WSOA3003A: Microproject 2 Analysis

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Demonstration of Intent

The overall goal of this microproject was to communicate feedback design through turn-based combat. To achieve this, the game would communicate effective and efficient feedback design through its UI (user interface), UX (user experience), color, animation, text and sound. This second microproject is an iteration of the first microproject. The focus of this prototype is to improve the enemy AI (artificial intelligence) and to ensure effective and layered feedback communication is demonstrated to the player when they interact with the game's systems and mechanics.

Demonstration of Process

Fixing the AI: In the initial the enemy AI made the game unbalanced as the AI had a huge advantage over the player. Unlike the player, the enemy AI could pick already blocked off cards that were either already used by the enemy or the player. This gives a huge advantage to the enemy, as the enemy could potentially use higher valued card multiple times unlike the player. In addition to this, the enemy AI would pick two cards in its turn, thereby giving a disadvantage to the player as it unfairly blocks off two potential cards the player could have used instead of one. In this iteration of the microproject, both problems were resolved through script changes, therefore making the game feel more balanced and less unfair to the player.

Color and Text: In the first microproject, the enemy and the player were visually represented as two squares that are different shades of grey. To better differentiate between the player and the enemy two different colors were used to represent them. The player and the player's actions are represented in blue while the enemy and enemy actions are represented in red. *Figure 1* illustrates how in the previous microproject, when either the player or enemy picks a card it disappears. *Figure 2* illustrates how in the second microproject when a player has picked a card it turns blue, and when the enemy has picked a card it turns red. This was done to communicate which cards have been blocked off by whom. Furthermore, when text is displayed, part of the text is either red or blue, in bold and in capital letters to indicate whose turn it currently is (i.e. It is now the **ENEMY'S TURN**!). This was done as the player associates blue with themselves and red with the enemy. In addition, when an opponent does an action, the action text is in bold and in capital letters to quickly bring attention to, and emphasize the action and value of the action to the player (i.e. The **PLAYER** has **HEALED** by **5HP**!).

UI: To further demonstrate effective feedback communication, in addition to the player's and enemy's health being displayed as text, a health bar was added to each one. This was done so that the player can quickly visually gauge how much health they have left in relation to their enemy, which is a form of layered feedback on the game's health system. This feedback is a form of layered visual feedback that

acts as secondary feedback in conjunction to the primary textual feedback of the health text. The text shows the exact amount of health the player and enemy has while the health bar is used for the player to quickly visually gauge and estimate how much health they have in relation to the enemy's. The "Attack" and "Heal" button in the game now have images next to them (i.e. a sword and a health symbol) as the visual elements on a button further emphasize their function. In addition to this, the text was removed from the reroll button, and was replaced with the symbol for "refresh". This was done as the designer felt that the player would know through video game conventions and conventions of symbols, signs and signifiers that by clicking this button, the numbers will change. In addition, when the player hovers over a button a textbox appears describing what the button will do. This was done so that the player is fully and effectively informed about what a button does when they decide to click it (i.e. when the player hovers over the attack button a textbox will appear saying: "*Attack: Damage the enemy by "X" HP!*". NOTE: This button hover function was added to the FINAL microproject. *

Sound and Animation: To provide feedback from the UI to the player, sound was included when the player clicks on either a card or a button. This was done to indicate to the player that the system acknowledges that the player has just interacted with it. The buttons and cards would change color depending on whether the player has hovered on it, clicked on it, selected it or if the button or card is disabled. To provide a layered feedback experience when the player or the enemy is interacting with the game's two major mechanics i.e. attacking or healing, sound and animation was added. Both when the player takes damage or heals and when the enemy AI takes damage or heals an animation clip plays to provide feedback. When the player wins the game, a positive sound is played to audibly indicate to the player that they won, however, when the player loses the game a negative sound is played to audibly indicate to the player that they lost.

Demonstration of Reflection

Mechanics: In a previous microproject analysis, the designer planned to add a potential "Block" mechanic that can only be used "X" number of times during a game. This mechanic would have prevented the opponent from doing any actions on their next turn. However, the designer decided to focus instead on optimizing the game's two main mechanics. In addition, the designer felt that this block mechanic did not add any interesting dynamics to the game's mechanics as the game would have simply ended quicker if the player or enemy could have two consecutive turns in which they can do considerable damage to the opponent. The designer felt that there have been sufficient improvements to the game's mechanics to improve the player's overall experience.

Feedback: The goal of providing the player with effective, efficient and layered communication feedback design was achieved, as the system has multiple levels of feedback (i.e. sound, text animation, health bar etc.) that provide enough information to the player about the system's mechanics without overwhelming them. *Figure 3's* diagram illustrates how the systems provides the player with various levels of feedback as the player interacts with the game during their turn.

*The reason why the hover button function was not added to this microproject despite that the function works in relation to communication feedback was because of a unity and GitHub conflict error that could not be resolved. However, the designer still decided to mention this function in the analysis as it reflects an example of communication feedback.

