

DOMINO: Knowledge Map Tool “For Learning and Fun!”

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Learning tools, as we all know is being developed either for network environment, or for recorded environments such as CD and DVD. The drive behind the design and development of these tools are mostly for distant learning or an information support for classroom sessions.

Whatever the reason is, these tools help the students to self-assess themselves and help them gain some skills on their own. These tools, besides helping students to evolve are also being a profound help to develop a new model of tutoring, liberate of the instructor and fully depended on the performance of the student. So, as an example, leaning duration of a linear conventional sixteen chapter course that will last for sixteen weeks could be totally depended on the knowledge and performance of the student. The student will have the flexibility to go on his own pace. In this model the student could skip the courses he feels to be competent at and could complete the sixteen-week course in a shorter length of time instead of sixteen weeks.

This new learning concept enables new learning system and tools to be designed and creative ideas on the issue to emerge.

We as Department of Interactive Media Design at Yildiz Technical University have designed a learning tool called “Knowledge Map” depending on the facts that have been mentioned above. The tool enables the student to learn in a total time independent environment.

Being a student once, we all know that, any student who has been taking courses, getting into exams or reading supportive texts are doing it not because they love to but they have to! Added to that, if the student is already familiar with the subject and knowing more than the text could tell will loose interest to the subject and class.

Depending on this fact we have tried to come up with a new electronic object, which will leave the control and the pace of the learning experience fully to the users’ control. And we have named it “The Knowledge Map”

To define the user experience we could say the followings:

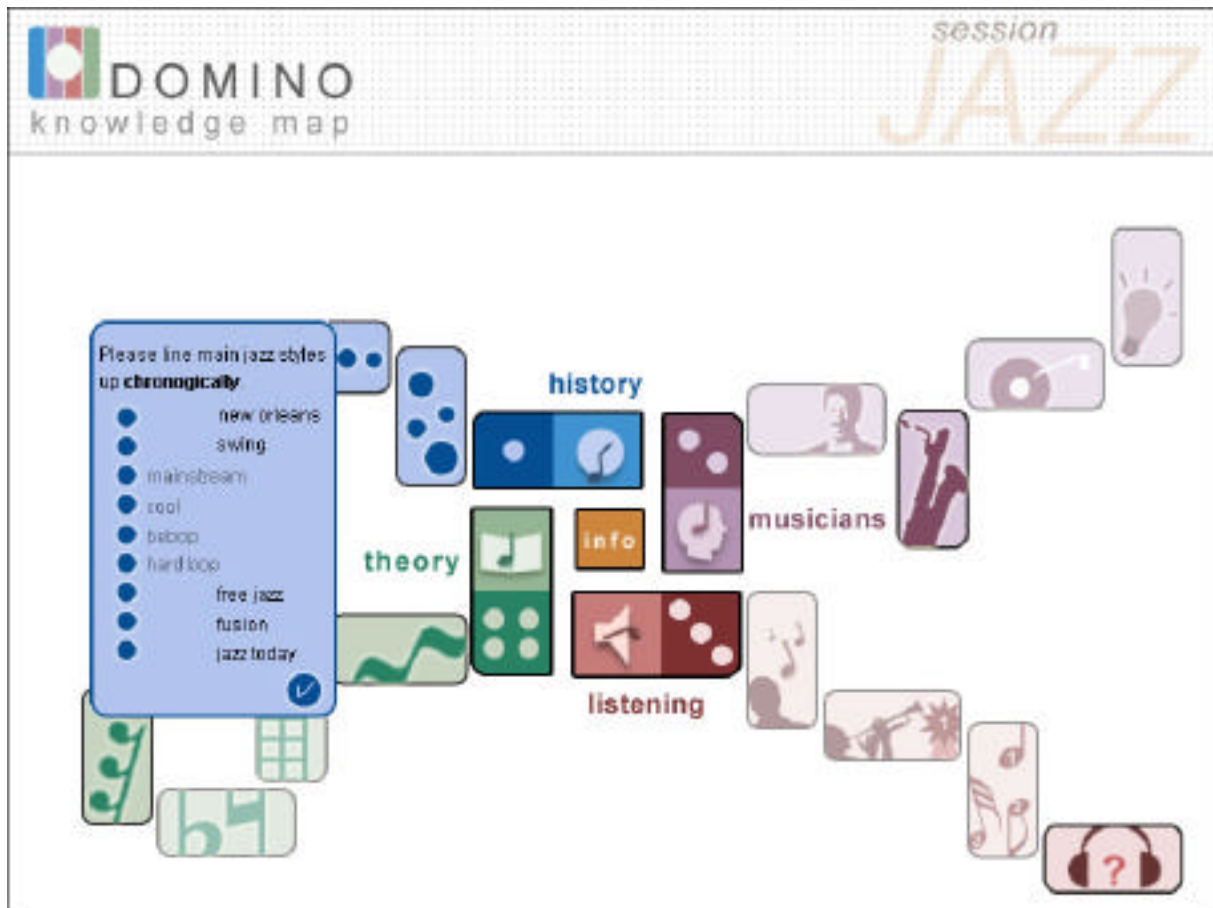
First the user reaches the “Quick Chart” which will give out the basic hints about the course or the subject, by the help of this tool. The look and feel of the interface has been influenced by the game Domino. The information flow of the Chart resembles the game.

Every Domino tile is a part of the subject and has a question about that particular subject.

At the beginning the user starts with a nine-tile Domino quiz.

Every tile when clicked on pops up a multiple answer type question window.

If the user gives out the right answer then the tile becomes a strong color and a new tile appears. If the user gives wrong answer then the tool guides the user to learn the subject by giving out Internet links on the subject and the tiles color turns dim



The user goes to the link to find out class notes about the subject supported with images and texts. We assume the user to get a hold of the concepts and when confident he gets back to the dimmed tile to click and continue the quiz. The knowledge map this time asks a new question on the same issue and assesses the users compatibility on the particular subject.

The system is designed and developed on the game concept, hoping to come out with a learning tool that is more fun and unconventional compared to the already available ones, and this, we hope is going to make the tool more popular.

At the end of a Domino session, the user will both asses himself and by look of the finished session will gain a quick chart that has images, short guides and terminological information about the course made of Domino tiles carrying this information.

As a conclusion, we have a learning tool that is both funs to use, as being time independent, more flexible and graphically pleasing. To mention a few words on the graphical interface, which completes the concept, we believe that heavy images competes with the information and some how creates perceptual conflict while learning. This fact has led us to design a light interface almost minimalist. The interface has been designed monochrome using the colors white as background and hues of blue.

The coding has been done using Lingo script for Macromedia Director. The project can be download from following link: <http://www.siyah.net/koray/domino/domino.htm>