On the theory of narrative computer game

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Abstract

The paper focuses on computer games that include narrative content (that is, such games that tell a story). Its goal is to reveal a theoretic delineation of the nature and inner working of narrative computer game as a specific (art) form, such that would broaden understanding of its properties, possibilities it opens and also to present a basic sort of a definition for it. This basic nature of the subject is discovered in the way the "agent – game situation" coupling is being formed. This coupling is present in both game and narrative, and being a common base, it facilitates integration of both forms into a new one, in this way: the player of the game becomes the agent, controlling the story's protagonist; and the narrative, constituted by the story plot and the conflict it includes and which the player faces, becomes the game situation. This integration produces a new, homogeneous form, from which both the simulation and the narrative parts of narrative computer game can be deduced. In this way it is shown that the apparent contradictory discrepancy between these two parts and the dualistic or mixed nature of the form as such are both in fact fallacious and not real.