

Research Paper

Each of the five titles background researched for similarities in other games.

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Date: March 15, 2009

Eco Research

Eco uses a camera system that shows the environment when speaking in the headset or microphone and when quiet it shows a black screen. The mansion that the game takes place in is random generated which means that for every play thru the room set up changes, sometime you might start in the basement and the other on the second floor.

Games that uses voice as a control method differs a lot in genre but here is a list of a couple of them:

Name	Format	Developer /Publisher	Release year	How does it use Voice in the game
Lifeline	PS2	Konami SCEI	2004	Give commands to a girl on what she should do.
End War	X360, PS3 & PC	Ubisoft	2008	Command troops with voice recognition, tell them to attack, defend or focus the camera on a certain unit.
Seaman	DC	Vivarium Inc. / Sega	2000	Talk to the fish that is Seaman, have conversations with him.
Odama	GC	Vivarium Inc. / Nintendo	2006	Give orders to your units while you are playing pinball on the battlefield
N.U.D.E.	Xbox	RED Entertainment	200x	Teach a female robot what there is to know about life.
Singstar /w other music games	PS2 /w many more		2004-forth	Lets you sing your favorite song and you get graded depending on how well you sang
Afrec!	Arcade	Namco	2008	Let's people voice acting to their favorite anime or manga.

In many games you use the voice to give orders to units in games or talk to AI's. No game uses it to control the vision. In the games that uses a headset to talk or give orders you have to push a button to make the game focus on your voice which isn't the way it will work in Eco.

Eco takes place outside Valencia in Spain and I have checked up what games are doing the same. The outcome was that many racing games had tracks in Spain, a couple of real time strategy games have part of their campaigns there and several fighting games had a Spanish fighter with his or her "arena" there. I could only find one game that takes place in Spain entirely and that is Resident Evil 4 from Capcom.

I could only find one game that took the blindness to another level, many games might have a blind character but this game actually lets you play in total darkness; In the Pit is the game and it is developed by Studio Huntly for the Xbox Live Arcade Community Games service. It puts you in a lightless pit where you have to listen after steps or breathing to hunt down animals with a normal first person shooter setup.

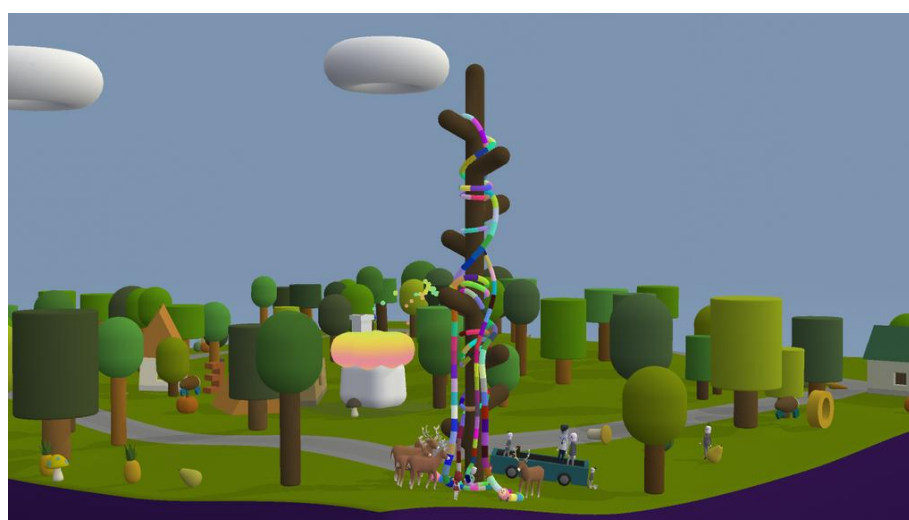
Some games use random generated maps which Eco will use as well. Some of those games are;

Name	Format	Developer	Release year	Where does it use random generation?
Dark Cloud	PS2	Level 5	2003	In the dungeons that the player explores
Noby Noby Boy	PS3 @PSN	Namco Bandai	2009	Every time the game start a new map is created
Hellgate London	PC	Flagship Studio	2007	The zones where you are adventuring
Diablo 2	PC & Mac	Blizzard North	2000	In the environments and where the enemies are placed

They uses random generation in the same way as Eco, Eco will generate a mansion with surroundings for each new game which is the case in most games with random generation.



¹A picture of Tom Clancy's End War's interface which is used when giving orders to your units.



