

coordinate data from pattern data corresponding to animation instructions to characters, supplying the obtained three-dimensional coordinate data and view-point position data to the graphics-data generating processor 13, and issuing rendering commands representing luminance data and address data indicating the positions of the display area of the buffer 21 determined by the graphics-data generating processor 13.

[0066] The CPU 11 performs sound processing control, such as issuing sound output commands to the sound processor 22 and designating the level, the reverb, etc. The CPU 11 also performs internal processing control, such as making calculations according to the operation of the controller 33.

[0067] Fig. 2 is a block diagram illustrating units for implementing the functions of the CPU 11. The CPU 11 includes a controller detecting unit 41, a character selection unit 42, a game-screen output unit 43, a game-progress control unit 44, a temperament setting unit 45, an emotion setting unit 46, a behavior-pattern selection unit 47, a character-behavior control unit 48, and a demand-action determining unit 49.

[0068] The controller detecting unit 41 is used for detecting the on/off operation of the controller 33 based on an operation signal transmitted from the operation button of the controller 33. The character selection unit 42 is used for selecting one of a plurality of characters displayed on the monitor 28 based on an operation signal output by operating the controller 33.

[0069] The game-screen output unit 43 reads the game screen from the main memory 15 or the recording medium 40 in accordance with the content of the game, and outputs the read game screen onto the monitor 28. The game screens include a plurality of game scenes, such as scenes in which the game proceeds inside a house and scenes in which the game proceeds outside the house. The game-progress control unit 44 proceeds with the game according to a preset program.

[0070] The temperament setting unit 45 is used for setting and changing the characters' temperament (providing the temperament to the characters) appearing in the game. The temperament setting unit 45 is formed of the following elements. A numerical-value providing unit 451 provides specific numerical values used as indices for predetermined parameters (elements) for determining the temperament in accordance with the operation content (instruction content) of the controller 33 and with the character's temperament when the operation is provided (when the instruction is executed). An addition unit 452 adds the numerical value. A reading unit 453 reads the temperament corresponding to the addition result obtained by the addition unit 452 from the recording medium 40. In the recording medium 40, the addition results and the temperaments are stored in correspondence with each other. The temperament setting of the character appearing in the game is changed to the temperament read by the reading unit 453.

[0071] The numerical-value providing unit 451 reads the numerical value as an index from a storage unit, such as the recording medium 40, for storing the characters' temperaments and the parameters in correspondence with each other, and provides the read numerical value for the parameter. The reading unit 453 serves as a selection unit for selectively determining the character's temperament according to the addition result obtained by the addition unit 452. Details of the temperament setting operation will be discussed later.

[0072] The emotion setting unit 46 sets and changes the emotions of the characters appearing in the game, and is formed of the following elements. A reading unit 461 reads and determines one of the emotions from an emotion determining table according to the instruction input through the controller 33 and the character's temperament when the instruction is executed. A subtraction unit 462 subtracts a certain numerical value from the index values of the emotions other than the emotion determined by the reading unit 461. An index value has been provided as an initial value for each emotion and has been stored in the storage unit, such as the recording medium 40. An addition unit 463 adds the subtracted value to the index value (which is stored in the storage unit) of the emotion determined by the reading unit 461. A selection unit 464 selectively determines the emotion provided with the highest index value from the storage content of the storage unit. The character's emotion setting is changed to the emotion determined by the selection unit 464. Details of the emotion setting operation will be described later.

[0073] The behavior-pattern selection unit 47 selects one of a plurality of behavior patterns preset for the characters according to the various situations in a game space. More specifically, the behavior-pattern selection unit 47 selects one behavior pattern corresponding to the game scene in accordance with the elapsed time of the game, or selects one behavior pattern by determining the currently set character's temperament and emotion (only the temperament may be determined, or both the temperament and the emotion may be determined according to the game scene).

[0074] Many different behavior patterns concerning a predetermined game scene selected from a plurality of game scenes are stored in the storage unit, such as the recording medium 40, as a dog-behavior pattern table in this embodiment. Accordingly, one behavior pattern is read from the dog-behavior pattern table according to various situations, such as the temperament and emotion set for the characters, and the elapsed time of the game.

[0075] The character-behavior control unit 48 controls the behavior of the character appearing in the game. More specifically, the character-behavior control unit 48 controls the character to behave in response to the behavior pattern selected by the behavior-pattern selection unit 47 regardless of instructions given by a game player through the controller 33. The character-