SIGN CONSTRUCTION ON VISUAL ELEMENTS IN VIDEO GAME HARVEST MOON: BACK TO NATURE

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Abstract: The presence of visual elements becomes a part of aesthethic value inside the video game, it creates a boundaries between real worlds and what can be seen seems to have dissapear. Eventually, creates a fantasy and increase the emotion while playing video game, where players are expected to understands the value. Seeing how big the role visual elements in the video game. Then through the study of visual signs reading, performed as a means to detemine the construction of visual element inside the Harvest Moon: Back to Nature video game. Interpretive descriptive methods are used to describe and interpret the object of study. Researcher uses Peirce's semiotics approach as a theoritical analysis of signs in order to read the visual signs like icons, indexes, and symbols that contained in the visual elements that oriented in the aspects of story inside the Harvest Moon: Back to Nature video game. Overall, the presence of visual elements that comes from the construction of visual signs (icons, indexes, symbols) inside the Harvest Moon: Back to Nature video game have depict a game world that puts player in the right perception of the theme inside the Harvest Moon: Back to Nature video game which is Back to Nature.

Keywords: Sign construction, *Visual elements, Video game, Semiotics*

1. INTRODUCTION

Video game is a phenomenon that continues to grow along side the advancement of art and technology, featuring a new level of sophistication in a digital artwork. The presence of the field of art and technology, has made the video game today has four important components (elemental tetrad) in existence, the components are; Mechanics Story, Aesthetics and Technology (Schell, 2008:41). The synthesis has presented in a different reality that is virtual reality in the process of artistic communication, which makes the aesthetic value as an inevitable part in the video game. With the presence of aesthetic values in the video game, the player is expected to understand the values, which makes the border between the real world and the virtual reality world seemed to disappear. The final result is creating a fantasy as well as the progressive increase in emotion while playing video games. It will be happen either by the presence of visual elements such as; characters visualization, background and setting visualization, and heads up display visualization in the aesthetics component. Actually, those visual elements will provide orientation for the player to establish a meaningful context in which an event occurs and contributes to the creation of the emotional state of the player. In addition to producing the value of beauty that makes a unique appeal, the visual elements also contains the codes and certain sign system that serves to connect between the game worlds to the player.

It can be said that the visual element plays a major role in the video game. The existence of the visual elements itself means the result of the formation of a sign through the construction of visual signs in it. Visual signal itself as described by Marcel Danesi in his *Messages, Sign, and Meanings*, stating that visual cues can be defined simply as a sign that is constructed with a visual marker, which means that with a marker that can be seen (not heard, touched, told or kissed). Like all other types of signs, the visual sign could be formed in iconic, indexical, and symbolic way (Danesi, 2005:65). It has been suggested that in the visual elements of a video game actually means there are also signs such as icon signs, index signs, and the symbol signs, which has been constructed and produces values, where the values of the intended & required by the player in playing video games.

In this research, the researchers interested in the video game named Harvest Moon: Back to Nature (hereafter shortened to HMBTN) as a research objects. The interest of researchers towards the video game certainly based on a variety reasons, but there are two main reasons considered sufficient underlying this study focused on the HMBTN's visual elements. First, the presence of the visual elements of the rural communities social life that are presented can be rationally acceptable, proves that players can enter into augmented reality to become a farmer in his life to farm, herd livestocks, socialize even follow a tournament in HMBTN video game. Secondly, the visual elements that presented in HMBTN has values that ultimately brought the players to the stream of consciousness while playing a video game, it is proved by the existence of a video game HMBTN have been able to survive in the players mind of the audience almost two decades (1997-2016) by various layers of different public audience.

