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WSOA2006 Assignment 3

Written Reflection

The alternate FPS game I created requires a player to move around an open area and direct one set of three possible sets of pronouns towards various characters that spawn randomly in the area. If the correct pronouns are matched to a character, a point will be gained and the character will look happy before disappearing. If the incorrect pronouns are given to a character, 3 points will be lost and the character will look upset. If the incorrect pronouns are given to an unhappy character, more points will be lost, but if the correct pronouns are given a point will be gained and the character will go back to appearing neutral. The game ends when your score gets to -50 or 50. If you reach a score of -50 you lose the game, and if you reach a score of 50 you win the game.

To move around the area, the w, a, s and d keys are used. The mouse is used to change the direction the player faces. The number 1 key is used to select she/her pronouns, the number 2 key is used to select they/them pronouns and the number 3 key is used to select he/him pronouns. To direct pronouns towards a character, the left mouse button must be clicked while facing the character.

I wanted to create a game that forces people to focus on gender and pronouns. My aim was to create characters that can appear in different colours and have different pronouns. The 6 colours chosen are from the pride flag, but also represents the fact that a person's gender identity doesn't depend on what they look like. In the game, you can see the colours of the characters from a distance, but can only see the pronouns written on them when you get close enough, which represents how you need to get close to a person and interact with them in some way to find out who they are. When a character is given the correct pronouns they smile, which shows how a person appreciates the correct pronouns. However, when they are given incorrect pronouns they get upset, and the player has to use the correct pronouns twice to make the person happy, but in total more points are lost than gained, which shows how using the wrong pronouns for a person does more harm. As a non-binary person myself, I wanted a game that felt inclusive. In all the games I have played, there is only one that distinctly included non-binary people as the player, and I clearly remember the feeling I had of finally being included.

I faced a number of challenges while working on this game. It was my first time working in 3D, so I had difficulty with things such as making the character sprites, making the planes face towards the camera, and making sure the lighting allowed the characters to be seen from any angle. It was somewhat difficult having so many different characters and making sure that all of them worked correctly. After finally getting the game to work, I ended up with errors when I tried to make the build, which took a significant amount of time to try to resolve, and was eventually avoided by making a PC, Mac and Linux standalone build instead of a Universal Windows Platform build. This project was a huge challenge for me mentally, as I wanted to produce a game I was proud of, but was also already mentally drained before even starting this project. Towards the end of the production of this game, I ended up so mentally drained that I kept passing out and losing focus, which resulted in a late submission.

Overall I am pretty happy with what I have produced. As this game is personal to me, I want to continue to add on to it and improve it in my own time. Some additions I can make are things such as sound effects, voiced pronouns (which I was not confident enough to include in this submission),

a wider variety of pronouns, and pronoun combinations (i.e. two or three sets of pronouns for a single character). I also want to find a more efficient way of changing the appearance of the characters when they become happy or upset, which will probably make use of animations and variables instead of instantiating new objects for the different states.