



Art, Gameplay, and Narrative: Links Between Video Games and Children's Literature

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Abstract

In the field of Humanities, there is a continuous review by researchers or experts in art and education who analyze from an academic and commercial perspective the video game industry, if these can be considered artistic pieces. The parameters in which videogames and art are developed are so close that the level of development in style and artistic aesthetics in a game can be excellent and not giving priority to the aspect of playability but the purely visual, in other cases videogames are intervened by developers to turn them into pieces of art. Currently there is a hybridization of analog and digital media that enriches different cultural areas in this case, the union of children's literature and video games, their interactivity and their scope to achieve challenges through playability and overcoming certain phases in the game. Analysis of the artistic nature of the genre of video games based on children's literature, highlighting those that are inspired by traditional stories and that form part of the popular culture of children, in order to encourage reading. A study is made of adventure video games that present dystopia or anti-utopy and that come from both audiovisual and literary media, including comics and graphic novels. In the video game industry, due to the creation of new complex narrative formats of the 21st century, there is a distinction between interactive, narrative and hypertextual formats, which fundamentally come from postmodernism. Video games based on literary works will be analyzed. It is necessary the cohesion between the way of telling stories and the activities designed for its implementation in the classroom through the creation of characters through the model sheet, as well as its three-dimensional construction through paper engineering. The generation of a video game based on conventional drawing and a digital basis for its creation. The natural format for telling and narrating history in education would be literary and books in their different narrative formats. From both links, an innovative cultural proposal is manifested that is the fruit of the union of literature with playability in didactic video games.

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Paradigm for Innovative Education: Horizon Report

The usual format for telling stories are books in their different narrative formats. Art and children's literature are linked because illustration has been essential in children's books.

This paper discusses an innovative cultural proposal resulting from the joint application of literature and gameplay in educational video games. It is necessary to note the cohesion between the way the stories are narrated and the activities created for their implementation in the classroom, also the design of characters and their three-dimensional construction through the use of paper engineering. An analysis is made into the nature of the genre of video games based on children's literature, highlighting those based on traditional stories that form part of the popular culture of children, in order to encourage reading. The complex narrative formats that have been developed in the 21st century, that may link to a scientific interest in Humanities with applications for educational use. The interactive medium of video games is considered both audiovisual and visual in nature and can be a proposal to tell and narrate history in education that would be another form of expression of literature complementary to books. From both nexuses, an innovative cultural proposal is manifested, fruit of the union of literature and playability in video games with didactic purpose.

In the field of Humanities, there is a continuous review by researchers or experts in art and education curators who analyze from an academic and commercial perspective the video game industry, if these can be considered artistic pieces. The parameters in which videogames and art are developed are so close that the level of aesthetic development in a game can be excellent and the aspect of playability does not prevail, but aesthetics in other cases videogames are intervened by programmers to turn them into pieces of art.

Currently there is a hybridization of analog and digital media that enriches different cultural areas in this case the union of children's literature and video games, their interactivity and reach to achieve challenges through gameplay and overcoming certain phases in the game.

One of the documents that is continuously updated is the Horizon Report, which contemplates all the educational stages, as well as the various technological developments that may have its application in Education.

Video Games Based on Children's Literature

A series of video games based on children's literature are displayed in order to merge the literary, educational and artistic spheres, thus dealing with hybrid and interdisciplinary contents.

American McGee's Alice

This action video game of 2000 takes place in the universe of Alice in Wonderland. Developed by Rogue Entertainment, designed by American McGee, and the music of Chris Vrenna. It is based on the 3D engine of Quake III Arena. Years after Alice in Wonderland's Adventures and Alice through the Mirror, the game features a more cynical Alice.

Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of Osborne House

This adventure videogame is the first of the Sherlock Holmes series that is manufactured for the Nintendo DS. The player must solve the puzzle using a tactile stylus and the screen. These mini-games include puzzles, codes to decipher and paintings to examine. Each puzzle has its own difficulty and style. Hand-drawn environments represent Victorian-era London players explore and perform missions.

Return to Mysterious Island 2

This adventure video game of 2009 was made by Kheops Studio and Microïds. The theme is that of the video game Return to Mysterious Island, based on Julio Verne. Mina's character is back and her monkey, Jep, each one has his own abilities: Jep, can go to inaccessible places and communicate with other monkeys, while Mina reads documents and uses complex tools.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

This is a videogame from 2005 based on Tim Burton's film, released for consoles coinciding with the movie's cinema premiere. Most of the actors in the video game use the same voices with the exception of Johnny Depp. The music was created by Winifred Phillips.

The Lord of the Rings: War in the North

This is an action video game of 2011 developed by Snowblind Studios. Based on Tolkien's 1954 novel The Lord of the Rings and an adaptation of Peter Jackson's film trilogy. The game contains narrative elements of the novel and the film, the aesthetic design is based on the look of the film and the characters in the game are similar to the actors.

Odyssey: The Search for Ulysses

This game uses the Cryogen engine, with characters moving in 3D, in a pre-rendered environment. The video game universe is faithful to Homer's Odyssey, including its characters, Poseidon, Zeus, Cerberus and Cyclops. The player has to fight against monsters like the Gorgon and Cyclops and have to deal with the gods to escape Poseidon and resist the seductive wizard.

