



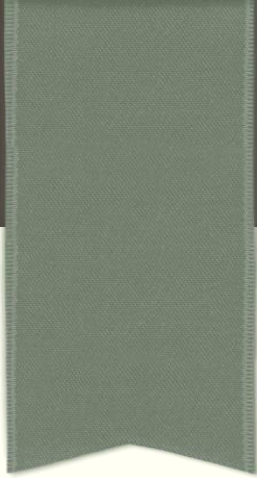
FORMALIZING CASUAL TABLETOP GAMES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING

Stamatia Savvani, PhD student, University of Essex, UK



Preview

- Approaches to gameful language teaching
- Teacher attitudes to gameful teaching
- Storytelling/Role-playing/Word games
- Aligning games to school curricula



THE WHY

Why apply COTS games for language education?

Gameful approaches to language teaching

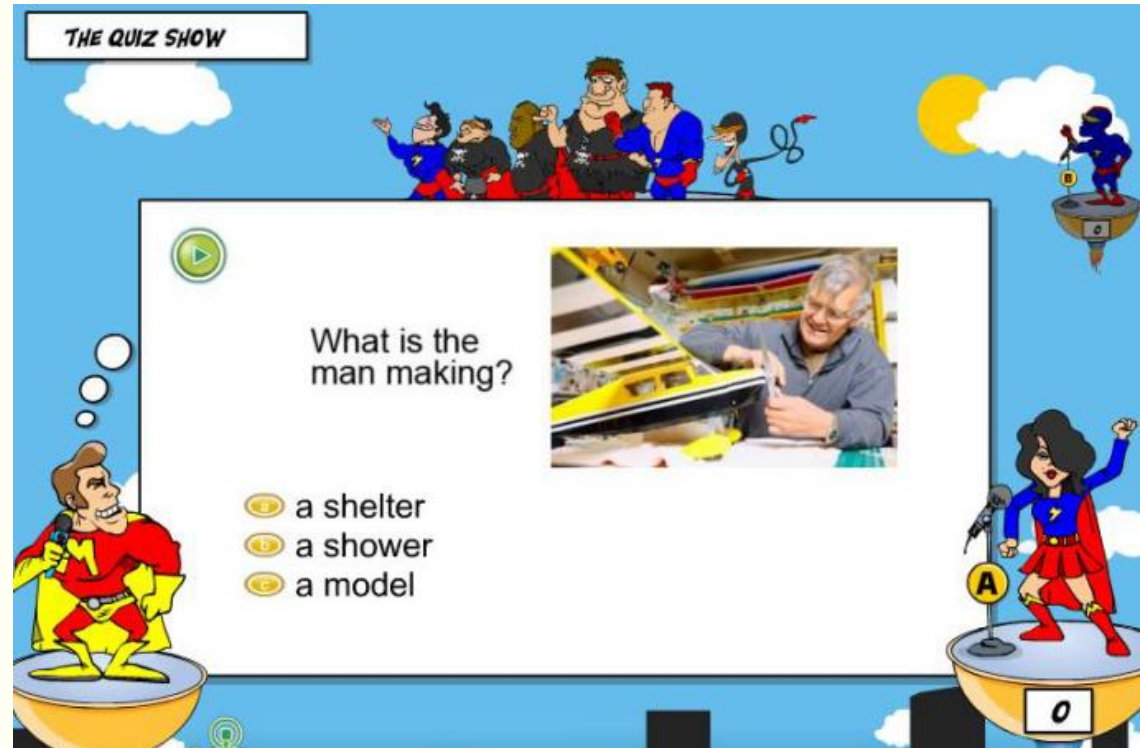
Game-Informed/Gamification

Application of game elements

Behaviorist

Gameful testing

HCI interaction, limited language production



Gameful approaches to language teaching

Game-Enhanced	Game-Based
Use of vernacular games	Use and or creation of games as the main unit of a lesson
Authentic	Exploratory
Meaningful language practice	Reflective language practice
Social interactions	Social interactions & creativity



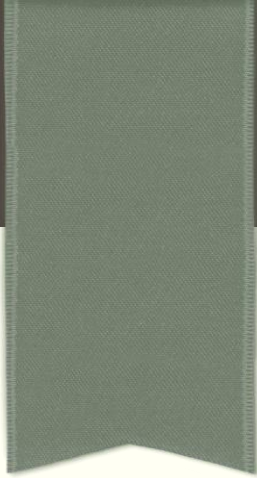
Teacher practices to gameful teaching

Games as/for:

- Individual activities
- Rewards
- Shallow engagement

*Teachers have rejected
gamified approaches*





THE WHAT

What kind of COTS games to apply in the language classroom?