²A picture from Noby Noby Boy and one of its random generated worlds

¹ <http://files.xboxic.com/xbox-360/endwar/endwar-beta-02.jpg> February 26, 2009; Time: 09.25

² <http://s265.photobucket.com/albums/ii219/dommoschitti/?action=view¤t=nbb.jpg> February 26, 2009, Time: 09.37

River Research

River is a game where you control a small river that starts up in the mountains as melted snow and as you make your way down the mountain the environment changes from a winter environment to a spring environment. The game play is relaxing and it shouldn't be stressed thru.

Relaxing titles are a complicated area to research but I found a list over at Gamedaily³ where they had listed titles that they thought were relaxing, I didn't agree on all of them but picked out a couple that I think have a relaxing game play.

Name	Format	Developer	Release year	What makes it relaxing?
Flow	Flash,PS3,PSP	Thatgamecompany	2006	The no goal game play and that it can be played without feeling stressed by finishing it
Flower	PS3	Thatgamecompany	2009	The soothing game play where you can fly around in the levels just listening to the tones that plays when activating a flower
Nintendogs	NDS	Nintendo	2005	Take care of your dog, take it for walks or just watch it play
Wii Fit Yoga	Wii	Nintendo	2008	Yoga is said to be relaxing so I guess the game equivalence is the same as well
Animal Crossing	N64, GC, DS, Wii	Nintendo	1 st : 2002	Run around in your own little city doing what you want. No goals or enemies to defeat.
Endless Ocean	Wii	Arika Co., Ltd	2008	Dive and explore the life under the sea.

Most games don't have any real goals which make them relaxing, other games do like Flower but still have a relaxing game play which is built up thru graphic, sound and control. River will have the later of those two, there will be goals in the game but the game should still be relaxing thru graphic, sound and control.

I have checked up some games that take place in snowy landscape which is where River begins but it then continues down the mountain and in the end there is a spring environment that the river flows thru. Snow landscapes are quite common; they appear in many games as an area where a part of the story takes place like in Dreamfall: The Longest Journey⁴ or Final Fantasy 7⁵. Then there are games which only takes place in snowy landscapes like Lost Planet and every snowboard and ski game out there.

Water has a central role in River since that is what you control in the game. I have checked up where water plays a central role in games or certain levels and my findings are as following:

³ <http://www.gamedaily.com/articles/galleries/most-relaxing-games-in-the-world/>

⁴ Developer: Funcom; release year: 2006; Format: Xbox and PC

⁵ Developer: Squaresoft; release year: 1997; format: PC, PS1

Name	Format	Developer	Release year	What part does the water have in the game
Bioshock	X360, PS3, PC	Digital Extremes, 2K games	2007	The game takes place in a city under water. It is water all around the city.
Endless Ocean	Wii	Arika Co. Ltd.	2008	You explore the water as a scuba diver
Undertow	XBLA	Chair Entertainment	2007	The water gives you freedom to move up and down in the battlefield
Super Mario Sunshine	GC	Nintendo	2002	Your character has a hydro pump on his back which he can use to clean areas with or to fly with.

Then nearly every platform game have at least one level that takes place under water but the list would get to long to list them all but in no game you are in control of the water itself which is the case of River.



(Over⁶) A picture from Flower. (Left⁷) A picture from Super Mario Sunshine where Mario uses the hydro pump to clean the area from the brown goo.

⁶ <http://www.joystiq.com/photos/flower-1/1343037/> February 26,2009; Time:26.25

⁷ http://blognintendo.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/hover_nozzle.jpg

Triangel Evolution Research

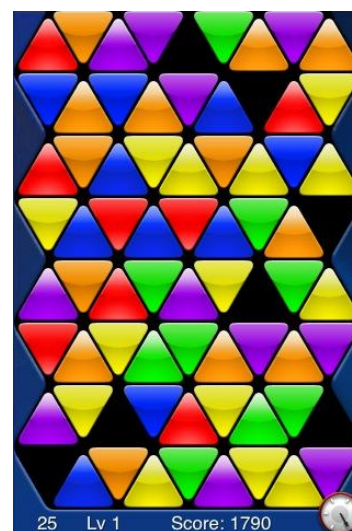
Triangle Evolution is a puzzle game where you should match different figures in the same color across the playfield to make them disappear. It has a lot of similarities to Tetris and similar games so I researched what similar games have for clearing criteria.