Children's Literature: New Formats of Narrative in Video Games

Study of adventure videogames presenting dystopia or anti-utopy that come from both audiovisual and literary media, including comics and graphic novels. In the video game industry, due to the creation of new narrative formats, there is a distinction between interactive formats, conventional narrative formats, hypertextual formats that come from postmodernism and their conceptions in art. In addition to the adaptations of video games in art that would be video games that are based on literary works.

As Masadi (2012) indicates in the book of Extra Life, the narration in a videogame is given due to the fusion of two components: the developers and the players, the interactivity means that the games are not narrated chronologically.

Ideal developers find a balance between the limits of the world, history, immersion, interactivity and the player's ability to act that guarantees the narration that will take place. The real player (real reader) takes the narration of the game as the developers created it for the ideal player and uses its interactivity and acting ability to recreate the sequence of the story and reconstruct the narration. (Masadi, 2012, p. 168.)

In the immersion narration, the player is not allowed to integrate into the developed story, so that the dialogue can take place through interactivity. Instead, the narrators expose an interactive cinematic sequence for the player to introduce himself gradually.

The cinematic sequence is a traditional form of narration and works as a transition between the real world and the world of play, as it generates the illusion of an alternative reality before giving way to interactivity, thus adding one more level of participatory immersion. (Masadi, 2012, p. 169.)

In the reconstructive narration of the Half-Life 2 game, the beginning is used as a cinematic, non-interactive format to expose ideas in a basic way. In a second non-interactive scene it occurs after the beginning of the game and as in the first, its role in the game is appropriately matched to the narrative content.

Although interactivity itself gives rise to a particular level of immersion in the narrative of the game, a specific event can generate an opposition between interactivity and immersion. (Masadi, 2012, p. 170.)

In the lexicon of digital media, there are other narrative formats such as hypermedia and transmedia. In hypermedia challenges are proposed to the participant, narratives and overcoming technological targets, which converge in the same scenario.

Hypermedia designates the interactive convergence of media and their expressive substances (still image, moving image, sounds, typographic images and even extraterritorial images) in digital media [...] in which the reader-receiver becomes a reading author, a co-author of the programme by selecting, transforming and even constructing. Hypermedia is synonymous with interactive multimedia, which in colloquial terms is reduced to multimedia. But it should not be forgotten that multimedia is a sum of media, not an interactive convergence of media. (Morales, 2012, p. 21)

Authors who create fictional or informational stories formulate and disseminate their ideas through multiple platforms, using different media and supports, this is called transmedia. Bernardo (2011) exposes the need to create with this idea in his book: *The Producer's Guide to Transmedia. How to develop, Fund, Produce and Distribute Compelling Stories Across multiple Platforms*.

Didactic Application to the Educational Field

It is worth mentioning the cohesion between the way of telling stories and the activities that will be created and implemented as an initial project for its implementation in the classroom through the creation of characters through the model sheet, as well as its construction in three dimensions through paper toys or Paper Toys and as we can also find this in other specific video games that will be exhibited.

The aim is to propose a new educational resource (see Table 1) to students to develop seminar sessions in which they are trained in the creation of video games for educational purposes.

Table 1 Postgraduate didactic proposal	
Session 1	<p><i>Theory:</i> Introduction and History of video games. The Horizon Report as a research document on the field of education in relation to technology.</p> <p><i>Practice:</i> Character design on a model sheet.</p>
Session 2	<p><i>Theory:</i> Display of educational video games or serious games.</p> <p><i>Practice:</i> Creation of graphics for making video games.</p>
Session 3	<p><i>Theory:</i> Presentation of narrative formats applied to video games and platforms on which it can be created.</p> <p><i>Practice:</i> Creation of the video game project with GameMaker, Kodu, Scratch, Adventure Time: Game Wizard and script design according to the selected narrative format.</p>

Proposals for improvement: Serious games as an alternative to learning

The video game is a field that has led to education from various approaches both learning theoretical content on a subject, and creating a typology of didactic video games called: Serious games.

Videogames present a connection with the educational field as they are a common platform of recent development and it is widely used, where new narrative formats are produced through emerging art or expanded art, mostly when it presents an aesthetic component as Journey an artistic videogame, the element of learning is less, what prevails is the aesthetics and exposure of contents in a visually attractive way.

[...] the emerging field of video game theory is also the point of reference for a wide variety of approaches, including film and television theory, semiotics, performance theory, game studies, literary theory, computer science, hypertext theories, cybertext, interactivity and identity, postmodernism, ludology, media theory, narratology, aesthetics and art theory [...]. The fact is that the study of video games has become a point of convergence of contemporary theoretical thought. (Wolf & Perron, 2005, p. 2)

Conclusions

The aim is to bring video games into the field of education through their study and analysis in an interdisciplinary way, applying them to areas such as literary, educational and artistic. With the aim of creating video games and a playful support to learn new ways of narration with a didactic component.

Serious videogames are a tool in education recently implemented in educational institutions, from the perspective of playing and including theoretical content of a subject. However, it would be enriching to merge the interactive ludic world with other areas of knowledge in an interdisciplinary way.

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