So, through the study of visual signs reading, performed as a means to determine the construction of the sign on the visual element in HMBTN. It needs to be done to identify and classify the main types of signs and functions of its use in the activity inside HMBTN game world. The process is done through observation by identifying the elements of artistic/visual in visual form as an object of study. In this study, researcher using Peirce's semiotics approach as a theoretical analysis of the sign in order to be able to read a visual signal in the form of icons, indexes, and symbols contained in the visual elements oriented aspects of the story in HMBTN.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Peirce's semiotic approach used by researchers as a method of analysis to determine the sign of the visual elements as the builder of a visual narrative in the video game HMBTN. As a language, visual elements is a style of expression according to visual ideas and messages from the designer to the public that are addressed via a visual signs, due to the nature of the presence of a visual sign consist of icons, indexes, and symbols. Peirce felt that this is a model that's very helpful and fundamental from the nature of the sign. Peirce wrote:

> "Every sign is determined by the object, first of all, by taking part in the character of the object, when I call a sign as an icon; second, by being real and the existence of individuals associated with individual objects, tatkal I mention the mark as an index, a third, with more or less approaching certainty that it will be interpreted as signs denote objects as a consequence of habit. I call a sign of a symbol (in Zeman, 1977), (Fiske, 2004; 69-70). "

3. THE RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses interpretative descriptive method as its principle. Interpretive descriptive method used as a method to describe and interpret the object of study. Interpretive description basically describes things as they are in accordance with the data and facts. Facts and data are then parsed, classified and interpreted to obtain a detailed picture so as to produce conclusions that can be accounted for. With this method of analysis are done only to the extent of the description, analyzing and presenting data systemically so that it can be easier to understand and inferred (Anwar, 2007: 6).

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The world that has been presented visually in the HMBTN video game world is a story world that by means of its delivery through a visual narrative, whose presence was built by visual elements such as; character visualization, background and setting (environment) visualization, and heads up

display visualization. Indeed the existence of visual elements has become an important object in the HMBTN game world, whose existence is the result of the formation of a construction signs through visual signs. As was mentioned earlier, that the existence of a visual element that had been constructed by visual signs (icons, indexes, and symbols) is one of the form of descriptive elements that is used as an information tool to describe the game world in a video game (Adams 2010:186).
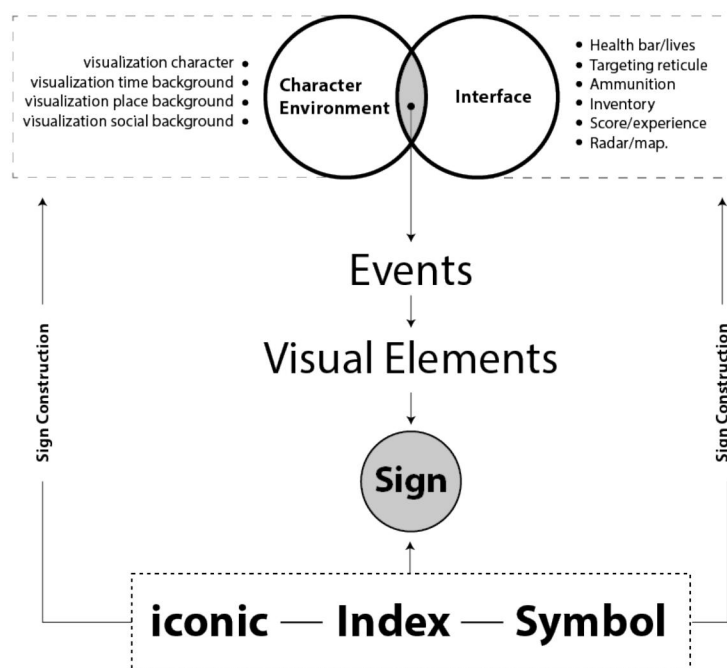

Figure 1 the analysis scheme
Source: Personal documentation 2015

The analysis was performed focusing on the construction of the visual elements as the strength of said visual style. In the visualization of characters how the construction signs in filling dimensions Physiology, the dimensions of sociological, and psychological dimension, visualization background and setting (environment) in filling the dimension of function, psychological dimension, whereas in visualization heads up display in filling health bar/lives, targeting reticle, ammunition gauge, inventory, (score/experience, radar/map, which in turn can provide an update to the player (player) via pins-visual cues (icons, indices, and symbols).

