.4), and is completed by referring to some first conclusions, while comparing them to the major and most relevant previous studies discussed in the literature review (5.5).

## 5.1 Interactions in L2

Based on their answers to interviews taken before the game, all participants were positive towards interactions in their second language, whether this was English or Dutch/German. The only exception was one German player who had to communicate in English. This gamer claimed that interactions in English had usually made her feel "weird", because what she could express was limited, as opposed to speaking her native language. This comment exemplifies and confirms what has been described in the literature concerning the limitations of ELF communication (Blees et al., 2014; Hincks, 2010). There was no notable difference between communicative modes or different nationalities with regards to this factor. The time of the interviews did not seem to affect feelings of participants about communicating in L2 either, as, after the task, their feedback about their feelings throughout the online call they had with their teammate was as positive as it was before the game.

However, two out of the six gamers who used English and gave positive feedback in the relevant question justified feeling comfortable during their interaction by referring to the character or other personal traits of their teammate (e.g. humor, friendliness). It thus seems that likability had an effect on participants' feelings in relation to their interactions for players of ELF teams. This is considered as an interesting finding, given that justification was not usually requested in previous studies assessing the effectiveness of the examined modes, as researchers were relying on qualitative data.

The positive feedback of participants who communicated in Dutch and German was more "to the point", as it focused on their interaction with their teammate. Nevertheless, some of them noted that this type of communication seemed a little "weird" in the very beginning of the call, as they were unfamiliar with using the L1-L2 communicative mode and/or thought they would be tempted to switch to English or the native language of their teammate. They then added that, after a short period of time, they got used to it, and unfamiliarity was rapidly substituted for feelings of comfort, that were maintained until the end of the game. This is in line with theoretical findings arguing that attitude towards L1-L2 communication improves over time and after practice, as familiarity with the language mode is key (Beerkens, 2010). However, there were also cases where players thought this would be the case, but were positively surprised by how easy and natural code-switching between their L1 and L2 felt. This does not necessarily contradict what was previously mentioned, because it can be attributed to the fact that these enthusiastic remarks came from participants who were used to switching between languages as part of their education or even in the context of online gaming communication. There was indeed the unexpected case of one participant who admitted that he had been used to hearing German from his German teammates, and replying to them in English while gaming, but thought that speaking in his native tongue was an even better idea. This illuminates the fact that multiple communicative modes are already being used in intercultural gaming communication and communication between Dutch and German players in particular, rather than just ELF.

## 5.2 Task

Findings did not differ much when it came to the task, neither before nor after the game, as all participants were positive about it. It is believed that the close relationship of participants to the content of the task played a significant role. In contrast to the weak(er) relationship of subjects with the task found in the majority of relevant studies described in the literature, the subjects used here were avid players of online games. Therefore, it is supported that their interest in gaming resulted in their interest in the task. This was confirmed by their answers about the upcoming and then completed task (“fun”, “cool”, “interesting”, etc.). Qualitatively analyzing replies offered some insights into differences between the two modes regarding the relationship between participants and the task, even though the overall character of answers was similar. In particular, players who tried LaRa communication were very enthusiastic about the task, whereas answers provided by gamers of the ELF teams showed that they were more indifferent and less excited about it. Thus, participants of this study who tried the L1-L2 communicative mode appeared to be hopeful and positive about it, as opposed to participants in Blees et al. (2014), who presumed that it would be more difficult than communicating in English.

## 5.3 Comprehension

The most noteworthy results occurred in comprehension, where differences were observed not only between communicative modes, but also between the time of the interviews (before or after game), as well as between nationalities. The fact that attitude of participants towards interactions in L2 and the task was not diverse implies that these factors were not directly correlated to comprehension expectations and feedback, which were characterized by large variation. In other words, a positive attitude towards English, Dutch or German did not guarantee equally positive expectations and remarks concerning comprehension.

