

CO GAME Videogame Research

General Information about the Game

Name of the game

The Talos Principle

Year of Creation

2014

Description of the game

The main character, an android robot, wakes up as a voice claiming to be called Elohim, informs it to explore a world he created and collect hidden signs within various puzzles as part of a path to enlightenment. However, the protagonist little by little discovers that other androids like him have unveiled not only what happened to a long-lost human civilization, but that Elohim is controlling the fate of others like him.

Throughout the story and along with an environment that mixes ancient mediterranean civilizations ruins (greeks, egyptians...) the player is made to think about deep philosophical questions through unlocked messages and allegories, in a fun, story-based way.

The objective is to solve 3D puzzles in the order the player decides to, solving mysteries. However, his decisions condition the story itself.

Platform

Linux

Mac

Windows

Playstation 4

Type of the game

Narrative / Puzzle

Website

<http://www.croteam.com/talosprinciple/>

Are there more institutions cooperating to the videogame development? Which profiles?

BLOCK A. HERITAGE INTEREST

This part is for describing the heritage quality of the game.

Is there any distinctive heritage element?

If yes, which are the different historical contexts (Who, when, where, why?) described.

Which are the main historical elements described?

- 1.- Classical culture: philosophy, classical mythology, ancient history, etc.
- 2.- Late contemporary cosmovision of our recent history and thoughts about the meaning of civilization and human existence.

*The first elements are presented as a means to transmit the second ones.

Are they rigorous or inspirational or simply scenarios for the development of the story?

The historical elements are rigorously placed in the visuals and narrative of the game. You need to get to know them to have a better understanding of the story you are playing through.

Which are the most interesting elements regarding COGAME framework, and why?

Historical scale: it has a clear presence of heritage elements (both material and intangible), very well fitted in a science-fiction story.

Game-design scale: narrativity, world exploration, puzzle solving. And the combination of these elements with a non-linear difficulty curve.

BLOCK B. EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

This part is about collecting information about the educational sense of the game.

Age addressed by the videogame

15 - 18

Is there any link with the national educational levels? (Is the game addressed specifically to any pedagogical level? To some pedagogical activity?)

Whereas it may not have been designed for a specific educational syllabus, this game can be perfectly used as a pedagogical activity for secondary or university students.

In terms of game design, it has an enough complexity level to be applied to or used as an inspiration for activities of different areas. That may be done by establishing connections between the logic of the levels, the gameplay and the plot, with any piece of knowledge one desires to transmit.

Which educational purpose has the game?

We can divide them into two areas:

- 1.- To transmit several philosophical and historical matters.
- 2.- To develop the mental skills needed to solve the puzzles as well as those the player develops when paying attention to the way the narrative, which are the same the students use in learning processes.

Target addressed by the project (List: community, classroom, subrepresented groups, disadvantaged, etc.)

The video game has been distributed mainly through commercial channels. However it has a wide range of possibilities to be implemented or to learn from in terms of game design applied to learning processes.

Which are the main skills / knowledge / attitudes learned by using the videogame?

- Several historical approaches.
- Philosophy matters and thought methods.
- Abstract reasoning.
- Literary and creative skills (storytelling, metanarrativity, etc.)
- Problem solving.
- Attention to details while not leaving the whole structure apart.
- Referential knowledge (when identified, to other cultural assets than the game itself).

BLOCK C. VIDEO GAME DESIGN

This part is for collect information about video game design

Graphics (Which type of graphics are used by the video game?)

3D graphics.

What is the storytelling of the video game? (Which are the main narrative elements?)

The story starts with a linear plot, but at some point (when a certain level on the difficulty curve is reach), the possibilities of the story become more complex and variable, conditioned by some of the actions the player can make.

Is it future or past oriented? It is dystopian or utopian?

Future oriented. It looks like a dystopy, but it remains a mystery whether there is an escape or not.

Main characters (How many characters the player can choose? Describe them.)

The game consists in the story of the main character, which is the one controlled by the player.

Interactivity (What is the level of interactivity inside the game? Describe.)

There's a semi-open world where the player finds levels (puzzles), hidden achievements, parts of the story, etc. During the levels, the player can grab objects and place them almost anywhere on the scenario in order to solve the puzzle.

Usability (Has the game a complex screen? Number of controls (keyboard, screen, Joystick...))

It can be played either with a controller or keyboard + mouse.

Accessibility (Is the game prepared for people with mobility or control disadvantages?)

BLOCK E. ASSESSMENT FOR CO-GAME

Which are the elements you identify as relevant to be taken in mind for the development of the different IO for Co-Game?

- Contents of the game (historical and philosophical): how to place them on video games of different genres: a level-based game (puzzles, platforms, etc.), a narrative game (graphic adventures), open-world games, etc.

- Re-thinking of the production process. This game is "big", i.e, it has a mixture of genres and ways of playing. One can focus on one of those or on a different mixture, depending on the aim of the game.

- Skills developed while playing the game. It can be used as a learning tool itself, with a complementary pedagogical program.

- Skills developed while creating a game with (part of) the elements found on this one. Both the development of a complex narrativity and the design of puzzle levels require the acquisition and development of different skills.

- Redefinition of a communication strategy, bringing the game to the area we want to reach.

Which are the elements not to repeat while developing Co-Game?

The aim of creating a game like this can be focused into dimensions other than the commercial channels. A good communication strategy may lead a game with these features, or part of them, to be implemented on educational (teens and/or adults) or social contexts.

Name of the organisation in charge of the questions (Write the name or your organisation (CEPS, LATERNA, MUNDANEUM, CIES; BFI)).

CEPS