To be more clear in knowing the construction elements-the visual elements on the visualization of characters, visualization background and setting (environment), and visualization heads up display, the researchers present at the start with the reading of visualization icons, and then followed by reading the visualization of the index and the last is the reading of visualization symbol in the video game HMBTN. Here is the analysis of the construction of the sign-a visual signal contained in the elements - the visual element in the video game HMBTN were among them; analysis of character visualization, analysis and visualization background and setting (environment), and analysis visualization heads up display.

4.1 The analysis of visualization characters on video game HMBTN
Character visualization is a main actor who can make the events of the HMBTN video game to be threaded and has a plot, through character visualization the player will find another depiction of a character, events, and story as a whole. Visualization of characters presented in the HMBTN video game also each has a variety of roles. Vladimir Propp in Eriyanto then expressed, that every story has more than one character, and these characters occupy a specific role in the story, the variation of characters are highlighted to make the story more dramatic (Eriyanto, 2013:67).

Based on observations conducted by researcher of the object of study, the role of the characters shown in the HMBTN video game serves many roles includes rural communities, suitable with the theme carried by the video game that is back to nature that have meaning connotation back to work managing nature of rural so it can be more productive.

a) Iconic reading
The iconic video game character in the visualization of HMBTN icons as markers of physiological dimension, and sociological dimensions. Psychological dimension, visualized through the game icon signs include; age signs, gender, body circumstances, as well as the expression of the characters. Signs of age are visualized in between; icon haircut, icon of hair coloring, icon of the expression on the face and body shape icons. Gender signs visualized in form of the iconic body stature are visible on the figure of a woman with iconic breast, and long hair are evident in all the female characters visualization.

Signs of expression did not escape from visualization through the construction of the relation mark icon, the icon in the form of signs of the eyes, eyebrows, mouth, nose, and some icons wrinkles, all of which have very strong relationships in constructing the message to be conveyed. There is also an icon as a marker of sociological dimension in visualization of the analyzed characters, these dimensions is visualized through the game icons signs include; social, employment, position, role in society, education, religion, fashion, ideology of characters contained in the visualization of a video game character HMBTN.

b) Index reading
Index in the visualization of video game characters are HMBTN index as a marker of sociological and psychological dimension dimensional visualization characters were analyzed. From the relations that exists in the sociological dimensions include; social, employment, occupation, education, religion, fashion, as well as ideology, in the visualization of a character in HMBTN video game. In psychological dimension, the behavior of the index includes: full of worries, high spirits, simple-minded, caring, stubborn, idealistic, greed, believe in things unseen, and arrogant. While the sociological dimension, the index community lifestyle portrayed with graceful appearance, preserved, naive, simple, and what it is, a portrait of the upper and lower layers of society.

The existence of several positions depicted in this video game starting from figure public official that is mayor, a police officer, even a position in the hierarchy works system. While the index as a sign of psycological dimension in the visualization of characters that were analyzed, covering; mentality, moral standards, desires and personal feelings, attitudes and behavior (gestures) of characters contained in the visualization of a character in HMBTN video game. The index can connect between a marker and a sign which has the properties: real, causal, and always hinted at something. Overall in the video game HMBTN there are several indices that social index, employment index, the index position, role in the community index, education index, religion index, fashion index.

c) Symbolic reading
Symbolic visualization of video game characters HMBTN there is a symbol as a marker of sociological dimension in visualization of the analyzed characters, these dimensions is visualized through the game include the symbol mark; social, employment, occupation, education, religion, ideology of characters contained in the visualization of a video game character HMBTN. The following researchers will present the results of the analysis are derived from the description of visual elements such as visualization of characters in table form.

