PastMaster@storytelling: A Controlled Interface for Interactive Drama

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Abstract
In this paper, we describe a controlled interface for Interactive Drama, PastMaster@Storytelling. PastMaster is used for interacting with an Interactive Drama engine. The paper discusses the test results regarding the usability of the interface.

Reference

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Definition: Interactive Drama is an experience, where the audience acts as a character by making decisions on each character's actions in a story.

GUIs for Interactive Drama

- Free interfaces: text-based, speech-based
- Controlled interfaces: list, sentence-based, object-based, history-based

- Façade: Mateas & Stern, 2004
- Beyond Good and Evil: Ubisoft
- Sentient: Psygnosis
- The Sims: Maxis

NEW: PastMaster

PastMaster

History (the past) - Addressee selection
Stage (the present)
Selected element
Potential actions (the future)

An adaptive Interface

First level – The list of events in the history is always growing. This offers more and more selectable texts to the user.

Second level – Following a given piece of text selected by the user, the list of proposed actions depends on the context.

Evaluation

Protocol: 4 subjects interacting 10 minutes with the story, followed by a questionnaire.

😊 The principle is understood and accepted
🚫 Difficult to access elements into the history
😢 Users do not think beforehand of the action to play

Future work

Improve the interface
- Structure the history
- Search the history

Other applications
- Information search
- Personal e-mail management