Appendix

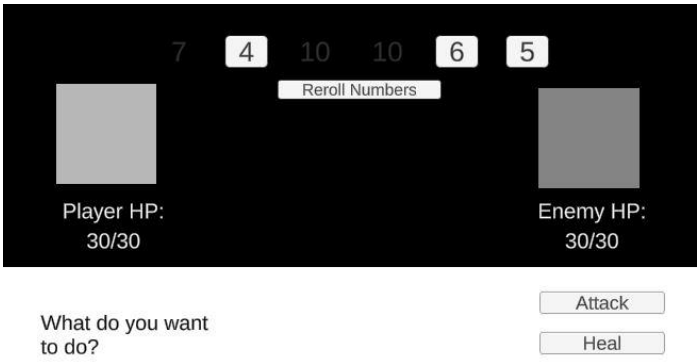

Figure 1: *A screenshot of the first microproject where there is minimal feedback design.*

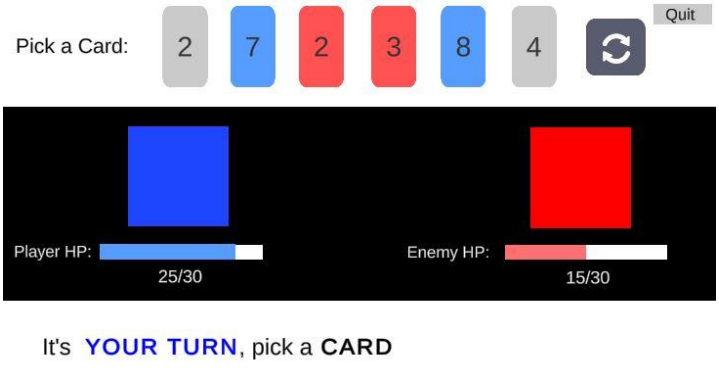

Figure 2: *A screenshot of the second microproject where feedback design has been implemented.*

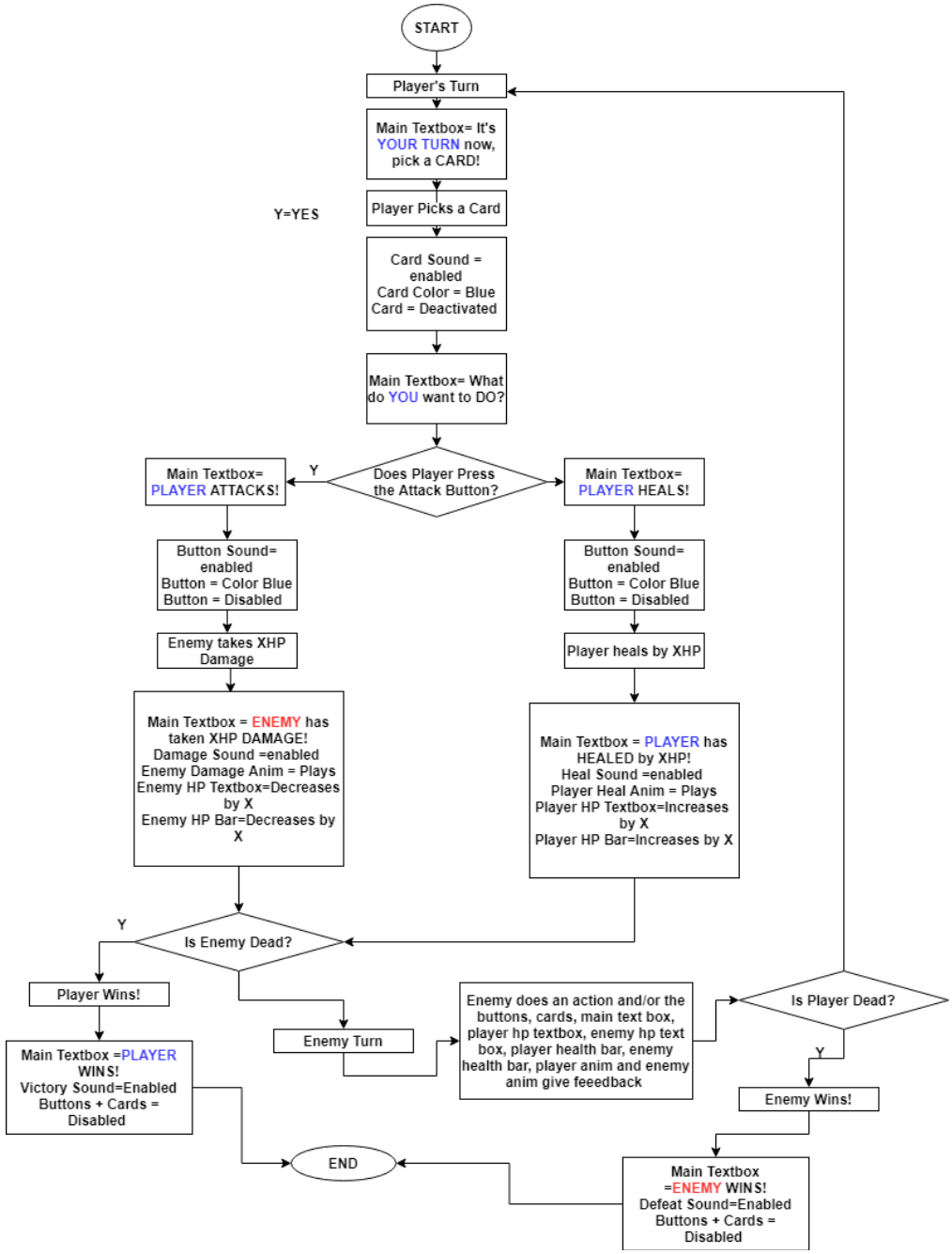

Figure 3: *A flow diagram illustrating the various forms of communication feedback design elements that occur during the player's turn.*