Chapter 8
The Relation Between Rocket League and Soft Skills and Its Implication in Education Processes

Sergio Alloza Castillo
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0149-1433
Gecon.es Foundation, Spain

Flavio Escribano
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1133-1804
Gecon.es Foundation, Spain

ABSTRACT

Esports have had a tremendous evolution since the commencement of the amateur video game tournaments. With over 75 million players, Rocket League has emerged as one of the most popular video games. In this chapter, the authors will expose a hypothetical bibliography-based model of the impact of this video game on the players' soft skills development trying to connect the relation between Rocket League and the potential development of numerous soft skills such as coordination with others or goal setting, amongst others. Soft skills are gaining relevance in the academic and professional sector since they are becoming of high value for professional profile differentiation. Rocket League, amongst other video games, may resolve into the perfect and engaging soft skills-enhancing instrument to assemble the training needs of current students and professionals, as explained in the examples of educational applications of Rocket League.

INTRODUCTION

The commencement of esports –equally recognized as electronic sports or competitive gaming (Jenny et al., 2017)– can be traced back to the 70s, when video game tournaments such as *Spacewar* were already held (Li, 2016). Since then, several authors have tried to describe what an esport is, regarding its characteristics or elements. To manifest a complete idea of what an esport is, a general synopsis of the term is presented. Esports are alternative sports and a unique method to utilise some existing commercial video games (Adamus, 2012) ruled by different leagues and tournament structure. In addition, esports have all the elements of the competition model of traditional (non-digital) sports such as coaches, teams, players, spectators, sponsors, etc. The main difference with traditional sports is the video game presence. Implying now that winning means to prove one's supremacy through a video game's result (Baltezarević & Baltezarević, 2018).

Regarding the video games utilized in esports, the most popular genres within esports are first-person-shooter (FPS), real-time strategy (RTS) and lately the Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA). As an example, in the FPS genre the most utilized video game for competitions is Counter Strike (Valve, 2000). Since its launch in 2000, a whole community has been created, with professional and casual players, reaching out to almost one million active players per day. Nowadays Counter Strike has more than 20 million players overall, parallel with fans and sport organizations or leagues (Rambusch et al., 2007). This phenomenon has occurred with multiple of the currently played video games, such as League of Legends (RIOT, 2009), with more than 115 million players, or the main video game in this chapter, Rocket League (Psyonix, 2015), with a growing number of players up to 75 million. As a result, video games are emerging as a phenomenon which is not only a diversion instrument; and this outside-the-game influence –in terms of reach– is merely "the tip of the iceberg".

Despite the general knowledge about the growth of the esports and video game sector, a more relevant consequence of playing video games exists, which is not yet a work in progress. This is: how the video games used in esports have an impact into player´s soft skills development. Particularly considering that several of these video games are utilized by a vast majority of non-professional players in their everyday leisure practices. Meaning that this possible cognitive impact is getting more extended worldwide, coincidentally along with the relevance of soft skills.

Soft Skills and Assessment

Multiple theories and several authors describe and define what a soft skill is, considering that there is not an absolute description or classification. Nevertheless, there are elements in common in those definitions that can be highlighted to understand what a soft skill is. Soft skills are interpersonal and intrapersonal or behavioural skills fundamental to apply technical skills (Rainsbury et al., 2002). The academic institutions focus on hard skills, understanding them as technical skills that involve working with equipment, data, software, etc. (Laker & Powell, 2011). That is precisely why soft skills are getting more relevant throughout the years as labour organizations and academic institutions are manifesting the necessity of soft skills in the present and near future on both academic and labour perspectives.

Furthermore, progress in the education sector has succeeded to facilitate access to that technical training and education on a massive scale. So, the added value of the professional profile differentiation that was previously obtained via official academic qualifications may be at the present insufficient. In consequence, colleges and universities are generating great quantities of resemblant profiles with equiva-

Related Content

Gamification in the Space Sector: How Gamification Activities Can Foster the Passion and Interest for STEM-Related Studies

Annalisa Galeone (2022). *Handbook of Research on the Influence and Effectiveness of Gamification in Education (pp. 285-306).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/gamification-in-the-space-sector/308758

A Proposal for the Design of a Gamified Experience for the Teaching of Historical Thinking in Primary Education

María Martínez-Hita, Cosme Jesús Gómez Carrascoand Pedro Miralles-Martínez (2022). *Cases on Historical Thinking and Gamification in Social Studies and Humanities Education (pp. 52-67).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-proposal-for-the-design-of-a-gamified-experience-for-the-teaching-of-historical-thinking-in-primary-education/311017

Learning About E-Safety Rules While Playing: Creation of an Interactive Test With CoSpaces Edu

Álvaro Molina Ayuso (2022). *Handbook of Research on International Approaches and Practices for Gamifying Mathematics (pp. 236-257).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/learning-about-e-safety-rules-while-playing/304155

The Role of Minecraft Build Challenges in Esports

Steven R. Isaacs, Erik Leitner, Laylah Bulman, Rick Marlattand Miles M. Harvey (2021). *Esports Research and Its Integration in Education (pp. 85-102).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-role-of-minecraft-build-challenges-in-esports/285084

Gamification of Formative Feedback in Language Arts and Mathematics Classrooms: Application of the Learning Error and Formative Feedback (LEAFF) Model

Man-Wai Chuand Teresa Anne Fowler (2022). *Research Anthology on Developments in Gamification and Game-Based Learning (pp. 1619-1638).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/gamification-of-formative-feedback-in-language-arts-and-mathematics-classrooms/293722