The effectiveness of games in improving language teaching in socioeconomically deprived areas

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Online games can be a useful tool in aiding students’ language learning, especially in deprived areas.

School-led recommendations
- Change teaching methods
- More choice
- Promote benefits
- Cultural knowledge

Government-led recommendations
- Schemes for resource access
- Change assessment methods
- Community resources
- Start languages earlier

This study takes inspiration from the communicative language teaching approach (CLTA).

Games are often considered as effective in improving students’ communicative skills.

Introduction
- The uptake of languages at GCSE and A Level has been in decline for a number of years
- Schools in more deprived areas are most severely affected by this
- This has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic

Methods
- 8 university students aged 18 – 22
- Participants from deprived areas who learnt languages in UK schools
- Semi-structured interviews
- Not easily generalisable, but can be used as a starting point for future study

Discussion
- Language classes focus on passing exams rather than communicating
- Students from socioeconomically deprived areas have more difficulty practising at home
- Games are seen as engaging and widely accessible

Conclusion
- Games can be useful - lack of access to resources outside of school
- Provides a new way to engage students
- Teacher support is still necessary to explain complex aspects e.g. grammar