Table 1 iconic, indexes and symbolic signs analysis of
video game characters visualization in HMBTN

Details	Physiology	Sociology	Psychological
Icon	• Age signs • Gender signs • Body signs • Facial signs	• Work signs • Fashion signs	
Index		• Social signs • Work signs • Occupation signs • Signs of role in society • Education signs • Religion signs • Fashion signs	• Mentality • Moral Standard • Desires and personal feelings • Attitudes and behaviours (gestures).
Symbol		• Social signs • Work signs • Signs of role in society • Education signs • Religion signs	

Source: Personal documentation 2015

4.2 The analysis of visualization environment on video game HMBTN

In the world of real game tells an event that happened to the main character. Stories from the event will be interpreted by the public audience as a background and setting (environment) of public events can be understood by the audience. In the process a visual background and setting (environment) on a HMBTN video game besides forming a simulated space environment on the play and provide an ambience that is required by the player (player), its presence is also required to be able to evoke emotions to any player (player).

Background and setting (environment) in the HMBTN video game consists more than 20 different background and setting (environment). The compatibility of the background and setting (environment) functions must be corresponding with the role of a character that was constructed in a HMBTN video game. In other words, construction signs serve as building blocks of visualization background and setting (environment) must successfully strengthen the themes raised and the role of the characters featured in the HMBTN video game.

a) Iconic reading

By reading iconic visualization background and setting (environment) HMBTN video game icons as markers asset material dimension, the dimension is visualized through the game icons sign the form; building signs, property signs, signs of attributes, and time signature. There are signs of houses / buildings are visualized through the construction of a relation icon dimensions assets, which include iconic doors, windows icons, icon house roof, wall icons, iconic building materials.
In addition to signs of houses / buildings, there are also signs in the form of icons and attributes are visualized properties such as; Property cookware, household property.

While there are also signs of time in the game world domination HMBTN visualized by embodiments using color icons. With the use of the color icon on the timing marks can clarify the nuances that occur. In the game mark icon located on the visualization background and setting (environment) HMBTN video game more play on the order of the dimensions of the material, while the sociological dimension and the dimension pisikologis not found. That is because the icons in the order of the dimensions of the material is a sign that can be seen directly and explicitly assertive presence in space on a video game simulation HMBTN.

b) Index reading
By reading the index in the visualization background and setting (environment) HMBTN video game there is an index as a marker of sociological dimensions and visualization of psychological in the background and setting (environment). From the relations that exists in the sociological dimensions include; social, employment, position, role in society, education, religion, contained in the HMBTN video game. In the HMBTN video game there is also a social index that includes: live in harmony, religious, high spirited, simple-minded, caring, romantic, greedy, believe in things unseen, and the difference in rich and poor people.

As one example of the results of the analysis carried out by researchers on living in harmony, rich and poor, as well as the high spirit in work. Found several number of places of business located in Mineral Town such as; blacksmith, lumberjack, fishing spots, inn, vineyard, place to buy household needs as well as seeds, cattles, chickens, goats it illustrates that people in Mineral Town has a high spirit in work. The lifestyle of the upper layer is described in considerably luxury houses.
From the relation of the icon on the dimensions of any material asset illustrated by the large and majestic houses are in the midst of society Mineral Town. Can also be seen an index that describes the subject of religion. There is a building that was so thick with the atmosphere of a church, it is visible from some of the properties contained in this room, such as a lounger which is neatly lined, a red carpet which is placed at the center between the rows of chairs, a podium place to convey the teachings, and the presence of a piano that's always present in every church and some candles that look bejajar left beside the pulpit. With the existence of a place of worship in the midst of society Mineral Town can signify Mineral Town is quite religious society, it is marked also by always their candles lit all the time every day.

c) Symbolic reading
While the reading mark symbol in the visualization background and setting (environment) video game as a marker HMBTN there are symbols and pisikologi sociological dimension, the dimension of the symbol pins visualized through games include; symbol of education, religious symbols, symbols of the property. Symbol of education can be seen from the presence of a library are displayed in public life in Mineral Town. Some visible religious symbols in the presence of a church along with several properties that make it up in the center of community life in Mineral Town. Symbol of property other than the property contained in a church there is also a painting of a property contained in the homes of residents in Mineral Town as a symbol of social strarta. The following researchers will present the results of the analysis of visual elements that form the visualization background and setting (environment) in table form.