Comparing the overall comprehension scores of ELF and LaRa before the game demonstrated that there was no significant difference between the two modes with regard to expectations about comprehension. However, when comprehension scores of each communicative mode were examined separately for each nationality, it was observed that each group had different expectations. More specifically, Germans were

more negative about understanding and being understood by their teammate during the interaction that would follow, whereas the Dutch were quite optimistic. Delving even deeper into this, it was found that Germans were less optimistic than Dutch players concerning both L1-L2 and ELF communication expectations before the game. After the game, however, German participants remained negative about understanding and being understood in English, but became more positive about LaRa comprehension. The Dutch were disappointed by ELF communication, which did not meet their high expectations, and became even more positive (100%) about comprehension achieved through interacting in Dutch and German. These results can be examined and interpreted in various levels.

First of all, the fact that the majority of Dutch people have advanced English language skills, as opposed to the much weaker English skills of Germans, is widely acknowledged. There are many surveys that attempted to translate this general knowledge into specific percentages. Notably, Ginsburgh and Weber (2011) examined disenfranchisement rates in English for Europeans. Their study showed that a percentage of 23% would be excluded from official channels due to insufficient English language knowledge. After comparing this result to Germany's equivalent percentage (62%), the difference is striking. One year later, the European Commission (2012) published information about the language skills of Dutch and Germans that were in agreement with these results. The percentage of people who spoke English as a foreign language was an impressive 90% for the Netherlands, whereas the percentage for Germany was limited to 56%. As indicated by the relevant studies, it is likely that Germans were less comfortable with speaking English compared to the Dutch, as a lower percentage is proficient in the language. This could explain less positive and, more importantly, negative answers of Germans.

There is also another possible explanation that could be relevant for the case of certain Dutch participants. It has been observed that Dutch speakers have a tendency to overestimate their language skills (van Onna & Jansen, 2006). In this thesis, something similar can be said for the case of the Dutch gamer who played in the ELF team of the third game. This player seemed to overestimate his English language skills, as it was clear from the feedback of his teammate, as well as from the way he phrased and spelled his answers, that his proficiency was poorer than what he thought. It thus makes sense that the Dutch are more positive towards L2 interactions, due to their (even unjustifiably

occurring) confidence. This also raises the issue of the degree to which researchers can trust self-reported language proficiency data, which has already been highlighted by many researchers (Ayers, 2010; Edele et al., 2015), especially for the case of speakers with tendencies similar to the ones of Dutch speakers.

A factor that seemed to be important for participants was the accent of their interlocutors in their second language. This came up not only when they were asked to evaluate their communicative experience, but even earlier, when they shared their comprehension expectations. Naturally, all these comments came from participants who had to communicate in English. In fact, 50% of the total of subjects who used the ELF communicative mode referred to accent as a factor able to obstruct comprehension. These players appeared to be insecure about whether they would be able to understand their teammates in case they had a strong Dutch or German accent before the game or pointed out that it was difficult to understand their heavily accented interlocutors after the task was finished. The fact that these gamers considered accent as a key factor for successful comprehension, as they were aware of the fact that they did not share the same L1 with their teammates, might have led to some kind of bias about how easy understanding each other would be. Studies like the one of Lindemann (2002) have shown that this type of prejudice reduces the effort listeners put into understanding their interlocutor. This, subsequently, results in decreased comprehension of foreign-accented speech (Munro & Derwing, 1995). Whether this was the case, or simply that the accent of their teammates was indeed too strong in order to always understand what they were saying, it is certain that accent played an important role in the formation of the comprehension score for the ELF mode, which was lower than the one for LaRa. Such an issue could not have arisen for the L1-L2 communicative mode, since both interactants spoke their native tongue.

As Beerkens (2010) hypothesized while discussing the answers of his participants for LaRa, which were less positive compared to the ELF mode, the fact that Dutch and German speakers appear to be more insecure about L1-L2 communication can be attributed to unfamiliarity with the mode. This does not fully apply here, as participants were almost equally positive about comprehension for the two modes before the game, but can explain the increase of LaRa mode's comprehension score after the game (why they were not equally positive from the beginning), as well as the surprise and excitement of participants. Unfamiliarity was also reflected in comments of participants

before the game in the form of doubts about successfully code-switching between their first and second language, and not switching over to the native tongue of their teammate or English. This was the main reason why they appeared to be more reserved in their answers about comprehension before the game.

