

How to: Analyze video games, focusing on non-linear narrations

AB2

Fach: Englisch

analysis of	terminology	explanation	effect
characters	main character	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- round- flat- cf. literary analysis	
non-player characters (NPCs)	flag	a binary (yes-or-no) value (players can choose to e.g. talk to or not to talk to a certain NPC) (cf. http://t1p.de/c3eg)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- disadvantage: not a lot of depth to characters
	affinity	numeric value (used to measure e.g. how strongly a character feels affection or dislike) (cf. http://t1p.de/c3eg)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- setting- special effects- cast- music		cf. movie analysis	

Next Level: Story Writing

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theme		cf. literary analysis	
story	embedded	created by the game designer	
	emergent	created by the individual player(s)	
point of view	second person narration	from the perspective of the player	
camera view	first person	player sees what the character sees (camera = character's eyes) (cf. http://t1p.de/c3eg)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- deeper connection between the player and the main character of the game- unless it is a VR game, no peripheral vision possible, taking away from this above-mentioned connection
	third person	player looks at main characters backside, usually from a behind-the-shoulder perspective (cf. http://t1p.de/c3eg)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- wider view of the area is possible- creating distance between the player and the main character
linear narration		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- cf. literary analysis- no decisions possible by the player	
modes	direct	action of the player triggers a reaction	
	indirect	action of the player triggers small reaction and a chain reaction later in the game	

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non-linear narration	branching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- interactive,- choice points given in the game- story follows one path until another choice point is reached	
	parallel paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- player can make choices- all choices lead to several mandatory events- choices may lead to additional story elements- players' choices may influence the ending	
	threaded	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- story is divided into small pieces- these small pieces may intersect- different narratives are possible at the same time- players can choose the paths and sometimes the order of the paths	
	dynamic/object-oriented narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- consists of different mini-stories (like chapters of a novel or acts in a play)- mini-stories have several entry points and exit points (unlike chapters or acts)- exit points can lead to another mini-story or final ending (unlike chapters or acts)- the players' choices determine the order of the mini-stories (unlike chapters or acts)	

The information is adapted from: "Game Design Concepts - An experiment in game design and teaching" by Ian Schreiber: <https://gamedesignconcepts.wordpress.com/2009/07/30/level-10-nonlinear-storytelling/> (<http://t1p.de/c3eg>) (Game Design Concepts by Ian Schreiber is licensed under a [CC BY 3.0 US](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/))

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