What Can ODFL Designers Learn from MMORGs?

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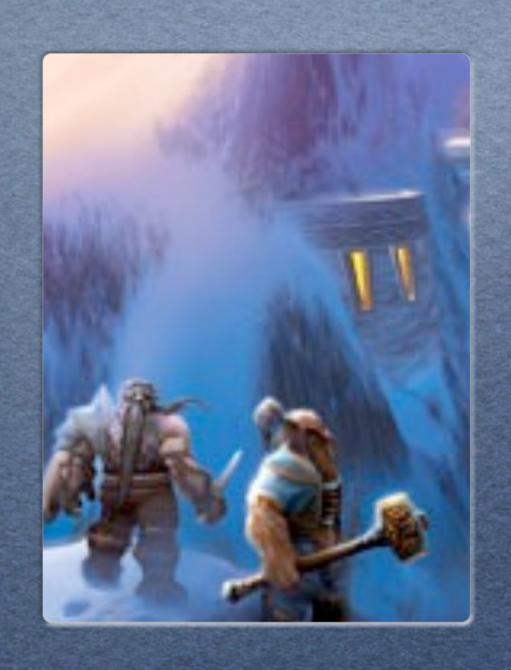Oceanik Psi Ltd.
Suva
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Friday, 31 July 2009

15 minute talk with a 5 minute question time. Provocative title (as in what are the acronyms). This is a slide show presentation that was inspired by an assignment for the Open University course H805 conducted in 2006.

MMPORGs ?

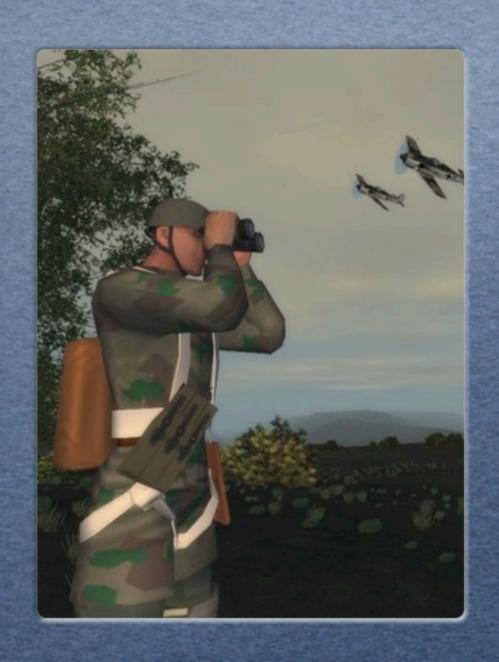- Massively Multiplayer Online Roleplaying Games

World of Warcraft

Dungeons & Dragons team playing format

World War II Online: Battleground Europe

How can you fight under WWII conditions

Second Life

An alternative 'universe' which has no overall 'aim'. Specific environments to learn.

there are specific tasks and games but these are made by the players themselves rather than the overall environment planners.

Features of MMOPRGs

- ☐ 1000s of players present at any one time
- ☐ Strong communications and team play
- ☐ Highly 'immersive' graphics

The point is that there's very strong social elements involved in this.

Individualisation

☐ Game assumes different starting points for different individuals eg:

  ☐ Take on different species in combat games

  ☐ Take on different roles in within species

  ☐ Unique identity develops

Eg humans vs. orcs in World of Warcraft, take on roles of fighter, vs. sorcerer etc.

Considerable investment in identity by players.

Progression Through Game

☐ Advance through skill levels as one acquires skills.

☐ Avartar 'develops'

Getting more 'powers' as one becomes more skilled and adept in the game. Stronger powers, more power weapons.

Also one can apply different 'skins' to the visual representation of ones character in the game.

Flexible Resources to Learn

- ☐ Initial built in training to cope with basic controls

- ☐ Online resources and forums to learn

- ☐ Peer to peer support

- ☐ Help from team players and others within game

In other words there's more than one way to learn how to play within the game. The resources are as varied as there are players. Players are not constrained to follow a curriculum. In other words they are FLEXIBLE.

Relevance to Education?

☐ Players 'learn' as they 'develop' within the gaming environment.

☐ Social elements are very strong (Brown & Duguid)

☐ Relevance to theory of 'Multiple Intelligence'

This is something that Brown & Duguid in Social Life of Information go on about. That is present email & web elements of ICTs don't go about the socialisation aspect in the same way. Still not there but immersion in game play allows considerable social friendships and networks to develop.

MMPORGs & Flexible Learning

- ☐ Delivery – ICTs

- ☐ 24/7 access

- ☐ Lifelong learning within associated environment
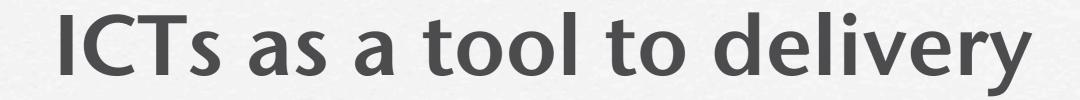
- ☐ Modular progression

Multiple Intelligence Theory

- ☐ Logical
- ☐ Language
- ☐ Spatial
- ☐ Music

- ☐ Kinaesthetic
- ☐ Inter-personal
- ☐ Intra-personal
- ☐ Naturalistic (classification)

Cognitive Development

☐ Majority have a few intelligences as strength (primary)

☐ Start to access more intelligences in secondary

☐ Tertiary specialises but also cuts across boundaries

ICTs as a tool to delivery

☐ Ability to promote multiple access points that individuals can chose to their pre-disposition

☐ Can return to other view points.

The second point is worth emphasising, because of the apparent lack of 'deep learning' that occurs with graduates. That is once they are asked to use the information that they have learnt that is out of context, they apparently 'freeze'. Having multiple access points means that once a student has mastered the topic from their preferred point of view, they can go over it again 'testing' themselves (if they want) with the other access points.

ICTs can Deliver Flexible Access

☐ Can present information via:

☐ narrative

☐ logical

☐ foundational

☐ aesthetic

☐ experiential

stress that these are not the only access profiles that utilise certain intelligences – but rather a starting point.

ICTs as an aid to MI Theory

☐ MI theory enhances the notion of 'flexibility' as a strived for learning process.

Flexibility from the point of view of ODFL is in course construction, assessment and delivery BUT hasn't been considered as a way to think about delivery to different cognitive styles.

Conclusion

☐ MMOPRGs remind us of flexibility of pedagogies

☐ Theory of Multiple Intelligences promotes ICTs in giving multiple access points.

Have a great game!