Investigating the Impact of Money Priming in Digital Game Based Learning

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Proposal Summary: Digital game based learning (DGBL) refers to the use of digital educational games for student learning. Careful construction of these serious games is critical to both maintain student engagement and to improve educational outcomes. As part of our research into the construction of DGBL games, we want to explore the use of tokens or score counters that measure player success. A variety of psychological experiments showed that subtly reminding participants ("priming") of the notion of money changed their actions and attitudes. We hypothesize that these results would extend in a DGBL context; the use of monetary tokens (e.g. coins) to represent scores may change player engagement, motivation, and/or the educational outcome. We propose to explore this question together with students in a game programming course; the students will create the games and conduct the experiments to test this hypothesis.

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