Games 4 You

Game-based digital learning. Playing to teach

ERASMUS+2023-ES02-KA210-ADU-000174J66
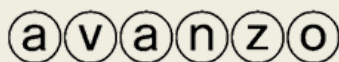
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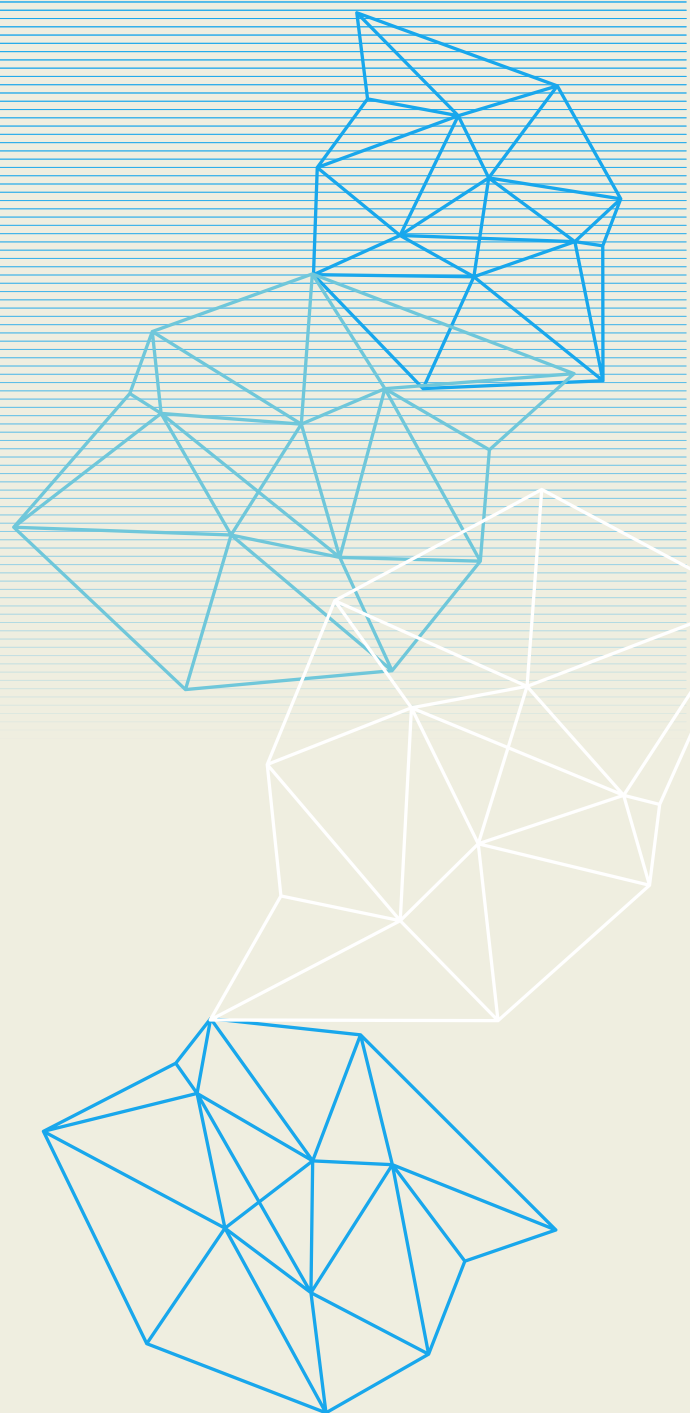# 4. Practical tips

**INTEGRATING GAMIFICATION
IN THE PROCESS OF ADULT LEARNING**

Adaptation to different linguistic and cultural characteristics, past experiences, specific problems and solutions

4.1.Distinguishing between gaming and training.

A.1. Definitions

TEACHING

The process of acquiring knowledge, skills and competencies in order to develop intellectual and practical abilities necessary for personal and professional development. The training aids in the understanding of new information and improves the ability to solve problems and make decisions. The training process can be implemented in three ways - through education, through experience or through mentoring. As for the environment in which it takes place, training can be formal (at school, university) or informal (self-study, practice).

GAMIFICATION

Application of game elements and mechanisms in situations and processes where the game is usually used very rarely or not at all. It has been proven that when gamification is used, the engagement and pleasure of the participants increases. Most often, game elements include points, rewards, levels, leaderboards, and challenges. Gamification is used in various fields, such as education, marketing, work, healthcare, and others. The introduction of game elements aims to turn routine or complex tasks into more fun and motivating tasks, incentivizing users to achieve better results or interact more actively.

A.2. Using gamification in the learning process

Gamification helps to acquire new knowledge and skills faster, making the learning process more dynamic, engaging and effective, and learning more fun, motivating and effective.