Name	Format	Developer	Release year	Criteria for clearing?
Columns	Different systems	Sega	1990	Match 3 or more in the same color to clear, can be in different forms and diagonally
Dr. Mario	1 st : GB	Nintendo	1990	Stack 4 capsules together in the same color to clear them out
Lumines	1 st : PSP	Q Entertainment	2004	Match up 4 blocks of the same color to make them be ready to be cleared when the beat wave comes by
Piyotama	PSN	SCE Japan	2007	Line up four or more eggs either horizontally or diagonally to clear them out, the eggs must be in the same color
Puyo Puyo	1 st : Arcade & MSX2	Compile	1991	Four Puyos besides each other in the same color in any way to clear them out
Tetris	1 st : home computers	Alexej Pajitnov	1985	Create lines over the playfield to clear them out, color doesn't matter
Trism	Iphone	Demiforce LLC	2007	Match 3 or more of the same color to clear them out.
Wetrix	N64, DC, PC	Zed Two	1998	Change the landscape so the water doesn't spill out

Of course this isn't all the puzzle games with similar game play but a fair bit of them and the list would have been too long to list them all. What is important thou is that most games clears the blocks, figures or eggs when they reach either three or four parts and most of them requires to be in the same color. Triangle Evolution doesn't have a set number of pieces that must be linked together to clear them out but instead they should reach from one side to the other on the playfield and be in the same color.

Triangle Evolution will have different backgrounds and themes while playing and there are other games with this feature in it. One example is Lumines which changes theme and graphical layout after a certain amount of time or cleared blocks and it comes with a huge amount of them too. The unlocked themes can then be used in other play mod

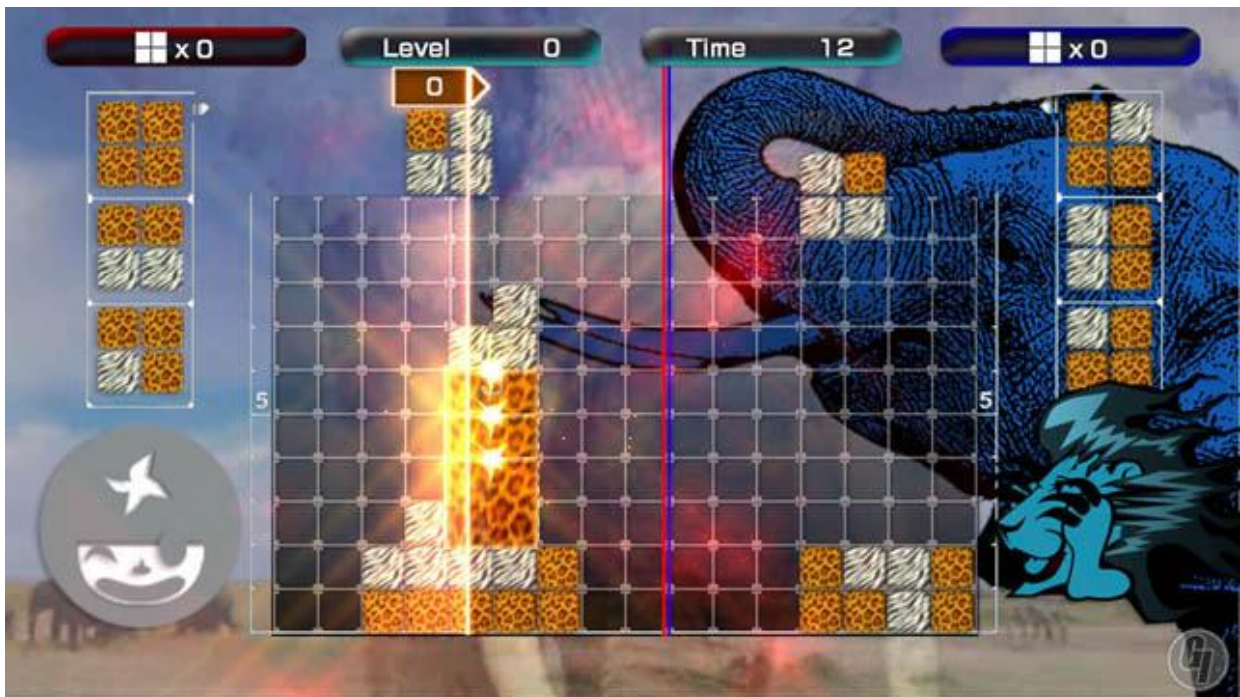
To the right⁸ is a picture of Trism for the Iphone



⁸ <http://venturebeat.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/trism5.jpg> Date: February 27, 2009; Time: 13.37



⁹A picture from Piyotama where the different eggs are circled in white that can be cleared.



