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<div align="center">Literate Activity in League of Legends</div>

1. Introduction

For me, literacy began as a simple idea. I believed that all it encompassed was someone's ability to read or write. Literacy, however, is much more than that. It is the ability to use language to engage with the world around you in various ways. Fishman talks about how literacy in Amish communities differs from that of literacy elsewhere. This is similar to how literacy in online subcommunities, such as those created around an online game, varies as compared to literacy you might find in other walks of life. Furthermore, literacy can be learned through anything. "While Eli Jr., like his siblings, is learning the necessity and value of literacy, what literacy means to him and the ways in which he learns it may differ in both obvious and subtle ways from what it means and how it's transmitted to many mainstream children…" (Fishman 10). On the other hand, Halvey figures out that literacy can be found in many different activities, like dancing. "This concept coincides with what many literacy scholars have to say about literacy across two or more discourse communities. For example, Newkirk's… study focuses on the literacy of children's drawings…" (Halvey 34). Reading this quote, you begin to grasp just how many different forms of literacy exist. That leads me to the topic of this report: how literacy plays around League of Legends (hereafter League). Players can read up on long guides or wiki articles to learn about various characters to learn how to play the game. Players can improve their sense of community by working together as a team to defeat the enemy. Additionally,

players can use the in-game chat feature to coordinate as a team or, in some cases, put down other players. Ultimately, all of this works together to result in people learning about literacy just by playing the game.

2. Methodology

Before discussing my methodology for this observation, I want to explain what League is. Understanding the game will help you understand the rest of the paper. League is a free-to-play, online competitive game where players are split into two teams of five. Each team starts at opposite sides of a map, near Nexus structures. The objective is to destroy the other team's Nexus. There are also side objectives, like killing boss monsters, which strengthen the team. I chose the most popular game mode, Summoner's Rift, for this observation. Strategy is critical in League. Each player must choose a champion to play as, and there are over one hundred champions with unique abilities. As a result, there are a massive number of possible champion combinations that a team can have. This, combined with the fact that each game of League is unique, means that the game has a lot of strategic depth.

For this research, I played one game of League with a group of three friends. I believe this was the best way to observe the activity because of League's five-person team nature—since there were four of us, there was the added bonus of one random player to mix things up. This specific game took place on September 8, 2022, between the hours of eight and nine at night. Throughout the game, I observed the players with the intention of recording any literate activities I saw. However, the main things I watched were the in-game chat window and the various other communication methods between players.

3. Results

Throughout the game, the ten players communicated in many different ways. There was a lot of literate activity going on during the game. The players communicated through the in-game chat window and other methods such as voice chat or pings. They also spoke through their actions in the game, such as using abilities and items.

In the in-game chat window, players would constantly comment on what they were doing as well as the current state of the game. For example, some players would type in the chat to track when the enemy had used a particular ability with a long cooldown because they would be weaker when they couldn't use it. There is also a cross-team chat in the game, primarily used to poke fun at the enemy team or for insults if players got too competitive.

Our group's voice chat platform was Discord, which is technically separate from League, but I think it counts anyway since League also has a voice chat feature. We used voice chat to communicate our plans or ask for help when we were in a sticky situation. Finally, we used pings as literary devices. Pings are simply a way to communicate without using words. In League, players can use different types of pings to signal different things. For example, there is a ping for when an enemy is spotted, or an ally is low on health. Pings are a quick and easy way to communicate and can be very useful in certain situations.

I also think that players' in-game actions count as literate activity. Due to the game's complex nature, players must strategize and plan to succeed. Players have to be able to think ahead to make the best decisions possible. Players can also pick up on their teammates' ideas and build on them. For example, if one player has a good idea but doesn't have the resources to execute it, another player on the team may be able to help them out. This type of teamwork is essential to win the game. This can also be done without communication.

4. Discussion

Overall, I think that League is a game that involves a lot of literate complexity. Though it may not be evident initially, I hope I've done a good enough job of showcasing why I believe that. Players showcase literate activity through the in-game chat window, voice chat, pings, and even their actions in the game.

This leads me back to both Fishman and Halvey's articles. It relates to Fishman's article in the sense that literacy doesn't necessarily have to be what you expect it to be. In the same way that literacy varies in the Amish versus the non-Amish, different kinds of literacy can be found in anyone, even those who play video games. I think this is showcased the best in the quote, "he knew what counted as writing in his world, just as he knew what counted as reading. He learned…that being able to write means being able to encode, to copy, to follow format, to choose content, and to list. And, when he arrived at school…these same abilities…were all that mattered there, too…" (Fishman 15). It also relates to Halvey's article since dancing can be compared to playing a game—both are heavily learned hobbies. "Briana reported that she keeps herself up-to-date about the dance world by reading what she refers to as 'random articles' online pertaining to dance or working out." This relates to what a League player might do to learn about the new additions to the game. Overall, even if most don't expect it, literacy can be found anywhere—even in a game like League of Legends.

Works Cited

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