A.2.1. Ways in which gamification can be applied:

- **Points and Rewards**

Learners receive points or badges for completing tasks, solving quizzes, or participating in discussions. This motivates them to keep learning and improving their skills.

- **Difficulty Levels**

The learning process has different levels of difficulty, similar to video games. Learners start with easier tasks and gradually move on to more complex ones, which builds confidence and knowledge.

- **Charts**

The introduction of leaderboards creates competition between learners, which motivates them to strive for better results.

- **Challenges and missions**

Introducing thematic challenges or missions related to the learning material, which makes learning interactive and stimulates critical thinking.

- **Achievement Awards**

Providing virtual or real-world rewards for achieving certain goals or skills stimulates commitment and the desire to succeed.

- **Scenarios and role-playing games**

In simulations or role-playing games, learners apply their knowledge to realistic situations, making learning more practical and interactive.

- **Continuous feedback**

Creating feedback through progress, assessment, or messaging that helps learners correct their mistakes and improve their scores.

- **Team Activities**

Group assignments and competitions encourage collaboration and communication between learners.

A.2.2. Comparison of classical training with training based on gamification

Classical learning (more traditional and structured, with a strong emphasis on academic goals and systematic knowledge acquisition) and gamification-based learning (makes the learning process more interactive and fun by stimulating engagement through game elements) differ in several main characteristics related to the approach to motivation, teaching methods, student engagement and learning process goals:
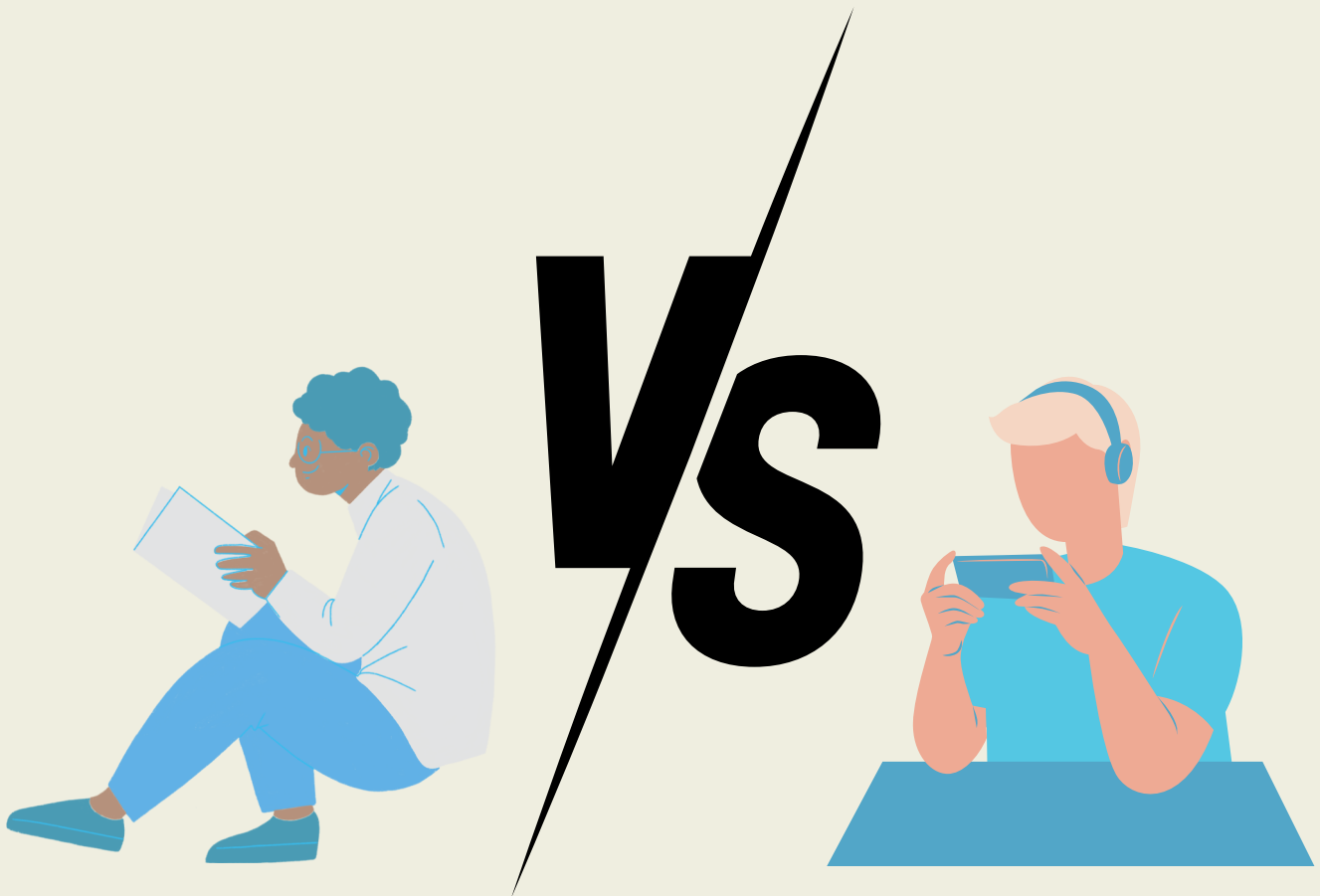
CLASSICAL TRAINING	LEARNING WITH GAMIFICATION
Motivation	
It is usually based on intrinsic motivation (desire to acquire knowledge) or extrinsic motivation (grades, diplomas, recognition). Learners are stimulated through assessments, examinations and recognised qualifications.	It focuses on extrinsic motivation through game elements such as points, badges, levels, and rewards. It uses game methods to make the process more fun and engaging, engaging learners through competition, challenges, and rewards.
Student engagement	
It varies depending on the teaching style and the interest of the learners in the material. If the approach is more passive, they may lose interest and become less engaged.	Stimulates active engagement through games and fun challenges. The inclusion of game elements motivates learners to participate more actively and to compete or collaborate with others.

