Annotation One: Super Mario 3D World’s 4 Step Level Design

Game Maker’s Toolkit (Mark Brown). “Super Mario 3D World’s 4 Step Level Design,” Mar 17, 2015, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBmIkEvEBtA>.

Level design, KISHOTENKETSU, Learning curve, Character creation, Environmental-

story telling

In this video, Mark demonstrated a unique level design philosophy in ‘Super Mario 3D World’ and then provided examples using level 5-6 ‘cakewalk flip’. This level design philosophy is based on a narrative structure ‘KISHOTENKETSU’, applied in Chinese four-line poems and Japanese four-panel comics. It first introduces the level (Figure 1), second develops the level (Figure 2), and then makes a twist that changes the level (Figure 3), finally offering a conclusion/ end of the level(Figure 4).

(Figure 1: introduce the level) (Figure 2: develops the level )

(Figure 3: makes a twist that changes the level) (Figure 4: conclusion/ end of the level)

"Super Mario 3D World is widely recognized and highly praised by players as a commercial product. This indirectly proves the feasibility of this game design philosophy and its potential applications, not only in poetry and comic creation but also in other fields. Furthermore, the ‘KISHOTENKETSU’ narrative structure has been heavily cited and peer-reviewed in Chinese history. Many ancient Chinese poets used this technique to create various poems that have been passed down through generations. Based on the success of Super Mario 3D World, I agree that its ingenious use of the KISHOTENKETSU narrative structure is noteworthy."

I believe this level design philosophy can create a learning curve for players, where they gradually encounter increasing difficulty challenges at each level, become more familiar with them, and gain higher proficiency. I consider gaining proficiency as the player's learning curve or player progression. reover, this philosophy can also use to shape the personalities and stories of characters within the game. First, introduce the characters to the players at the beginning of the game to establish a preliminary connection. Then, through events in the game, shape and enhance players' empathy with the characters. Participate in more events to expand on the personality traits and ultimately achieve complete character development while building a connection with players.

Annotation Two: 100 principles of game design

Despain, Wendy. “100 principles of game design,” Chapter 61 "Wayfinding",103 -105. New Riders,2013. https://vdoc.pub/documents/100-principles-of-game-design-300c3

bimcnag

Level design, Wayfinding, Spatial awareness, Affordance cues, psychology

In Chapter 61 "Wayfinding", Wendy discusses the definition and purpose of wayfinding, and demonstrates how landmarks, weenies, birth canals,

well-structured paths, and lighting can be applied in levels

as a guiding method. Chapters 97 "Spatial Awareness"

and 81 "Affordance Cues" are linked to prove that humans instinctively seek forward paths based on these guiding methods. These elements are subtle guides at a psychological level rather than glowing arrows.

 (Figure 1: Wayfinding at its best: A clear path,

checkpoints at unique landmarks, and a dynamic weenie.)

This source is Reliable because it is heavily cited by peers and has multiple language versions. The content introduced in these chapters is unbiased, and I agree with Wendy's definition of players' wayfinding behaviour and how to create good wayfinding within levels. This knowledge is crucial for me when I'm creating game levels. While acknowledging this, I also have opposing thoughts. As designers, we can create different feelings and experiences by using the player's anxiety, panic, or confusion when there is a lack of wayfinding method in the game level.

I believe that the guiding methods proposed by Wendy are indispensable in the game level design process to avoid boredom from repetitiveness, add unexpected events to surprise the player，proper guidance for players. Regardless of whether wayfinding elements exist or not, they can be considered as a design point to influence players' wayfinding choices from a psychological perspective. When a player faces a fork in the road without any guidance, the probability of choosing each path is only 50%. However, if the light on one of the roads is dimmed and a visible light is placed at the end, this will break the 50-50 chance. The visible light that may represent treasure will increase players' curiosity and make them more likely to choose the path with glowing lights.

Annotation Three: The art of Game design: Chapter 21 World Contain Spaces

Schell, Jesse. "The Art of Game Design : A Book of Lenses, " Chapter 21 World Contain Spaces, 395 -409. Third Edition. Milton: CRC Press LLC, 2019. Accessed April 3, 2023. ProQuest Ebook Central. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/aut/reader.action?docID=5842983

In chapter 21, Jesse elucidates how to design a suitable game environment. The designer needs to understand the fundamental purpose of the architecture, ensuring that it is free from inner contradictions. Different game spaces should be organized using various level structures. Eye height, the scale relationship between doorways and the player's character, and texture scaling need to be considered during the designing process to avoid distortion of the game space.

Jesse states good level design should be free, exact, egoless, eternal, free from inner contradictions to make players feel this is the right place for the right environment. Setting the correct purpose for different types of architecture is also an essential part of delivering a game that feels alive and immersive. Jesse is explaining this concept as a designer, which is exactly what I need - a designer who understands architectural design theory and knows how to level design in games. This information is reliable, given the author's academic status and the number of times the book has been reissued.

This chapter has established the fundamental purpose, space arrangement, and design principles necessary for creating a level that fully immerses players in gameplay. As a result, it is an invaluable resource for exploring the level design aspect of my research question and developing a compelling level that engages and captivates players.

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Despain, Wendy. “100 principles of game design,” Chapter 61 "Wayfinding",103 -105. New Riders,2013. https://vdoc.pub/documents/100-principles-of-game-design-300c3

Bimcnag

Schell, Jesse. "The Art of Game Design : A Book of Lenses, " Chapter 21 World Contain Spaces, 395 -409. Third Edition. Milton: CRC Press LLC, 2019. Accessed April 3, 2023. ProQuest Ebook Central. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/aut/reader.action?docID=5842983