Overall, expectations about comprehension did not seem to be much different for the two modes, but views of participants changed after the task was completed. Gamers who communicated in English seemed to be disappointed in their interactions, which were limited to the exchange of very basic information. On the contrary, expectations of LaRa players were surpassed. They were surprised by how deep their communication could get in spite of having to alternate between two languages, and enjoyed the advantages of speaking their native tongue. Moreover, they were able to construct and follow complex gaming schemes.

#### 5.4 Outcome and duration of game

In the majority of games (2 out of 3) couples of players who communicated in Dutch and German won. This means that participants who interacted in English were victorious only once, in the case of the first game. This is in line with the rest of the results, that seem to indicate the LaRa mode as being more effective than ELF communication. Nevertheless, it is important to question the reliability of these results, as well as the degree to which they are relevant to the research question.

The game result seems to correspond to the answers of participants for the second and third game. Therefore, on the one hand, it further enhances what has already been claimed for the communication developed between LaRa participants of these two games, which seemed to be very effective, judging by their enthusiastic remarks. On the other hand, it reflects the indifference or the disappointment of ELF gamers by their communicative experience, which was less successful.

It is essential to query whether the outcome of the first game and the degree to which it can be linked to the research question of this thesis are reliable. If this outcome were examined out of context, as a mere index of effectiveness, it would be linked to an ineffective interaction for LaRa gamers, and an effective one for ELF players, something that would contradict certain answers provided by participants. There is a

number of different reasons why it would not be advised to trust in the reliability of the first game's result. To begin with, the large number of participants caused a great deal of miscommunication, something that delayed the procedure and led to the dissatisfaction of many players, whose attitude and performance could have been negatively affected. However, the major and most relevant to the study problem created by the fact that more participants were involved was the fact that the outcome of the game did not solely depend on the communicative and gaming performance of the two couples of players who were interviewed. There was an attempt of manipulating potential interference of this factor by matching all ten players based on their gaming competence, but this was only possible to a certain degree and did not guarantee results equally reliable with the ones of the two games that followed.

Leaving external factors aside, and looking at the individual remarks of the players directly involved, defeat of the LaRa team does not seem unjustified. The German participant overrated his Dutch language skills before the game, as he was not able to fully comprehend the words of his teammate, and asked him to speak more slowly. The fact that he adjusted his speech pace accordingly, even if unnecessary, indicates the cooperative attitude found in gaming communication, as described by Iaiia (2016). Van Mulken and Hendriks (2015) also found that it is a common strategy for speakers to ask for assistance when communicating in their L2, but offer help in their L1 to non-native speakers. From the feedback provided by the Dutch player of the same team, it became clear that neither of the two players took achieving victory as seriously as expected. As Gee (2007) argues, motivation in gaming functions in a way similar to the way motivation functions in a classroom, which means that it can seriously affect performance. (Such an impact can also be detected in the case of LaRa players of the second game, who were highly motivated to defeat their opponents, and won.) Except for lack of motivation, there is a chance that the two opposing teams were not matched appropriately, as the two teammates thought that their opponents were more skilled in the game. As a consequence, they attributed their defeat to this factor, and not poor communication. Due to this reason, this couple of gamers also decided to play passively, something that could be considered as a successful point of their communication, as it is indicative of following a certain gaming strategy that was adjusted to the circumstances. Besides, comments of the ELF team did not seem to fully

match the game result either (e.g. comprehension problems due to the German player's strong accent). Hence, the outcome of the first game is considered unreliable.

The duration of the games, which was used as an additional effectiveness index, did not render very noteworthy results. The first game was a few minutes shorter than usual, something that could indicate a victorious result achieved slightly more easily than usual for the ELF team. The third game took three minutes longer than the average length of a game of this type, which could imply that victory for LaRa team required extra effort. This information is not reflected in the comments of players, and, thus, the contribution of this factor is questionable. What could be worth mentioning here is the fact that the largest deviation (five minutes) from the average game duration was detected in the second game. Again, this was not very large, but it seems to be in agreement with the remarks of LaRa participants, who appeared to be very motivated, and pleased with their cooperation and communication, in opposition to their ELF opponents, who were disenchanted by their interaction.