Learning objectives	
The main goal is the acquisition of knowledge and skills, with a focus on a deep understanding of topics and the development of analytical abilities. The assessment is usually based on theoretical and practical exams.	It aims to make the learning process more engaging and improve motivation. Knowledge and skills are also a goal, but the emphasis is often on short-term achievement, commitment, and fun.

| Feedback	
It usually comes in the form of grades, exams and comments from the trainer, and can be intermittent and delayed.	Frequent and instant through game mechanisms - collecting points, passing levels, ranking in lists. Learners can immediately see their progress and adjust their behavior.

Competition and cooperation

It is usually implicit and manifests itself through the assessments and successes of individual learners. The collaboration is structured through group projects or class discussions.

It creates explicit competition through leaderboards and competitions, but also stimulates collaboration through team missions and challenges. The mechanisms encourage both individual and group activity.

Awards and achievements

Traditionally, they are associated with academic results - diplomas, certificates or recognition of excellence.

In-game rewards such as points, badges, virtual trophies, or additional in-game benefits are immediate and aimed at driving engagement.
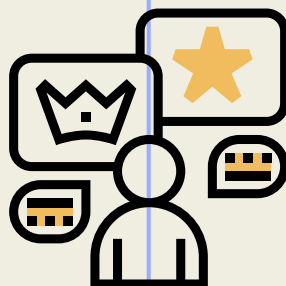
Approach to failure

It is often seen as a negative result that leads to lower grades or the need to retake an exam.	It is taken as part of the learning process, similar to games, where players can try to succeed repeatedly. This reduces the fear of making mistakes and encourages experimentation and repetition.

Emotional engagement

It can trigger emotions such as stress or the pressure of exams, but also satisfaction with success. Emotional engagement is more related to the content of the learning material.	It stimulates positive emotions such as joy, fun and satisfaction from overcoming challenges. It often uses dynamics that make the process more fun and motivating.

Flexibility and adaptability	
Structured and often less flexible, with fixed goals and methods that are strictly followed. It is difficult to adapt to the individual needs and learning styles of each student.	It is usually more flexible and adaptable, allowing for personalized learning paths. Game mechanics can be modified depending on the level of the learner and their preferences.

A.2.3. Classic Learning vs. Gamification-Based Learning

The choice between classical learning and gamification-based learning depends on various factors: learning objectives, context, learning styles of learners, nature of the material.

When is **CLASSICAL TRAINING** preferable

- **Seriousness of the topic**

When training touches on critical areas, such as medicine, law, or safety, the classical approach can provide the necessary depth and seriousness.

- **Deep knowledge acquisition**

If the goal is to achieve an in-depth understanding of complex concepts and theories, classical learning offers a structured approach

- **Standardized tests and assessment**

In contexts where assessment and certification play an important role, classical training provides a formal framework.

- **A more structured environment**

In situations where learners prefer clear instructions and methodology, the classical approach is preferable.

*When is **LEARNING WITH GAMIFICATION** preferable*

- **Increase engagement**

Gamification is especially useful when the goal is to increase learners' motivation and engagement, especially in less interactive or routine topics.

- **Developing practical skills**

In situations where learners need to apply their knowledge in practical situations, game scenarios make learning more realistic and applicable.

- **Fostering collaboration**

When it is important to encourage interaction between learners, gamification offers opportunities for teamwork and competition.

- **Personalized learning**

Gamification allows the learning process to be adapted depending on the individual needs and pace of learning of the learners.

