
Summary

- Semiotic domains encourage people to play with new identities.
- Meaningful inquiry requires the learner to adopt identities; such as a scientific thinker or problem solver.
- Video games are a crucial example of how identities work in learning.
- Video games encourage identity work and reflection in clear and powerful ways.
- Three identity types that occur during gaming:
  - Virtual character – As a virtual character, you, the real person, take on responsibility of the successes and failures of your virtual character through intentional action/non-action.
  - Real person – A combination of real-world roles (husband, father, professor).
  - Projective identity (two meanings):
    1. To project real values and identity on to the virtual character. Your real identity is filtered through the virtual character, projecting positive and negative attributes (for example, to become a thief or not). This process of in-game decision-making reflects the real identity by reflecting or challenging it.
    2. To view the development of a virtual character as a project or series of tasks.
- Video games are successful in teaching/learning because the player is encouraged to:
  - Continue trying, especially after failure.
  - Commit a lot of effort to becoming successful.
  - Be able to achieve meaningful success.
- Creates learning principles that correspond with successful video game design:
  - Cites Eric Erickson’s Psychosocial Moratorium, where learners can take risks without real-world consequences.
  - Committed Learning Principle – learners are able to practice and feel committed to their virtual identity.
  - Identity Principle – learning takes place when there are real choices that require mediation between virtual, real, and projective identities.
  - Self-knowledge Principle – a virtual world that encourages learners to explore their capabilities.
  - Amplification of Input Principle – a little user input but creates a lot of feedback.
  - Achievement Principle – rewards are customized to learner level as he or she progresses.
- Assumes players possess the same metacognitive abilities and will achieve the same state of self-reflection regardless of the lack of external (out-of-game) guidance.

Questions

As individuals we incorporate sequences of significant artistic experiences into our identity (think of the first time you read what would become your favorite author). What if we were to consider our individual gaming experiences in the same manner? Consider significant moments in your gaming history, why were they significant? If you view your gaming history and experiences as part of who you have become, could you consider your gaming experience to be an aesthetic experience?