Table 2 iconic, indexes and symbolic signs analysis of
video game environment visualization in HMBTN

Details	Physical Function		Psychological Function
	Materials/Assets	Sociological	Psychological
Icons	• House/Building Signs • Property Signs • Attribute Signs		
Indexs		• Social Signs • Work Signs • Education Signs • Religion Signs	• Properti Signs • Time Signs
Symbols		• Education Signs • Religion Signs	• Property Signs

Source: Personal documentation 2015

4.3 The analysis of visualization head up display on video game HMBTN

The persistence of a game in the HMBTN video game isn't just the presence of visual elements in form of characters visualization, background visualization, and setting (environment), but there is a visual element that must be also presented, such elements are visualization heads up display comprising of; (1) visualization of health bar/lives, (2) visualization of targeting reticule, (3) visualization of gauge ammunition, (4) visualization of inventory, (5) visualization of score/experience, (6) the visualization of radar/map. The continuity of the communication process between the players and the HMBTN video game that mediated by the interface isn't separated from head-up display.

Head up display refers to any visual elements that communicate information to the player (player), such as character status (life points, health, attributes, ammunition, time, score and mini map showing the location of the players in the game world), teammates, enemies and objectives, what's important is that the visualization of head-up display can provide every information that player needs to play HMBTN video game. Its presence can stimulate an emotion, even tell the players what they should do.

a) Iconic reading

The iconic visualization head-up display on the HMBTN video game is more hyperealist. What is meant by hyperrealism in the head-up display icons visualization is that icons which contained in the head-up display visualization represents more to what was in the HMBTN game world no longer represent what was in the original reality.

Like the iconic main character to the result of the crop. It aims to give a sense (taste, feel, taste) like in the real world. Icons that hyperrealist are ultimately provide an ease in the process of understanding and communication of the game's system control which played by a player, when a player is already inside the HMBTN game world that in fact as virtual reality and no longer as the original reality in life player.

b) Index reading

Index in the visualization of head-up display on the HMBTN video game functioned more as an informant of the achievement result. From the analysis, it contained some of the achievement index on the visualization of head-up display which is; financial achievement index, index of search attainment of power, achievement of happiness index, achievement of yields index, to the achievement of player's sucess index. The index beside providing the necessary information, the the index also gives a value of its own that can dramatically increase the emotion, like; the emotion of fear, panic and happiness to the player where it is very necessary to achieve an immersion.

c) Symbolic reading

Symbolic visualization of head-up display on the HMBTN video game isn't too prevalent, there are only a few symbols used in the visualization of head-up display which is; a symbol of happiness and a symbol of selling value of the mines that was symbolized by the colors and iconic shape of love (heart).

5. CONCLUSION

Overall the existence of the elements-the visual elements that are presented on the construction sign-a visual signal (icon, index, symbol) in the video game HMBTN has been able to describe the game world (world game) that puts the player (player) in the proper perception of the themes in the video namely HMBTN game back to nature (back to nature). The existence of the elements - the visual elements capable of guiding the player (player) to recognize what objects are there in front of him, and give an adequate explanation easier to understand by the player (player). And we can conclude the existence of a visualization of characters, visualization background and setting (environment), and visualization heads up display whose existence as elements-the visual elements

that construct narrative visual has been able to function well as part of the element descriptive contained in a video game.

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