COMBINED APPROACH

In many cases, combining the two approaches can be effective. A typical example is a process where the basics of a topic are mastered through classical learning, after which gamification is used to apply this knowledge in practical scenarios.

A.3. Effects and difficulties of using gamification in the learning process

A.3.1. Positive effects

- **Increased motivation**

Gamification makes learning more fun and exciting, which incentivizes learners to participate more actively. Rewards, points, and achievements keep them interested and motivate them to keep moving forward.

- **Engagement and attention**

The game elements hold the attention of the learners and engage them in a deeper interaction with the material. They become more attentive and engaged in each task because they feel the immediate impact of their actions.
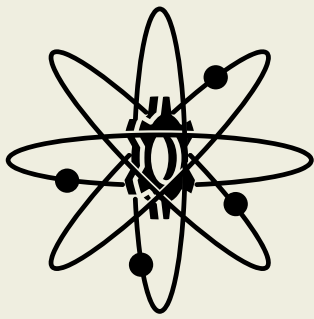
- **Increased productivity**

By setting clear goals and regular feedback, gamification helps learners focus on their progress and work more efficiently. Points and rewards encourage faster and better completion of tasks.
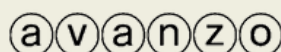
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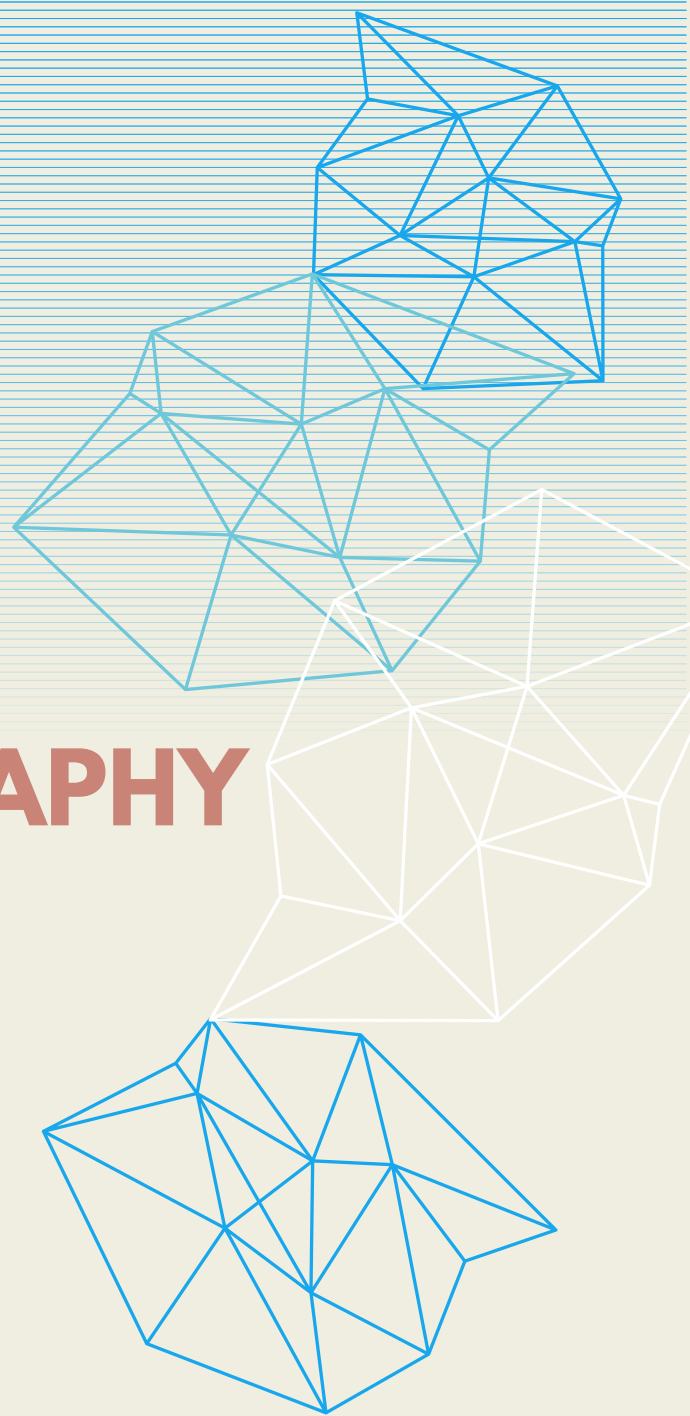
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- „Gamification by Design: Implementing Game Mechanics in Web and Mobile Apps" - Zichermann, G., & Cunningham, C. (2011), O'Reilly Media.Practical examples of using gamification techniques that can also be adapted for learning purposes

GAMES 4
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