Method

The Context:

- English as a Foreign Language
- A1-B1 CEFR levels
- 45-60-minute classes

Criteria for Advanced Search on Board Game Geek website:

- Game category: party games
- Gameplay: 15-30 minutes
- Complexity: 1-2/5



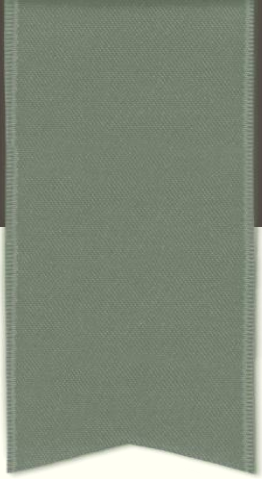
6 casual games

6 casual games

Analysis looked at:

- Game Mechanics
- Ties to Grammar
- Ties to Vocabulary

“Casual is so far best defined by the easiness of the game experience in its expanded sense, covering the whole experience from the accessing of a game to playing it” Kuittinen et al. 2007



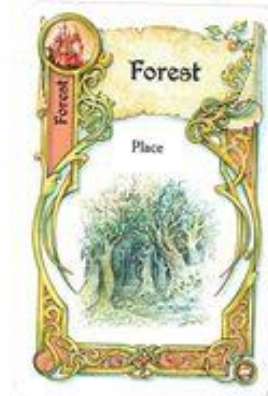
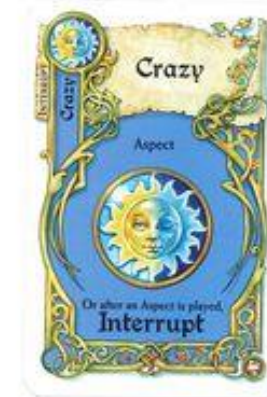
THE HOW

How to apply COTS games for language education?

Storytelling games

Once Upon a Time & Storyline

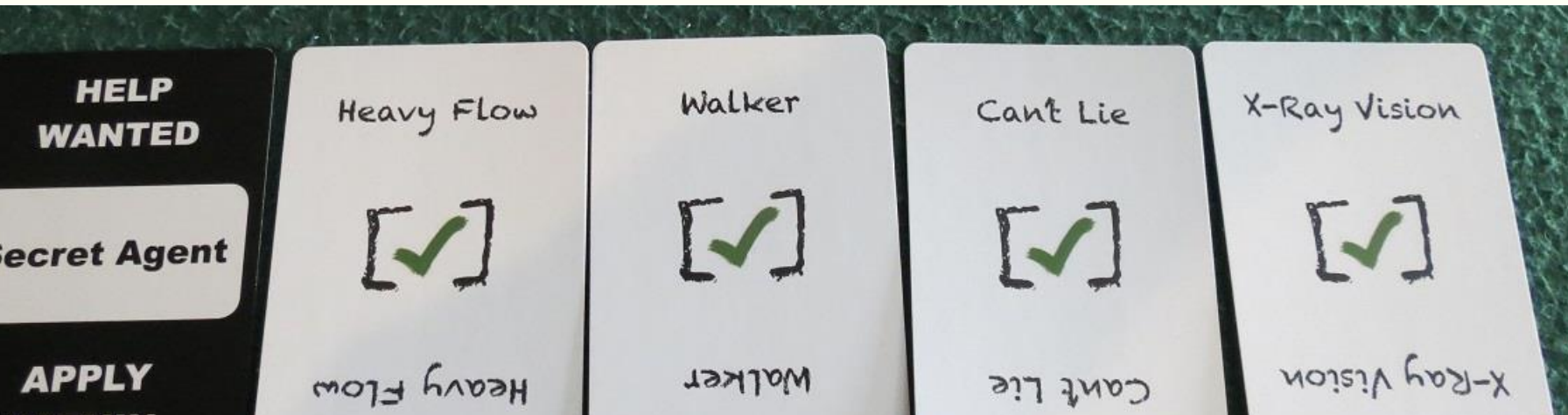
- Storytelling, voting
- Past Simple tense, parts of speech
- Fairytales, descriptive adjectives



Role-playing games

Spyfall & Funemployed

- Role-playing, acting
- What/When/Yes or No questions, Conjunctions
- Professions, Locations



