



Inclusive video game design ideas for a language course
Design a game for ESL

Make Interactive quizzes

Introduction

Game feel, also called juice, is an invisible thing in a game. It is what the game feels like to play. Fun is all about our brains feeling good, the release of endorphins into our system. Fun from games arises out of mastery. It arises out of comprehension. It is the act of solving puzzles that makes games fun.

You guessed it, one should aim at making quizzes more fun to engage students. We'll see the components of fun to explore avenues for doing that.

How to juice your quizzes

The recipe for fun

Impact/reward

As humans, we like to have an impact on our environment. It gives us a feeling of control. The more impact, the better. The more lasting consequences, the better. It feels more impactful to write on a shelf with a permanent marker than with a crayon on a piece of paper. What people love to have an impact on is other people. When moving a piece in chess you not only change the board positions but create a situation for your opponent. It is also a great engagement leverage to feel relationship and working for something bigger than you. Another great impact is reward. Provide acoustic and eye candy rewards to the players/learners.

Best rewards have an impact on their own, for example, experience points in games give the player more power when enough are gathered. They spend it to unlock new abilities and new ways to impact the environment!

Artificially delaying rewards creates expectations and can increase their effectiveness. Another thing that boosts the impact of the rewards is randomness: randomized reward values create an expectation and pleasure for the high gains. It's like a casino.

Challenge

Challenge is at the core of fun. It is due to the pleasure of the sensation of mastery. Overcoming an obstacle is rewarding.

Too much challenge though and it becomes frustrating, while not enough and the player gets bored.

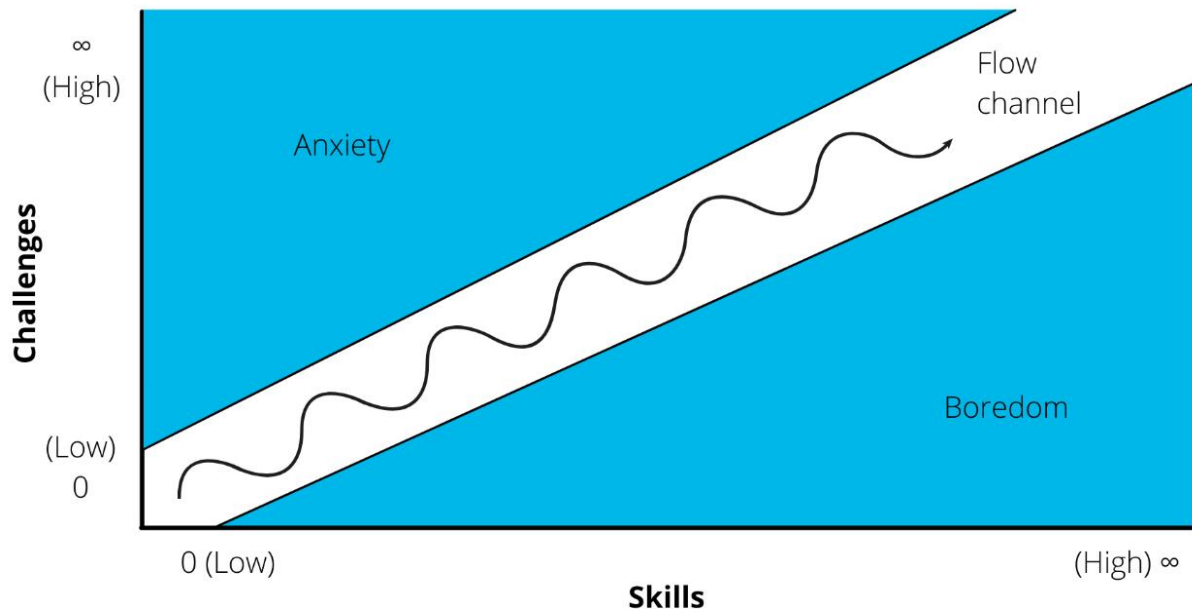


Figure 1. The flow theory

Attaching rewards to a completed challenge is great.

A challenge must feel fair and provide feedback on how well the player is doing.

Fantasy

It is the setting, the world around your game and it is very powerful. We like to escape reality and empathize with characters. The same game mechanics with a nice world and narrative can be much more enjoyable.

Ideas for a gamified quiz

Following the fun and engagement theories in game design, we propose some reflections on how to gamify a quiz.

Using supporting gameplay

The quiz is part of a game with 2 gameplay. For example, the good answers generate munitions for a shooting game or balls for a basketball game.

Example Impact/rewards

Each good answer gets the class experience points, when reaching a level they can peak at a question of their next exam or they can get bonus points for the next exam.

Example fantasy

A spy lost in a foreign country asks their remote support team language questions to infiltrate a party.

Challenge

It's the questions of the quiz, and the 2nd core gameplay if you use one.

Example of meaning (something bigger than them)

You can have a Jenga tower set up in the classroom while performing the quiz. If the Jenga tower falls they all get a surprise exam. Each wrong answer means removing a block from the tower.

The reward points and their effects (peaking at exam...) are collective.

If you use secondary gameplay you can also have students choose which student will play in the secondary gameplay.


Quiz tools

Ready-made

Some quiz tools let you easily create quizzes that are visually appealing.

Online platforms

[Kahoot!](#) And [Quizziz](#) are online platforms on which you can create quizzes. Students can connect to answer questions simply by using a code generated by the application, and you can check the results. It's possible to integrate images and videos into the quizzes.



You can also use [genially](#), it's more general and aimed at creating interactive content, like presentations, but it works great to create quizzes. You have more control over the display but will have to put in a bit more work.

Ideas for making your own tools

You can gamify quizzes by making a narrative game with choices.

Good game engines for this are [Twine](#) and [Ink](#).

With the right tutorials, they are quite easy to use and can let you create interactive fiction.

Think about a setting that requires language (infiltrated spy, xeno-archeologist...) and make it a playable story.

Conclusion

Gamification is more complex than putting badges on quizzes. However, quizzes can be a great tool. From time to time, try to spice them with the 3 components of fun: impact/reward, challenge and fantasy.

Resources and references

- [Joseph Tyroller]. (2020, April 14). 'Can We Make This Button Fun To Press?' [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7L1B5YaxxoA>



Co-funded by the European Union

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Project code: 2021-1-BE01-KA220-SCH-000027783

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