

update the temperament setting at predetermined intervals. This enables the game player to give an instruction according to a change of the temperament of the character, thereby providing dynamic aspects for the game content.

[0015] According to the aforementioned video game machine, the temperament of the character may be determined in accordance with predetermined parameters. With this arrangement, the temperament setting of the character is influenced by the action done to the character by the game player.

[0016] According to the aforementioned video game machine, the temperament setting unit may include a numerical-value providing unit for providing a numerical value used as an index for the predetermined parameter according to an instruction content concerning the action and the temperament of the character when the instruction is executed, an addition unit for adding the provided numerical value for each of the predetermined parameters, and a temperament selection unit for selectively determining the temperament according to an addition result obtained by the addition unit. As a consequence, the temperament setting of the character is reliably changed, thereby making the game content dynamic and highly entertaining.

[0017] The aforementioned video game machine may further include an emotion setting unit for setting one of a plurality of emotions for the character in accordance with an instruction content concerning the action. The behavior selection unit may select one of the behavior patterns from the behavior-pattern storage unit in accordance with the temperament and emotion of the character, and the behavior control unit may cause the character to behave according to the behavior pattern selected by the behavior selection unit.

[0018] With this configuration, the character's emotion setting is changed according to an instruction from the game player, and the character behaves according to the set emotion. Thus, the game content can be made dynamic and highly entertaining.

[0019] According to the video game machine, the emotion setting unit may set the emotion in accordance with the temperament of the character when the instruction concerning the action is executed. Consequently, even with the same instruction, the character differently exhibits emotions according to the temperament of the character when the instruction concerning the action is executed.

[0020] The aforementioned video game machine may further include an emotion storage unit for storing a numerical value used as an index for each of the emotions. The emotion setting unit may include a subtraction unit for subtracting a predetermined value from the numerical values currently stored in the emotion storage unit corresponding to the emotions other than the emotion determined by the emotion setting unit according to the instruction content concerning the action and the temperament of the character when the instruction

is executed, an addition unit for adding the subtracted value to the numerical value currently stored in the emotion storage unit corresponding to the emotion determined by the emotion setting unit, and an emotion selection unit for selectively determining the emotion having the greatest index value from the emotion storage unit. With this arrangement, the character's emotion can be reliably changed, thereby providing dynamic aspects for the game content and making the video game interesting.

[0021] The aforementioned video game machine may further include a character storage unit for storing a plurality of characters, and a character selection unit for selecting one of the plurality of characters.

[0022] According to the aforementioned video game machine, a plurality of icons for specifying an instruction content given by the operation unit may be indicated on the display screen of the display unit, and the operation unit may select one of the plurality of icons. With this arrangement, the game player is able to proceed with the game by specifying one of the icons, thereby speedily responding to the character's behavior.

[0023] According to the aforementioned video game machine, the behavior selection unit may select one of the behavior patterns in accordance with various situations in the game space.

[0024] With this arrangement, the character appears in a game space displayed on the display screen of the display unit. The temperament setting of the character is changed according to a "praising" or "stroking" action performed by a game player and the temperament of the character when the action is performed. The character then behaves based on the changed temperament according to various situations in the game space. For example, when the owner returns to the doorway, the character ignores or barks at the owner. Thus, even with the same environments and events surrounding the character, the character behaves differently according to the character's current temperament. That is, the character autonomously behaves according to various situations in the game space regardless of instructions provided from the game player. Accordingly, the game player is able to enjoy almost the exact feeling of playing and living with the character. It is thus possible to implement a highly entertaining video game.

[0025] According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method for controlling a character behavior in a video game that allows a character to appear in a game space. The method includes a game-screen output step of outputting a game screen including the character to a display screen of a display unit, a temperament setting step of providing a temperament of the character in accordance with an action performed on the character by a game player and the temperament of the character when the action is performed, a behavior-pattern selection step of selecting, according to the temperament of the character, one of a