

Chapter 7

A Coaching Framework for Meta-Games: A Case Study of FPS Trainer

Wee Hoe Tan

Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Since mid-2000s, online coaching games emerged as meta-games which support players who need professional training for knowledge and skills in playing specific games. This chapter presents a case study of a coaching game for first-person shooters (FPS) involving a collaboration between a game-based learning researcher, a professional FPS coach, and a team of game developers. The focus of this study is how the collaborative team balanced the seriousness of a coaching needs and the fun of game playing systematically. The object of this study was to propose a coaching framework for designing and developing meta-games for use in mastering various genres. To achieve this objective, the researcher discussed with professors in sport science, interviewed with professional gamers, conducted multiple brainstorming sessions with game developers, and analyzed design documents of published FPS titles. The proposed coaching game framework—when used appropriately—can be a guide for coaching in different game genres.

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INTRODUCTION

Game coaching became a profession in the creative industry since mid-2000s, with the rise of record-breaking online tutors for entertainment games (Lee, 2005). For instance, Victor DeLeon III, aka Lil Poison was recognized by Guinness Book of World Records as the youngest professional video game players or pro gamer at the age of six years old in 2004 (Lee, 2005). Players actually paid \$30 an hour for an individual coaching session on a video game titled Halo 2 through his personal website. Other pro gamers also offered similar services at different rate, generally based on the level of achievement and expertise of individual pro gamers in the game world.

In general, online game coaching services are offered either through personal website or through third party web portals. Initially, these websites were created as a paratext or surround to enrich game playing experience, as advanced players would share tips and tricks on how to win in the game world. The nature of such paratext evolved when the mechanics and elements of entertainment games turned out to be sufficiently complicated of games become complicated. In order to acquire mastery of skills and winning strategies, novice players started to request paid personal coaching session from advanced players. As for advanced and professional gamers, they may advertise or promote their coaching services through these websites. This phenomenon of demand and supply developed into a need for dedicated online game coaching portals, where game-coaching website sprung up like mushrooms through the game industry (see Table 1).

Table 1. List of third party game coaching websites

Websites	Uniform Resource Locator (URL)	Services
Superprof	https://www.superprof.us/	Gaming lessons Game design and development Game art and graphic design
Gamer Sensei	https://www.gamersensei.com/	eSports professional coaching
Microcoaching	http://microcoaching.net/	Advice from expert league coaches Mythic Plus Helper tool Sidekick
League Coaching	https://www.leaguecoaching.gg/	Verify coaches Synchronize coaches' availability Messaging system

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