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after two months of Duolingo I have a conclusion: it is extremely bad

Annoyingly so. They make active decisions to make it more ■ fun ■ so they avoid things that make people :(like substantive explanations of grammar or even a list of the vocabulary you are supposed to be learning

The spaced repetition is ass and results in me being assaulted with the word for apple like 80 times a day over anything else

you're never gonna be fluent from an app but Duolingo is just chock-full of bad lesson design/pedagogical choices that only make sense when you realize their goal is to make you *feel* like you're learning, not to make you learn (bc the latter is hard and not fun all the time)

Also, they just get lazy. The pronunciations in Portuguese are not sentence-level, i.e., they string together words read individually in a way that hides how native speakers naturally would produce an utterance. Ends up sounding mechanical.

The story/skit features solve this, and they're actually pretty good! But instead of asking you to actually think about unfamiliar content and what you learn from it, it asks you asinine stuff like "which word in that sentence means 'apple'? ... good job :D!!!!"

I goofed around on the Chinese lessons (I'm fluent, whatever that means) and it was really atrocious. Bc of the word-level, and not sentence-level, it regularly mispronounces characters like ■, which it teaches as 'even' (gèng) but reads as g■ng ('to replace')

The marketing is incredibly slick though which is why I got all excited and spent 8 bucks or whatever on the Pro version for a month. Can you tell I'm sort of bitter about that?

a small number of you tweet like that Owl is going to kill you if you don't say something nice

anyways my point is not that it's a crime against humanity it's that despite its brilliant marketing Duolingo has made a lot of very bad choices when it comes to actual language learning and teaching that are borderline inexcusable for an app of its status and revenue

oh and final note, very important as this thread gains traction. the best way to learn a language is through immersion. I am now single so if any handsome Lusophone man is in my area, make yourself known. god bless