## 5.5 First conclusions and comparison to previous studies

To sum up, results of this study led to the inference that receptive multilingualism (L1-L2 communication) was more effective compared to communicating in English as a Lingua Franca for the case of Dutch and German League of Legends players. This finding is in concordance with van Mulken and Hendriks (2015), who also evaluated LaRa communication as more effective compared to ELF. Nevertheless, it contradicts what Blees et al. (2014) discovered, as, according to their results, ELF was more effective. These researchers explained this difference in results with the assumption that L2 proficiency of participants must have been higher in the study of van Mulken and Hendriks (2015), because their subjects were students in Nijmegen, a city close to the Dutch-German border.

Therefore, it is important to investigate the possibility of participants of this thesis having higher L2 proficiency compared to the one of participants in Blees et al. (2014), and relate it to proximity to the Dutch-German border. Returning to proficiency requirements, it can be observed that this study used minimum proficiency requirements for participant recruitment, without specifying a maximum proficiency level. Due to this, proficiency of LaRa players could have been (much) higher than the

minimum proficiency level required in order to participate. Thus, proficiency could indeed have been one of the reasons why findings of this and van Mulken and Hendriks' (2015) study were more favorable for participants communicating in Dutch and German, compared to the ones of Blees et al. (2014). This hypothesis can be confirmed by several answers provided by LaRa gamers about communicating in their L2 in general ("easy", etc.).

After verifying that very high L2 proficiency of participants could have been a possibility for this thesis, the significance of the location of participants, and its proximity to the border, needs to be assessed. Van Mulken and Hendriks (2015) recruited participants who were studying close to the border, in Nijmegen, whereas Blees et al. (2014) used students of a university in Delft, a city in the east of the Netherlands, far from the Dutch-German border. As mentioned above, larger distance from the border was associated with lower proficiency. As participants of this thesis were recruited online, their location was not the same. Nevertheless, two out of the three German LaRa participants (in other words, two out of a total of six LaRa players) were students of Radboud University, and had spent one or two years in Nijmegen. It is interesting that these players responded to LaRa communication much better than the German participant of the first LaRa team, who had not spent a considerable amount of time living or studying in the Netherlands. However, the Dutch participants who used this mode had not lived in Germany or close to the border, but performed, if not better, equally well as the two Germans. This implies that proximity to the border functioned positively for the case of Germans, but did not determine the results of this study, at least for the case of Dutch participants. From their comments, it became clear that the degree to which they were used to code-switching (e.g. in education) played a more significant role in the way they viewed and performed in L1-L2 communication.

## 5.6 Limitations of this study

There is undoubtedly a number of limitations that need to be highlighted before proceeding to more general conclusions. Firstly, the number of participants and the games played were limited. For the reasons highlighted above, proficiency requirements might have been less strict than needed for having a clearer view of the significance of findings. In addition, this study relied on self-reported proficiency, but,

as previously mentioned, this was not always reliable, as it depended on the subjective and sometimes inaccurate judgment of subjects. The factors examined were limited, and the content of the dialogues was not analyzed (e.g. for finding which strategies were used). Lastly, in spite of special adjustments described in the methodology, and due to the fact that gaming is a highly complex cognitive task, it is still probable that other interfering factors (gaming skills, equipment, etc.) aside from communication affected the results.

## 6. Conclusions

This thesis examined whether English as Lingua Franca or receptive multilingualism (L1-L2 communication) was more effective in the oral communication developed between Dutch and German players of the online game “League of Legends”. Using authentic data from couples consisting of one Dutch and one German player who communicated in English on the one hand, and in Dutch and German on the other, it was found that LaRa interactions were more effective compared to ELF communication.

An interesting finding was that generally positive expectations regarding ELF communication were not met, but more reserved views on LaRa were surpassed. On the one side, this implies that the use and value of L1-L2 interactions are still not as widespread as ELF communication. On the other side, combined with the great enthusiasm of participants about LaRa communication, and their indifference about using ELF, this finding indicates that the ELF mode, as the standard type of communication used in interactions between speakers with different mother tongues, is not an exciting option anymore, something that can negatively affect communicative performance. Young speakers seem open to try new communicative modes. In fact, particularly for intercultural communication in the gaming environment, it became evident that players do not interact exclusively in ELF, but often proceed to the selection of different modes, based on their own or their teammates’ language skills.

