Empathy and Compassion in procedural rhetoric

Tokyo University of Technology
Research project – RAKOTOVAO Romane
Who the heck am I and where did I come from?

Empathy and compassion in procedural rhetoric - TUT 2021
Games as life skills training

❖ Mental skills
  ▪ Concentration
  ▪ Management
  ▪ Memory
  ▪ Observation
  ▪ Strategy
  ▪ Tactics
  ▪ Cleverness

❖ Physical skills
  ▪ Measurement
  ▪ Precision
  ▪ Reflexes
  ▪ Timing
  ▪ Endurance

❖ Social skills
  ▪ Leadership
  ▪ Negotiation
  ▪ Influencer
  ▪ Helper
Emotional Intelligence, a set of skills

- **Recognize** and **understand** **emotions** in oneself and others
  - Social, but...
    - Focused on the relationship to otherness, the alterity
    - Can be used on oneself
  - Mental, but...
    - Not addressing rational thoughts or logic!
  - Physical, sometimes!
    - As it can ask for an action
    - Rather than showing off capabilities, it asks for *intimacy* and *vulnerability*
Games as life skills training?

❖ Mental skills
  ▪ Concentration
  ▪ Management
  ▪ Memory
  ▪ Observation
  ▪ Strategy
  ▪ Tactics
  ▪ Cleverness

❖ Physical skills
  ▪ Measurement
  ▪ Precision
  ▪ Reflexes
  ▪ Timing
  ▪ Endurance

❖ Social skills
  ▪ Leadership
  ▪ Negotiation
  ▪ Influencer
  ▪ Helper

❖ Emotional skills
  ▪ ???
  ▪ ???
  ▪ ???
  ▪ ???
  ▪ ???

Empathy and compassion in procedural rhetoric - TUT 2021
Challenge, where are thou?

Writing, acting, photography... But not interactivity!

Emotions in gameplay... As flavor.
Oh, there you are! (maybe)
Don’t get me started on multiplayer

Sometimes I feel like crying and I don’t know why.

You and me both, friend.

Sometimes I never figure it out, and sometimes it just takes me a while to realize that something I thought I was ok with is actually bothering me a lot more than I thought it would.

I hope you feel better.
So, what about it?

- Emotional skills **exist**
  - Can we **make games** about it?
- Games are made with it
  - Is it a **genre of games**?
- Concept is **nebulous**
  - Why can’t I tell a team “I want to do an emotionally **challenging** game” like I would say “I want to **make a shooter**!” or “I want to **make a puzzle game**!”?
- Mechanics are workarounds
  - Most of the time, we ‘**translate**’ emotions with **mental, social, and physical** skills.
- Lacks reciprocity
  - Game emotional interactions are one-way rides!
  - Must be some ways to learn to share feelings, rather than inflict or take!

- **How does a team rally under a project if they do not have words to describe the challenge?**
So, what do I do?

Name it, label it, describe it, document it.

❖ 1 written document
  - **Emotional Intelligence Skills**
    - Name it
    - Describe it
    - Back it up with psychology research
  - **Mechanics** that can only exists in game
    - Use Procedural Rhetoric
    - Name it, describe it
    - Back it up with examples

Test it. Prove it. Make it simple to grasp.

❖ 1 prototype
  - Prototype interesting **mechanics**
    - to make it apparent when existing examples are lacking simplicity
  - Make it **accessible**
    - Not limited to one language or culture, but universal
    - Inclusive
    - Decline mechanics with colors, sounds, touch, etc.
How do I do that?

1 week to **set monthly objective**
- Decide *what mechanic* is worth prototyping
- Make v.1
- Note the limits

1 week to **polish mechanic**
- Make it inclusive
  - Language
  - Accessibility
- Make it **juicy**
  - Enjoyable for anyone!
- Fix bugs
- Make a build

1 week to **test and improve**
- Make people play
  - And tell how they feel about it
- Take note of *their behavior*
- Fix and adjust product

1 week to **think and write**
- Ask the questions
  - Does the player experience reflect what the mechanic is intended to make them feel?
- Read documentation, get feedbacks
  - Psychology
  - Game design
  - Scholars
- Write results
  - Experiment success or failure
  - Various thoughts
Bonos objectives: get the experiment known

❖ Publication on ich.io

❖ Vlog update on YouTube
  - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCff1HQqrnw6gPjUveqmXmg
Thank you

Please ask questions!