

Resonant Icons: The Role of Music in Shaping Video Game Characters

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Abstract

Video games are an increasingly relevant medium for entertainment and storytelling, driving technological innovation forward and exercising human creativity in order to achieve new ways to tell stories. Characters are one of the many parts of a video game and, in many cases, they may transcend the given setting of a product, becoming icons of their own, as is the case of Mario, from Nintendo, and Sonic, from Sega. The aim of this presentation is to outline the foundations of a project for a future doctorate research in the field of Intermedial Studies. The objective of this incipient research is to analyze and understand how music and characters are related in video games, especially when it comes to their characterization. As a starting point, this presentation is based on Signe Kjær Jensen's 2021 dissertation, in which she studies the reception of film music and animation film by young audiences, focusing on how these two media types relate and help shape the interpretation that this demographic has of such characters. The intermedial nature of the relations between music and characters in video games becomes apparent when one considers the different media types involved in this context, following the model for analyzing media proposed by Lars Elleström in 2021: the characters are normally images, still or moving, presented through the computer screen and captured by our eyes; while music is, essentially, sound waves captured by our ears. However, a song can emphasize certain features of a character depending on many factors, such as its tempo or the instruments used, evoking certain physical characteristics of this participant of the narrative, which would normally be captured by our eyes.

Keywords

Video game, music, character, intermediality, characterization

Bio

Master's student in the field of Literary Theory and Culture Criticism in the Federal University of São João del-Rei (UFSJ), currently developing the dissertation project titled "Following the Scarlet Thread of Crime: The (re)construction of the Formidable Rival Professor in Moriarty: the Patriot", financed by UFSJ. Graduated in English through the Federal University of São

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