As for the nationality of participants, it was shown that Germans were more negative, especially about interacting in English, compared to Dutch participants, who were generally more positive, but expectations and opinions about LaRa

communication were almost equally positive for both groups. This was connected to higher L2 proficiency of Dutch speakers, as well as their tendency to overestimate their language skills. Nationality is thus related to both comprehension expectations and skills, and this should be taken into account when selecting groups of participants for similar studies.

The L1-L2 communicative mode led participants to victory more often, and the game where this type of communication was most effective was also accompanied by short duration, which was associated with easiness and flexibility in communication. All participants showed vivid interest in, and were positive towards the task, something that is in concordance with one of the main arguments of the study, namely that authenticity is a key factor for the selection of a task in studies that evaluate the effectiveness of communicative modes. It is highly advised that future studies follow this example, by using tasks that are authentic, and relevant to the characteristics on the basis of which participants were recruited (gamer, student, etc.), as well as the area they wish to generalize to (gaming, education, etc.).

The qualitative design of the study provided deep insights into the communicative experience of speakers that would most likely have remained obscure if exclusively quantitative methods had been followed. It became clear that ELF communication can pose serious impediments to comprehension. One that seems to be of great importance to interactants using this communicative mode with their conversational partners is non-native, and heavily influenced by a speaker's L1 accent. On the contrary, similar issues do not occur in L1-L2 dialogues, as interlocutors use their native languages. This mode additionally helps speakers communicate more complex messages, as was shown by the elaborate gaming schemes LaRa teammates co-constructed during their online calls, as opposed to what can be conveyed through intercultural interactions in English, which seems to be limited at a very superficial level.

The evidence from this study confirmed that additional cognitive effort is required for code-switching, compared to the one needed for L1-L1 or L2-L2 interactions. Notwithstanding this, the degree to which this difficulty associated with the LaRa mode can impede communication seems to be overestimated. On the one hand, situations involving code-switching become more and more frequent (online communication, increased mobility, migration, and foreign language learning, official multilingualism

in certain countries, etc.). This renders L1-L2 communication not only more likely to naturally occur, but also more “normalized”. On the other hand, it can be deduced from answers of participants that this weakness of receptive multilingualism can be relatively quickly and easily overcome along the way, as interlocutors get used to communicating in this way. It is thus corroborated that familiarity and practice play a crucial role in the effectiveness of LaRa communication.

This thesis provided the first evidence that receptive multilingualism is a highly effective communicative mode for the communication between players with different, and potentially typologically and geographically related L1s, such as Dutch and German, as developed in the context and for the purposes of an online game, such as “League of Legends”. This alternative communicative mode appeared to be more successful than communication using English as a Lingua Franca. Due to space and time limitations, this thesis did not investigate or analyze the topic of LaRa and ELF effectiveness in the communication developed between gamers exhaustively. However, it is hoped that it will serve as a starting point for similar studies. In this regard, future research could examine the content of such L1-L2 and ELF interactions, and detect, compare, and discuss communication strategies used by players of online games in each communicative mode. It would be further beneficial to combine qualitative analysis with quantitative methods, in order to strengthen the reliability of results, and carefully estimate their significance. Finally, it would be interesting to conduct a similar research project using speakers from different groups, or comparing different group combinations, on the basis of the language status in each country. For example, since nationality and familiarity with code-switching proved to be important for the effectiveness of L1-L2 communication, a future study could examine whether there is a difference between speakers from countries with one official language and speakers from counties with official multilingualism with regard to their attitude towards LaRa, as well as their communicative performance using this mode.

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## Appendix

List of standard questions asked in interviews before (1-3) and after (4-6) the game.

- 1) Do you think you and your teammate will understand each other during the call?
- 2) How do you usually feel when you have to communicate in Dutch/German/English?
- 3) How do you find the task?
- 4) How did you find your communication with your teammate? Did you understand each other?
- 5) How did you feel during your conversation?
- 6) How did you find the task?