Word games

Codenames & Taboo

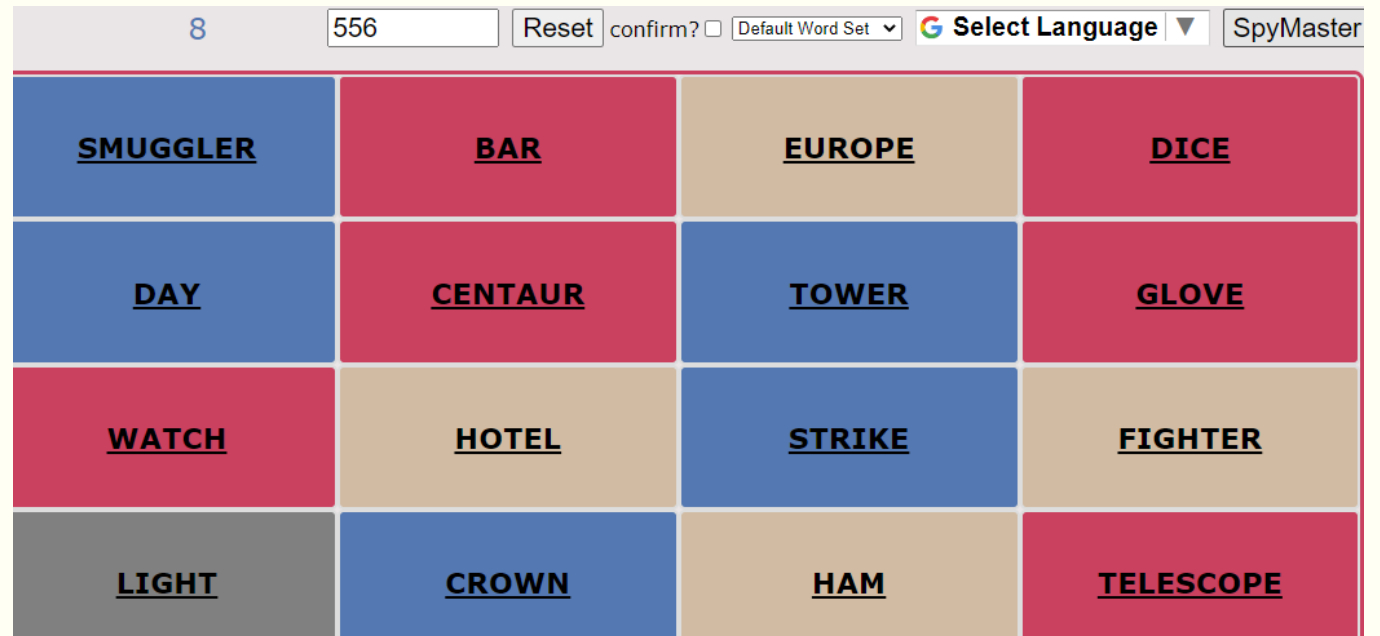
- Communication limits, team-based
- Relative clauses (who,which), synonyms



Online learning

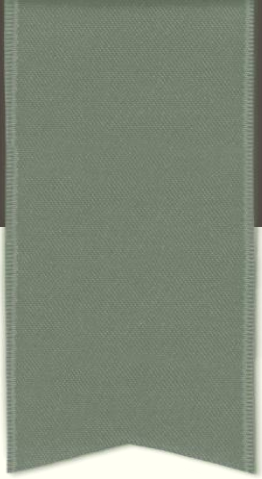
Play Spyfall & Codenames online
(advantage: customizable content)

Apps for Storytelling games
(e.g. StoryCubes; creative writing through prompts)



The screenshot shows a web interface for an online game. At the top, there is a header bar with a score of 8, a word count of 556, a 'Reset' button, a 'confirm?' checkbox, a 'Default Word Set' dropdown, a 'Select Language' dropdown, and a 'SpyMaster' button. Below the header is a 4x4 grid of words, each in a different colored box. The words are: SMUGGLER, BAR, EUROPE, DICE, DAY, CENTAUR, TOWER, GLOVE, WATCH, HOTEL, STRIKE, FIGHTER, LIGHT, CROWN, HAM, and TELESCOPE.

8	556	Reset	confirm? <input type="checkbox"/>	Default Word Set	Select Language	SpyMaster
<u>SMUGGLER</u>	<u>BAR</u>	<u>EUROPE</u>	<u>DICE</u>			
<u>DAY</u>	<u>CENTAUR</u>	<u>TOWER</u>	<u>GLOVE</u>			
<u>WATCH</u>	<u>HOTEL</u>	<u>STRIKE</u>	<u>FIGHTER</u>			
<u>LIGHT</u>	<u>CROWN</u>	<u>HAM</u>	<u>TELESCOPE</u>			



PARTING WORDS

Food for thought

- Meaningfully link COTS games and curricula objectives
- Familiarise teachers with COTS games
- Establish sound practices for gameful teaching

Big Question:

- How can the game industry assist in creating **truly interactive** lessons-experiences?

Thank you!

Feel free to contact at: stamatia.savvani@essex.ac.uk

