15-112, Summer 2, Term Project - Competitive Analysis

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SCPhillips Morse Code Translator
https://morsecode.scphillips.com/translator.html

This translator is almost exactly what the Translator feature should function like. The presentation is clean and simple, so it is a good model from a graphics perspective. However, there is one considerable design issue: this translator has only one input, and yet it can take in both normal characters and marks. This can be problematic when the user inputs ".", for example. The translator assumes that the "." represents a mark, and outputs "E"; however, what if the user's intention was to translate from normal characters to marks, instead of the other way around? In that case, the translator should have instead given the output ".-.-.-". For my own program, I will instead have two different input text fields in order to deal with this issue.

Just Learn Morse Code
utvikling.com/JustLearnMorseCode.msi (Download)

This program's functionality is similar to that of Decode. The user interface is extremely unintuitive; I had to spend considerable time looking at the Help documentation just to get a sense of the program's features. While user friendliness isn't of the highest priority, I seek to have substantially more clarity in my own program.

Still, this program has shown me a number of things that may be useful in the implementation of my program's features:

- Koch's method, which argues that it is best to learn morse code not by starting with a slow transmission speed and then getting faster, but by starting with learning only a few characters and then adding more.
- Farnsworth timing, which, rather than affecting the timing of everything, affects only the length of the pauses between pulses and not the length of the pulses themselves, which may make the user adjust to faster speeds more quickly.
- Creating/reading from audio/text files, which may be a useful feature for my own program, though audio files might be tricky to deal with.

Word Search Puzzles
http://word-search-puzzles.appspot.com/

While not at all related to morse code, this program is certainly close to what I want to achieve in Morse Search. The program isn't very customizable, as the size of the word search is fixed and there aren't any ways to customize the word bank (aside from language). User customization may be something to consider for my own feature.

The UI for this program, on the other hand, is above my expectations for my own program. The click-and-drag method of selecting text in the word search is very clean and satisfying, but harder to implement than simply clicking in two different locations.

CS:GO Stats
http://csgo-stats.com/76561198032715378/

This page displays data about a certain user that has been collected over the course of his game time. Its design contains several features that may be beneficial to include in my own user data system:

- Comprehensive data, from stat totals to stat averages to recent stats
- Clean UI, especially the circle that is colored based on the ratio between stats, like a pie chart
- Ability to compare stats between two users

Morse
http://www.kongregate.com/games/dgreisen/morse

In this game, flashing dots, each representing a character, run across the screen. The user has to press the key corresponding to the character of the leftmost dot on the screen in order to delete it. If a dot reaches the left side of the screen, the game ends. The game employ's Koch's method: a new character is introduced with each level.

While simple in terms of both visuals and game design, it seems fairly effective at teaching morse code. In early levels, however, it's easy to abuse the probability of randomly guessing the correct key. In my own design, I should punish users for guessing randomly in my Coder feature.