Abstract:

This paper aims at exploring and developing the concept of the invisible agency in video games and the way it enhances narrative experience through the morality and self-reflection. Three cases are analysed to define the role of invisible agency, where it fully defines the game environment and narrative structure (Silent Hill: Shattered Memories, 2009), measures the morality borders of the player (Papers, Please! 2013) or used to diversify playing experience and broaden the borders of Interactive Digital Narrative (Undertale, 2015). The methodology includes Hartmut Koenitz’s System, Process, Product framework and hermeneutic strip extension for the analysis of invisible agency integration in the game systems, accompanied by the Morality Play model, assessing the player's response and morality impact. The final inspection of Invisible Agency potential proves that its use may add deeper and broader experience for branching narratives with systemic choices approach, though some problems may arise, such as systemic misunderstanding of player’s actions and intentions. Nevertheless, Invisible Agency develops the Hermeneutic Strip model and adds a delayed reaction of the player to the reaction to the system level, that is specific for this phenomenon and can be used in future works to achieve more realistic approach to the use of agencies in interactive narrative.

Keywords: