

T.C.
BAHCESEHIR UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME DESIGN

UNRELIABLE NARRATOR IN VIDEO GAMES



MASTER'S THESIS

ÖMER CAN SAROĞLU

ISTANBUL, 2023

T.C.
BAHCESEHIR UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME DESIGN

UNRELIABLE NARRATOR IN VIDEO GAMES

MASTER'S THESIS

ÖMER CAN SAROĞLU

THESIS ADVISOR

Assoc. Prof. Dr. DİĞDEM SEZEN

ISTANBUL, 2023

T.C.
BAHÇEŞEHİR UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

...../...../.....

MASTER THESIS APPROVAL FORM

Program Name:	Game Design
Student's Name and Surname:	Ömer Can Saroğlu
Name of The Thesis:	Unreliable Narrator in Video Games
Thesis Defense Date	

This thesis has been approved by the Graduate School which has fulfilled the necessary conditions as Master's thesis.

.....
Institute Director

This thesis was read by us, quality and content as a Master's thesis has been seen and accepted as sufficient.

	Title, Name	Institution	Signature
Thesis Advisor:	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Diğdem Sezen	University for the Creative Arts	
2nd Member	Dr. Çakır Aker	Bahçeşehir University	
3rd Member (Outside Institution)	Dr. Güven Çatak	Bahçeşehir University	



I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Surname:

Signature :

ABSTRACT

UNRELIABLE NARRATOR IN VIDEO GAMES

Saroglu, Ömer Can

Game Design Masters Program

Thesis Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Diğdem Sezen

August 2023, 98 Pages

This thesis explores in depth the use of the concept of unreliable narrators in video games. It aims to understand how unreliable narrators are utilised, the characteristics of narrators, the disclosure of unreliable narrators, and the possible effects of unreliable narrators on interactivity and game endings. Within the scope of the research, Bastion, Braid, Call of Juarez: Gunslinger, Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice and Portal, which have quite different characteristics from each other, were examined and analysed with the close reading technique and the results were compared with each other. This research reveals that the use of unreliable narrators in video games is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. The games analyzed show that the unreliable narrator is integrated with game design, gameplay, visual and auditory elements. As a result, it is revealed that the unreliable narrator is used as a complex narrative technique in video games as in literature and cinema. It also provides comprehensive information on how the unreliable narrator in games contributes to game design and the communication between the designer and the player. The thesis offers a new perspective on narrative in the field of game studies and helps us to better understand the power and structures of the medium, which will lead to the design of even more quality and innovative products in the future.

Keywords: Game Narrative, Unreliable Narrator, Video Games, Narrative Game Design

ÖZ

VIDEO OYUNLARDA GÜVENİLMEZ ANLATICI

Saroğlu, Ömer Can

Oyun Tasarımı Yüksek Lisans Programı

Tez Danışmanı: Doç. Dr. Diğdem Sezen

Ağustos 2023, 98 sayfa

Bu tez, video oyunlarda güvenilirmez anlatıcı kavramının kullanımını derinlemesine incelemektedir. Güvenilmez anlatıcılardan nasıl yararlandığı, anlatıcıların özellikleri, güvenilirmez anlatıcıların ifşası, güvenilirmez anlatıcının interaktiviteye ve oyunun sonlarına olası etkilerini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma kapsamında Bastion, Braid, Call of Juarez: Gunslinger, Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice ve Portal gibi birbirinden oldukça farklı özelliklere sahip altı oyun yakın okuma tekniği ile incelenmiş, analiz edilmiş ve çıkan sonuçlar birbirleriyle karşılaştırılmıştır. Bu araştırma, video oyunlarında güvenilirmez anlatıcı kullanımının karmaşık ve çok yönlü bir fenomen olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. İncelenen oyunlar, güvenilirmez anlatıcının oyun tasarımı, oynanış, görsel ve işitsel unsurlarla entegre bir şekilde kullanıldığını göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak güvenilirmez anlatıcının, edebiyat ve sinemada olduğu gibi video oyunlarda da karmaşık bir anlatı tekniği olarak kullanıldığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca, oyunlardaki güvenilirmez anlatıcının, oyun tasarımına ve tasarımcıyla oyuncu arasındaki iletişime nasıl katkı sağladığına dair kapsamlı bilgiler sunmaktadır. Tez, oyun çalışmaları alanında anlatı üzerine yeni bir perspektif sunmakta ve gelecekte daha da nitelikli ve yenilikçi ürünlerin tasarlanmasına yol açacak olan medyanın gücünü ve yapılarını daha iyi anlamamıza yardımcı olmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Video Oyunlarda Anlatı, Güvenilmez Anlatıcı, Video Oyunlar, Anlatı Oyun Tasarımı

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to those who assisted me with this project.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Diğdem Sezen, I would like to thank you for your guidance and support. Your insight aided me in every step of the journey.

Thank you to my family, Nurhayat Saroğlu and Ömer Faruk Saroğlu, for believing in me. Your affection and support made this possible.

Meltem, my spouse, thank you for your support. Your tolerance and affection helped me endure difficult times.

I am appreciative of you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ETHICAL CONDUCT	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF SYMBOLS/ABBREVIATIONS	xii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review	2
2.1 Narrative in Games	2
2.2 Narrator	4
2.2.1 Narrator	4
2.2.2 Secondary Narrators and Multiple Narration	7
2.3 Unreliable Narrator	8
2.3.1 History	8
2.3.2 Irony, Inconsistency	10
2.3.3 Rhetorical and Cognitive Approaches	10
2.4 Unreliable Narrator in Video Games	11
2.4.1 Previous Studies	11
2.4.2 Differences Between Unreliable Narrative and Unreliable Narrator	12
2.4.3 Ludic Unreliability	13
2.4.4 Games Without Narrator	13
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	14
3.1 Research Design.....	14
3.2 Purpose of the Study	15
3.3 Significance of the Study	15
3.4 Research in Video Games	16
3.5 Research Design.....	18
3.6 Game Selection	20
3.7 Limitations	21

Chapter 4: Analysis of Games.....	21
4.1 Bastion	22
4.1.1 Game Details	22
4.1.2 Gameplay.....	23
4.1.3 Analysis.....	35
4.1.3.1 Narrator.....	35
4.1.3.2 Unreliable Narrator.....	35
4.1.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator.....	36
4.1.3.4 The effect of unreliable narrator on multiple endings of the game	37
4.1.3.5 Effect of Unreliable Narrator on Interactivity.....	37
4.2 Braid.....	37
4.2.1 Game Details	37
4.2.2 Gameplay.....	37
4.2.3 Analysis.....	40
4.2.3.1 Narrator.....	41
4.2.3.2 Unreliable Narrator.....	41
4.2.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator.....	41
4.2.3.4 The effect of unreliable narrator on multiple endings of the game	41
4.1.3.5 Effect of Unreliable Narrator on Interactivity.....	42
4.3 Call of Juarez: Gunslinger.....	42
4.3.1 Game Details	42
4.3.2 Gameplay.....	42
4.3.3 Analysis.....	57
4.3.3.1 Narrator.....	57
4.3.3.2 Unreliable Narrator.....	58
4.3.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator.....	60
4.3.3.4 The effect of unreliable narrator on multiple endings of the game	61
4.3.3.5 Effect of Unreliable Narrator on Interactivity.....	61
4.4 Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice	62
4.4.1 Game Details	62

4.4.2 Gameplay.....	62
4.4.3 Analysis.....	76
4.4.3.1 Narrator.....	76
4.4.3.2 Unreliable Narrator.....	77
4.4.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator.....	78
4.4.3.4 The effect of unreliable narrator on multiple endings of the game	78
4.4.3.5 Effect of Unreliable Narrator on Interactivity.....	79
4.5 ICEY	79
4.5.1 Game Details	79
4.5.2 Gameplay.....	79
4.5.3 Analysis.....	83
4.5.3.1 Narrator.....	83
4.5.3.2 Unreliable Narrator.....	84
4.5.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator.....	84
4.5.3.4 The effect of unreliable narrator on multiple endings of the game	84
4.5.3.5 Effect of Unreliable Narrator on Interactivity.....	85
4.6 Portal	85
4.6.1 Game Details	85
4.6.2 Gameplay.....	85
4.6.3 Analysis.....	87
4.6.3.1 Narrator.....	87
4.6.3.2 Unreliable Narrator.....	87
4.6.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator.....	88
4.6.3.4 The effect of unreliable narrator on multiple endings of the game	88
4.6.3.5 Effect of Unreliable Narrator on Interactivity.....	88
Chapter 5: Findings	88
5.1 Features of Unreliable Narrators.....	88
5.2 Multiple Narrators & Secondary Narrators	90
5.3 Demonstration of Unreliability	91

5.4 Unreliable Narrator and Interface Usage.....	91
5.5 Knowledge Transfer in-game: UN and Communication Mechanisms.....	91
5.6 Visual, Auditory and Mechanical Reflections of the Unreliable Narrator.....	92
5.7 Unreliable Narrator and Interactivity.....	92
5.8 Unreliable Narrator and Gamepay.....	93
5.9 Unreliable Narrator and Metafiction	93
Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusions	94
6.1 Conclusions.....	94
6.2 Discussion.....	95
6.3 Limitations & Recommendations for Future Research	96
REFERENCES.....	99

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES

Table 1 Narrator's Point of View in the Analyzed Games 91

Table 2 Steam Review Count and Average Review of Examined Games..... 96



LIST OF SYMBOLS AND/OR ABBREVIATIONS

2D	Two-dimensional
3D	Three-dimensional
CJG	Call of Juarez: Gunslinger
FPS	First Person Shooter
FPV	First Person View
HSS	Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice
RPG	Role Playing Game
UN	Unreliable Narrator

Chapter 1

Introduction

Narrative has been a part of video games since the first digital games, both in embedded and mediated ways and as an explicit and central element. From the arcade game *Ms. Pac-Man* (1982), to *Disco Elysium* (2019), an interactive narrative game, it is possible to feel like a part of a story in line with the information given to us by each video game. *Disco Elysium* is a role-playing game in which the player portrays a detective with mental problems. *Ms. Pac-Man* tells us a story about life and death, consumption and power (Zimmerman, 2004). What these games, which tell their stories in quite different ways, show us is that games and narrative are highly intertwined and that in order to understand games it is necessary to consider narratives as well. With the development of technological possibilities and the use of more complex narrative techniques in games, the importance of research in this field is increasing.

Narrative is not only an accompanying element of gameplay, it is also important for immersion when it comes to the presence of players in the game. Indeed, a failure to understand the game world can lead to a failure in gameplay (Tavinor, 2005). Every game producer aims to reach the maximum depth of experience in which the player can experience immersion during the design process. Sweetser and Johnson support this by stating that narrative is also important for immersion and gives players the information they need to feel part of the story (Sweetser and Johnson, 2004).

Considering that narrative is so important in terms of player experience, studies in this field can be very instructive for the game industry and the field of game studies. Gonzalo Frasca stated: "So far, the traditional—and most popular—research approach from both the industry and the academy has been to consider video games as extensions of drama and narrative" (2003, p. 221). Like any new field of research, game studies has to borrow concepts used in fields such as literature and film theory until it comes up with its own concepts.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the utilization of the narrative method known as the "unreliable narrator" in the context of video games. This notion, commonly employed in literature and cinema, has gained significant prominence, particularly in the post-Second World War era. This research seeks to answer questions regarding the discourses of unreliable narrators, their interactions with gameplay, their impact on interactivity, and the use of unreliable narrator disclosures in selected games.

Unreliable narrators are becoming increasingly common in video games, yet research directly related to this concept in game studies is very limited (Fruzińska, 2018; Roe & Mitchell, 2019; Beyvers, 2020a). Just like cinema or new media studies, the existence of unreliable narrators in games is a topic that needs to be discussed in terms of their effects and characteristics.

In this study, the games *Bastion* (2011), *Braid* (2008), *Call of Juarez: Gunslinger* (2013), *Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice* (2017), *ICEY* (2016) and *Portal* (2007), which are produced in different game genres or use different unreliable narrator techniques, will be analyzed and how they use the unreliable narrator will be investigated using close reading method.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Narrative in Games

According to Roland Barthes, narrative exists in countless forms all over the world, at all times and in all societies; it is international, transhistorical and intercultural (Barthes, 1975). Just like French films, modern ballet, the Orkhon Monuments or Eminem songs, video games also fall within the scope of narratology. Games also present a narrative, a story, in embedded/indirect ways or directly. Some games encourage the player to uncover this story, while others present it through cutscenes inserted between gameplay segments. Salen and Zimmerman distinguish between two main types of storytelling: emergent and embedded narratives (2003).

Dubbelman (2017), on the other hand, argues that according to the cognitive perspective, games can offer narratives even if they do not have a predetermined storytelling purpose because players create stories in their minds through real-time dynamic interaction with the game system. Again, Zimmerman's study on Ms. Pac-Man game can be given as an example (2004). Ms. Pac-Man, which appears as an ordinary arcade game from the outside. Pac-Man, when analyzed in a structuralist way, can actually become a game that contains many stories. Zimmerman (2004) argues that Ms. Pac-Man can be read as a game that tells stories about life, death, power, consumption and relationships. This structuralist approach can be applied to all games and it may be possible to approach games from a new and different perspective.

Pearce (2004) argues that play and the player experience are central to games, and in this respect games differ from cinema and literature, which emphasize storytelling. In other media, the story is the main component of the structure and is often indispensable for the experiencer. Games, on the other hand, are designed experiences and even if they contain stories, these serve the experience (Calleja, 2011). However, Calleja can be objected to by giving the example of postmodern productions that undermine themselves and aim to destroy the text, breaking traditional structures. Contemporary art products are controversial in this respect and many of them, like games, sometimes only prioritize experience. It should be noted, however, that the interactivity of video games is not yet as actively used in other media as it is in games.

Since the 2000s, the most discussed topic in game studies has been the relationship of video games with narrative. In 1999, Adams argued that interactivity in games may prevent telling a story and that interactivity and narrative are two opposite poles. Frasca argues that games are simulations rather than narratives (2003); Jenkins states that not all games, but some games tell stories and that the narrative style of games can be abstract, expressive and experimental (2004). Researchers such as Majewski and Tavinor have tried to explain the difference between games and traditional media by considering the interactivity in games (Majewski, 2003; Tavinor, 2005). Calleja, on the other hand, emphasizes that games try to redefine and benefit from classical narrative concepts and states that games take their narrative features from narrative traditions such as literature and cinema (2011). Bateman also states that playwriting can break new ground in the field of narrative (2021). All this process, in

parallel with the games produced, shows that there have been theoretical developments and paradigms have changed in the relationship between game and narrative. In parallel with the changes on the academic side, even in casual mobile games, players are now provided with an engaging story and narrative structures are established to connect with the game.

However, studies on narrative in game studies, which we can see as a new discipline, are still quite few. The unique characteristics of the media and the immanence of more than one artistic form require further research in this field. Aarseth puts it as follows:

“The last ten years have seen a number of comments on the so-called “ludology vs. narratology” debate, but, ironically, very few have actually engaged the question of the relation between games and stories through a properly narratological analysis, using the basic concepts and models of modern narrative theory.” (2012, s. 129).

As a result, video games are still a new media in its infancy. Research requires looking at games from new perspectives in order to analyse the ever-growing and developing sectoral productions. We may have been playing games for hundreds of thousands of years, but for the first time in history we have the chance to produce them as narrative or simulation or interactivity or all of them together. We need to find new perspectives, approaches and frameworks to analyse games in the future that we can't imagine designing now, and we need to more fully embrace narrative in games.

2.2 Narrator

2.2.1 Narrator. Since the beginning of storytelling, the existence of a conscious narrator can be mentioned. However, considering Barthes, who says that everything is a narrative, the narrator actually goes back much further. The origins of our narrative skills, which are still evident in video games today, are much older than we think. We can say that the first narrators were our ancestors who drew the oldest known cave wall paintings in history. Margolin (2009) defines the concept as follows: "In the literal sense, the term "narrator" designates the inner-textual (textually encoded) speech position from which the current narrative discourse originates and from which

references to the entities, actions and events that this discourse is about are being made."

The structuralist perspective posits the narrator as an absolute entity, although scholars within the Chomsky tradition, including Kuroda, Banfield, Patron, and others, argue that the presence of a narrator is not an obligatory component (Derviscemaloglu, 2022). This thesis will adopt the approach of structuralist theorists such as Chatman, Phelan and Rabinowitz.

According to Mieke Bal, the narrator is one of the most central concepts when analyzing texts, giving the text its special character through the effect of its presence (1997). Different narrators will perceive events and situations from their own perspectives. Bal introduced the term focalizer for this purpose (ibid.). Accordingly, subjects who perceive the same event and situation differently will also convey it in a different way. This phenomenon, exemplified in Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon* (1950), is called the *Rashomon effect*.

As in cinema and works of literature, video games can also have more than one narrator. However, the boundaries for a person who conveys a statement to be considered a narrator are very vague. Calling every character who communicates something a narrator creates an inextricable classification. Margolin (2009) states that the narrator has a discourse that does not only consist of reporting facts but also includes summary, analysis, interpretation and generalizations. Chatman (1978) states that speech act theory is functional in distinguishing between narrators and characters, and distinguishes characters from narrators because their speech is not directed towards the addressee and/or the implied reader. Nevertheless, the validity of such assertions diminishes in the context of video games. For instance *Call of Juarez: Gunslinger* (2013), the character Silas is actually telling his story to the other NPCs in the Saloon. There is no implication that he is addressing the player in any way. As a narrator, Silas falls outside of this kind of distinction. Therefore, we cannot say that this distinction is valid in all circumstances.

Conversely, within the realm of video games, there exists a challenge in discerning the narrator's identity, even instances where non-playable characters (NPCs) explicitly communicate with the player. In *Call of Duty Black Ops 3* (2015),

for example, multiple NPCs address the player-controlled character "Player", reporting situations and updates, but deciding whether any one of them is a narrator is a difficult distinction to make. Other characters often talk to them, looking towards the camera. On the other hand, it's a good key in many ways that Chatman (1978) states that the main act of non-narrator characters is to express what they want to do rather than narrating. This will help us get the right answer when evaluating NPC conversations in video games, asking if the NPC wants to narrate or if he is talking to give information about x or to do x.

One of the most important questions when analyzing the narrator is the question of who is the narrator in the narrative being analyzed. However, this is preceded by a larger distinction concerning the author. Booth distinguishes between the author and the abstract person who is assumed to have written the work, and proposes the concept of the implied author (Booth, 1961). Schmid (2009) states that the first similar examples of this concept were produced by the Russian Formalists. In the context of author and implied author, issues such as the responsibility for the writing and who owns the voice have been frequently discussed in narrative theory. Chatman defines implied author as: "He is not the narrator, but rather the principle that invented the narrator, along with everything else in the narrative, that stacked the cards in this particular way, had these things happen to these characters, in these words or images." (1978, p. 148)

For example, when reading *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*, we know that the author is Jonathan Safran Foer, but the subject we assume to have written the book is another persona, yet we hear the story of the book from a nine-year-old character. This distinction is always present, including in some autobiographical works. Beardsley expresses it thus:

"In general, the correct principle seems to be that the speaker of a literary work cannot be identified with the author—and therefore the character and condition of the speaker can be known by internal evidence alone—unless the author has provided a pragmatic context, or a claim of one, that connects the speaker with himself." (1958, s.240).

The narrator can position themselves inside or outside the story according to their function, sometimes they are a human being, sometimes a hobbit or a cockroach. They can be omniscient or simply someone who interprets what they see. The narrator may remain as isolated from the text as possible, with no discernible presence, as in the stream-of-consciousness novels of Virginia Woolf or Hemingway's simple narratives. These works in this genre can be said to have a closed narrator. Especially when it comes to literature, it is possible to see that historically the narrator has become increasingly isolated from the text. As we approach the present day, the narrator has become a hidden subject in some texts, a subject whose existence is uncertain and who does not comment. Subsequently, cinema and rapidly developing video games seem to have taken over this tradition. When it comes to cinema, the debate on the narrator takes a more interesting dimension as Gaudreault & Jost states "In the cinema, the primary speaker, the implicit narrator, speaks cinema using images and sounds; the explicit narrator only uses words" (1999, p. 52). These media, which can present stories without the need for a narrator or intermediary, have emerged in a way that fits well with narrative traditions that have increasingly eliminated the narrator and their influence.

2.2.2 Secondary narrators and multiple narrators. In works, the narrator of the narrative may not always be a single person. It is possible to see multiple narrators, especially in literature and video games. Scheherazade in *One Thousand and One Nights* is one of the oldest and most well-known secondary narrators. In fact, like a Chinese box model, the narrative is constantly handed over to a new narrator in a smaller unit. Ryan (1991) classifies the stories in such narratives as main story and embedded narrative.

Margolin (2009) gives the examples of Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red* and Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and emphasizes the necessity of identifying a macro voice from polyphonic narration. However, it is not always easy to find a single generative voice that is the source of the entire work. When designing the narrative, the author may have constructed the work in order to completely subvert it. It also seems difficult to imagine a single imply author for multi-narrator works with as many different characteristics as possible. Margolin (2009) states that: "Some narratives do not have a general or global narrator, so that the events on the narrated level are related

by numerous independent partial narrators, neither of whom refers to the discourse of the others, thus creating ‘narrative parataxis’ (Coste 1989: 173)”.

Video games also use these narrators by utilizing the possibilities of the medium to tell the story. *Hellblade Senua's Sacrifice* (2017) is an example where narrators are used in accordance with the theme of the story. Multiple voices are used as narrators to better reflect psychosis.

Especially in open-world games, using multiple narrators for the narrative designer provides a setting for the player to follow the story without detaching the player from the game. This also allows players to experience the same story from the perspective of various characters.

2.3 Unreliable Narrator

2.3.1 History. The term “unreliable narrator” was first used by Wayne C. Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961). Booth states: “I have called a narrator reliable when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's norms), unreliable when he does not” (p. 159-159).

Although the concept was proposed historically in the second half of the 1900s, many works had been transmitted by unreliable narrators until then. The concept, which is frequently used in conjunction with modernism, especially after the Second World War, has become a frequently discussed topic in terms of the narrative-narrator-reader relationship in today's postmodern narrative productions. The concept has begun to be handled in an interdisciplinary manner in a scope that expands from works of fiction to every expression that contains narrative or non-fiction. This, in turn, has led to the redefinition of the concept and the attribution of new characteristics to it by taking into account the areas it covers.

Scholars who study the unreliable narrator take two different approaches: Rhetorical and cognitive. In the rhetorical approach, unreliability ontologically resides in the text. In the cognitive approach, on the other hand, it is argued that the presence and interpretation of the reader/viewer/player reveals the unreliable narrator.

According to Phelan and Rabinowitz (2012), an unreliable narrator is a type of narrator who is incomplete or inaccurate when the narrator conveys, evaluates and interprets. It is possible to say that the work is narrated by an unreliable narrator, if the reader or player feels suspicious and starts to detect inconsistencies while reading the text or playing the game. In such a situation, they will prefer to put a distance between themselves and the discourse and will want to continue their experience in a different way. As soon as they realise that the information presented to them is epistemologically erroneous, they will start to evaluate what they see and hear with a different eye in order to find the truth in the created fictional world.

The unreliability of the narrators can occur consciously, as well as the lack of knowledge and evaluation criteria of the narrator. However, the ethical values of the narrator can also cause the narrator to be unreliable (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983). Rimmon-Kenan cites *The Catcher in the Rye* and *The Sound and the Fury* as novels in which the narrators have limited knowledge and understanding (a.g.e.). The narrators of these two novels are Holden Caulfield, an angry teenager with poor social skills, and Benjy, who suffers from mental retardation. The narrators with such characteristics will be unintentionally unreliable, and therefore the reader's approach to the text will be determined by the narrators' personal characteristics. Olson (2003) makes a distinction between unreliable narrators, defines narrators who are affected by external circumstances as "fallible narrators" and gives the example of Huckleberry Finn. According to Olson, "untrustworthy narrators" behave inconsistently and unreliably as a conscious choice, and readers react differently to them than to fallible narrators (ibid.).

Hearing comments other than what we expect from the narrator will also shake our trust in them. Such a narrator would not be able to evaluate events from a subjective point of view and would be unreliable when they do not coincide with our values. On the other hand Jahn states: "Many first-person narrators are unreliable" (2021, p. 71). This is a consistent observation when postmodernism and subsequent productions are taken into account. Today, there is not a single reality, but realities. In this period called post truth, what constitutes reality is an illusion. According to Baudrillard, the age we live in is an age of simulation (Baudrillard, 1994). Vera Nünning stated that this situation has become a norm and this is reflected in the narratives of the period

(Nünning, 2015). Many modern works use unreliable narration as a means of questioning and debating traditional notions of reality (Booth, 1961). According to Rimmon-Kenan (1983), some texts, which can be defined as ambiguous narratives, leave the reader in an undecided position and in many texts it is very difficult to understand the degree of reliability of the narrator. This is especially the case when the narrator relays the statements of other speakers.

According to Elsaesser, who discusses unreliable narrators in the context of cinema, narrators are a priori unreliable and when the audience learns this as a plot twist at the end of the movie, they are asked to remember the whole story again (2021). Considering examples from both literature and cinema, there are many examples to confirm this observation. In such works, it appears more often as a plot twist element. However, narrator unreliability can also be caused by greed, intellectual apology, naivety, confusion or innocence (Chatman, 1978). Lanser, on the other hand, approaches the issue in the context of gender and states that an unreliable narrator may be encountered even in a situation where the assumption that the author is male is not correct (1995).

2.3.2 Irony, inconsistency. In modern and post-modern literary productions, irony has become a very common tool used by writers. Especially in metafictional narratives, postmodernist writers choose to communicate with readers in a different way. Irony is also one of the attitudes used by unreliable narrators. For irony to emerge, a statement must be said in a different sense by any context (Brooks, 1951). Irony is often accompanied by sarcasm. However, Booth (1961) argues that irony is not a sufficient characteristic to identify unreliable narrators alone.

2.3.3 Rhetorical and cognitive approaches. Booth (1961) defines an unreliable narrator on the basis of the distance between unreliable narrators and implied author norms. For him, even a character who lies may not be an unreliable narrator (ibid.). However, this is a rather limited perspective given the myriad of possibilities.

The cognitive approach, meanwhile, focuses on the distinction between the reader and the writer as the starting point of untrustworthiness. Hansen (2007) puts it as follows: "If reader and narrator share a worldview, a moral standard, values, or

beliefs, the narrator will be reliable to the reader. If not, he/she will be unreliable” (p. 227-228).

A relative criterion such as ethics or conscience will always cause the definition to change in all circumstances and cultures, which is ultimately incompatible with objectivity. The relationships that each reader can have with each author are diverse and unquantifiable. An analytical lens based on personal qualities would never be conclusive in this respect and would be similarly unreliable. Phelan also criticizes cognitive narratologists, arguing that the reader's reception is not sufficient in itself and that the author must be the cause of the inconsistency through a design decision (2005, as cited in Hansen, 2007).

However, rhetorical approaches that focus on discourse will be able to make an objective analysis of the content and will not be mistaken in identifying contradictions. Therefore, the narrator's discourse and the analysis of the content of the work must constitute the main framework. Chatman (1978) also focuses on discourse and considers the contradiction of the implied reader's expectations and predictions about the story with the narrator's discourse as a threshold and states that in case of contradiction, the story undermines the discourse.

2.4 Unreliable Narrator in Video Games

2.4.1 Previous studies. If previous studies are to be considered, research on video games has started quite recently. Research focusing specifically on the unreliable narrator is quite scarce.

In their close reading of "Tales from the Borderlands Episode 1" (2014) and "Doki Doki Literature Club" (2017), Curie Roe and Alex Mitchell examined the unreliable narrator created without a personified and omniscient narrator (Roe and Mitchell, 2019). They explored the unreliable narrator's relationship with disclosure, narrative mechanics and interactivity (ibid.). In Tales from the Borderlands Episode 1, the player is given a choice as they play scenes of events that are said to have happened before by two different unreliable narrators who accuse each other of lying, but the researchers noted that these choices are ultimately irrelevant, suspecting that the actions they perform are part of the character-narrators' imagination, and that they are

deliberately drawn into a layer of metalepsis (ibid.). Booth also notes that the appearance of another unreliable character in narratives further complicates the narrative (1961).

In Doki Doki Literature Club, they stated that the character Monika directly addresses the player, that she is aware that she is a character in the game and can manipulate the game, that the game interface is designed accordingly, and that the player's inputs can be controlled and directed by the system (Roe ve Mitchell, 2019). They emphasized that the unreliable narrator is supported by auditory, visual and interactive qualities (ibid.).

Astrid Ensslin analyzed the play in the context of unnatural narration by close reading *Stanley Parable* (2013) (Ensslin, 2015). Kubiński (2017) also read *Stanley Parable* and emphasized the effects of the unreliable narrator on the narrative. *Stanley Parable* is one of the most studied and analyzed plays in this context (Fest, 2016; Beyvers, 2020b).

Fruzińska (2018) conducted an analysis on the relationship between the unreliable narrator and the narrative in a meticulous examination of *Call of Juarez: Gunslinger* (2013), a game that was also explored in the present thesis. The study delved into the intricate connection between the unreliable narrator and the narrative.

Beyvers (2020a) states that the unreliable narrative in *Dear Esther* is supported by verbal, visual and ludic code. She emphasizes that the narrator's unreliability is due to her mental madness (ibid.).

Although the existence of the unreliable narrator in video games has been investigated to some extent in the research to date, comparative examples of this in video games have not been examined, and the concept of the unreliable narrator has not yet been framed. Beyvers argues that the lack of discussion of this issue in video games compared to other media is due to the versatility of the medium and states that there can be many independent narratives at the micro level in games (Beyvers, 2020).

2.4.2 Differences between unreliable narrative and unreliable narrator.

Before starting the game analysis, the boundaries of the conceptual framework need to be emphasized. There are some differences between unreliable narrators and

unreliable narrative. Especially in video games, it is not possible to talk about the concept of implied author. Although the concept of the "game narrator" has been coined as an alternative (Roe & Mitchell, 2019), looking at all games through this analytical lens can become quite controversial. In cases where there is no narrator, but the game still contains elements of unreliability, the term "unreliable narration" should be used. For instance, in *Superliminal* (2019), the player tries to solve puzzles with optical illusion tricks. There is no narrator to guide him, and what they experience is inconsistent. In *Hotline Miami* (2012), the main character's delusions are caused by his own mental state, which may create an unreliable narrative, but there is no narrator.

2.4.3 Ludic unreliability. In addition, there is the concept of ludic unreliability that can occur during gameplay. This occurs when the mechanics or rules of the game do not match the player's expectations or the functions suggested by the game itself (Gualeni & Van de Mosselaer, 2021). Two different types of ludic unreliability exist: intentional, which is a design decision, and unintentional, which is the result of an error in construction (ibid.). By intentionally altering the player's inputs, deliberately manipulating the degree of control within the game, and distorting the pace of their actions, it is possible to enhance the player's enjoyment of the game (Laar & Plass-Oude Bos & Reuderink & Poel & Nijholt, 2013). Similarly, *Doki Doki Literature Club* is a game where inputs are controlled as unreliable narrative mechanics (Roe & Mitchell, 2019). Arjoranta (2017) states that in *Assassin's Creed 3*, the player learns later that he actually works for the Templars, contrary to what he was told, and mentions that the game uses the game interface in this direction while deceiving the player. A narrator figure is not seen in such examples. It is possible to classify such examples as unreliable narrative if they are related to the narrative, or as ludic unreliability if they are not.

2.4.4 Games without narrator. *Spec Ops: The Line* (2012), one of the games rumored to have an unreliable narrator in game forums, falls outside of this concept because it does not actually have an identifiable figure as a narrator. It is not possible to characterize the character Walker/Konrad as a narrator. At the beginning of the play, it is unclear whether it is Walker who gets out of bed and starts to tell us a story; the camera does not show the character's face. Considering the ending of the play (Walker is the one who informs him by radio), it seems unlikely that this person is Walker. As

a narrator, this character is like someone who exists only at the beginning of the play and whom we never see again afterwards. The reason for using this scene may be to mislead the player. We can say that it is not the narrator who does this, but the designer of the game. As a narrator, the character Walker, who is directed by the player, does not give information, report or comment on events. His conversations with NPCs take place as ordinary dialogs. It is not possible to see him as a narrator. His mental health condition that appears at the end of the story shows that the game contains an unreliable narrative, but not a narrator.

A similar situation is also valid for *Firewatch* (2016). It is very difficult to code one of the characters as the narrator. Dialogues take place between two characters and there is no trace of a narrator dominating the narrative.

The biggest reason for the confusion in the literature is the difficulty of determining who is the narrator in video games. Similar to the ongoing debates in literary and film studies, the same is also true for video games. The extent to which the presence of a narrator can be observed in every game, and the potential for analysis using the concept of an implied game designer, remains an area that has not been sufficiently explored in existing research.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Questions

One of the things that makes the concept of the unreliable narrator important is that many different disciplines work on this concept. Zerweck (2019, p. 221) states: “Narrative unreliability is a phenomenon situated at the crossroads of different fields and disciplines, including narratology, ethics, epistemology, linguistics, psychology, and cognitive theory.” Today, debates on truth are not only philosophical. Wherever there is narrative, unreliability has become the default position. Video games are as much a part of this as politics, news and advertising.

This thesis seeks to answer the question "How are unreliable narrators used in video games?". Other sub-questions are as follows:

- Do unreliable narrators affect interactivity in video games?
- How are narrators revealed to be unreliable?
- Can unreliable narrators affect game endings?
- How do unreliable narrators affect narrative structure in games?
- How are unreliable narrators used in different game genres?
- Can games with unreliable narrators be compared and a common pattern found?

3.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the multifaceted technique of employing unreliable narrators in video games and to understand how this narrative device significantly influences various aspects of gaming. The investigation is grounded in the hypothesis that the utilization of unreliable narrators in video games is not a mere storytelling gimmick but a complex method that has substantial impacts on the narrative structure, interactivity, game endings, and genre-specific storytelling.

3.3 Significance of the Study

Video games are today's new storytelling tools that offer contemporary narratives. Each generation is moving further and further away from the prevalent media tools of the previous generation and chooses to listen to and experience stories according to the technology and needs of its generation. This journey from our ancestors who listened to tales by the fire to handheld consoles also benefits from the accumulation of the past. It derives and uses methods from theater, literature and cinema in its own media. The unreliable narrator is one of them.

Even when I was a kid in the 90s, many games had strong narrative structures and had a meaningful impact on the gameplay. Players can experience a game without

paying attention to the narrative, but this is like watching and experiencing a movie casually. You can read a novel without paying attention to the story, you can read a part of a novel in an experimental way by looking at the characters' speech, descriptions or just punctuation, but the experience is incomplete and meaningless. I remember playing a video game called *Silent Still* (1995) when I was a kid. I was very young and didn't know enough English to play the game, and no matter how much the game drew me in, it was a text-based game, so I had a hard time understanding the meaning of the choices I made. Yes, I can say that I played the game when I was a kid, but the only thing I remember about the game was the crew looking worriedly at the camera and the torpedo crashing into the submarine. I probably never finished the game.

While narratives are so crucial for understanding and experiencing games, studies in this field are quite limited. This study aims to fill the gaps in the field and contribute to the research on the relationship between narrative and games.

3.4 Research in Video Games

Although there has been a great increase in research on video games since the 2000s, the work of theorists such as Huizinga (1938) and Caillois (1958) goes back much further. As our playing practices change, the subject matter and methods of research in this field also change. It can be seen that there are two main dynamics that are the targets of research in game studies: players and games themselves (Consalvo & Dutton, 2006).

When we look at the analysis studies on video games, one of the first studies is Konzack's (2002) empirical research based on a case study. In this study, Konzack claims that games can be analyzed separately or as a whole through seven different categories: Hardware, program code, functionality, gameplay, meaning, referentiality, socio-culture (ibid.). Konzack argues that these structural components of games should be part of the analysis so that it is possible to understand how games work (ibid.). Consalvo and Dutton (2006) criticize Konzack's structuring of analysis for not giving enough insight into how to apply the proposed methods of analysis. It is indeed difficult to examine these categories, which are quite different from each other, together. This is because each of them has different disciplinary contexts. For a

narratologist to study the language of a program or vice versa is an expectation that has little practical applicability. This shows that the researcher's area of specialization and competence will influence the form of the research. Aarseth (2003) suggests that the researcher can take Konzack's work as a framework and work with a few of these layers as contexts.

Aarseth (2003) states that each game has three different dimensions (gameplay, game-structure, game-world) and that games can be approached from these angles:

- Gameplay (the players' actions, strategies and motives)
- Game-structure (the rules of the game, including the simulation rules)
- Game-world (fictional content, topology/level design, textures etc.)

Aarseth states that non-game resources can also make a significant contribution to research and suggests some suggestions such as observing players, following the posts of communities and examining their communication (ibid.). In this respect, the functionality of Fandom, TV Tropes and similar sites can be particularly emphasized. gamers contribute massively to game-related information in such media encyclopedias. They bring together data on a wide range of elements from story, mechanics, collectibles to creatures. Especially some games have very high quality data that we can call an unofficial GDD (Game Design Document). Within the scope of this thesis, I tried to make use of similar information pools in the games I analyzed.

Consalvo and Dutton (2006) proposed a framework with four categories: Object Inventory, Interface Study, Interaction Map and Gameplay Log. This is a new approach for video game reviews as it focuses on more concrete data than previous studies. It is important in terms of revealing the importance of the interface and the game's communication with the player.

Carr (2009) tries to derive a methodology by combining three different types of analysis. Accordingly, she combines textual analysis, structural analysis and Bennett and Woollacott's concepts of inter-textuality and reading formations. In her work, she emphasizes the subjectivity and contingency of analysis, with particular reference to social contexts and different readings. Influenced by Barthes' textual analysis in *S/Z*,

she tries to adapt the method to Resident Evil 4. One of the notable points in his research is that he chose a representative part of the game for analysis after playing the whole game.

Schmierbach (2009) uses qualitative content analysis and emphasizes the importance of applying a standardized method to accurately capture the variable data of interactive media. Since each interaction yields different data and each experience or test leads to different conclusions, more efficient ways of research should be sought. For a competent analysis, all scenarios and possibilities in the game should be contextually tested and data collected. As Bizzocchi & Tanenbaum states: "In a digital text, the reading must be able to account for the indeterminate nature of the experience" (2011, p. 299). In this thesis, all actions involving interactivity were tried one by one and noted down. Gameplay videos of other players were also meticulously analyzed to avoid any information that could not be obtained during the research.

Bizzocchi and Tanenbaum (2011) tried to create a close reading method compatible with gameplay. They emphasized the importance of the analytical lens in close reading studies (ibid.) According to them, context will enable the interpreter to focus on more precise points and to address the desired aspects of the subject. For a type of media such as video games, which takes a long time to experience in its entirety and contains a lot of details and possibilities, this approach seems quite reasonable in terms of efficiency.

3.5 Research Design

In this study, close reading will be applied as a method. The technique, which is frequently used in game studies, provides us with the necessary approach to analyze a game in detail.

“Close reading is a technique from literary theory that has evolved over the years since its early formulations by John Crowe Ransom and the other “New Critics” in the late 1930s and early 1940s. A close reading is a detailed examination, deconstruction, and analysis of a media text” (Bizzocchi & Tanenbaum, 2011, p. 289).

In this study, the researcher will play each game twice and take screen recordings. The PC versions of the games to be analyzed will be played in such a way that the main single-player stories are completely finished. In one of the playthroughs, the researcher will play the game as a naive reader and in the other as a researcher. The gameplay breakdown will be done by watching their own gameplay videos and comparing them with other players' gameplay videos. The gameplay analysis will be reported in the context of the unreliable narrator and will be conveyed with someone unfamiliar with the game in mind. The aim should be to enrich the transmission of the gameplay experience with details of rules, story and interaction (Fernández-Vara, 2019), so such details related to the unreliable narrator context will also be included in the analysis. Following the gameplay analysis, the identified questions will be asked and the findings of the research will be obtained. In the gameplay analysis, when describing actions performed by the game in cutscenes and animations, I used the name of the characters as the subject of the action, and when describing actions performed as a result of the player's commands, I used "the player" as the subject.

In this research, while investigating the unreliable narrator in the plays, the framework of the context will be the definition by Phelan and Rabinowitz (2012). Expressions of irony, sarcasm and inconsistency in the discourse will be explored throughout the analysis.

By claiming that games offer increasingly complex and contemporary narratives, it will be based on the expectation that narrative techniques specific to other media are now also seen in video games. In the research, situations such as the discourses of unreliable narrators, their relationship with gameplay, their effect on interactivity, their position and form in the narrative will be examined and facts will be tried to be reached. It will be investigated whether the results obtained form a pattern.

The importance of player typology classifications is often emphasized, as gameplay will yield different results depending on the player's play (Aarseth, 2003; Schmierbach, 2009). Parameters such as the player's playing style, knowledge and skills about the game and the genre can shape the whole experience. This study uses the "naive interactor" approach proposed by Bizzocchi. Bizzocchi explains this concept as follows: "The naïve interactor whose voice I created is someone who has not read the books, and is playing the game for the first time. These descriptive

sequences therefore represent a constructed phenomenology.” (2001, as cited in Bizzocchi & Tanenbaum, 2011)

3.6 Game Selection

Schmierbach (2009) states that most studies do not randomly select a sample of games for content analysis, but instead consider the game genre or the number of sales, and that this carries the risk of not representing the sample well enough. Within the scope of this thesis, I also set reaching a large number of players as a criterion in my game selection, but I can say that the fact that popular games exhibit certain stereotypical characteristics that Schmierbach criticizes and that this may mislead the research data is not a factor in my research.

First, I gathered the information I came across during the literature review. Then, I searched various forums with a large community of gamers such as Reddit; sites with compiled information such as TV-Tropes; gaming media sites such as www.gamedeveloper.com, www.rockpapershotgun.com and videos on YouTube, especially GDC talks. With the information I obtained, I prepared a list of games that I could only play the PC versions of the games I found. In this list, I added the name of the games, release date, number of Metacritic and Steam user reviews and review scores. Since Steam user reviews are higher than Metacritic, I adjusted the ranking according to Steam. Then, in order to examine the maximum number of games that I could examine during the research, I limited the games that I would evaluate to those with less than 10 hours of total single-player play time. I watched gameplay videos and played the games that were likely to be included in the research to understand whether the games included in this scope actually had a narrator, and if so, whether they had an unreliable narrator. As a result of the research, I observed that although many games were stated by players as having unreliable narrators, this was actually not true.

I excluded Doki Doki Literature Club and Stanley Parable, which have already been studied by other researchers, to avoid repetition. Call of Juarez: Gunslinger, both because it is an FPS game and because of its narrative features, I wanted to investigate it myself and included it in the list, even though another researcher had done a close reading research on it.

I also considered parameters such as whether the unreliable narrator is written or spoken, the limits of the narrator's knowledge, the player's point of view, and whether the unreliable narration is intentional or unintentional. After my elimination, Portal, Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice, Bastion, ICEY, Call of Juarez: Gunslinger, to which I added Braid as it features a different type of unreliable narrator, thus making it possible to examine more different narrators in various game genres for a more accurate representation.

3.7 Limitations

It is not possible to track the total number of sales and plays of games across different platforms. Moreover, video game sales are constantly increasing over the years and new players experience the game. In this study, it was emphasised that games should be easily accessible and experienced by as many players as possible. Games with a high number of reviews have generally been influential in the gaming industry and culture. For this reason, the games were selected based on the number of reviews on the Steam platform and ranked accordingly. Choosing these games from the Steam platform limited the study to the game reviews of people who play games on computers and laptops and the games that they can play. Again, the criterion of less than 10 hours of total playing time used in the selection of games restricted the games to be researched to games of a certain length. In this respect, it should be taken into account that a different example of the unreliable narrator may be encountered in other games.

Chapter 4

Analysis of Games

4.1 Bastion

4.1.1 Game Details. Bastion is an independent action, hack and slash game developed by Supergiant Games and released in 2011. In a post-disaster scenario, the actor controls a character called The Kid. The protagonist of the game is another character named Rucks.

Interaction in the game is limited. The player can break the surrounding items but cannot perform any other action. There are various weapons that can be used in fights with NPCs and the player is allowed to upgrade them in the arsenal. Core mechanics include using weapons, dash, jumping with skybridge and switch mechanics. Once the player dies, they will respawn where they died, but if they die more than once they will either start at the beginning of the episode or return to Bastion.

The game features a third-person perspective from an isometric camera. On the maps in the game, the ground often builds up or collapses depending on the player's movement, this mechanic is also presented as an obstacle to the player in some levels.

According to the information given by the narrator, before Calamity, The Kid started working at Rippling Walls because things were not going well at school. He never saw his father and lived with his mother. The walls are a structure that protects Caelondia and The Kid's work here shows his hardworking, determined and determined character.

The narrator does not only give information about the past and Calamity throughout the game. He also frequently narrates the player's fights and struggles. Since these are not related to the unreliable narrator's discourses, I did not deem it necessary to report these discourses of the narrator. Due to the fact that it is an action and hack and slash type game, the player has to fight with creatures for long periods of time. I have not included the narrator's words in these sections, but it should be recognised that in these sections the narrator is interpreting and describing what he sees. I have searched, researched and conveyed the common patterns of unreliable narrator characteristics in the play.

4.1.2 Gameplay. The Rippling Walls

The game begins with the narrator's introduction. The Kid is sleeping on a rock in the sky. When the player moves The Kid, the Narrator simultaneously accompanies the player's movements: "He gets up." Throughout the play, the Narrator continues his narration by reacting to the player's actions.

The player makes his way to Bastion and as he progresses, new tiles are added to the map and the map gets bigger and bigger. On the way the player finds a Cael Hammer. The player must pick it up and open the obstacles on the way. In the rest of the game, different types of weapons will appear in various parts of the map and become part of the player's inventory.

There are items around the player that can break. The narrator says that these are the remnants of Calamity. As the player progresses, a Gasfella appears and the player destroys it. On the way, a fountain appears. The player replenishes their health by drinking from this fountain, and this mechanic is offered to the player until the end of the game, and each fountain provides health regeneration. Small creatures called Squirt surround the player. The player finds a memento called Crystal Barrette, which the Narrator says belongs to a girl he used to like. The player enters the Saloon door and the screen goes black.

The Sole Regret

The player enters a place like an inn. The narrator describes it as a watering hole. There are barrels and a statue of a frozen man. The player picks up The Kid's "Bullhead Shield". This causes a Security Turret to spawn. The player detonates it. This time, Windbags fall from the sky and eventually turn into Gasfella. After defeating them, Squirts and Big Old Fella appear. Following the battle, the player exits the level by clicking where it says window.

The Wharf District

The player finds the Distillery and the Arsenal. This is where the player can equip his weapons and acquire spirits that enhance his abilities. At this point the player encounters a petrified person, and if the player breaks it, the Narrator will say: "That one was Maude the tutor. Once taught the Kid good manners. He never used them though."

The player boards a ferrybarge and sets off. At the destination, they fight Scumbags, Gasfella and Squirts. After defeating them, the player gets the Core. The Narrator: "He steals the City's heart. Might as well."

When the player overcomes the obstacles and reaches the Skyway, they return to the Bastion.

The Bastion

The Kid falls into the Bastion. When the player gets up and walks away, the Narrator says: "Did anybody else survive?.... He finds me." The player encounters the Narrator, Rucks. The player can interact with Rucks to get information about the items they have collected. The player places the monument and Bastion becomes alive again. New spaces are opened in Bastion. Skyway section is formed. Narrator: "Now the Bastion can send him even farther, into the Wild unknown." The player can build and upgrade a Distillery or Arsenal in the newly opened spaces. The player can go to the Skyway and choose where they want to go on the map. This map contains information about regions and Cores. Each newly obtained core will open up other regions.

The Workmen Ward

The player tries to find the Core by choosing between several alternative paths. If the player picks up the Squirtl Lure in this chapter, some of the Squirtl around him will side with him for a while and attack others. The player can find the Forge and upgrade their weapons in this area.

The player can find the locked Core, guarded by the Gasfellas, by taking the path to the northwest. The player first destroys the Gasfellas and then the Core is unlocked. The player takes the Core and returns to the Bastion by going to the Skyway. By placing the Core in the Monument in Bastion, a new built area appears. The player can build any new structure they want in this area. Then they must choose a location in the Skyway to obtain new cores.

The Melting Pot

The player spawns in an old market area. The player must press Switch button to release the Core here. However, the cage will not open and Gasfellas enter. After the player kills the creatures, the Core is released and the player returns to the Bastion by barge. The Narrator: "I still remember the look on his face after that one. The old

world's finished. But the new world's just getting started." The player places the Core. They can build a new structure. He chooses a new location on the Skyway.

The Soundown Path

On the player's way to the Core, the place begins to collapse as others have already taken it. The player moves through the collapsed areas while destroying the enemies they encounter. Narrator: "... But the question is... Who else could have taken the Core? Well... ain't no survivor stole the thing."

The player arrives in an area full of cases. The Narrator: "Even Gasfellas need some shuteye from time to time." When the player approaches them, they all turn into a Gasfella and attack the player. After destroying them, the player arrives at the Skyway.

Cutscene

The Kid sits on a small rock. The Kid's colour is the colour of stone. In the background there is an apocalyptic image, the colours of fire dominate. The Narrator: "In all his toil Kid keeps coming back to an overwhelming question... Who else could have survived the Calamity?"

The Kid returns to Bastion. The player chooses a new location from Skyway.

The Hanging Gardens

There are petrified people in this region. The Narrator: "These folks never saw the Calamity coming. But someone did. Someone close... It was someone... like him." The player moves forward, there is someone in the distance, alive. The player moves towards him, overcoming obstacles. The Narrator: "Just think. Without that man... we wouldn't be here right now. Would we."

The Kid takes the Core and the door opens. The player goes to the person they see in the distance and takes him to Bastion. In the Bastion, he is identified as Zulf of Ura. The narrator says: "The Kid and I introduce ourselves in kind. Both to him... and to each other, for the first time."

The player can now also interact with Zulf. However, the dialogue is still narrated by Rucks. For example, when The Kid talks to Zulf about Ura Sigil, the Narrator relays: “He was born in the Tazal Terminals. The Ura sent him on a mission of peace to our City, and he’s lived here ever since.”

After placing the Core, the player can establish The Memorial or Lost-and-found in the newly opened area. The player chooses a new destination from the Skyway.

Pyth Orchard

The Narrator says that people used to come here on pilgrimage to pay their respects to the Bull. When the player approaches the Bull, the Narrator says: “...And the Orchard Core, it’s long gone too.”

When the player moves forward to the second bull used as a scarecrow and hits it, the bull comes to life and attacks The Kid. After defeating it, the player arrives at the Shrine, which is guarded by the bull. In the Shrine there are busts of gods and their information is written. The player can pray to these gods to make the game harder and earn more fragments. After leaving the Shrine, the player destroys the enemies and returns to the Bastion.

Cinderbrick Fort

According to the Narrator, Wingbags now guard the castle after the police have left the city. The player fights long battles with Turrets and monsters throughout the chapter and returns to the Bastion. Zulf has placed his pipe, which he brought with him, in the Bastion like a monument. When the player clicks on the pipe, The Kid takes a breath from the pipe and collapses.

Who Knows Where

The Narrator: “There’s something you should know about the Kid but let me take it from the top.” The Kid wakes up in a visually imaginary place. The player destroys the creatures they encounter. They must collect 20 reflections. The narrator tells about The Kid's past, how Calamity happened, and how he and The Kid got together.

The Narrator: Through twisted streets he ran with nothing but the City Crest and an old stranger's voice to guide him.

After the player has collected all the reflections, the chapter ends and The Kid returns to The Bastion. The player can build any structure they want in the newly opened area in The Bastion. Then the player goes to the new area.

Langston River

The player travels on the Nellie (barge), overcoming obstacles and Gasfellas, and switches. Meanwhile, enemies continue to attack. The Nellie crashes to a halt and the player continues to move forward through the obstacles. Peckers (flying creatures) come flying and attack The Kid. The Narrator: "They had their own eyes on the Core. But why...?"

Meanwhile, the Weeping Nellie is ready to be driven again. On top of the Nellie there are security turrets with hearts sticking out of them, helping the player to resist attacks along the way. When the player reaches land, they enter the passage marked "opening". The Narrator: "Now listen close. You should remember this next part."

Prosper Bluff

The Narrator: Why go to Prosper Bluff...?

The player finds a diary while passing obstacles, then comes to the singing person (Zia). The Kid returns to Bastion with Zia. The Narrator says that the four of them are fast friends, but there is one last Core to find.

The narrator states that the diary found by the player is about Calamity, that it belongs to Zia's father, and that Zulf learned a lot from that diary. The Narrator: "Kid's surprised when I tell him there's only one Core left. I shouldn't have believed it either."

The Wild Outskirts

The player is spawned in an atmosphere reminiscent of the wilderness. Here the player fights wild creatures to obtain the Core and returns to Bastion. The Narrator:

“After all... he’s got the final Core. His journey’s over, right? Well no, it ain’t... not by a longshot.”

The Narrator says that they had an argument with Zulf, that Zulf damaged the monument and then left them. The Narrator: “Zul can barely muster the words. The Calamity failed, he says... But I will not.” According to the Narrator, the player must collect Shards to repair the Monument.

Jawson Bog

This is an area on the Wilds side. The Narrator: “You’ll get lost in that Bog, I told the Kid. And I won’t be able to guide you back.” When the player arrives at the pink Shard, The Kid falls asleep and the screen goes black. The Narrator: “This place is... intoxicating.”

Prosper Bluff

The Narrator: Don’t know where he’s gone.

The Kid wakes up in Prosper Bluff, a place he’s visited before.

The Narrator: Wherever he is... It’s somewhere I’ve never been. Somewhere I never want to go.

As the player advances, the stage lights flash on and off, and only the creatures called Stinkeye and lighting effects are visible in the darkness. As the player kills these attacking creatures, the lights come back on. When the player clicks on the Siren, the scene changes. The Narrator: “The dead welcome him with open arms. Kid pops them good.”

The Hanging Gardens

The Kid is surrounded by petrified people. The player breaks through them to make a path for himself and fights the incoming Gasfellas. After passing them, Zulf appears in front of him. It has the word "surrender" written on it.

The Bastion

The Kid is in Bastion, the colours are green and pale. As the Kid progresses, we realise that in this version of Bastion there are only wild creatures. The player passes the obstacles here and is sent to another location.

The Sole Regret

The player kills turret and creatures.

The Rippling Walls

The Kid is asleep, as in the first scene of the game. When the player wakes up The Kid, the Narrator: "He wakes up... I'm just fooling." The player moves forward and encounters a copy of The Kid here, destroying it.

Ordinary CampSite

The Kid is in a place like a labour camp. There are few objects for the player to interact with. The narrator starts humming a song. After the player puts the ores and lights the fire, The Kid falls asleep.

Jawson Bog

The Kid wakes up next to the pink Shard where he fell asleep. The Narrator: "Thought we'd lost him... but he finally comes to." The player picks up the Shard. The player must destroy the wild creatures to return to Bastion.

The Bastion

The player places the Shard and repairs damaged structures.

Roathus Lagoon

The Narrator says that Roatnus Lagoon is a place full of creatures that everyone is afraid of. The player moves on, killing the creatures. He destroys Queen Anne to retrieve the Shard and returns to the Bastion.

The Bastion

The player places the Shard in the Monument and is entitled to one repair. They then sets off for another Shard.

Point Lemaigh

The player overcomes obstacles and climbs up the railway tracks. The Narrator gives information about the first Ura-Caelondian War. The player picks up the Shard. As the player fights the creatures, the Narrator addresses the player again: "Ever tried dancing side to side while holding your breath? Well let me tell you... It ain't fun." When the player reaches the end of the tracks and destroys the last of the creatures, there is a man dressed as a warrior. Narrator: "At first he thinks it's Zulf. Turns out he was wrong. This... is for you, says the man. Then, wham." The screen fades to black. The Kid is lying on the floor and a letter written by Zulf to Zia is nearby. They return to The Bastion.

The Bastion

When the player asks Zia about the letter, the Narrator says: "The note says it plain. Zia -go east to learn the truth about the Calamity, and our people. I'll be waiting. Sincerely, Zulf." The player places the Shard and repairs a location. He sets out to find a new Shard.

Colford Cauldron

The player travels through the ashes, smoke and flames of the Colford Cauldron, past wild creatures, retrieves the Shard and returns to the Bastion.

The Bastion

The player places the Shard and sets off again.

Mount Zand

The player moves through the wilderness and picks up the Shard. The Narrator explains that the creatures here are also building their own Bastions, so they are collecting Cores and Shards.

The Bastion

The Narrator: "Kid arrives just in time to sample Zia's famous cooking." A sign appears above the Stockpot. When the player clicks on it, the Kid falls asleep.

Who Knows Where

The player must collect 20 reflections in this chapter. While the player fights the monsters, the Narrator tells the story of Zia and how her father caused Calamity. After collecting the Reflections, the player returns to The Bastion

The Bastion

The player moves to another location where he can collect Shards.

Burstone Quarry

The player sees Zulf after taking the Core. The Narrator: "I've come to warn you, he says. The Bastion... is under siege. Let it fall. You should not go back." The player picks up the Shard. The Narrator: "If that's the way it is, he says... Then I won't stop you. Because my countrymen will." The player returns to Bastion.

The Bastion

Bastion is demolished. Ura warriors appear in front of the player. According to the Narrator, Zulf has informed them and they have come for revenge. The player tries to save the Bastion, but it is too late. An illustration appears.

The Narrator: We find each other as the dust settles. Then I tell him why the Ura came: To get us back... for the Calamity. It was Caelondia's master plan to wipe the Ura out. But part of that plan backfired, didn't it.

The player places the Shard, but the Bastion is still in ruins. The Narrator says that they need one last Shard. The player goes to Urzendra Gate.

Urzendra Gate

The player fights Ura warriors. The game interface shows that the days pass quickly.

The Narrator: "The Calamity can be undone. But it's important to understand why it happened. Zulf said the Calamity failed, and he's right. The Ura stand as living proof of that. At the heart of the Calamity was a simple idea. We never wanted to go to war again. Wanted to rule it out. We put a lot of folks against that problem. Scientists, soldiers, spies. Even me. We sought solutions far beyond the City... Most of our efforts didn't bear fruit. Then there was a breakthrough. But it didn't come from one of our people. It came from an Ura. A brilliant young scientist named Venn. Venn worked for the Mancers. The sharpest knives in the City's drawer. With his help the Mancers devised a way to seal the Ura tunnels shut... in a flash. Just like that, every last Ura living in the Tazal Terminals would be gone... But Venn didn't like being manipulated. He had plans of his own. He sabotaged the Mancers' little science project. Set it to blow up in their faces... But remember: The Bastion can fix everything. We just need that Shard."

The player comes close to getting the Shard, but the Ura warriors won't let him. Narrator: "It's strange... feels like I've told this part a thousand times..." The player returns to The Bastion and then travels to Zulten's Hollow.

Zulten's Hollow

In this chapter, the player destroys Ura's military forces and reaches Zia. The Kid convinces Zia to return.

The Bastion

A sign appears on The Kid's Bedroll. When the player interacts with the bed, The Kid falls asleep.

Who Knows Where

The Narrator: Zulf. Very soon the Kid's going to have to face that man again. For the last time.

The Kid wakes up in an environment of black and white. The Player sees Zulf, but when he touches him, he disappears. They destroy the Ura warriors. The player must earn 20 reflections. The Narrator tells about Zulf's past. Once the player has the last reflection, they return to Bastion.

The Bastion

To get the Last Shard, the player must go to The Tazal Terminals where Zulf is located.

The Tazal Terminals

The Narrator: "I can't hear him at all anymore. He's too far away. Bet he'll be all right... But Zia there's another reason I've been telling you all this. There's something I want you to understand. When the Kid brings back that Shard, the Bastion will be complete. What happens to Zulf will no longer matter... Everything will be back to normal. The problem is... we'll all be gone... Oh we're not going to die. It's more like... All of this will just... stop. Things will go back to the way they used to be. That's the power of the Bastion. This whole place... is a living record of the times before the Calamity."

The Narrator: Oh who am I kidding... There's something else... a confession. How come I know so much about the Bastion? Well I designed the place, but that's beside the point. There's one problem with a place that sets things back to a bygone time... You can't test it.

The Narrator: So you're probably wondering, if the Calamity happened already... What's to stop it from happening again, after the Bastion does its thing? The answer is... I don't know.

The Narrator mentions evacuate as a second possibility. There is a technique that can drive the Caelondia away if they wish. The player continues forward and takes the Shard. The player then destroys the other soldiers and reaches Zulf. Here the game gives the player two options: Move on or Take Zulf. If the player chooses to leave Zulf and move on, the Narrator will say: "The Kid saved Zulf once, but I don't think he'd

make the same mistake. I wouldn't." The player kills the last remaining Ura soldiers and returns to the Bastion.

If the player chooses to rescue Zulf, some of the soldiers will fire, but others will bow and give way. At the end of either choice, the player returns to the Bastion alone. The player places the Shard and the Bastion is complete. Narrator: "Now... there's something I want you to see."

The Monument

The Narrator: Welcome... to the heart of the Bastion. I ain't one for long goodbyes, so here's the deal. Zia and I figure you done the heavy lifting. So you get to do the honors.

The player can choose between restoring or evacuating the Bastion. If they choose restoration, they will get Calamity back.

Zia: If I could be anyplace I wanted... I'd stay right here. We could go anywhere in the world.

If the player chooses evacuation, the three of them evacuate together in a module and the game ends.

If the player chooses restoration, the Narrator: "...The Bastion's going to take us back to a better time. Before any of this. Might be we'll forget everything you've done... and each other... So long, Kid... Maybe I'll see you in the next one..."

Endgame.

4.1.3 Analysis.

4.1.3.1 Narrator. Bastion is a video game in which a single narrator is at the center of the narrative and mediates the entire narrative. The narrator voices actions, relays information, makes comments and voices the speech of other characters. He accompanies the player from the first to the last action of the game. He is also a character (Rucks) in the game, showing a homodiegetic characteristic. As a character, he is the old and wise figure of the game universe. He exhibits the same characteristics

from the beginning to the end of the play and does not change. He usually uses a plain language without exaggeration. He rarely displays a cynical attitude. The main protagonist of the story he tells is The Kid.

The narrator reacts to player inputs and makes it feel as if he is aware of every action the player takes and interacts with the player. For example, when the player gives input for The Kid to get up, the Narrator says that The Kid is getting up.

The Narrator often asks rhetorical questions and addresses the player. It is unclear who the actual recipient of his conversations is, in one episode he says that he is talking to a character named Zia, but in general there is no other interlocutor than the player.

4.1.3.2 Unreliable narrator. The narrator hides throughout the game what will happen when Bastion is activated at the end of the story. His main argument is to restore everything and make up for what they did. The restoration option presented to the player at the end of the game will cause everything to reset after Calamity. Moreover, this is a vicious circle. The same events will occur again and Calamity will happen. Then again, The Kid will try to save Bastion and take everything back.

The narrator's words at the episode's conclusion in Urzendra Gate make it clear that the player is in an infinite loop: "It's strange...feels like I've told this part a thousand times..."

Before The Kid goes to Prosper Bluff, the Narrator says: "Now listen close. You should remember this next part."

As an omniscient narrator, he has the ability to know how things have happened before and how they will happen in the future, but he pretends not to know and acts inconsistently when narrating events. He knows all of Zulf's, The Kid's and Zia's stories; he emphasizes in the play that he knows how events will unfold, but often pretends not to know: "Who else could have taken the Core? Well... ain't no survivor stole the thing."

At yet another moment, the Narrator: "In all his toil Kid keeps coming back to an overwhelming question...Who else could have survived the Calamity?"

In Langston River, the Narrator asks a similar question: “They had their own eyes on the Core. But why...?”

He's been through this cycle over and over again, but when he meets The Kid, he says: “The Kid and I introduce ourselves in kind. Both to him... and to each other, for the first time.”

In The Jowson Bow, after The Kid falls asleep, he talks as if he can't keep track of what is happening and doesn't know where The Kid is. However, he continues to narrate throughout the dream sequences. This contradictory statement raises two questions: Is the person we hear in these scenes another imaginary narrator in The Kid's head? The other question is whether Rucks as a narrator is unreliable and gives contradictory statements.

4.1.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator. The narrator reveals the facts towards the end of the play by giving clues. In The Tazal Terminals, he tells Zia these facts: “Everything will be back to normal. The problem is... we’ll all be gone... Oh we’re not going to die. It’s more like... All of this will just... stop.”

The moment he implies that they are in a loop is the moment when he is revealed as an unreliable narrator.

4.1.3.4 The effect of unreliable narrator on multiple endings of the game. Throughout the game the player is given two choices. In one of them, the player chooses whether or not to help the wounded Zulf. His decision affects whether or not the Ura warriors fight him, but it does not affect the endgame. When the player returns to the Bastion, both choices leave the player alone. In the Monument scene, the player is given the choice between restoration and evacuation to decide the final ending.

The player chooses restoration if they want to stay in the life cycle they learned about from the narrator and restore everything to its pre-Calamity state.

If the player wants to end the cycle, they choose evacuation and leave Bastion with Rucks and Zia.

4.1.3.5 Effect of unreliable narrator on interactivity. The narrator has reacted to the player's actions since the first scene of the game, but this does not change the linear course of the game. The player only has the right to make a decision at the end of the game.

4.2 Braid

4.2.1 Game details. Braid is an independent 2D puzzle platformer published in 2008 and developed by Number None. The game begins in a cityscape dominated by warm colours reminiscent of flames. The player controls a white male avatar in a suit named Tim. The proper name "Tim" and the English word "Time" are closely related and can be considered as an element in the narrative.

The Narrator of Braid nonlinearly tells the story of a person named Tim in written form to the player from an objective and heterodiegetic plane. These writings, consisting of a total of six chapters and an epilogue, contain various passages and appear before the player as a whole in a place called "clouds" before each chapter. In addition, each chapter contains a picture table created with jigsaw puzzle pieces. At the end of each episode, a dinosaur tells Tim that the Princess is in another castle.

The main mechanic of the game is the time-reversal mechanic. This is also compatible with the story told in the play and can be referred to when interpreting the narrative. From the beginning of the play, with the support of the narrator's expressions, it is given the impression that Tim is looking for the Princess and trying to fix the situation by turning back the time.

4.2.2 Gameplay. The narration begins in the chapter entitled "World Two: Time and Forgiveness". The narrator states that the Princess has been kidnapped by a terrible and evil monster because Tim made a mistake. Tim sets out to rescue the Princess. According to the Narrator, Tim made many mistakes in their relationship, the Princess tried to forgive him, but nothing was ever the same. Tim regrets therefore. The text emphasises the compensation of mistakes and their lasting effects. In gameplay, the player is shown the basic controls and mechanics in this chapter. Even if the player makes a mistake, the undo mechanic allows him to correct the current situation and complete the task of collecting the puzzle pieces. When the puzzle is completed, a

picture of a young man and woman in close intimacy is revealed. However, the man's crooked hand is knocking over a bottle.

In "World 3: Time and Mystery", the Narrator says that years ago Tim left the Princess and went on the road, but later regretted it and had to look for her again. Accordingly, although Tim thought their relationship was perfect, he had different needs over time and there were things he needed to change in his relationship with the Princess. The text ends as follows: "In the distance, Tim saw a castle where the flags flew even when the wind died and the bread in the kitchen was always warm. A little magic." In this chapter, the player can overcome objects and obstacles using the time-reversal mechanic. He can utilise objects with green halos that do not interact with time. When the puzzle is finished, a Tim lookalike can be seen toasting among other people.

"In "World 4: Time and Place", the Narrator talks about the family dinner Tim went to and his past. They emphasises that he feels depressed and lonely and that he is looking for the Princess. The narrator says: "This improvement, day by day, takes him ever-closer to finding the Princess. If she exists — she must! — she will transform him, and everyone." Here it can be understood that he has gone back to a time when he did not recognise the princess. In the rest of the text, Tim is portrayed as hopeful and optimistic about finding the Princess. During the episode, every movement of the player affects the avatar's connection with time. Moving the avatar to the right moves time forwards, stopping the avatar stops time, and moving to the left causes time to go backwards. When the puzzle for this section is completed, a picture of a human silhouette peering through a doorway into a room resembling a nursery is revealed.

In the chapter titled "World 5: Time and Decision", the Narrator: "She never understood the impulses that drove him, never quite felt the intensity that, over time, chiseled lines into his face. She was never quite close enough to him — but he held her as though she were, whispered into her ear words that only a soul mate should receive." In the second passage, the Narrator says that they both know that the time has come. The Narrator: "He would have said: "I have to go find the Princess," but he didn't need to. Giving a final kiss, hoisting a travel bag to his shoulder, he walked out the door." The passage goes on to say that she continued to love him on all the following nights, as if Tim had stayed to comfort and protect her. In this passage, a

personal pronoun (She) is used instead of the Princess' name as the subject, Tim's partner. It can be assumed that the Narrator is referring to another person and that Tim has made a choice to go to find the Princess. When the player rewinds time in this section, his actions are repeated by a shadow. The player has to solve the puzzles by calculating the movements and effects of this shadow. When the jigsaw puzzle of this episode is completed, a picture of a young man standing hesitantly in his seat emerges.

"World Six: Hesitation", it is stated that Tim cannot find the Princess, but he wears a ring that shows his devotion to her. This ring affects Tim's interaction with other people. Over time, Tim establishes better communication with other people. The Narrator: "Tim begins to hide the ring in his pocket. But he can hardly bear it — too long tucked away, that part of him might suffocate." During the chapter, the player can leave the ring at any point and use the time slowing mechanic in a small circle around the ring. When the player finishes the chapter, the dinosaur in the castle says they have never seen the princess and asks Tim if she is real. When the jigsaw puzzle of the episode is completed, a city and a picture of a young man looking at a glowing yellow ring in a ruin in this city are revealed.

"World 1": Longer than the previous chapters, this one is saved for the end. In this text, it can be seen that Tim is detached from the world to which he belongs. Tim has not yet found the Princess, but he has a great desire to find her. Time flows backwards in the episode. When the player arrives at the finale, an Armoured Character, very similar to Tim, is seen at the top of the image, hanging from the vine with the Princess and entering the episode. Armoured Character says: "I've got you!" The princess asks for help. "Come down here!" said the Armoured Character, making monster noises. The Armoured Character jumps and the stones are dislodged and rolled. Meanwhile, an effect reminiscent of flames appears on the left edge of the screen. The game camera moves to the right and flames approach the characters. The Princess runs to the right of the screen, avoiding the Armoured Character, while the player controlling Tim must also move to the right. The actions of Tim and the Princess mutually aid their escape. At the far right of the level, the obstacles are left behind. An explosion effect occurs and the screen fills with a red colour. When the screen returns to normal, the flames to the right of the image are gone and time has returned to normal. The Princess is asleep. When the player tries to climb down, the Princess wakes up

and starts running, this time in the direction she came from. Tim follows her. This time, however, the Princess' actions prevent Tim from reaching her and stop him. When they reach their position at the beginning of the episode, the Princess again asks for help. Together with the Armoured Character, they climb up the vine. A flash effect appears on the screen again and the music changes. The player enters the Epilogue by entering the door to their right.

Epilogue. After World 1, there is a final epilogue passage towards the end of the play. Here the Narrator tells the story in more detail: "The boy called for the girl to follow him, and he took her hand." The first passage gives place names such as Manhattan and the Canal St. subway station. The second passage describes dissonance: "You're going the wrong way and you're pulling me with you." In the third passage, what he did to search for the Princess is described in detail. Among these, it is said that he carried out some scientific studies such as the fall of an apple, the bending of metal spheres hanging from a rope, examining the brains of rats, monkey experiments. These may be considered to contain some references. In the fourth passage, the woman asks the man to look at her. However, the Narrator interprets the event as follows: "But he would not see her; he only knew how to look at the outsides of things." In the fifth passage, he continues his laboratory investigations in the third passage. It is stated that he finds the princess and sees her face. In the sixth passage, eternity is described as if time has stopped and it is emphasised that a great event has been witnessed. There is a political reference in the sixth passage: "Someone else said: 'Now we are all sons of bitches.'" This is the famous quote of Kenneth Bainbridge after the Trinity nuclear test, and the Narrator explicitly refers to it. The Narrator states that he is full of rage and expresses it in a way that evokes the atomic bomb. In the next passage, expressions such as the death of the world and the unreachable candy shop are used. He is depicted here as someone who is trying to be restrained. In the following passage, the narrator mentions that he screams and trembles. She says that he is young and consoles him. The narrator's expression here suggests that he is looking for some concepts such as ethical calculation, magnetic monopole. She says: "Maybe when you're older, baby." In the last two passages, the candy shop is emphasised again, indicating that he continues to be in the same process, albeit with changes. The building of a castle is mentioned and it is stated that he realises that he can put the stones together for the beginning. In the epilogue, Tim's name is not mentioned at all, and the male subject is

mentioned through the personal pronoun. At the end of the episode, there is a structure that gives the impression of a castle. When the player enters through the door on the right of the screen, they return to the beginning of the game screen.

Endgame.

4.2.3 Analysis.

4.2.3.1 Narrator. Braid is a game that is very similar to postmodern novels (even as a parody of Super Mario Bros. (1985)); it questions reality, the nature of reality, human relations and allows for intertextual readings. Its mechanics, such as rewinding time, are produced in harmony with the narrative in which big mistakes are made and Tim regrets them, and support the narrative content.

In addition, in different passages in different chapters, the narrator uses pronouns rather than personal names. This makes it difficult for us to understand whose story we are following and in this way, it is an approach that makes us question the text. It makes us look for the equivalence of the subjects and what they represent at different points in the text. While the Princess is referred to the atomic bomb, Tim, who pursues her, represents scientists, and this leads to the idea that one of the readings of the play is about the Manhattan Project.

The illustrations, another element of the narrative, contain very implicit messages and their interpretation is left to the player

As a result, the text of the play is quite complex and closed. The romantic story given by the Narrator to the player actually ends in a very different way than expected.

4.2.3.2 Unreliable narrator. The narrator describes the relationship between Tim and the Princess as an epic love story. Even if there are problems in their relationship, what separates them is a monster. An expectation is created that their relationship will continue after Tim saves the Princess from the monster. However, at the end of the play it is revealed that this is not true.

4.2.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator. The presence of the unreliable narrator phenomenon, where the narrator gives incomplete and inaccurate information,

is revealed in the last part of the play when the Princess escapes from Tim and the Armored character, who can be observed to be a version of Tim, despite the fact that throughout the narrative, the Princess is kidnapped by a monster and Tim is supposed to save her.

4.2.3.4 The effect of the unreliable narrator on the multiple endings of the game. There is only one ending and the unreliable narrator has no influence on it. The player is not given any freedom of choice.

4.2.3.5 Effect of unreliable narrator on interactivity. The game has no interactivity.

4.3 Call of Juarez: Gunslinger

4.3.1 Game details. Call of Juarez: Gunslinger is an FPS game developed by Techland and published by Ubisoft in 2013 in both PC and console versions. It is the fourth game in the Call of Juarez series, but its story is independent. The events and characters in the story are based on historical facts.

The game's visuals are in comic book style, with strong lights and dark shadows. The cutscenes at the beginning and end of the chapters use comic book panels. During the game, comic book-like text bubbles appear to introduce the characters.

The game initially has two difficulty levels: normal and hard. If the player finishes the game once, the hardest level is unlocked. The game has frequent auto-saves. If the player dies, the game continues from the last save point without any loss.

Movement within the game is limited; the player is not allowed to leave the map. There is no interactivity; objects and people cannot be interacted with at the player's will. There are collectibles, however, and the player can collect items hidden on the map throughout the game and learn real information in this way.

4.3.2 Gameplay. The first cutscene of the game consists of animated illustrations. The cutscene begins with an illustration of a cowboy on horseback looking at a distant settlement. Abilene, Kansas 1910 is written on the right side of the image. The next illustration shows the cowboy riding into town. The streets of the

town are empty. In the second image, an announcement with the word "DON'T" draws attention. A car passes by the cowboy quickly and splashes water on the cowboy. The horse rear up. The cowboy ties his horse. The cowboy enters the place with the Bull's Head sign at the entrance. When the cowboy enters, it is seen that three people are sitting at a table. When the cowboy sits at their table, one of them turns to the cowboy and asks: "Don't I know you, sir?"

The cowboy says that he does not recognise him, that he has not been here for many years and that his name is Silas Greaves. A young man among them recognises Silas Greaves, he knows that he is a bounty hunter. Silas Greaves says he used to be one. The man in the pub asks him what he is doing in Abilene. Silas says he was just passing through, he had a little business to take care of. The young man offers to buy Silas a beer. Silas accepts, sits down. The people around him are interested in him and introduce themselves in turn. Dwight says they want to hear his stories, but one of them, Jack, expresses scepticism about whether they are true. Silas says that some of them are true. Dwight asks if a story from the dime novel he is holding is true. Silas tells him not to believe everything he reads and starts to tell his first adventure. He says that he knows Billy the Kid, one of the famous criminals of the period, that they used to ride horses together when they were young and talks about how fearless he was. Ben, who was standing in the pub at the time, intervenes and gives Dwight information about that period. In order to avoid confusion in the research, from this point onwards I will refer to the person who lived the events in the past as Silas the Younger and the person who narrated the main narrative as Silas the Elder.

The first chapter begins. In a rural location in Stinking Springs in the 1980s, the player begins to control the avatar as first person of view. The voice over of old Silas explains that he and The Kid are together because Billy's enemies are with the one he vowed to avenge. The player can walk around the environment and explore the roadside barn, but cannot interact with the objects they see. The player travels around the map and if they move away from The Hideout, a warning will appear on the screen. This warning will appear again throughout the game whenever the player moves away from where they are supposed to be. After this warning, when the player returns to the path to The Hideout, his pistol will appear and he will begin to control it as well. Two bandits will appear as the player moves along the road. When the player shoots the

bandits, they will receive experience points and a message will appear on the screen informing them that they can gain new abilities. The player can enter the ability interface and unlock new abilities with his points throughout the game.

Gunshots are heard in the distance. Old Silas says that the gunshots belong to Pat Garrett's posse. As the player approaches the homestead, the mission to rescue Billy the Kid and his gang begins. Before the battle begins, the player is taught Concentration, one of the most important mechanics in the game. This allows the player to slow down time, locate enemies and perform various kill combos. These combos allow the player to score more points. Silas' voice continues to narrate as the player clashes with Garrett's men. He says that the governor of New Mexico has provided weapons to Garrett and his men to counter the Kid. Meanwhile, the player must kill the entire gang. If he dies, the last save starts again without any loss. This rule applies in all conflicts throughout the game and in high places like cliffs where the avatar can fall. The player must therefore always do what is expected of him in the game. Since the player is not given much freedom of movement, it would be better to tell the story only through what the player has to do.

During the battles, the player can find collectible items called Nuggets of Truth hidden in different places in each level. In the diagram called Nuggets Menu, each Nuggets of Truth gives real historical information about events and people. In this way, the player can learn the true story of Silas and the others while playing the game. The Sense of Death mechanic is also taught to the player in this chapter. This allows the player to avoid lethal shots.

Meanwhile, Billy the Kid and his gang are trapped in a building on the estate. Silas hears their voices and goes to help. Silas' outside voice says: "I cut their numbers in half..." Silas adds that the men are incompetent and continues. When he enters the house, Billy the Kid throws a rifle for him to catch and gestures for him to go to the window.

Listening to old Silas in the bar, Dwight is surprised and asks if he is friends with Billy. Silas is undecided: "Yeah... Sort of..." The player must kill Garrett's gang through the window. After the men have been shot, Old Silas says that the more he shoots them like flies, the more new ones come.

When most of the gang is dead, Billy orders Silas to get the horses ready. Old Silas explains that he doesn't like taking orders and says that he questions this himself. Old Silas says that when he was young, like Jack, he thought he was invincible. Jack does not like these words.

Meanwhile, the player must move the avatar towards the stable with the horses. When the player comes out of the skirmishes and arrives at the stable, they will be confronted by Sheriff Pat Garrett. The first duel of the game takes place between the player and Garrett. The player must focus and aim during the duel. When the player kills Garrett, Old Silas tells Dwight that the truth is not as it is written in the novels. He stops time and Old Silas says: "No, boy, that ain't what I meant when I said I MET Pat Garrett." The image rewinds like a movie in sepia tones. Old Silas starts narrating again. As he enters the barn, a fist is heard and the screen goes black. Garrett's voice is heard: "That's not Billy..."

Dwight excitedly asks what happened at the end. Old Silas tells him that this is not the end but only the beginning of the story. The episode ends. The player's stats appear on the screen. The player can analyze data such as hits, enemies killed, nuggets of truth found, etc.

Episode 1: Billy the Kid

The scene begins with new cutscene. Old Silas explains that Garrett has arrested him. According to old Silas, Billy has also surrendered. They imprisoned them in Lincoln and sentenced them to death.

When the cutscene ends, the player is in a cell in prison. Old Silas says that he can only find his enemy when he is with Billy. Sounds come from outside the cell. Old Silas says that Billy's men are coming. Billy helps young Silas to escape. The player has to kill the enemies to get to the roof. If he gets off the rooftops, the game warns him to go to the town. As the player fights enemies in the town, Old Silas says that he and Billy are physically similar in skin color and physical appearance. As the player moves through the town, they have to pass the enemies in front of them. According to Old Silas, Billy set him free to be a decoy and distract the townspeople. Because everyone thought he was Billy. In order to get out of the town, the player clashes with

enemies taking cover in various parts of the town. When he reaches the barn, young Silas is saved.

One of the bar occupants, Jack, says he thought Billy had killed Bob Ollinger and saved young Silas. Old Silas says it's not true and he and Jack have an argument. Old Silas explains that Bob came after him and they had to duel. In this scene, the player enters a duel and encounters Bob. The episode ends when the player defeat Bob in a duel. The statistics screen opens. Old Silas says Billy's escape didn't work because he was shot by Pat Garrett three months later.

Cutscene starts. Ben at the bar asks where he went after Lincoln. Old Silas says he fled to Mexico. He did business with Rurales there. Ben, surprised, asks if Rurales is a Mexican. He says he was hired to help track down the "Cowboys".

Episode 2: The Cowboys

The bars are shocked when they learn that young Silas is after The Cowboys. The gang led by Old Man Clanton includes bandits like Curly Bill and Johnny Ringo.

Cutscene ends. The player is in Guadalupe Canyon. Ben at the bar asks:

Ben: So was the bastard you were after now riding with the Cowboys?

Old Silas: Roscoe "Bob" Bryant was his name.

Ben: Oh.

This dialog reinforces the conflict between the two.

Old Silas continues by telling the story of Mr. Ringo's pursuit. After a bit, the actor witnesses a train robbery up ahead. Spotted by members of the Cowboys gang, Silas is hit by bullets, but Old Silas explains: "I did my best to help those poor passengers..." When the bandits in the shootout are dead, Young Silas looks at the stagecoach: no one is alive. Then he thinks of the other members of the gang and Old Silas says: "They attacked from on high, like Apaches often did."

Suddenly the color of the image changes, vignettes appear. Apaches appear on top of the hill and start shooting. As the player engages them, Jack asks Old Silas in the bar and the image freezes:

Jack: Hold on, were you attacked by Apaches? What happened to the Cowboys?

Old Silas: Did I say they were Apaches?! I said Clanton's Cowboys attacked me Apache STYLE.

The screen fades out and fades in. The apaches at the top of the hill are gone, replaced by bandits. The player clashes with the bandits. Old Silas says it's because he ran out of bullets, but in the game Young Silas is cornered and has to retreat into the caves. He runs into the caves despite the bullets flying in the air. An apache falls from the sky. Old Silas says that a miracle has happened, he took the ammunition of the Apache warrior lying on the ground and continued to fight. The player returns from the cliff and continues to fight the gang. He goes after the gang with dynamite he finds on the ground. At the end of the chapter, instead of a duel, there is Old Man Clanton on top of the hill firing his Gatling gun. The player will climb the hill and kill Old Man Clanton. According to Old Silas, this required climbing a very long hill, like the day Jesse James chased his brother Frank James. The player eventually kills Clanton. According to Old Silas, his sons went after the Earps instead of Silas to get revenge on the killer, which led to the events at the OK Corral. Chapter ends, statistics screen appears.

The player is in Iron Springs seven months after the death of Old Man Clanton. Young Silas has followed his enemy and the Cowboys to the sawmill where they are hiding. Old Silas continues to tell his story as the player enters the sawmill and fights the enemy. Meanwhile, Ben interrupts and reveals that he recognizes Ringo. The player battles Curly Bill in the sawmill for this episode's boss fight.

Old Silas says that he searched for Ringo for three months and finally tracked him down in West Turkey Creek Canyon. The duel scene begins. The men in the bar are surprised by Old Silas' story. They say they thought someone else killed Ringo. The player shoots Ringo and the episode ends, the statistics screen shows up.

Old Silas says that Ringo and Curly Bill made a lot of money from their awards and then went after Henry Plummer.

Episode 3: The Innocents

After the cutscene, the player travels to a gold mine. Here he clashes with Sheriff Plummer's gang of commoners. When the player arrives at the gold mine, the screen freezes. Old Silas says that he hesitated, but then thought about entering the mine gate and saw an entrance. Meanwhile, the camera pans right towards the mine entrance. A new walkway is created to the entrance where there was no path before. The player enters the mine and tries to get past the enemies in the mine and finds his way through the labyrinthine mine. There are many explosive barrels in the mine, so the player has to be more careful here. However, when one of the bandits shoots at Young Silas, the bullet hits the explosives in the back and explodes. The mine starts to collapse. The player must quickly get out of the mine. When he gets out and jumps into the water, a minecart from the train tracks in the mine hurtles towards him, killing him and the screen goes black. When the image comes back on, it returns to the scene before the player entered the mine. The image begins with a sepia-toned cutscene. A staircase appears out of thin air ahead of the tracks and the player must now play by climbing down from this point. Old Silas describes the situation as follows: "Instead, I spotted a ladder. A way into the mine from the opposite side." After descending the ladder, the player re-enters the mines through another entrance. Old Silas mentions the bounty on Plummer's head and says: "That ten thousand they put on his head would go a long way to helping me find old Bob." After exiting the mine, the player can choose to use the stairs or the elevator to kill the bandits in their path.

Old Silas: Plummer was a mad dog killer and the people of Nevada City deserved better.

Ben: Nevada City? I thought Plummer met his maker in Bannack, Montana?

Old Silas: Right, well, he was Sheriff in both places at one time or another, but that's neither here nor there.

The player clashes with Henry Plummer in the boss fight of this episode. Killing him ends this episode.

Old Silas says that he had heard that Bob was in Kansas with John Wesley Hardin.

Bob asks: Where in Kansas?

Old Silas: Abilene. Why do you ask, Ben?

Ben: No reason...

This scene is an example of Ben's growing suspicion as the story moves towards the finale.

Episode 4: John Wesley Hardin

Young Silas gets caught in the middle of a battle in a town square in Abilene as the scene opens. Old Silas says he was there to find Bob and capture John Wesley.

Ben: I thought the Texas Rangers got Hardin?

Old Silas: Yeah, that's what they want you to believe...

The player enters the saloon in Abilene where Old Silas is telling stories to his companions. Old Silas tells him that Hardin is waiting for him there. The screen goes black. Hardin enters. Old Silas says he will tell Hardin's story before the shooting starts. The image fades to the past. Young silas wanders the countryside before arriving in Abilene that night. According to Old Silas, Hardin had organized a gang of killers and Bob could be with them. Young Silas clashes with the gang members here and then heads into town. The scene from the beginning of the episode is repeated and the player clashes with the enemies in the town square. After entering the same bar, Old Silas sarcastically remarks that he sensed some hostility towards him that night as he clashed with the gang members. After killing the members in the bar, the John Wesley Hardin cutscene begins. The player duels with Hardin inside the bar. Old Silas says that Hardin was very drunk that night and that he was at Silas' mercy. Old Silas explains that he sent him to prison, where, according to him, he was killed years later by avengers. The statistics screen opens. Dwight asks about Bob, but Ben changes the subject and asks about his other adventures.

Episode 5: Grey Wolf

Old Silas tells Grey Wolf that he is after him for the bounty on his head. The player starts controlling his avatar on the mountain slopes. Apaches attack the player and the player has to fight Apaches for a long way. The player then enters the caves in search of the Grey Wolf. They meet in a flooded cave, but the Grey Wolf does not attack the player, instead giving advice and disappearing.

When the screen goes black and comes back on, the player finds himself in a campsite. They are surrounded by enemies. Meanwhile, Grey Wolf's speeches are heard. While the player is fighting, suddenly the scene returns to the cave and Apaches surround and attack. Rocks form steps in front of the player. The player tries to get out of the cave. When the player comes out, they see the Grey Wolf and give chase. When Old Silas says that he is chasing Grey Wolf to solve this ridiculous mystery:

Jack: Mumbo jumbo is right... Are you making this all up as you go?

Old Silas: A few details may be fuzzy, brother, but I am relating exactly what happened to me.

It is conceivable that the listeners are becoming increasingly suspicious of what Old Silas is saying. Molly, one of the others, also shows her doubt by questioning the number of Apaches attacking.

When the player gets past the apachee obstacles and into a clearing, Old Silas tells him that Grey Wolf has trapped him. Jack again disputes Old Silas' numbers, but Dwight says he believes him.

After killing the apachees surrounding the player, a new path is formed between the rocks and the player passes through it. While following Grey Wolf on the rocks, a wolf runs away and the chapter ends. The statistics screen opens.

Cutscene begins. Old Silas admits that the truth sometimes depends on your point of view. When Dwight asks if the story of the Daltons is true, Ben steps in and explains that he was there that day and that he, too, fought back against these robbers who used to be lawmen. Old Silas asks if he was on the side of good.

Episode 6: The Dalton Brothers

In this episode the player starts in a shop. The narrator is Ben next to Old Silas. He tells the player that The Dalton Brothers tried to rob two banks on the same day. Ben continues to narrate as the player clashes with the gang. When the player enters the bank and kills The Dalton Brothers in the room with the safe, the image freezes. Dwight protests and begins to tell his version, claiming that what he read in the comics is actually very different.

Simultaneously with Dwight's narration, the player spawns on a rooftop. The player, accompanied by the sheriff's posse, engages the bandits on the roof of the bank. Dwight says that the Bounty Hunter has come down from the rooftop alone and gone to the back entrance of the bank. The player must do what Dwight says as if following a command. Dwight says that he used the water tower to reach the back entrance of the bank building. The player follows the instructions and enters through the roof of the bank and kills everyone in the building and neutralizes The Dalton Brothers. The image freezes. Old Silas interrupts and says that this is not how it happened.

As Old Silas begins to tell his version, the player spawns in a forest. According to Old Silas, by the time he gets there, the robbery has already taken place. The player clashes with gang members in the town square. The player eliminates the gang members and leaves the town. According to Old Silas, the Daltons have set a trap for him. The player escapes this trap by hiding from the logs rolling down the hillside. When the player climbs up the hillside, they come into conflict with Emmett Dalton. When the player defeats Emmett Dalton, Ben protests to Old Silas.

Ben: But Emmett Dalton survived the robbery in Coffeyville. He's the only Dalton who did.

Dwight: They say he was shot twenty-three times.

Old Silas: Well, Dwight, who do you think put all those damn holes in him?

After this dialog, the first part ends and the statistics screen opens.

In the continuation of the Dalton episode, Old Silas explains that he and the security forces continue to search for The Dalton Brothers. The player spawns in the river. The player tries to navigate their way through the level with a complex map. The level design of the level changes as Old Silas gives information about the season and the environment. In flooded ruins, the player clashes with enemies firing from rooftops. As the player moves inland, the number of enemies increases. A barn is created out of nothing in front of the player when Old Silas says he has seen a barn. The player passes through the barn on the other side of the road and moves forward. Meanwhile, one of Old Silas' listeners, Steve, is snoring. The image freezes. Old Silas wakes Steve up and tells him that he is suddenly surrounded by Indians. The player is suddenly surrounded by Indians and the player clashes with them. After engaging his audience, Old Silas resumes his story. At the end of the skirmishes, Old Silas says that he sees a steamboat up the road. The player clashes with gang members who have made the ferry their headquarters. Old Silas says that some of the gang members are security forces moving with him. He says that he thought he had captured the Daltons, trusting the Union soldiers on board. When he walks through the door, he is hit and the screen goes black. When the player wakes up, the player is trapped on the burning ship. They must overcome obstacles and get out of the ship. Old Silas tells him that he has been betrayed. When the player steps out of the ship, they come to an area with a Gatling gun, where they use the Gatling gun to defeat the gang members. After killing the gang members, the player duels with Bob and Gratt at the same time. After the player shoots them both, Old Silas says: "...If they had only known that Emmett was still alive, despite his wounds. Paroled fourteen years later, he moved to California, sold real estate and lived off the legend of that fateful day."

Chapter ends. Statistics screen. Cuts scene starts. Old Silas tells the audience that his brothers have tragically died.

Episode 7: The Wild Bunch

The cutscene begins and Old Silas tells his story. He tells how his enemies, whom he defeated at a poker table as a young man, caught up with them the next day when they were traveling to Texas with their older brothers. The thugs, Johnny Ringo, Roscoe "Bob" Bryant and Jim, robbed them, tied them to a tree and left. Silas' brothers

die there. Silas swore revenge that day. According to Old Silas, Bob has joined the Wild Bunch gang.

The player spawns in a wooded area and moves forward. Old Silas tells that Bob was with Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid at the time. He catches them in the robbery of a gold shipment. The player travels through the cars of the crashed train in search of his enemies. When they walk into the forest, they come across gang members. After defeating the watchmen, they move between the wagons and clash with the gang members. Old Silas says that the lawmen didn't come to help. The image freezes and the boss battle begins. As the player confronts the gang members, Old Silas says that he is fighting the Wild Bunch alone. The image freezes, the camera pans to the left, and the cavalry on the rock hills disappear one by one. When the image returns to normal, the player moves through the wagons, taking out the gang members one by one, and dueling and defeating Flatnose Curry. Old Silas says that Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid left the Wild Bunch that day and fled to South America. The statistics screen appears. Screen goes black.

The player spawns in a wooded area. Old Silas tells them that Kid Curry has escaped from prison and that the Wild Bunch has regrouped. Young Silas is after them to find Bob. The player raids the Wild Bunch's camp. After killing gang members, they find the gang's next next plan. Cutscene interrupts and shows dynamite strapped to a train bridge. The player spawns near the bridge. The player must kill the gang members and collect the dynamite. The last dynamite the player must collect is a dynamite with a burning fuse. After clearing the train bridge, the player climbs the rocks and goes to the continuation of the train track. Here they fight against gang members and Kid Curry. After dynamiting the tunnel where Kid Curry is hiding, the player duels with him and shoots him. Young Silas asks the wounded Kid Curry where Bob is. Before Curry dies, he says that Bob went to South America with Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, that Silas will never find him, shoots Silas, the player escapes and shoots Curry, Curry dies. Statistics screen appears, the episode ends. Cutscene starts.

Bob: So Bob Byant got away?

Old Silas: I knew I'd never find him in South America.

Old Silas Jim'i Jesse James'in çetesinde bulduğunu söyler.

Episode 8: Jesse James

The player spawns on a train. Old Silas tells that he met Jesse James' gang while robbing a train. The player enters the carriages and clashes with the gang members. At the bar, Steve asks Old Silas how the gang stopped the train. The image freezes, rewinds, screen goes black.

In the cutscenes, the train arrives and we see Jesse James. The comic book balloons say: "He could stop a train by staring it down."

The animation starts. While Old Silas explains how he and the gang jumped on the train, Young Silas jumps from above and enters the train. From this moment on, the player starts fighting with the gang members again in the carriages.

Jack: And you took on them all by your lonesome? Again? I'm finding this all a little hard to swallow, friend.

After killing one or two more gang members who get in his way, Old Silas gets up to go to the restroom. At this moment the image desaturates and the camera slows down. As the player controls his avatar, the player hears the voices of the people in the bar.

Jack: I never heard so much malarkey in my life.

Steve: You think he's bullshitting us?

Dwight: You don't think he's Silas Greaves?

Jack: I think he's just some old drunk looking for some free liquor.

Dwight: I don't know Jack. I think I believe him. You don't think he met Jesse James.

Jack: Boy, you gotta be kidding me. That story makes no sense at all.

With Old Silas back in the bar, the player's camera returns to normal and the player continues to fight the gang members. Old Silas says that the gang thought he was one of the Pinkertons. Jack questions the fact that everyone thought he was someone else. The player walks between the logs, moves from one wagon to another and fights. When the player meets Gatlinger, Old Silas describes his struggle with him as follows: "... Now I don't remember how I took it... It was either a bullet or dynamite." After the player kills the Gatlinger, they fight off the enemies coming at them. The player then enters a wagon. Here they kill the gang members. When the player comes out, an explosion occurs in a part of the train. Old Silas says: "I could see Jesse waiting for me, fixing to kill me, so he could get away with that money." As the player tries to pass through the scene of the fires, the screen goes black and the duel with Jesse James begins. The bar crowd doesn't believe that he killed Jesse James. After the player shoots Jesse James, Old Silas says that he didn't kill Jesse James, he only wounded him, while Jim is in the next part of the train and his gun is in the engineer's head. The statistics screen appears.

The player spawns in the Ozark Mountains. The player will go into enemy territory to find Jim and Frank James, but on the way Indians attack. When the player kills them and enters a camp, Old Silas mentions the Grey Wolf again. A large number of Indians warriors surround them and the player must defeat them. Old Silas absently repeats the words Grey Wolf told him. As the player moves through the map, Old Silas starts singing the folk song "O, Death". As the player makes their way up the hill, it rains and lightning flashes. The screen begins to shake, turning sepia. Huge boulders roll down the mountainside. Ben asks if he found Jim. The screen goes black as Old Silas expresses his anger at him. Cutscene begins, showing Frank James watching the valley from the top with a rifle. The player makes his way to the top of the mountain and dodges incoming bullets. Old Silas says that Frank blamed Silas for the death of his brother Jesse James and that they both thought Jesse James was dead. As the player goes up, Frank retreats further back and continues to shoot. As Silas advances up the mountain, rocks from the hill fall on the player. As the player approaches the bunker where Frank is, Old Silas says that he has used the dynamite on him. The player has to kill Frank with the dynamite at a distance. Gang members come over the bridge and attack the player. After the player throws enough dynamite into the bunker, Frank's cabin falls down the hillside. Steve asks if Frank was in it. Old Silas says yes. Dwight

says that Frank James is still alive, living in Missouri and showing his farm to those who pay 25 cents. The image freezes and turns sepia. Old Silas' response is typical: "I didn't say he died in the fall, now did I?"

Cutscene: Frank James climbs up the side of the cliff, talks to Silas and tells him where Jim is. The player heads towards the mountains with his rifle. They kill the lookouts, enter the cave where Jim is hiding, kill the bandits and then duel Jim. The statistics screen appears, the episode ends. Old Silas says that he has one more chance to find Ben.

Back to Episode 7: Wild Bunch

Cutscene appears.

Old Silas: Six months ago, I heard that Butch and Sundance were back in the states and had gathered up some of their old gang. I tracked them down, hoping that Roscoe "Bob" Bryant had returned with them...

Jack: So you're saying they didn't die down in Bolivia?

Silas: That's what I'm saying...

Cutscene ends. The player spawns in the forest. In the forest, they encounter bandits, they clash. Old Silas explains what kind of person he has become, but he never gave up his revenge. The player goes up the slope and comes to the abandoned houses. When the player enters one of the houses, all the bandits start shooting at him from a distance. The screen fades out and in as the player struggles. When the player moves forward, Old Silas says that he has seen dead bandits. The player kills the ghosts he encounters. The scene pauses.

Jack: So I am right. You are teched in the head.

Molly: Mr. Greaves, perhaps we should switch you to coffee?

Jack: You see that old Indian again too?

Then the image suddenly comes to life again and the player continues to fight these ghosts while Old Silas describes the other dead bandits he saw. As the player kills the ghosts, they come to a square surrounded by tombstones. Dead bandits keep coming from all sides, shooting and shooting. Next comes the Sundance Kid, who unlike the others is not dead yet. After the player defeats him, Butch Cassidy arrives and the screen goes black. The cutscene starts. Sundance Kid stands up. The three of them duel: Mexican Dead End. The player kills both of them in the duel.

Old Silas: Butch Cassidy and Sundance Kid died there in that cemetery not six months ago.

The statistics screen appears, the episode ends. Cutscene starts.

Jack: Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid were killed by the Bolivian army. Everybody knows that!

Old Silas: That's the legend, but that ain't the truth.

Ben: So you never found Bob?

Jack: There is no "Bob". This old sumbitch ain't even Silas Greaves.

Dwight: Sir, is that true? Have you been pulling our legs this whole time?

Old Silas: Not the whole time.

Jack: Old man, I think you've worn our yor welcome here.

Old Silas: Maybe you're right, Jack. Maybe it's time to pay.

Old Silas'ın elinde Bob'un çocukken Silas'ın ağzına tıktığı madeni para vardır.

Old Silas: You see, Ben, or should I say BOB, your past always catches up with you.

Ben admits in horror that he is Bob but says that he has changed. The player is given two choices: Revenge or redemption. If he chooses forgiveness, Old Silas says that he has told the whole story to see what Bob has become. He gives Dwight advice

and leaves the bar and the game ends. If the player chooses revenge, Old Silas gives Bob a gun and they fight a duel. Bob dies. Cutscene: Everyone is convinced he is Silas Greaves. Old Silas turns around and leaves.

Endgame.

4.3.3 Analysis.

4.3.3.1 Narrator. The character Silas is the main narrator in the play. He is the one who narrates, reports and evaluates the events. From the beginning of the game - with a few exceptions - the narrative is told from his point of view. Cutscenes aside, during the game Old Silas is present as an extradiegetic narrator. His audience is his listeners at the Bull's Head Saloon.

He is a psychologically vengeful character-narrator. He exaggerates his past stories in order to catch the person he is after and to make sure that he is the right person.

4.3.3.2 Unreliable narrator. In *Call of Juarez: Gunslinger*, we can identify the unreliable narrator both from his attitudes, his communication style and from the *Nuggets of Truth*, which constitutes the writing history of the game universe given to us.

That he is an exaggerator can be seen in his reaction to being shot at from the water tower in the first episode. Although Silas narrowly escapes death here, his reactions are like those of a character in a superhero movie. He makes sarcastic remarks about the bullet aimed at him ("Not a bad idea. It would be a turkey shoot from up there.") The narrator, who exhibits similar behavior throughout the play, displays an sarcastic attitude, which is one of the most typical characteristics of unreliable narrators.

It is very difficult to talk about consistency in his narration. From time to time, the story he tells becomes completely different, for example, in episode 2, the cowboys turn into Apaches, and when this detail is noticed, he immediately corrects it and continues his story. There are motifs that make it feel as if he is telling the story improvisationally, such as when a dead native suddenly appears and the ammunition

he finds in him changes the whole situation. To reinforce this improvisational feel, the Native American falls out of the air during gameplay.

In Episode 3, after the player enters the mines and dies, the story rewinds and the player is allowed to continue on an alternate path. During the game, the image stops, reverts to sepia colors and rewinds quite often.

From time to time, he tends to correct inconsistencies between the story and the truth due to warnings from his listeners. When he says that Frank James's cabin fell off the cliff, he adds an additional comment in response to the reactions and states that Frank James did not die in spite of this ("I didn't say he died in the fall, now did I?"). In Episode 3, when listeners point out that the person who killed Plummer actually did it in a different town than Silas described, Silas ignores this and brushes it off. It can be said that Silas' answer is far from satisfying his listeners. Similarly, in The Dalton Brothers episode, when the actor shoots Emmett Dalton in a duel, listeners object and point out that Emmett Dalton did not die this way.

The characters Dwight, Jack, Ben, Molly, Steve, who are among the listeners, consistently display different personas throughout the play. Jack is skeptical of the narrative from the very beginning, and from time to time he mocks Silas, showing that he does not believe him. Dwight, on the other hand, is portrayed as young and listens to Silas with interest and curiosity, and as a comic book reader he is fascinated by Silas' narratives. With excitement, he rarely tells his version of events as a secondary narrator. Ben, on the other hand, is a character who shows his concern throughout the story, and occasionally participates in the narrative as a secondary narrator. The character of Molly stands out as the only female character with dialog in the game, yet she has very little presence. Steve is perhaps the only listener who undergoes a dynamic change throughout. He listens to Silas with a gradual decline in interest and conviction. One of the details that shows that Silas can use the power he has while telling a story to make any changes and manipulation he wants by breaking away from the truth is the scene where Steve starts snoring. After Silas realizes this, he makes the story more exciting to attract Steve's attention.

Another element that reinforces the feeling that Silas' storytelling is haphazard and improvised is the seasonal changes in the level design as Silas narrates. After

giving details about the weather, the weather and season in the game can change instantly. Another is the Native American who suddenly falls from the sky. Again, he makes the story more exciting to wake up a sleeping listener and suddenly deviates from the story he is telling.

At the same time, the interface moves in harmony with the unreliable narrator. When the cutscene for Jesse James arrives, a comic book frame reads: "He could stop a train by staring it down." This is a statement that is contrary to the reality of the game and cannot be true.

According to the informations provided in nuggets of truth:

- Clanton was killed by Rurales. There is a high probability that Curly Bill was killed by Wyatt Earp. Johnny Ringo's death also has an uncertainty. He may have committed suicide.

- Henry Plummer was hanged by the Vigilance Committees.

- Hardin was arrested by the Texas Rangers. Old Silas said he was the one who caught him.

- There is no Native American named Gray Wolf in history. On the contrary, there was an officer with the nickname Gray Wolf, who was affiliated with the American army and fought against the Indians.

- Bob Dalton and Grat Dalton were killed on October 5, 1892, the day they tried to rob two banks at once. In the game, Silas was talking about killing them both in a duel at the same time.

- Sheriff Jesse Tyler is the person who chased and killed "Flat Nose" Curry.

- While Silas killed Kid Curry in Episode 8, it was reported that in reality Kid Curry committed suicide to avoid being caught.

- If we look at the scene where he kills The Sundance Kid and Butch Cassidy in the final scene, nuggets of truths tells us that the information about how these two actually died is not certain. However, the claim that they died in Bolivia or returned to

the USA under a new name may be much more convincing than the exaggerated account of Silas, an unreliable narrator.

- Contrary to what Old Silas told, Jim Reed was murdered in Paris, Texas.

- For Roscoe “Bob” Bryant, it is written about him in Nuggets of Truth: “He was allegedly killed by Selman's Scouts near Seven Rivers, New Mexico in 1878. However, there were rumors that the corpse was misidentified and that Bryant kept on living, joining other gangs and continuing his criminal career.”

4.3.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator. In the game, Old Silas' exaggerated stories challenge the characters' perception of reality. This gives the player a more limited expectation of the game universe. For example, it is unbelievable for one person to engage in combat with dozens of people alone in the game universe. The reactions of the people who listen to Old silas, especially Jack, may also resonate with the player. The player becomes suspicious of the narrative. This is also reinforced through the repetition and correction of stories. Having more than one version of a story can shake the perception of reality and lead the player to question reality.

On the other hand, collectibles acquired throughout the game give us the facts of the game universe. This information, presented as a true American historical narrative, often contradicts the statements of the main narrator, Old Silas. Through this collected information, the player can conclusively decide that Old Silas is in fact an unreliable narrator. This revelation of the unreliable narrator also distinguishes the game from other games with unreliable narrators. Whereas in other games the player has to make his own judgment about the narrator, in this game he has other data at his disposal.

4.3.3.4 The effect of the unreliable narrator on the multiple endings of the game. While the game has two different endings, it cannot be said whether the unreliable narrator has a direct influence on them. Although the narrator manipulates the stories throughout the game experience, his influence on the player's final decision at the end can be evaluated separately for each player. The choice to take revenge on the character Ben or to forgive him is left to the freedom of the player and the narrator has no intervention or reaction to this decision.

4.3.3.5 Effect of unreliable narrator on interactivity. Interaction in the game is very limited. The player collects Nuggets of Truth collectibles and can interact with them from the interface. This allows them to gather information about the game, but they are not allowed to change anything in the game. Nevertheless, the player may learn from Nuggets of Truth that the narrator is unreliable. This might change the player's perspective on the game. The player experiences a predetermined, linear story. The only decision they can completely influence is the duel scene with Ben at the end of the game.

4.4 Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice

4.4.1 Game details. Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice is a 2017 single-player third-person action-adventure game developed by Ninja Theory. The game centers on a female warrior character named Senua who struggles with mental illness and fights against the goddess Hela to save her deceased lover Dillion.

The game has a special sound design to better reflect the theme of psychosis. The visuals are generally dark and cold in tone, and the locations are mainly dungeons, abandoned settlements and forests. Abstract locations are also often used in cutscenes.

The game has movement, focus, and combat mechanics, but very limited interaction with the environment. The player cannot interact with any objects other than lorestones.

The game is narrative-driven, often using flashbacks and scene transitions to present the story. The player has no freedom to decide and act accordingly in the story. The game uses Lorestones to build the background world of the story, which includes Viking mythology. There are 33 lorestones in total, but the player can finish the game without using any of them. If he collects the information from all the lorestones, an extra scene will be unlocked before the encounter with Hela. For the purposes of this research, I did not include the lorestones as they are not related to the unreliable narrator.

4.4.2 Gameplay. Cutscene. The game begins with a blurred image of a vast, mist-covered lake or sea. The narrator's voice is heard addressing the player.

The Narrator: Hello, who are you? ... It doesn't matter. Welcome. You are safe with me. I'll be right here, nice and close so I can speak without alerting the others. Let me tell you about Senua. Her story has already come to an end but now, it begins anew.

The narrator's voice moves from the right sound output channel to the left, a motif repeated throughout the play. The camera moves towards Senua. Senua is rowing on a tree stump. As the camera gets closer, some other voices are heard. Apart from the narrator, there are other voices speaking. It can be assumed that Senua hears these voices as she looks towards the camera. Senua is startled by the voices but continues rowing. There is a skull covered on her waist. The voices question why Senua is doing this and answer each other. Senua tells these voices to shut up. The narrator mentions that these voices have existed since the tragedy: "They've been around ever since the tragedy. Well...that's not quite true. Some are old, some are new, but they've...changed. I think the darkness changed them just like it changed her."

Senua continues rowing towards a place where the dead hang from trees, the Narrator explains that the northerners call this place Hel and describes the dead around. There are creepy voices, tense music. Inner voices keep trying to stop her, to turn her back. Even though the inner voices try to dissuade her. The narrator continues communicating directly to the player and gives information about Senua and his journey: "What is she thinking? I can tell you. She is afraid. Wouldn't you be?" When Senua lands, if she continues, there will be no turning back. The narrator says that she knows what Senua is feeling and thinking. When Senua looks towards the camera, the Narrator says: "Oh! She heard us..." Senua pushes the raft into the water. The narrator invites the player to the game.

The cutscene ends and the player starts controlling Senua. The player cannot interact with the environment using her avatar, she can enter the water but can only move up to a certain limit. The movement limits are set by the game. There are runestones on the scene and the player can follow the story that will be narrated by another narrator. When the player stands in front of the first runestone, internal voices (Furies) tell them what to do: "Focus. Look Closer." The narrator in Runestone tells the legendary background of the game universe and guides Senua. He shows her the way to Helheim. Senua moves on. She crosses a lake. The voices multiply. She comes

to a brighter shore lit by the sun. Senua holds the skull in her hands and asks where he is. The narrator says that the soul of that person (beloved, Dillion) is held by the goddess Hela.

Senua passes under the bridge to Helheim. The Narrator says: "The Bridge to Helheim... I forget its name. She forgets too. But she remembers that only the dead may cross it. That part wasn't so easy to forget. The old fool said there was a hidden path up to it..."

Senua moves forward, climbs the stairs and enters the cave, where she is confronted by a closed iron door with a motif on it. The cutscene plays. The character who is afraid and says he is hiding in the darkness is named Druth, and Furies say "Listen! He lies!". Druth and Senua seem to have a friendship, with Druth both telling stories and guiding her as a guide. Druth says: "For my tales of the northmen, they call me Druth, a liar, an old fool! Druth is my Truth." Druth's image disappears and reappears, like a ghost. He guides Senua to solve the puzzle. Once the player is in control, the player must find the rune given in the puzzle in the surroundings and try to overcome the obstacle. The player must use the concentrate mechanic for this. Along the way Druth starts to tell his story. It can be seen that there is solidarity between them. Senua crosses dangerous places towards the bridge. If the player jumps off these bridges, the screen goes black and Senua reappears at the bridge. The player can try this several times, but these deaths do not cause any loss. A runestone appears ahead and tells her to negotiate with Hela, the owner of Helheim, to save Dillion.

The player uses the stairs to go through the tunnel to the door leading to Helheim. When he tries to open this door, the cutscene begins. Senua looks at the camera and begs it to let Dillion go. She speaks to someone we don't see. The player may think she is addressing Hela here. When Senua extends her hand towards the camera, she feels a pain in her hand and the rot in her hand begins to spread throughout her body. A warrior comes. Senua is forced to draw her sword and fight them. If the player loses the battle, the cutscene starts and Senua screams in pain on the ground, his body gradually decomposes and he dies. Another Senua comes from behind and suffers, looking at Senua lying on the ground. Senua scrapes his arm where the rot is spreading, the rot gradually spreads. Senua gets up and attacks Hela's door. The following text

appears on the screen: “The dark rot will grow each time you fail. If the rot reaches Senua’s head, her quest is over. And all progress will be lost.”

When the camera pans back to Senua, she is kneeling and looking at Dillion's skull. The Narrator says: “With every defeat, the dark rot will grow and soon it will take her soul.” Senua gets up, Druth says: “To open it you must face the gods that guard it. The god of fire, Surt, and the god of illusion, Varlrahn.” The player can choose one of the two doors and take any path they wish. When the player tries to open the doors, illusions specific to the respective gods will appear on both of them and Druth will provide information about the individual gods..

If the player passes through the Valrahn gate, they must navigate through huge stuns, stony paths, castles, solve puzzles with Runes hidden on the wall and defeat warriors. The player must find solutions to solve the puzzles, such as changing perspective, aligning objects, etc. These symbolic mechanics are supported by the Narrator's words: “It’s funny. We all want to see behind the veil, don’t we?” As the player finds runes and solves puzzles, they must open new doors. The narrator then tells the following about Senua: “Senua never could close her eyes, however hard she tried...and begged. This is the price she pays for seeing things differently.”

The player has to fight the warriors guarding the gates to open them. The Narrator says: “The northmen will not stop her. She will find what she’s looking for.”

The player finds out from Druth what they have to do to open the door: “To break the seal, align the ravens with the mark of Valrahn...”

As they go further, another door opens. Valrahn is singing. The player focuses and follows it. The player can find illusions by standing on the left or right side of the trees. Furies when Valrahn disappears: “You lost him again. You’re stupid!” As the player tries to solve the puzzle, Furies say: “She can get up now? It must be magic! A trick. Valrahn’s magic.”

When the player solves the puzzle and opens the door, they enter into a new castle. In this area, light fluctuates on the surfaces hit by the light. As the player tries to find the right passage, they encounter warriors. During this fight, Furies warn the

player by saying "Behind!". When the player kills the last warrior, the light fluctuations stop and the image returns to normal.

As the player moves through the map, the Narrator gives implicit information about Senua's past and her psychology. When he arrives at the new area, there is another closed door and a puzzle. As Senua focuses on the door, the ravens around her light up and she puts her head in her hands in pain. Furies then begin to give information about Senua's past, like a narrator. Each one says a sentence, building a dialog, completing a narrative:

“...She went to the wilds a long time ago. Why did she go to the wilds? She wanted to fight her own darkness. She thought she could beat her own darkness. Did she beat her darkness? No. It nearly killed her but she tried. Druth. Druth helped her. If it wasn't for Druth she'd be dead. She can't beat her own darkness. She wanted to marry Dillion. She came to beat her own darkness. She thought her curse would infect him...”

Once the player has solved the puzzle and set the seal, they arrive at Valraven's final illusion. Here Senua asks Druth to tell a story. Druth tells the story of a man named Findan, his own past. Findan went to The Northmen to save his sister. They imprisoned him and released him after a while.

Druth: “Then they released him. I don't know why.”

When he returned, his father's house was set on fire and his father and brother were killed. Later, Findan was captured again and enslaved. Six years later he managed to escape.

The player solves the puzzle and breaks the seal. The camera shows Senua's face, full of fear and anxiety. Valraven appears behind her, attacks Senua and the screen goes black.

Senua is lying on the ground. Valraven is out of frame hurting Senua, Senua opens her eyes, she is scared. Druth calls out, tells her to get the iron mirror. When Senua picks up the iron mirror, Valraven jumps, the whole environment lights up. Senua says: “I see you! You led me to the wilds! You trapped me there! But I can see you now!”

The boss battle with Valraven takes place. Senua has to fight other warriors throughout the battle. When she kills Valraven, the rot in her arm spreads from her right wrist to her elbow. The sky lights up and the door opens.

The player walks forward and on the way encounters the face of Galena, Senua's mother, formed in the rocks. When the player focuses, the shape of Galena comes to life. Galena says that Senua has the gift of sight like her.

The player moves through the map for a long time and comes to the area where Hela's gate is located. Here they face other warriors from The Northmen. After defeating them, they can enter through Surt's door.

In this episode, the Narrator explains how Druth and Senua meet. When the player arrives at the sealed gate of Surt, they encounter warriors. After defeating them, Druth's voice is heard. Druth says that he hears the smell of burning people and their screams. The player can open the door after solving the rune puzzles here. When the player arrives at the next door, they are again confronted by warriors. After the fight, the player goes to the burning stone to open the door. When the player focuses on the stone, suddenly the whole place is engulfed in flames. The player must run quickly through the doors and out of this area. Druth appears and tells the player to fight to get rid of Hel.

When the flames are gone, Furies say: "Where's the fire gone? It was a trick! It was an illusion. Surt is testing her."

Upon reaching the next door, the player is faced with a similar puzzle. Again, he tries to escape through the flames created by touching a stone. Druth appears again. Then the player reaches a door again.

Senua: How did you lose your gods?

Druth: Senua... I was a man of knowledge, not a warrior. To survive...I did things, bad things.

The player finds the stone and touches it. This time the player has to fight even harder to get rid of the flames and the obstacles he encounters. They must also defeat

the warriors they encounter. Once through the gate, Senua talks to Druth and continues on his way. The player is in the middle of a sheltered building surrounded by stakes. When they solve the puzzle here, they cannot escape the flames and collapse in flames. The scene changes. Senua wakes up healthy in an abstract dimension, apologizes and talks to Dillion. She talks about her desire to go off alone to fight and promises Dillion that she will return to him. When the scene changes, she finds Surt sitting in the flames and draws the sword. After Surt dies, the flames go out and the door of Helheim appears and dissolves in front of Senua. Druth appears, but he seems to be dying: "I die free, knowing you will carry my stories with you. I have fulfilled my quest."

When Druth's image fades, the player returns through the burnt fields to where they came from, and the narrator returns to the conversation after a long break, talking about Druth's past and his association with Senua and asking the player the following question: "Have you ever died before? It's a serious question. When the illusion of self is shattered, you simply cease to be... Senua has died three times before. And she will do so again. You can be sure of that."

The player comes to the courtyard where the gate to Helheim is located and opens the gate to Helheim. Furies say: "Don't open the gate! She has to open the gate! Don't!"

When the door opens, Senua is left in the darkness. Some parts of her surroundings are vaguely illuminated. Senua is frightened, she calls out to Druth. Zynbel's voice is heard. Zynbel tells her that she cannot get rid of him. Senua sees Dillion further down the road. As she gets closer, it turns into a brightly lit beach. There are dead bodies around. Senua approaches Dillion and she sees Dillion killed by the blood eagle method. She collapses and cries.

Zynbel: "In the head of his corpse lies the seat to his soul. So you must carry his vessel to bring him back home."

Senua hears voices accusing her. The screen goes black.

Senua is on the bridge to Helheim. Zynbel tells her to fight the darkness, that it is her duty. As the player walks across the bridge, they encounter warriors and fight them. As the player passes them and opens the door at the end of the path, a warrior

attacks Senua and knocks her down. The player must get up and kill the warriors in front of them. The player then opens a door and is confronted by another puzzle sealed in the door. Druth's voice is heard: "The journey to Helheim is never a straight one. Each must find their own path. Align yourself to its secrets and you will find yours."

After solving the puzzle and opening the door, the player runs across a wooden bridge and tries to reach the door at the end of the bridge. Meanwhile, the door opens and black matter rains from inside. Warriors spawn and the player kills them. A song is heard, Hela is coming slowly from inside.

Narrator: I'm sorry. I can't watch this.

When Senua meets Hela, she cannot look at Hela, she turns her head away. Zynbel tells her to stand up and draw her sword. Senua takes it and when Hela comes towards her, she strikes Hela, her sword breaks and Senua jumps into the air from the impact. The screen goes black.

The camera wanders into a dark, cave-like place and approaches Senua. We hear Zynbel's voice insulting Senua. The camera comes out of a mirror and Senua is looking at her reflection in the mirror, insulting herself. She takes her broken sword from the fire beside her and presses it to her face. She screams and the scene fades to black.

Senua lies on the beach with Dillion's skull in her hand. The Narrator speaks about giving up and moving on. Senua hears Dillion's voice and gets up. Furies say: "It's not real. It's a trick, don't trust it. It's real. Maybe you're already dead."

When Senua stands up, in the distance a glow flashes on and off. The player walks along the beach and sees the shimmering figure in the silhouette of a man making figures with his sword -swordplay- and disappearing again. The player must follow this flickering figure along the beach. The narrator tells how Senua was like when she was a child and how Dillion met her.

Narrator: Before she first met him, she was not in a good place. Just a teenager but not like the others. Barely functioning, she rarely left the house. Her father, Zynbel, made sure of that.

The scene changes. Senua is walking in the meadow. She runs towards a tree. She meets Dillion. The scene changes again. Senua is now standing before the same tree, perhaps the same tree as before, with its leaves fallen and dried up. The camera pans around the exhausted Senua. The tree is on fire. Senua hears Zynbel's voice and argues with him, the flames multiply. When she shouts, everything returns to normal, the flames are extinguished. Senua hears Dillion's voice and looks into the camera, promising to find him.

The player enters the hollow of a large trunked tree by the shore. There is a sword stuck in the trunk of the tree, casting light all around. Senua tries to draw the sword. Black flying matter forms on the trunk of the tree and there is a powerful humming sound. Senua grabs her head with her hands in pain. She throws herself out of the tree hollow. She hears Druth's voice. Druth tells her that the sword (Gramr) was forged to kill the gods, but that it is not a single piece, and that Senua can put it back together by passing the tests. The player must go to the Shards on the beach and solve the puzzles. Dillion guides and accompanies her through the puzzles.

In one of the stones leading to the Shard, Druth tells the story of Baldr. The player spawns in a new location, on a bridge. With the help of a giant mask, the player must find their way through the light and dark (hot and cold) dimensions and solve the puzzle. When they find the last rune, they approach Dillion, but he disappears. Dillion tells Senua that her sight is a gift.

Another of the tests is about rot and plague. It starts with Druth giving information about the plague. The player first moves through the town, which is soaked in rotten liquids. They solve illusions and enter a building, where they must quickly find the rune puzzle and escape the fire chasing them. The fire is chasing Senua, along with the figures chasing her and the roars of the crowd. Once the player has solved the puzzle and opened the exit door, Senua's conversation with Dillion begins. Senua says that the others blame her for the plague. Dillion console her and try to comfort her.

The theme of the other test is vision and wisdom. Senua is in pitch darkness. She hears Dillion's voice calming and guiding her. The player tries to find his way in the darkness. The narrator addresses the player as follows: "Shhhh. I know what you're

thinking. He's not really here. It seems there is no escaping the past in this place. And so she is forced to relive it. To what end?"

As the player moves through the darkness, he comes to a house. Senua is frightened when she hears horrible noises. In the darkness, a creature is seen in the room. The player moves towards the sounds of a burning fire. There the player passes more creatures and enters another house. Senua says that it smells of death. The player crosses a wooden plank bridge with a dark cliff below. There is a huge creature moving in the darkness of the cliff. At the end of the path there is a dead end, Senua jumps into the well and falls into the creature-filled water with corpses hanging from the ceiling. The player has to go towards a light shining in the distance. Dillion says that this light is himself. The closer the player gets, the farther away the light goes, guiding them. When the player reaches the end of the path, Senua finds herself in a forest.

The Narrator: She could spend hours, days even, trapped within herself, in the dark.

With Dillion's help, for the first time she was able to get support from someone and come out of the darkness. Senua finds herself back on the beach.

Furies: "Killing you would be too easy. They are stealing your memories!"

When the player arrives at the other stone on the beach, Druth tells the story of the Tyrfind sword. Senua is on another beach. The narrator calls it a "burial mound". When the player climbs up higher on the island, they encounter a dark tunnel.

Furies: Don't go in there. Go in! Take the torch! It's too dark. Take it.

Senua takes the torch hanging on the wall. The player moves through the tunnel. Monster sounds are heard. Dillion's shouting voice is heard as they move forward: "Father! Come back to me! Don't leave me!" The light of Dillion's silhouette appears behind the iron bars. It disappears when approached. The player must make his way through the labyrinthine tunnel by lighting the torches fixed in the rooms and listening to Dillion's cries. The player arrives in front of a closed door and when they open it, Senua puts down the torch and speaks to her father. She says she will leave the house

and mentions Dillion. Her father opposes this and beats Senua violently. Senua resists and draws her sword. Senua turns and leaves and the scene fades to black.

Senua is on the shore again. Furies tell her to go and get the sword. The player goes to the tree hollow and takes the sword. As she draws it, Zynbel orders and warns Senua not to take it, but Senua says that Dillion left it and takes the sword. When Senua draws the sword, darkness surrounds her. The hollow of the tree closes and Senua is trapped inside. Senua sees someone lying on the ground in the darkness.

Dillion: My father was not supposed to die like this.

Senua hears the voices of Zynbel and others accusing her. She is confronted by warriors. After killing the warriors, the player enters the Sea of Corpses and moves forward. Walls made of the arms of the dead try to catch Senua. Zynbel blames Senua for what happened. The player kills the warriors in front of her. Senua hears Galena's voice. Zynbel blames Senua for what happened to Galena and tries to convince her to give up and surrender. The player continues and new warriors appear. After passing enemies, the player exits the Sea of Corpses and climbs upwards. Here they pass over and past moving corpses. Senua sees Galena and tells her that she can't take it anymore and wants to be with her.

Senua is on the rocks by the seaside. Dillion approaches her from behind and convinces her to live.

Dillion: We've lost so many. And I've lost my father. I can't lose you.

Senua: You said it. I have blood on my hands...

Dillion: I didn't say that. You've done nothing wrong!

Dillion convinces Senua. When Senua closes her eyes and opens them, she is back on the beach where she picked up the sword. The player continues on the road to Helheim.

Furies: ... Senua... we're here... hello... we're back

Senua is unresponsive, as if she does not hear them. Furies keep on sounding as the player progresses.

Furies: We found you. Where have you been? There she is...we thought we lost you. You need us. We're here to help you. Don't worry. You don't have to do this alone anymore.. She is so clever... Did you miss us?.. Are you glad we're back?.. She did, she did... She is so glad we're back...

Senua: Go away. I'm not listening.

A ladder is discovered on the rocks and the player climbs up. They come in front of a huge door. The player pushes the doors and goes inside. They go up a spiral staircase and open a closed door. As the door opens, scary noises are heard and a red light envelops the area. Senua falls to the ground in fright and everything returns to normal. Zynbel tells her that a monster called Garm is here and that it knows Senua is coming. As Senua moves forward, the horror-themed images superimpose. The player must run, without stopping, where there is daylight from above and then to the door. Senua can't open the locked door, she takes the torch next to the door. Senua hears a voice. She sees Galena on the other side of the door. It turns out that Galena is struggling with similar things and is being abused by Zynbel. Galena asks for help and leaves. A new rune puzzle appears above the door.

The Narrator: I don't talk much about her father, Zynbel. I suppose I just didn't want to risk upsetting her. But it doesn't matter now, does it?

The player goes down the stairs and into the water to solve the puzzle. By diving into the water, the player risks losing the light of the torch. When the light is gone, the eerie sounds start again. The player must run towards the sunlight. Between each point of daylight there are darkneses that must be crossed by running. The player moves quickly accordingly, finding a torch. As the player moves through the cave, they find runes, kill the warriors they encounter and the puzzle is solved. When the player opens the locked door, the torch goes out. Senua turns around and sees the beast running towards her. The player must run to the light without stopping. As Senua crosses the bridge, the ropes of the bridge break and throw Senua somewhere. Meanwhile, the skull Senua was carrying falls into the deep void below.

Zynbel: WHAT HAVE YOU DONE! You've lost him! It's over! Without his head you will never bring his soul back! His fate is sealed.

The scene changes. Senua is in isolation. She asks her mother why she left her. Her father won't let her see Dillion. She says she won't give up and will find Dillion.

The scene returns to its original state. The player picks up a new torch and continues through the dungeons, coming to a new puzzle door. The player kills the warriors they encounter. To solve the puzzle, the player finds the runes and opens the door, taking care not to extinguish the torch and stay in the dark. The player moves through the caves, encountering the creature at the end of the tunnel. Throughout the battle Senua is subjected to terrible illusions created by the creature. Finally the creature grabs Senua, drags her, Senua tries to fight back, the screen goes black.

Senua is standing, on top of the corpses, breathless. The rot in her arm has spread. Dillion's skull in her hands, she crouches down and apologizes to Dillion.

The Narrator: If she had stayed, she wouldn't have survived. But... maybe Dillion would still be alive...

Zynbel: Forgive me Senua. I know you have no reason to trust me anymore. But believe this. It was my mission to make you hate, to hate the darkness with a passion so great, that it would focus your mind on this quest. For without it...I feared you would have let go of this life. All this time I wanted to protect you from this beast that would have destroyed you long time ago. But you have conquered your darkness at every turn. You deserve to see behind the veil of darkness.

Senua comes up from the cave. He asks Zynbel to take her deeper into the mountain. Zynbel says that Senua will not get out alive, but Senua says that she knows that.

The player goes up the stairs and comes to an area with a bridge full of illusions. The player must solve the puzzles and cross the bridge. In doing so, they must kill the warriors they encounter.

Furies: The bridge. It's broken. She can't fix it. She can. She's done it before. You have to fight on. Be powerful. The final battle. Get his soul back. It's the final test.

Senua: Yes it is.

The player kills the warriors on the bridge, pushes the door and enters a hall. Furies are worried, they say they don't want to die and beg Senua to stop.

Senua: I'm sorry. I didn't ask you to be a part of me. If you don't want to die with me, then leave me alone.

The Senua comes across an object with an opaque white surface where she sees her reflection. Another Senua comes from that surface and they argue. Senua does not listen to the worried words and enters through that surface. The player walks towards the lighted passage at the end of the hall. If the player has collected all the lurestones in the game, an extra scene called Druth's Truth begins. Druth says that he used to be a coward and adds: "...But under torture, I did no such thing. I led them to the treasures and slaves they sought..."

Senua goes to the moment when Galena was burned alive. Senua blames Zynbel. Zynbel threatens her, implying that the same thing could happen to her. Senua says that it was Zynbel who created this darkness and madness. The scene of Galena burning in flames turns into the scene of Hela descending to the ground. Senua draws her sword and runs towards Hela standing on the bridge. Hela blows and lifts the ground and Senua falls to the ground. The rot on her arm extends to her face.

Zynbel appears and says: The darkness is inside you and it will destroy you!

Senua stands up. Warriors appear and surround Senua. The player kills the warriors. Senua challenges Hela. The player runs at Hela. The pieces of the bridge between Hela and Senua come together again. The player runs to a new battlefield. Hela attacks Senua again. Senua falls to the ground. Zynbel appears again and argues with Senua.

Senua: You told everyone I was cursed! They believed you! I believed you!

Senua picks up her sword again and stands up. Valraven appears. During the battle, Valraven transforms into Surt, then Beast and other bosses. The player defeats them and continues forward. Hela appears. New warriors spawn. The player kills them too. Zynbel tries to make Senua quit and give up. Surrounding warriors attack and injure Senua.

Senua writhes on the ground in pain. Hela gets up, approaches Senua and picks up the sword from the ground. Senua crawls on the ground to pick up Dillion's skull. Senua turns towards Hela and challenges her. Senua has nothing left to fear. She offers Hela her life and asks her to let Dillion go.

Senua: But if you won't then you will have to kill me because I have nothing left. No fear. No hate. No quest. Nothing. And you have no power over me.

Hela grabs Senua by the throat and thrusts the sword into Senua. Senua collapses, breathing hard. We see a vision of Dillion. He tells Senua to accept death. Senua dies, lying on the ground. Hela comes and takes Dillion's skull. Hela drops the skull into the void. The camera pans back to Hela and we see that it's Senua.

We see Senua somewhere else, looking at the mountains. Furies starts again.

The Narrator: This is where my story once began. And so it has to end here. Because I cannot see further than this.

Senua turns back and looks into the camera: Follow us. We have another story to tell.

The Narrator: My friend. Go with her. This now will be your story to witness. Good bye.

Endgame.

4.4.3 Analysis.

4.4.3.1 Narrator. Although there is one main narrator in the play, the narrative in the play shows multiple narration features. Some figures assumes the role of a narrator from time to time.

The main narrator "the Narrator" differs from the others in that he addresses the player from the beginning of the play. For example, in the scene where Senua walks in the dark under Dillion's guidance, she says the following to the player: "Shhhh. I know what you're thinking. He's not really here."

From time to time she falls silent and then reappears. She is a heterodiegetic narrator. It can be assumed that Senua does not hear her in general, but when Senua looks at the camera, the Narrator reacts as follows: "Oh! She heard us..." In another scene, she explains the reason for not talking about Zynbel as follows: "I suppose I just didn't want to risk upsetting her."

The Narrator can be considered as an omniscient narrator: "Senua has died three times before. And she will do so again. You can be sure of that."

The side narrators are Druth and Furies. Although Furies sometimes monologues, Senua is the main interlocutor of the side narrators throughout the play.

Furies narrates Senua's struggle with her inner darkness, her back from death's door, Druth's help, and her fear for Dillion's safety.

Druth tells stories of Viking mythology and guides Senua.

4.4.3.2 Unreliable narrator. The Narrator can be interpreted as an omniscient narrator. Her command of the story from the beginning to the end of the play makes one feel that she has established a certain power. Nevertheless, she chooses to withhold some information. For example, she forgets the name of the bridge to Helheim: "The Bridge to Helheim... I forget its name. She forgets too..." The narrator's knowledge that she has forgotten undermines her absolute authority.

Another inconsistency is the Narrator's repetition of the permadeath warning that appears on the screen when Senua's arm begins to rot: "With every defeat, the dark rot will grow and soon it will take her soul." Even if the player dies repeatedly in the game, even if she reaches the beginning of the rot, Senua never ultimately dies from it. However, this warning creates the idea of permadeath and misleads the player into thinking that the game can start all over again. This is also an example of deliberate unreliability.

In the episode where Druth tells the story of Findan, he said that he did not understand why they freed him while he was in captivity. When Senua asks how he lost his gods, Druth says that he did terrible things. And in the extra scene at the end of the play we learn that Druth is the one who led them to the treasures and slaves, he is the traitor.

Furies are voices that utter contradictory, inconsistent sentences from the beginning to the end of the game. They often express two opposite ideas together: “Don’t go in there. Go in! Take the torch! It’s too dark. Take it.”

Genellikle şüphe, kaygı ve korku ifadeleri işitilir. Sadece Senua'nın başına kötü şeyler geldiğinde değil, Dillion onu karanlıktan kurtardığında bile: “Killing you would be too easy. They are stealing your memories!”

However, Senua gradually changes towards the end of the game and is no longer tolerant of these voices: "I'm sorry. I didn't ask you to be a part of me. If you don't want to die with me, then leave me alone." She does not care about them and is not attracted to them. This worries the Furies and it can be said that they are engaged in a power struggle with the character.

There are also inconsistencies and illusions that cannot be attributed to just one narrator. For example, when Senua sees a dead body lying on the ground, she hears this voice: "My father was not supposed to die like this." This phrase is clearly Dillion's, but in later encounters with Dillion, Dillion states that he never said such a thing. As a result, this could be an imaginary voice that Senua hears, or it could be a lie told by Dillion. It is also conceivable that Senua often hallucinates, and the ultimate reality of the play is open to interpretation. Indeed, characters like Druth and Dillion constantly appear in a non-physical, transphysical dimension. From this perspective, it can be argued that these audio and visual elements create an unreliable narrative, and that the fake permadeath warning in the game also creates an unreliable narrative.

4.4.3.3 Disclosure of unreliable narrator. We cannot say that the Narrator is unreliable throughout the game. The Permadeath warning can be recognized as a fake as the player dies repeatedly, and so the revelation of the Narrator as an unreliable narrator is related to each player's own experience. If the player has heeded this

warning throughout the entire game experience, they may not realize that it is a fake warning even after the game is over.

While Druth can be considered an unreliable narrator after he confesses the truths he has been hiding in the information about his past, Furies appears unreliable, contradictory and inconsistent from the very beginning.

4.4.3.4 The effect of the unreliable narrator on the multiple endings of the game. The game contains a single ending. The cutscene in the last scene implies that Senua's story will continue.

4.4.3.5 Effect of unreliable narrator on interactivity. There is no interactivity in the game. Any action taken by the player does not change the flow of the story and gameplay.

4.5 ICEY

4.5.1 Game details. ICEY is a 2D hack-and-slash and action platform video game developed by FantaBlane Network and published in 2016. The game is set in a post-apocalyptic cyberpunk universe. The player controls an avatar named ICEY. The game features mechanics such as jumping, dashing, attacking, and abilities that can be upgraded. The player earns money for killing enemies and can upgrade their abilities on upgrade consoles.

4.5.2 Gameplay. After the tutorial part of the game, system error warning messages appear on the screen, when the player presses the "I See" button, a computer terminal screen opens and code animations begin. The interface opens, and a file containing some ethical warnings by the game's manufacturer is like a contact that breaks the fourth wall. If the player selects the "ICEY.bin" file in this interface, the Avatar arrives at home base. This is the main structure where there are many screens with various arrow instructions and close-up photographs of human eyes. Various distortions of the image occur in this scene. As the player progresses, the game starts to communicate with them. It asks who they are. In response, the player must choose one of the yes or no options on the screens on either side of the question screen. The player is asked in writing what difficulty level they prefer and whether they find challenges or stories more important. After this, the player returns to the main menu.

The player has to select the continue game option several times, and this parody of inoperability in the menu calls into question the concept of control even in the main menu of the game.

When the game begins, ICEY is found sleeping in a stasis tank among the ruins. The Narrator takes over from this scene and becomes the sole source of all information about the world and ICEY. He tells us that ICEY has no memory and no past, that the only purpose of its existence is to kill Judas. He describes Judas as the devil who brings the apocalypse. He instructs the player to wake up ICEY. If the player does not give the command to wake up ICEY, the Narrator starts accusing ICEY of laziness and finally returns to the terminal screen and types the command again. The same scene starts again.

When the Avatar wakes up and enters the new chapter, the Narrator makes it clear that the arrow signs must be followed. He says that Judas sent the enemies attacking ICEY. If the player past them, they will come to a digital console with a deep chasm between it and the other side. The narrator encourages the player to use the console to activate the photon bridge. If the player dashes through the air instead of using the console to cross, the Narrator reacts with surprise and asks the player how they did it. The player can continue where they left off. But if the player jumps off the cliff, the ICEY spawns/appears again at the top of the slope. The narrator states that ICEY slipped and fell. If the player drops ICEY into the cliff three times in a row, the Narrator starts to react to the player: "Are you messing with me?!?!? I told you time after time!!!" Meanwhile, he puts virtual walls in both directions the player can go and warns the player that this is an action game and the goal is to kill monsters. When the walls are removed and the player chooses to jump down again, the Narrator says that he hadn't thought of that before and opens the terminal screen. He writes a new code. He throws the Avatar ahead of the episode. He rewards ICEY here with the money console. He tells the player to go to the right. If the player chooses to go left, they will be connected to the next part of the story. If the player goes left, they enter a part of the main building and cannot leave. Here the narrator refers to the player's disobedience. The images are distorted. The Narrator writes some notes about the story on the console screen. As the system reloads, the Narrator questions his own identity.

ICEY reappears at the beginning of the episode and the game starts again. As long as the player follows the instructions, they can progress to the end of the game.

One of the unchanging patterns of the narrator's discourse is the Judas references. For example, in the sewer episode, the player receives a message. If the player accepts the message and opens it, the terminal opens. In the image, which is organized as an e-mail, an "Unknown" sender states that they have limited time and that Judas is preparing to sacrifice his physical body to move his self into a virtual world, and that his goal is to create the child of God. The player is then shown a map of the sewer. If the player goes to the left instead of the exit, they may end up in the "Totally Empty Room". If the player continues to stay in this room despite the Narrator's anger directed at the player, a trophy will eventually appear on the stage. After the player has obtained the achievements, the Narrator questions the game and its purpose and then ends the scene. The player can select a chapter from the terminal screen and continue.

There are also times when the Narrator gives correct information and the player is guided correctly, such as in the Ultimopolis episode. If the player decides to go to the gates of Ultimopolis instead of listening to the Narrator's direction to go to the town of Ultimopolis, the Narrator tells the player that the gates won't open until he defeats Thor in the town and that it's a waste of time, and the player realizes this is true when they overcome many obstacles and arrive in front of the huge gates. However, when ICEY goes back to the town, if he chooses to enter the storage building in the town, they can enter another hidden section. If the player enters this section with sketches, the Narrator reacts to the player and tells them that he has not finished this part yet. The game gradually turns into a metafiction. The Narrator starts the archive section and starts showing the first prototypes of the game to the player. He shares his experiences of game development. This section closes with a terminal screen, on which someone -probably the Narrator- writes new information about the game's story: "After ascending the Holy Throne, Judas was able to finally carry out his plan. After developing System I™, he transferred all of his follower's memories into a virtual city called Ultimopolis. At the same time, with System I™'s help, The Chosen One, "ICEY", was born."

In the Subway Station episode, the player interacts with the Narrator in a different way when they do not follow the instructions. The Narrator transforms ICEY

into another character called UCEY. The Narrator explains that UCEY is a free but lonely character who is not forced to make choices, and shows images of it, but without giving the player any chance to control it, the Narrator ends this story and allows ICEY to start the game again at the Metro Station, but now with the name UCEY written unchanged. The player encounters a dead end in this chapter, after passing the boss named PUCK. The Narrator states that there has been a mistake, opens the terminal, writes teleport nodes and teleports ICEY to Metro Transfer. If the player insists on not moving in the direction of the Narrator's arrows to go after Judas in this section, they can reach a deadly puddle underground, and if they jump into this water against the Narrator's warnings, the screen goes black and ICEY disappears into the water. The Narrator cannot understand this behaviour of the player. The Narrator reacts by opening the storage room section of the terminal to the player. In this area, he offers the player another game called "Koi" to play, in which the player can make free choices. He then opens a game called "Shio" from the terminal. The player tries to get off the platform with only jumping mechanics in this Far Eastern themed section. If the player repeatedly jumps into the void to die with this character, they return to ICEY's story and continue from where they left off. If the player finishes the episode instead of jumping into the void, the Narrator agrees with the player and admits that he was wrong. The narrator then opens the terminal and writes a text on free will: "...Perhaps, this was because he envied people that are "free", and wanted to show them what it felt like to be caught in a relentless web. This is exactly what Judas was looking for; a servant without feelings, and one that would not resist his commands. Although he knew Parker was his own child, Judas was willing to sacrifice his own bloodline to achieve freedom from the web of mortal existence." After the terminal, the player can select the chapter they want to start again from the interface panel and pick up where they left off. The Narrator continues to mislead the player.

Before going to Ultimapolis, the Narrator tells ICEY that they must follow the arrows or they will get lost.

On the way to kill Judas, when he encounters the character Trinity, the Narrator tells ICEY to kill them. If ICEY doesn't kill them, the Narrator questions the player's choice, but in the sequel, Boss kneels down to show respect to ICEY and lets them pass, which the Narrator is surprised by and can't understand: "Why? Why didn't she

attack you? It's clearly been programmed... I don't get it... I don't understand..." However, if the player chooses to kill Trinity, the Boss will fight the player this time. The conflict between the player and the Narrator continues until the last scene before Judas. In this scene, the Narrator asks the player "Are you ready?" and the player's answer will again start a discussion with the Narrator. If the player chooses not to give the answers the Narrator wants, the Narrator starts to insult them. The screen displays "ICEY is a pig She doesn't listen to orders (Are you ready?)". If the player waits long enough, the terminal screen will open after a while. Narrator: "Wait, who is accessing the terminal? Is it you? How are you able to... What are you going to do?" New commands are entered into the terminal: "The Narrator is a pig" The terminal is loaded. Again we see ICEY in front of the screens, the image is distorted. Then the player's screen is covered with system error messages saying "Narrator is a pig...". The screen goes black. Back to the terminal screen, the player can continue from where they left off by selecting the desired chapter.

When the player finally encounters and defeats Judas, the Narrator announces that ICEY has completed its mission and the game is over, the screen goes black, a person who can be assumed to be the Narrator is heard getting up from his desk and walking away, opening a door and walking away, and the game credits move. The impression is given that the game is over. After this screen, the terminal screen opens again and there is a statement that Judas is banished to the Clock Tower. If the player goes to the Clock Tower again, they learn that the Narrator's name is HASTUR. When he goes to the Marionette Theatre again, they can enter a new, secret section. The Narrator begins to worry. An image of a mobile phone appears in the middle of the screen and the phone rings, it is his wife. The Narrator does not answer the phone. If the player goes left, they enter the secret room. There is a screen labelled "Wrong answer". It is heard that someone comes to the narrator. The narrator pleads with him, telling him to trust him. A gunshot is heard and a crack appears in the centre of the screen. The terminal opens and restarts. The player can go to the panel to the newly opened section called Master's Name. The Narrator congratulates the player on finding a new secret location. He tells the player that he finally understands, that he is only a Narrator, that he cannot control the game, that he is only a voice and a character in the game, that he does not really exist, that all his answers are programmed. The terminal opens. The command "Delete the Narrator" is entered. The Narrator says that he does

not want to be part of this game anymore. When he returns to the section, he wants to destroy ICEY. ICEY resists, starts talking, turns into an autonomous character.

Endgame.

4.5.3 Analysis.

4.5.3.1 Narrator. He is a heterodiegetic narrator in the role of the developer of the game. Due to the Narrator's conversations about the game and his frequent interventions into the game, the narrative often turns into a metafiction. In one episode, the boundaries between the player and the game are violated, and a monologue about the game's design starts. This breaks the fourth wall and prevents the suspension of the player's belief.

The narrator communicates verbally with the player. His dialogues contain sarcasm. However, there is another written source in the terminal that gives information about the game universe. The source of these words is unknown. Although the narrator usually uses the terminal, sometimes someone else accesses the terminal.

In terms of interactivity, every choice that goes against the Narrator creates a dynamic narrative. The player is sometimes rewarded with treasure chests in these situations.

4.5.3.2 Unreliable narrator. In ICEY, the presence of an unreliable narrator is integrated into the gameplay from the beginning to the end. The narrator often gives the player deliberately false information.

There are parts of the game that have not yet been designed or where dead ends are encountered by mistake. Even when the narrator tells the player to always follow the arrows or they will get lost, this is repeatedly shown to be untrue. When the player does not kill Trinity, the Narrator cannot understand why the next boss does not attack the player. However, as the developer of the game, he is expected to know all these things. Even when the player defeats Judas, the Narrator manipulates the player by claiming that the game is over. Credits are displayed, but later it is seen that the game continues.

4.5.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator. The manipulative impact of the narrator is apparent in ICEY right away. The narrator also shows this by influencing the game interface. The lack of control in the continue panel or the choice of game difficulty at the beginning of the game makes the player feel that they are not in control, and this is the first indication of an unreliable narrator. As the player violates the rules set by the narrator, they are encouraged to do so by being rewarded in the in-game economy. Thus, they can choose to disobey the narrator's orders in order to enter many hidden parts of the game.

4.5.3.4 The effect of the unreliable narrator on the multiple endings of the game. Although the narrator claims that the game is over, the player can continue the game by selecting the newly opened chapter from the terminal screen and encounter the last creatures. Despite the intense interactivity of the game, the player is not given another choice at the end of the game.

4.5.3.5 Effect of unreliable narrator on interactivity. The player interacts with the game through their actions or inactions. Every action in which the player deviates from the narrator's discourse creates interactivity. As a result of these actions, hidden parts of the game can be unlocked, and the player can obtain achievements. Some interactive actions create dead ends in the game. Within the narrative, the game designer cannot resist the player's reflection of his free will in this way and often withdraws from the game by using discourses of giving up and quitting. The game turns into a performance by the narrator in a metafictional dimension. The designer can make the player play other games he has designed or show level designs that are still in the design process.

4.6 Portal

4.6.1 Game details. Portal is a single-player, 3D, first-person perspective puzzle game developed by Valve in 2007. The narrator is a robot named GLaDOS. The core mechanics of the game are creating portals and using cubes. The player progresses through the game by solving puzzle systems with these actions.

4.6.2 Gameplay. The game begins in a glass-walled cell where the player controls an android. After an interface showing the player basic movement controls, a

voice of unknown origin enters the game and gives information and instructions to the player as the Narrator. This artificial intelligence named GLaDOS is the narrator of the game. GLaDOS tells the player that the Avatar is in the computer-aided development centre of a company called Aperture Science. While making safety warnings, it experiences a malfunction and switches from English to Spanish. GLaDOS then corrects his speech by switching back to English. GLaDOS opens the doors of the Avatar's cell and talks to the player as he learns basic mechanics. After solving the puzzles in the levels, the player must enter "the chamberlock", an elevator-like structure. After the introduction, GLaDOS gives the Avatar the portal device and encourages the player to open portals. While explaining the rules of use of the device, it again shows a malfunction and emits a scratchy sound... As the player progresses, GLaDOS's expressions in different modes are revealed. In the third chapter, he calls out to the player: "Congratulations! Remember: The Aperture Science Bring Your Daughter to Work Day is the perfect time to test her."

When the player passes the fourth test, GLaDOS says: "As part of a necessary testing protocol, we will not monitor the next test chamber. You will be entirely on your own. Good luck." After the player has progressed some time in the fifth test, GLaDOS calls out again and admits that the previous statement was "made up". This confession is the first obvious example in the game and is important for the player's evaluation of GLaDOS as unreliable for the rest of the game. The player has to move unguided on the way to his final destination.

In the ninth chapter, GLaDOS tells the player not to make any attempt to solve the next test because it is impossible. While the player is solving the puzzle, GLaDOS frequently tries to make the player give up, repeating that the test is broken and without a solution. At this point, GLaDOS mentions the "cake", a motif that will be repeated frequently later, and says that if the player surrenders immediately, the cake will be served immediately. When the player finishes the test, GLaDOS congratulates the Avatar for being determined and resourceful in an extremely pessimistic atmosphere. As the player continues, they keep encountering these contradictory statements. GLaDOS tries to gain the player's trust by stating that no more lies will be told.

It is stated by GLaDoS that this test has been applied to other subjects. Then, although the player is controlling an android, GLaDOS states that the Avatar can donate its vital organs to a corporate fund.

When the player completes the nineteenth test, they see that the rail car they are on is travelling towards a blazing furnace. GLaDOS indicates that the test is over and the oven is at a temperature of 4000 Kelvin. The player must continue and start running away. When the player does not listen to GLaDOS and runs away, GLaDOS first gives a malfunction and then says: "We are pleased that you made it through the final challenge where we pretended we were going to murder you." GLaDOS shows that he did not expect the Avatar's behaviour, but very quickly readjusts his expressions to the Avatar's. To dissuade the Avatar, GLaDOS begins by praising the achievement and promising a party and "cake" in the Avatar's honour. As the player progresses, it can be observed that GLaDOS uses more manipulative discourse, threats and accusations of psychological violence.

The player finds GLaDOS itself in the final episode. After throwing the pieces of the Morality Core that fall from GLaDOS into the furnace, GLaDOS explodes. The screen turns white. When the image comes back, we see the fire after the daytime explosion on the street in the open air. The Avatar is also on the ground. At this point, another robotic voice enters: "Thank you for assuming the party escort submission position." The Avatar begins to drift backwards on the ground. The image fades to black, and when it comes back on, it travels quickly through a multi-layered structure to a cake with a candle burning on it. There are many parts of the exploded plant around and they begin to work. The game ends when a robotic arm from above extinguishes the cake's candle.

Endgame.

4.6.3 Analysis.

4.6.3.1 Narrator. The narrator of Portal is an android named GLaDOS. The narrator will often try to dissuade the player and promise him a cake throughout the game. He is a homodiegetic character who is present in the game, whom we see in the finale and who communicates with us by voice. It is a narrator with limited knowledge.

The most important aspect of the character is to try to persuade the player to give up by threats and manipulations. It deliberately tries to mislead the player.

4.6.3.2 Unreliable narrator. In Portal, the unreliable narrator tries to mislead the player and make him give up by giving him false information. From time to time the narrator adopts a hostile attitude towards the player. The player has to progress without a final goal until the end of the game.

The narrator's open admission of inconsistency and misinformation in his own discourse is more than enough to recognise him as an unreliable narrator. It is possible to understand this from his confession of surveillance in the fifth chapter.

4.6.3.3 Disclosure of the unreliable narrator. At the very beginning of the game, GLaDOS's change of language while speaking and the technical malfunctions that occur during the countdown are the first clues that the narrator may be inconsistent. Even in his autonomous functioning, the narrator experiences some unusualities.

GLaDOS: "Remember: The Aperture Science Bring Your Daughter to Work Day is the perfect time to have her tested" is sarcastic and ironic. This statement undermines the narrator's credibility as a statement that does not match the identity of the Avatar, an android.

4.6.3.4 The effect of the unreliable narrator on the multiple endings of the game. There is only one ending, and the player is not given a choice. When GLaDOS explodes, a cutscene begins and then the game ends.

4.6.3.5 Effect of unreliable narrator on interactivity. There is no interactivity in the game. The player has minimal interaction with the environment.

Chapter 5

Findings

In this chapter, research findings will be listed, and a comparison will be made between them. The findings on UN features, the relationship between UN and multiple narrators and secondary narrators, the demonstration of UN, the use of UN and interface, the relationship between UN and communication tools in games, the use of UN and audio-visual elements together, the design of mechanics according to UN, the effect of UN on interactivity, the relationship between UN and gameplay, and the metafiction dimension of games with UN will be presented.

5.1 Features of Unreliable Narrators

In all the games analyzed, it was revealed that the unreliability of the narrator was deliberate.

Call of Juarez: Gunslinger has a first-person narration; Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice and ICEY have both third-person and second-person narration; Portal has a second-person narration; and the other games have third-person narration. Narrators with mixed points of view sometimes address the player as "You" and at the same time narrate the actions of the character in the game from the third-person point of view. This shows that it is not possible to generalize directly to a specific narrator type in games where unreliable narrators are used.

In Braid, Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice (The Narrator) and ICEY, the narrators speak from outside the game space (heterodiegetic); In Bastion, Call of Juarez: Gunslinger, and Portal, the narrator is a character in the game (homodiegetic). As a result, the Unreliable narrator in video games can be both a character within the game and a figure speaking from outside the game.

In four games, the narrator is omniscient, whereas in ICEY and Portal, the narrator's knowledge is limited and directly related to the character's progression through the game. However, in most of these games, omniscient narrators are inconsistent, claiming that they do not know, have forgotten, or conceal some information. Consequently, unreliable narrators occupy a position relative to the game

narrative, and although they may appear to be a dominant element in the story, their knowledge may be limited.

The content of the narrator's discourse in the games, which imply unreliability from the very beginning, clearly contains irony, sarcasm, contradiction, and inconsistency. In these games, the figure of the unreliable narrator creates a clear and distinct motif. However, players who do not concentrate during the game and are under the influence of external factors such as music or streaming may not understand these motifs in the narrators. At this point, the fact that the games represent unreliability in a holistic way and reflect it in the mechanics and graphics of the game can increase the communication success of the production in this regard. The analyzed games convey unreliability with mechanics, graphics, interface, control, and sound design.

In *Braid*, the narrator conveys the story in written form with a slightly more literary language. In the other games, the narrator tells the story by speaking, i.e. by voice. In *ICEY*, although we see written parts of the story and messages on the terminal screen, it is not clear whether they belong to the narrator or not. The general tendency seems to be for the narrator to communicate verbally with the player.

Table 1

Narrator's Point of View in the Analyzed Games

	Bastion	Braid	CJG	HSS	ICEY	Portal
Narrator Point of View	3rd Person	3rd Person	1st Person	Mixed	Mixed	2nd Person

According to the findings, there are different narrator perspectives in the analyzed games. In *HSS* and *ICEY*, unlike the others, the narrator both narrates the events from the third-person perspective and addresses the player as "You". Similarly, the narrator in *Portal* addresses the player directly and uses second-person narration.

This tendency indicates that video games utilize second-person narration, a type of narrator point of view not often used in other media.

5.2 Multiple Narrators & Secondary Narrators

Four of the reviewed games have a single narrator, while *Call of Juarez: Gunslinger* and *Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice* have a main narrator and sub-narrators. Moreover, these sub-narrators are also unreliable. In *Call of Juarez Gunslinger*, this brings even more alternate realities to the narrative, confirming Booth's theory (1961) that multiple unreliable narrators complicate and obscure the narrative. Players can only learn which version of the stories told in the game is true from the Nuggets of Truth collectibles. In *Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice*, all narrators become part of a shared reality. They appear as the reflection of the psychotic character's suspicious perception of reality. Therefore, it can be said that the unreliable narrator in video games is a tool used together with sub-narrators. It is seen that this contributes to unreliability and uncertainty, creates a more contradictory discourse, and dynamises the discourse dimension. However, there is no direct relationship between unreliable narrator and multiple narrators or secondary narrators.

5.3 Demonstration of Unreliability

In three of the games, it is shown or implied at the beginning of the game that the main narrator is unreliable. The player can intuitively follow the unreliability or recognize it from items such as Nuggets of Truth. However, in the other three games, the judgment that the narrator is unreliable is only revealed at the end of the game, when the story is completed. In these games, the player will not have any real information about the narrative until they finish the game. In the case of HSS, even if the player finishes the game, if they have performed optimally, they may not realize that there is an unreliable narrator in the game because the avatar did not die enough while under their control. This leads us to the idea of the importance of the messages games use to communicate their rules. Such an experience would be incomplete from the point of view of the game, and the player would finish the experience incomplete, not realizing one of the most important features of the game.

5.4 Unreliable Narrator and Interface Usage

Effective use of the interface includes systems and limitations such as providing information in item menus and manipulating player control. In terms of player-

computer interaction, such a system is compatible with the narrator in the game in the case of unreliability.

We see that the information that the player can learn about the realities of the game world can be given through the interface. In *Call of Juarez: Gunslinger*, the player can learn whether the narrator's statements are true from the Nuggets of Truth they collect. This provides a data set for the player against the unreliable narrator and is quite unique feature in this respect. CJG is a game in which the necessary environment is prepared for a position where the player can criticize the narrative and make a judgment about it. In this regard, it can be said that the game shows metafictional features.

5.5 Knowledge Transfer in-game: UN and Communication Mechanisms

Like the collectible cards in CJG, *Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice*, information about the game world is provided through lorestones, but this is not directly related to the narration of the unreliable narrator. It seems that when considering games with a strong narrative aspect, game and narrative designers need to use these communication spaces and channels integrated into gameplay in order to present a long and comprehensive story to the player. However, these means of communication do not always support the unreliable narrator.

5.6 Visual, Auditory and Mechanical Reflections of the Unreliable Narrator

Games can utilize audio-visual design to support the theme of the unreliable narrator. The CJG designers do this through their choice of a comic book aesthetic and by rewinding and retelling the narrated events, a recurring pattern in the game. It becomes a parody of the exaggerated myths about the Wild West. The designers take the connotations of the theme and use them in another medium: video games.

HSS aims to do this with sound design and cutscenes. Often, the images of dead characters appear ghostly; horrifying images superimpose on the game's imagery. On the other hand, cutscenes often go back in time. Some of the places of the past are in abstract dimensions. The transitions between the past and the present complicate and obscure the narrative. *Braid*, unlike others, reflects this in its mechanics. Since the mechanics of rewinding and fast-forwarding time directly emphasise the mutability of

the nature of reality, it seems to be a thematically compatible design for the unreliable narrator.

In ICEY, the player's control is manipulated in the start menu of the game. When the player gives a command to start the game, the input is not finalized. The game starts after repeated commands. In addition, the narrator in the game transforms the game into other games with more restricted mechanics when the player does not follow his instructions in some parts.

In summary, the unreliable narrator can be supported by visual and auditory elements and mechanics.

5.7 Unreliable Narrator and Interactivity

The interactivity between the unreliable narrator and the player in ICEY creates a dynamic narrative. The player choices in ICEY are important, the premise of the narrative is contextualized through this interactivity, and the final ending of the game requires the player to make an interpretation that the game is not over, which is related to the interactive aspect of the game. In Bastion, the narrator reacts interactively to the player's actions, and this creates a dynamic narrative. However, interactivity in Bastion does not change the course of events.

It can be seen that the unreliable narrator is used in interactive games and can affect interactivity in games.

5.8 Unreliable Narrator and Gameplay

Silas is able to change the gameplay while telling his story in CJG. Situations such as changing seasons and rain reveal the unreliable narrator's relationship with the gameplay. The game offers an experience that supports the unreliable narrator's discourse.

Unreliable narrators can tell the player that if their character dies, they may lose the progress they have made. This may cause the player to play the game more carefully and differently. If the player has not researched the game beforehand, they

may mistake the game for a roguelike and not realize they have been tricked until the game is over. This can limit or change the experience.

Unreliable narrators can affect gameplay and change the way games are played.

5.9 Unreliable Narrator and Metafiction

In games such as CJG and ICEY, the player can start to think critically about the narrative by realizing that they are in a gaming experience. This is especially evident in games such as ICEY, where the narrator communicates directly with the player and their actions have different consequences on an interactive level.

Unreliable narrators can take part in metafiction games or they can function to transform the narrative into metafiction.

Chapter 6

Discussion and Conclusions

This study aimed to understand how unreliable narrators are used in video games. I based the research question and sub-questions on Phelan and Rabinowitz's (2012) concept of the unreliable narrator. The six video games selected for the research were analyzed using the close reading technique, and the findings were compared with each other. In this section, I will summarise the results obtained and then, in the discussion section, I will propose new ideas and problematics based on the information I have gathered.

6.1 Conclusions

The concept of unreliable narrator is encountered in all six games analyzed. This research has shown that UN is used in video games as a narrative technique, just as it is used in literature and cinema.

The research confirms that the unreliable narrator is used in many different game genres. According to the analysis, it is observed that video games can have complex narratives no matter how different their genres and mechanics are.

In the analysis of different types of games, it was observed that the UN does not have a single representation in the games and shows different characteristics in each game, so a common pattern could not be reached.

It was observed that there were different narrator's points of view in the analyzed games. It was revealed that there was not a single type of narrator in the games with the UN. Unlike other mediums, the unreliable narrator uses also second-person narration in video games.

It was found that the UN can affect interactivity in video games and that interactivity can be designed in a way that is compatible with the theme of an unreliable narrator.

The UN plays an important role in multi-ending games by influencing the player's decisions.

It has been observed that there are changes in the games during gameplay while the UN conveys the narrative. In particular, it was observed that the games functioned visually, audibly, and mechanically in accordance with the UN. It was concluded that there is an important relationship between the UN and gameplay.

It was concluded that the UN communicates in written, audio, or both audio and written form in games of different genres.

The UN fulfills a complex function in narratives by revealing unreliability at the beginning or at the end. Therefore, UN is a very important part of the narrative of the game and directly affects the player's experience.

In the analyzed games, parody motifs and intertextuality were observed and it was found that these were in harmony with the UN. Metafiction, parody, and intertextuality are important elements of contemporary narratives. As a result, it has been confirmed that video games have structures that offer contemporary narratives.

The hypothesis that the use of unreliable narrators in video games affects the narrative structure, interactivity, game endings, and storytelling in the game was proven.

Analyzing contemporary narratives in the field of game studies in more comprehensive and detailed ways will help us better understand the power of the media and the structures of the productions and will lead to the design of more qualified and innovative products in the future.

6.2 Discussion

While in other artistic works today, audiences or readers have a priori expectations of the unreliability of narrators (Zerweck, 2019), the tendency in video games is to make the UN part of the narrative.

Table 2

Steam Review Count and Average Review of Examined Games

	Bastion	Braid	CJG	HSS	ICEY	Portal
Steam Review Count*	26,487	6,214	15,009	49,174	22,316	116,317
Steam Average Review*	Overwhelmingly Positive	Very Positive	Overwhelmingly Positive	Very Positive	Very Positive	Overwhelmingly Positive

*Access time: 9 August 2023, 22:36:00

The analyzed games show that the UN narrative figure has been used in games and reached a wide audience, especially since the 2010s. Especially when we take into account the Steam rating criteria, it can be considered that UN may have been a factor in the players' liking of the games. It should be investigated whether this tendency will cause players to be more distant and skeptical towards the narrators and implied designers of the game in the following years. It should be observed whether this narrative approach in different game genres will become the norm in the game world.

In the analyzed games, unreliable narrators made verbal or written statements. Further studies should be conducted on whether a narrator model can be mentioned by using visuals without verbal or written communication. The multidimensional structure of games may include different types of narrators and unreliable narrators.

Considering that video games appeal to a wider audience and convey their stories in a very simple way, Nuggets of Truth-like items in CJG may allow players to unravel the existence of the UN more easily. This would allow for easier information transfer and, therefore, more player focus on the game. Players would be less likely to miss the narrative or clues to the narrative.

Game designers who design such games should consider and balance narrative ambiguity. They might consider that the unreliable narrator's discourse can be supported by auditory, visual and mechanical features, which can create a stronger effect. This method can also be used to make the player like and empathise with the main character. Creating a character like Senua also involves a special co-operation between the player and the character. Although often used as a plot twist in popular culture, the unreliable narrator can actually be a great tool for questioning text, reality and presence in different contexts. For innovative approaches, it is necessary to analyse the narrators in existing games and enrich them by attributing new features to narrators in new games.

6.3 Limitations & Recommendations for Future Research

This study is limited to video games with less than ten hours of single-player gameplay and available on the steam platform. It is possible to meet a different type of unreliable narrator in games that are not included in the scope of this thesis. The production of different narratives and narrator types may require new studies in this field. In future studies, unreliable narrators can be used in longer and more intricate narrative structures, and the effects of this on the narrative can be analyzed. Again, the effect of unreliable narrators on the player experience should be investigated in studies in this field. While such games break the fourth wall and interrupt immersion, they create a new dimension and take the player into a different magic circle. This may indicate the need for a newer definition in video games when it comes to alienation, suspension of disbelief or the breaking of the fourth wall. Further work could also be done to recognise that players in multiplayer games can also modify the existing narrative and influence narrative unreliability.

In addition, there is a need for a more precise definition of the narrator in both narratology and game studies. When we talk about the existence of narrators in some

video games, I think that we attribute to them a feature that they do not actually possess.

I suggest that these micro-narrators, which we can code as sub-narrators, should actually be considered on a larger scale, and their relationship with "the game narrator" (Roe & Mitchell, 2019) or "The Implied Designer" (Van de Mosselaer & Gualeni, 2020) should be examined. I have a suggestion that we need an abstract concept in which the designers of the game are pointed out, and that this may prevent us from having to call characters who make simple declarations in games narrators.

Especially in First-Person games, it is often unclear whether or not the people who enter into dialogue with the avatar are narrators. Or, to give a more extreme example, what exactly should we call a figure that says, "Thank you, Mario! But our Princess is in another castle!"? Does this figure deserve to be called a sub-narrator as an informative NPC, or can we include it in another classification?

Just like in literature and cinema, the debate on narrators and unreliable narrators in games deserves to be discussed for a longer period of time. New definitions and categorizations in this field may also offer a new perspective on the position of game designers.

REFERENCES

- Aarseth, E. (2012). A narrative theory of games. *Proceedings of the International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games - FDG '12*, 129. <https://doi.org/10.1145/2282338.2282365>
- Aarseth, E. (2003, May). Playing Research: Methodological approaches to game analysis. In *Proceedings of the digital arts and culture conference* (pp. 28-29). Australia: Melbourne.
- Adams, E. (1999). *Three problems for interactive storytellers*. Designer's Notebook Column, Gamasutra, 144, Retrieved from http://www.designersnotebook.com/Columns/026_Three_Problems/026_three_problems.htm at 2023, March 1
- Arjoranta, J. (2017). Narrative Tools for Games: Focalization, Granularity, and the Mode of Narration in Games. *Games and Culture*, 12(7–8), 696–717. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1555412015596271>
- Bateman, C. (Ed.). (2021). *Game writing: Narrative skills for videogames*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- Bal, M. (1997). *Narratology: introduction to the theory of narrative*. Toronto, Buffalo.
- Barthes, R. (1975). An introduction to the structural analysis of narrative. *New literary history*, 6(2), 237-272.
- Baudrillard, J. (1994). *Simulacra and simulation*. University of Michigan press.
- Beardsley, M. C. (1958). *Aesthetics, Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*. Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.
- Beyvers, S. E. (2020). » Do you see it now? Do you see it like I do?«: Unreliability and the Unstable Narrating Mind in DEAR ESTHER (2012) and LAYERS OF FEAR (2016). . In: Arno Görden, Stefan Heinrich Simond (Eds.), *Krankheit in Digitalen Spielen. Interdisziplinäre*

Betrachtungen. (pp. 163– 187).

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25969/mediarep/14979>.

Beyvers, S. E. (2020). The game of narrative authority: Subversive wandering and unreliable narration in The Stanley Parable. *Journal of Gaming & Virtual Worlds*, 12(1), 7-21.

Bizzocchi, J., & Tanenbaum, J. (2011). Well read: Applying close reading techniques to gameplay experiences. *Well played 3.0: Video games, value and meaning*, 3, 289-316.

Booth, W. C. (1961). *The rhetoric of fiction* (2nd ed). University of Chicago Press.

Brooks, C. (1951). Irony as a Principle of Structure. *Literary Opinion in America*, 2, 729-741.

Calleja, G. (2011). *In-game: From immersion to incorporation*. MIT Press.

Carr, D. (2009, September). Textual analysis, digital games, zombies. In *DiGRA Conference*.

Chatman, S. B. (1978). *Story and discourse: Narrative structure in fiction and film*. Cornell University Press.

Consalvo, M., & Dutton, N. (2006). *Game analysis: Developing a methodological toolkit for the qualitative study of games*. *Game studies*, 6(1), 1-17. Retrieved from https://gamestudies.org/0601/articles/consalvo_Dutton

Dervişcemaloğlu, B. (2022). *Çözülemeyen Bulmaca: Anlatıcı Üzerine Tartışmalar*. [The Unsolvble Puzzle: Debates on the Narrator]. İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları.

Dubbelman, T. (2016). Narrative Game Mechanics. In F. Nack & A. S. Gordon (Eds.), *Interactive Storytelling* (Vol. 10045), (pp. 39–50). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-48279-8_4

- Dubbelman, T. (2017). Repetition, Reward and Mastery: The Value of Game Design Patterns for the Analysis of Narrative Game Mechanics. In N. Nunes, I. Oakley, & V. Nisi (Eds.), *Interactive Storytelling* (Vol. 10690, pp. 286–289). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-71027-3_27
- Ensslin, A. (2015). *Video Games as Unnatural Narratives*. <https://doi.org/10.25969/MEDIAREP/550>
- Fernández-Vara, C. (2019). *Introduction to game analysis*. Routledge.
- Fest, B. J. (2016). METAPROCEDURALISM: THE STANLEY PARABLE AND THE LEGACIES OF POSTMODERN METAFICTION. *Wide Screen*, 6(1).
- Frasca, G. (2003). Simulation versus narrative: Introduction to ludology. In *The Video Game Theory Reader* (pp. 221-235). Routledge.
- Fruzińska, J. (2018). The Pitfalls of Narration: Call of Juarez: Gunslinger. In *On the Fringes of Literature and Digital Media Culture* (pp. 147-156). Brill.
- Gaudreault, A., & Jost, F. (1999). *Enunciation and narration. A companion to film theory*, 45-63.
- Gualeni, S., & Van de Mosselaer, N. (2021). Ludic Unreliability and Deceptive Game Design. *Journal of the Philosophy of Games*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.5617/jpg.8722>
- Hansen, P. (2007). Reconsidering the unreliable narrator. *Semiotica Journal of the International Association for Semiotic Studies*. Vol 2007 (165), (p. 227-246). <https://doi.org/10.1515/SEM.2007.041>
- Jahn, M. (2021). Narratology 2.3: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative. English Department, University of Cologne. Retrieved from www.uni-koeln.de/~ame02/pppn.pdf at 2023, March 1

- Jenkins, H. (2004). Game design as narrative architecture. *Computer*, 44(3), 118-130.
- Konzack, L. (2002, June). Computer game criticism: A method for computer game analysis. In *CGDC Conf.*
- Kubiński, P. (2017). Play It Again, Stanley: Mise en Abyme and Playing with Convention and Narrative in The Stanley Parable. *Tekstualia*, 1(3), 45–59. <https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0013.5929>
- Laar, B., Plass-Oude Bos, D., Reuderink, B., Poel, M., & Nijholt, A. (2013). How Much Control Is Enough? Influence of Unreliable Input on User Experience. *IEEE Transactions on Cybernetics*, 43, 1584–1592.
- Lanser, S. S. (1995). Sexing the Narrative: Propriety, Desire, and the Engendering of Narratology. *Narrative*, 3(1), 85-94.
- Majewski, J. (2003). *Theorizing video game narrative*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Centre for Film, Television and Interactive Media, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Bond University, Queensland, Australia.
- Margolin, U. (2009). Narrator. In P. Hühn, J. Pier, W. Schmid & J. Schöner (Ed.), *Handbook of Narratology* (pp. 351-369). Berlin, New York: De Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110217445.351>
- Nünning, V. (2015). Conceptualising (Un)reliable Narration and (Un)trustworthiness. In V. Nünning (Ed.), *Unreliable Narration and Trustworthiness: Intermedial and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (pp. 1-28). Berlin, München, Boston: De Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110408263.1>
- Olson, G. (2003). Reconsidering unreliability: Fallible and untrustworthy narrators. *Narrative*, 11(1), 93-109.
- Pearce, C. (2004). Towards a Game Theory of Game. In *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game*, ed. N. Wardrip-Fruin and P. Harrigan. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Phelan, J. (2005). *Living to Tell About it: A Rhetoric and Ethics of Character Narration*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Phelan, J., & Rabinowitz, P. J. (2012). Authors, narrators, narration. *Narrative theory: Core concepts and critical debates*, 29-38.
- Rimmon-Kenan, S. (2003). *Narrative fiction: Contemporary poetics*. Routledge.
- Roe, C., & Mitchell, A. (2019). "Is This Really Happening?": Game Mechanics as Unreliable Narrator. In *DiGRA Conference*.
- Ryan, M. L. (1991). *Possible worlds, artificial intelligence, and narrative theory*. Indiana University Press.
- Salen, Katie, and Eric Zimmerman. 2003. *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Schmid, W. (2009). Implied author. In Hühn, P., Pier, J., Schmid, W., & Schönert, J. (Eds.). (2009). *Handbook of Narratology* (Vol. 19) (p. 288-300). Walter de Gruyter.
- Schmierbach, M. (2009). Content analysis of video games: Challenges and potential solutions. *Communication Methods and Measures*, 3(3), 147-172.
- Sweetser, P. & Johnson, D. 2004. Player-centred game environments: Assessing player opinions, experiences and issues. In *Entertainment Computing - ICEC 2004: Third International Conference*. LNCS 3166, Springer Verlag, New York, 321-332.
- Tavinor, G. (2005). Videogames and Interactive Fiction. *Philosophy and Literature*, 29(1), 24-40. <https://doi.org/10.1353/phl.2005.0015>
- Van de Mosselaer, N., & Gualeni, S. (2020, August). The implied designer and the experience of gameworlds. In *DiGRA*.
- Zerweck, B. (2019). The 'Death' of the Unreliable Narrator: Toward a Functional History of Narrative Unreliability. In A. Erll & R. Sommer

(Eds.), *Narrative in Culture* (pp. 215–240). De Gruyter.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110654370-013>

Zimmerman, E. (2004). Narrative, interactivity, play, and games: Four naughty concepts in need of discipline. In *First person: New media as story, performance, and game* (Vol. 154). MIT Press.
http://www.anabiosispress.org/VM606/1stPerson_ezimmerman.pdf

