Emotional Design Thinking in the Classroom
Successful Teaching Strategies for International Business Educators

Main Learning Objectives:

• Briefly review (understand) the importance of emotions in education. (3 minutes)

• Practical interventions to foster learning while reducing potential boredom and overwhelming anxiety in the classroom. (32 minutes)

• Q&A (10 minutes)

Emotions in education matter. Research showed that emotions give purpose, priority and focus to our students’ thinking. Their emotional state determines where they direct their attention, what they remember and what they learn. Recommended reading: Permission to Feel: Unlocking the Power of Emotions to Help Our Kids, Ourselves, and Our Society Thrive, Marc Brackett – Director Yale University Center for Emotional Intelligence, How Emotions Are Made. The Secret Life of the Brain, Lisa Feldman Barrett – Director Northeastern University Interdisciplinary Affective Science Laboratory.

Boredom and anxiety are the two most important students’ emotional states affecting learning in the classroom. Recommended reading: Beyond Boredom and Anxiety. Experiencing Flow in Work and Play, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi – Former head of the Psychology Department at University of Chicago / Application of Flow in Human Development & Education.

Boredom and anxiety is a problem in college education. Boredom research also indicates that 90% of the college students nationwide text during class, 70% check emails and 40% surf the web. Anxiety: 75% have experienced a sense of overwhelming anxiety at some time. Recent increase in anxiety due to current situation: 83.2% experiencing higher stress level (352 nationwide college students/ CircleIn research)

Emotional Design Thinking Framework

Because students’ emotions can’t be ignored, an Emotional Design Thinking Framework can help IB instructors to think about their students’ emotions when planning their next teaching intervention. The EDDT is focused on the two fundamental emotional states affecting learning (boredom and anxiety) and the two core generic solutions: edutainment and expectation of success centric activities.

Edutainment is mainly aimed to minimize boredom. Expect people to be more bored when deprived of playful behavior. Recommended timing: Second half of the class

Rising Students’ Expectation of Success (evidence based) is mainly aimed to minimize anxiety.
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My Takeaways: Student Profile

Many of them …

- want to see the connection of the course subject with the industry.
  √ How relevant is the course we teach to the job market?

- have low self-confidence.

- are physically and mentally tired as well as distracted.
  √ They have part-time jobs until late night.
  √ They are excessively involved in social media or video games.
  √ They have financial problems.

- do not know how to study, take notes, and read class materials.

Challenge | What works for me?
---|---
Relevance of the subject | Use real-life examples from relevant news sources | Invite guest speakers
Tired and distracted | Stimulate class discussion | Use classroom technology | Be energetic & passionate
Low self-confidence | Give examples from successful graduates | Give them opportunity to express themselves | Feedback
How to study | Include some instructions in the syllabus | Demonstrate in the classroom
Example

Challenge: Relevance of the subject + Tired and distracted

What works for me?
Real life examples + Technology tools + Individual work

Example

Challenge: Tired and distracted + Low self-confidence

What works for me?
Feedback + Technology tools
Some education technology tools

Games

Example

Challenge:
Low self-confidence

What works for me?
Examples from successful graduates

How to receive good grades?

- Review the lecture slides.
- Read the chapters in the book.
- Study the chapter questions, exercises, and cases in the book.
- Follow the business-related news.

Example

Challenge:
How to study

What works for me?
Instructions in the syllabus

You Can Do It: Recent Grad in IB

Mary Lyles

Mary’s Degrees: Bachelor’s degree in Spanish, master’s in international business

Internships during college: World Trade Center of Atlanta, purchasing analyst, Dillard’s

Jobs held since graduating:
- Buyer and private label project manager, Elite Foods, Atlanta, USA
- Sourcing analyst, Estee Lauder, Ranchos Cucamonga, California, USA
- Senior sourcing analyst, Starbucks, Seattle, USA

When she first enrolled in college, Mary considered becoming a dentist. But after
pondering the long hours of science courses required in dentistry, Mary had a change of
heart. Her natural enthusiasm for learning about cultures, languages, and religions
inspired her toward a career in international business. Mary majored in Spanish. A study
abroad program in Granada, Spain, inspired her to pursue a master’s degree in
international business.

Two different approaches: physical and virtual environment (and COVID)

Simplified Emotional Design Thinking Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boredom</th>
<th>Edutainment</th>
<th>Expectation of Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Objective 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Objective 2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anxiety</th>
<th>Edutainment</th>
<th>Expectation of Success</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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Simplified Emotional Design Thinking Framework (Physical classroom) to reduce boredom and anxiety

- Music!
- Polls
- Short videos
- Flipped approach
- Previous readings / assignments
- Discussions in class
- Debates
- Use of their experiences
- Simulations
- My experience

Who I am... (anxiety)

TopHat (boredom)
### Activities to prepare them to discussions (boredom and anxiety)

- **In the Physical Classroom (boredom and anxiety)**
  - Compare two countries
  - What are the communication styles?
  - How are they different?
  - Which strategies do you recommend?
  - How are they related to the cultural dimensions?

- **In the Virtual Classroom**
  - Almost everything that we did in the physical (except Legos and collage)
  - Daily check in (pet? Objects from a trip? Covid situation)
  - Virtual guest speakers
  - Activities in breakout rooms using google sheets or ppts
  - Silence x participation
  - Virtual study abroad
  - Work with international students from different universities.

- **Activities to prepare them to discussions (boredom and anxiety)**
  - **In the Physical Classroom (boredom and anxiety)**
    - Ask their feedback!!
Objective: Offer students opportunities to see first-hand how their content mastery helps them solve a business challenge while encouraging creativity.

Procedure: Students work in global virtual teams to develop solutions, applying the design thinking approach, for a real international business challenge.

Target: Undergraduate and graduate

Key Insight
“Design Thinking is a solutions-based, creative process used to address challenges..... It is rooted in empathy and driven by ongoing feedback, reflection and iteration”

IDEO.org, The Design Thinking Process
Design Thinking Mindsets
- Creative Confidence
- Empathy
- Embrace Ambiguity
- Learn from Failure
- Iterate, Iterate, Iterate
- Optimism

Examples of Activities:
1. Re-frame challenge/How might we….?
2. Draw It/Interview
3. Brainstorm
4. Rapid Prototyping
5. Test

Simplified Emotional Design Thinking Framework

Key Takeaways
- X-Culture with Design Thinking approach offers challenges that can be solved in creative and innovative ways.
- X-Culture can be aligned with design thinking concepts to reduce students' boredom and anxiety, while facilitating learning and mastering content.

Recommendations
- Align course material with X-Culture's timeline.
- Explicitly outline the connection between the experience as an application of learned concepts.
- Allocate more than 20% of the grade to the project.

DR. EVARISTO DORIA
Aesthetics: Research showed that attractive things make people feel good. Reading: Emotional Design. Why we love (or hate) everyday things. Don Norman - Professor Emeritus of Cognitive Science University of California, San Diego

Music: (1) Research showed listening to relaxing music reduces anxiety. (2) Music helps people sync their behavior and attention in time. Reading: The Psychology of Music. Elizabeth Hellmuth Margulis - Director of the Music Cognition Lab Princeton University

Theory in Action: Teaching interventions for the students to practice the theory in the classroom. (Processim Labs with Tableau Data Visualization) Creativity & Play to Win mindset development.

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