¹⁰A picture from Lumines where the bright glowing line is the bat that clears the grid from blocks.

⁹ <http://kotaku.com/gaming/tastes-like-chicken/piyotama-brings-more-bird-gaming-to-psn-267383.php> Date: February 27, 2009; Time: 13.31

¹⁰ <http://www.gameinformer.com/NR/rdonlyres/B0B12484-0E1F-4829-B4C5-690B5760502B/9386/LuminesLive1.jpg> Date: February 27, 2009; Time: 13.41

Space Station Breakout Research

Space station breakout is an adventure puzzle game where you have to make your way thru the FFOS space station. You have to jump between different parts of the corridors since the station have been hit by a meteor rain. The space station has lost all gravitation and when you jump you will only stop when hitting something else. I have checked up some games with a different take on gravitation and there are a couple of games that does it. Nintendo's latest Mario adventure Super Mario Galaxy¹¹ did change the platform genre when you could run around every piece of land. It was build up around pieces of land floating around and where you had to jump between by different means. If you jump of the edge of one you would simply land on the other side of it.

Dead Space¹² is another game that has used the gravitation in another way then the usual. Dead Space is a horror game that takes place on the space station USG Ishimura that have been devastated, but the gravitation part of the game takes place when you reach a room where there are no gravitation and you have to use your gravitation boots to land on the walls.

Cosmic Walker¹³ is an unreleased game but as far as I know lets you explore a space station that might lack gravitation in the same way as Space Station Breakout. Not much is known or shown of this title.

Space is a huge place and Space stations have probably figured in a lot of games with a sci-fi or space theme. So I have researched a couple of titles that takes mostly place on Space stations. The already mentioned Dead Space is one of them as it takes place entirely on USG Ishimura. Prey¹⁴ is another game which takes place in an alien space station where you have to save your girlfriend and humanity. The third title I researched is System Shock 2¹⁵ which takes place on a space ship that has been overrun by mutated humans.



¹⁶ A picture of Super Mario Galaxy which shows the different landmasses that floats around which and which you can travel on either side of.

¹¹ Super Mario Galaxy; Wii; Nintendo; 2007

¹² Dead Space; PS3, X360, PC; EA; 2008

¹³ Cosmic Walker; Wii; GAIA; 2009

¹⁴ Prey; X360, PC; 3D realms; 2006

¹⁵ System Shock 2; PC; Looking Glass Studio; 1999

¹⁶ <http://mywii.com.au/img/game/large/Super-Mario-Galaxy-9.jpg> Date: March 5, 2009; Time: 11.34

Elemental Railroad Research

In Elemental Railroads you build toy railroads to transport containers from the boy room thru the kitchen and other rooms and down to the basement. The game is built on small missions where you have to build a railway from point A to B and avoid the different elemental dangers that can be found on the way.

Many games that involves building railroads are of the management type, the Rollercoaster Tycoon¹⁷ series lets you build railroads as a way of transporting the visitors to different parts of the park and the Railroad tycoon¹⁸ series puts you in control of an industry empire where you shall transport cargo and passengers between places. Both games differing from Elemental Railroad in the way that they are management games while Elemental Railroad is a puzzle game build on levels that can be finished pretty quickly.

Elemental Railroad also contains different elements as dangers or traps in its game play; it could be stuff like a hot plate in the kitchen or a pool of water in the bathroom that soaks the cargo. The four elements are used in many games as dangers so it would take too much place to list all games with elements in them. Motorstorm Pacific Rift¹⁹ uses elements on the tracks as both dangers and it can sometimes offer help. If you use your turbo enough the motor will explode but if you drive in water it will cool down which is the way it should work in Elemental Railroad. Elements are also often used when magic is involved in games, the Final Fantasy series²⁰ has each element represented as magic.



²¹A picture from Railroad Tycoon 2 showing one of the industries that the trains collect cargo on before taking it to the next step in

¹⁷ Rollercoaster Tycoon; PC,Xbox; Chris Sawyer; 1999

¹⁸ Railroad Tycoon; PC; Sid Meier; 1990

¹⁹ Motorstrom Pacific Rift; PS3; Evolution Studio; 2008

²⁰ Final Fantasy serie; NES-PS3; SquareEnix, former Squaresoft; 1987 and forth

²¹ http://www.gamershell.com/static/screenshots/3245/50622_full.jpg Date: March 5, 2009; Time: 13.20