Heuristic Evaluation

Part I

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Part II

I've evaluated the "GuGu" group's low-fi prototype "Eating the world" for mobile environment.
It is designed for tourists who are unsure about what to eat
or where to dine and want to discover new dishes, learn culinary insights,
and enjoy authentic gastronomic experiences during their trip.

Part III

The evaluation took place at Politecnico during lab hours.
One group member acted like the facilitator, explaining how the session would proceed and providing me with the three tasks, the project solution, and relevant contextual information.
Another group member acted as the computer, updating the prototype sheets in response to my clicks.
The materials used for the evaluation included the low-fidelity paper prototype and the list of heuristics to take notes on any violations.
The process began with understanding the purpose of the application, followed by familiarizing myself with the tasks to be completed.
I then performed the simple, the medium and the complex task noting any heuristic violations encountered.

The information provided by the other group was enough to understand how the application works and what their goal was.

Part IV: List of Violations

1. H1 visibility of system status
   Where: During the quiz. (Simple task)
   What: There is no indication of the total number of questions

Why: Users are unaware of how many questions remain before the quiz ends

Severity: 2

2. H2 Match between system and the real world

Where: Restaurant menu (moderate task)

What: The menu is displayed in italian even if the language is set to English

Why: The interface does not match the user's selected language

Severity: 2

3. H2 Match between system and the real world

Where: Search bar on the Home Page (moderate task)

What: the placeholder is "type location" but users are expected to search for a city

Why: It could be confusing for users because the placeholder text does not align with the real-world task users are performing.

Severity: 2

4. H2 Match between system and the real world

Where: "Play" button in the pop-up to start "Learn and Earn" (simple task)

What: the button "Play" open a page to scan the QRcode

Why: The button label does not aling with the user expectation and the subsequent action

Severity: 2

5. H3 User control and freedom

Where: Filters in search procedure (moderate task)

What: There is no button to apply filters

Why: The user can select filters but cannot apply them because there isn't a button to do that

Severity: 4

6. H3 User control and freedom

Where: Filters in search procedure (moderate task)

What: There is no option to exit without saving the selected filters

Why: The user cannot exit without applying the changes

Severity: 3

7. H3 User control and freedom

Where: Booking experience (complex task)

What: There is no option to select the time for a reservation, nor to specify whether the booking is for lunch or dinner

Why: Users are unable to specify a preferred reservation time

Severity: 4

8. H3 User control and freedom

Where: Reservation list

What: There is no option to modify a reservation without deleting it

Why: Users cannot make changes to their existing reservations,

limiting their ability to manage bookings effectively

Severity: 2

9. H4 Consistency and standards

Where: During the quiz (simple task)

What: There is no button to proceed to the next question after the solution and explanation are shown

Why: It violates consistency because users expect to move to the next question after seeing the solution.

However, unlike standard quiz interfaces, there is no clear way to proceed

Severity: 4

10. H4 Consistency and standards

Where: During the quiz (simple task)

What: There is no button to end the quiz

Why: It violates consistency because users cannot easily conclude the quiz,

unlike most quiz interfaces which provide a clear way to finish and submit the quiz

Severity: 4

11. H5 Error prevention

Where: Booking experience (complex task)

What: A checkbox for a "special experience" is available for restaurants without such an option

Why: Users might mistakenly believe they are booking a special experience when it is unavailable.

Severity: 3

12. H5 Error prevention

Where: Booking experience (complex task)

What: Past dates are not disabled

Why: Users can accidentally select past dates

Severity: 2

13. H5 Error prevention

Where: Reservation list on the profile page (simple task)

What: The button "Learn and earn" is enabled even before the date of the reservation

Why: Users might think they can start the quiz at any time,

even though it requires scanning a QR code at the restaurant

Severity: 2

14. H6 Recognition rather than recall

Where: Page displaying opening hours (moderate task)

What: The restaurant name is not shown

Why: Users must remember which restaurant they are checking

Severity: 2

15. H6 Recognition rather than recall
    Where: Booking experience (complex task)
    What: There is no user feedback or confirmation
    Why: Users cannot confirm if their booking was successful without checking the reservation list and searching for the new entry
    Severity: 3
16. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use
    Where: Restaurant page (moderate task)
    What: Only the current day's opening hours are shown
    Why: To view opening hours for other days, users must navigate to a different page, which reduces efficiency
    Severity: 2
17. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use
    Where: Page displaying all reservations - profile page
    What: There is no direct link to the reservations list
    Why: Users must navigate through their profile to access the reservation list
    Severity: 2
18. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design
    Where: Home page (moderate task)
    What: The triangle icon to expand the list of culinary highlights is placed in a separate section from the label
    Why: It could be unclear that the icon is related to the label above it, can cause confusion for users
    Severity: 1
19. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design
    Where: Home page (moderate task)
    What: The "Culinary highlights" filter is separate from the basic filters
    Why: It appears as a distinct section instead of being integrated with the dropdown filter options
    Severity: 2
20. H9 Help user recognize, diagnose, and recover form errors
    Where: Pop-up for destination not found (moderate task)
    What: The message only says "destination not found" without further guidance
    Why: Users receive no suggestions to resolve or avoid the error
    Severity: 2
21. H10 Help and documentation
    Where: Coupon taken (simple task)
    What: There is no information on where to find the coupons

Why: Users may struggle to locate their coupons

Severity: 1

Part V: Summary and Recommendations

Report in the table below the total number of identified violations.

Heuristic	# violations
H1: Visibility of system status	1
H2: Match between system and the real world	3
H3: User control and freedom	4
H4: Consistency and standards	2
H5: Error prevention	3
H6: Recognition rather than recall	2
H7: Flexibility and efficiency of use	2
H8: Aesthetic and minimalist design	2
H9: Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors	1
H10: Help and documentation	1
HN: Non-heuristic issue	-

general impressions and recommendation

The project is based on a wonderfull idea, as it allows users to discover places where they can try local cuisine and learn more about it.
I really like the "learn & earn" concept, which allows users to earn a discount by guessing something about the history or ingredients of a dish.
To further emphasize this, I would suggest adding a feature that enables users to explore the history and ingredients of the dishes before visiting the restaurant.
This could include a dedicated section with images of the dishes alongside their stories and ingredients, making the experience even more engaging and informative.

In addition to what I mentioned in the heuristic, the customization of the culinary experience offers limited options for the user.

An additional feature to enhance the customization of the culinary experience could be allowing users to pre-select dishes they would like to try or adding a field where they
can specify special requests for the restaurant they are booking.
I like the "culinary highlights" filter because it allows users to filter based on the local dishes they want to try. However, it might be more effective to integrate it into the main filters, perhaps as a dedicated filtering section.

The violations reveal recurring issues that has an impact on the system's usability. Some involve the lack of clear controls and adequate feedback, making it challenging for users to complete essential actions, such as progressing in a quiz or managing reservations. Several problems stem from a misalignment between the system and user expectations, such as unclear labels or confusing placeholder texts. Additionally, the interface suffers from inconsistencies and fragmentation, with unclear elements or unintuitive placements (H4, H8). Limited flexibility and inefficiency are also critical concerns, as users often need to take unnecessary steps to access information or complete tasks. Lastly, error prevention and recovery are insufficient, leaving users without guidance in situations of error or uncertainty. Additionally, I would suggest adding more documentation to guide users, ensuring they quickly become aware of key features such as the coupon system and the "Learn and Earn" functionality. These features might not be immediately apparent but are essential to the application and greatly enhance the user experience.