

July 6, 2019

Ludology Club audio notes

Trial + Error

- A major factor with regard to a player's frustration depends on the source - is the game to blame, or the player's ineptitude? Even if the controls or levels are challenging, the player accommodates the game's proposed structure by playing the game. Only when a game contradicts its own rules does the blame fall onto the game itself.

- What are some instances of Trial and Error?

- Some games which feature trial + error may feature some **problem solving**, some **memorization**, etc.

- How to create good Trial + Error?

- The player isn't reminded of its repetitiveness

- What would be the "ideal" Trial and Error game?

- Exploring "multiple routes" in a story is one interesting way to employ trial and error, ie Undertale

- "**Exploring**" trial and error can be found in open world games, eg Breath of the Wild

- **Strategy** trial + error can manifest in games like Hearthstone

- Does Trial & Error require hypothesis? (yes)

Player Accessibility

- To what extent do we want players to "access" our content?
 - We don't want people to ignore the game, but we don't want players to feel like their hands are being held
 - The expectation of literacy in our audience is the floor of accessibility, but is also how we might bore
 - **Game Literacy** is a skill that can be present in players to varying degrees
 - **Basic Literacy**: the ability to understand the base mechanics of a game in order to simply play the game. Example: Mastering WASD walking mechanics until it's second nature.
 - **Advanced Literacy**: the ability to understand aesthetic significance from implemented mechanics, Example: Interpreting the fighting mechanics in Undertale to have a significant ethical impact on the world.

- Designers should be aware of the level of expectations we have of our audience
- We should aim to invite casual gamers to be challenged without overwhelming them
 - Games that return meaningful feedback help new players learn
 - Approach design with educational psych.
 - Apple's "intuitive" UX design philosophy
 - "Video game" skills are really just a collection of heuristics
 - Older games expected a high level of player engagement that cannot be expected of a casual audience
 - Bottom Line: We want a middle ground between giving a "casual gamer" the access they need vs. giving a satisfactory challenge to seasoned gamers