

**CGD6224**

**GAME DESIGN FUNDAMENTALS**

**Trimester March 2024**

**Lecture/Tutorial: TC1L/TT1L**

**Lecturer: Mohana A/P Muniandy**

**ASSIGNMENT 2**

**Design a Microsoft Teams Game**

by:

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# Game Description

# Formal Elements

### Player

* The target players of this game are the players who are the fans of romance and dating sim fans, and the players who enjoy the story-driven game. Since our game is having the high school settings, so the teenagers will also be the target audience of our game.
* The number of players in this game is flexible, it can be a single player game or a multiplayer game. The single player mode enables players to play it privately while the multiplayer mode allows players to interact with other players while playing the game. The multiplayer mode is played in Microsoft Teams.
* This game has fixed roles, the players play as the protagonist in the game.
* This is a cooperative game, the players will make the choices and vote in the polls to decide the path of the game.

### Objective

* The objective of this game is to tell an interesting and catchy story to the players by providing multiple choices that lead to different endings. This will encourage the players to explore different branches of the story and hence increase the replayability.
* This game uses a lot of visual arts, background music, animations and sound effects to draw the players into the game world.
* The objective category of this game is exploration.

### Procedures

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Starting action** | **Single Player:**   * Click on the “New Game” button   **Multiplayer:**   * Join the meeting in Miccrosoft Teams. * The game will start once all the players have joined the meeting and ready to start. |
| **Progression of action** | **Single Player:**   * Click on the dialogue to proceed to the next dialogue * Choose a path to progress when multiple choices are presented   **Multiplayer:**   * Vote in the polls in the chat box of the meeting when the multiple choices are presented. |
| **Special action** | * This game does not have any special action. |
| **Resolving actions** | * Progress through the dialogues until the player reaches the end of the story path. |

### Rules

* The player can only proceed by clicking either on the dialogue box or the “click to continue” text.
* When presented with a choice, the player can only choose one of the options given to progress the story.
* The player cannot undo any choices they have made.
* The player cannot skip to different scenes/chapters until they have completed the game at least once.
* In multiplayer, each slide will only be shown for 5 to 10 seconds based on the length of the text.
* In multiplayer, players only have 30 seconds to vote for each choice.
* In multiplayer, in the event of a draw, the players will be asked to vote again until a majority vote is made.

### Resources

The resource is the choices as the player’s choice will determine which ending the game will lead to. Besides, during multiplayer mode, the time given for the player to vote in the poll is also one of the resources as they have to make decisions in a 30 second duration.

## Dramatic Elements

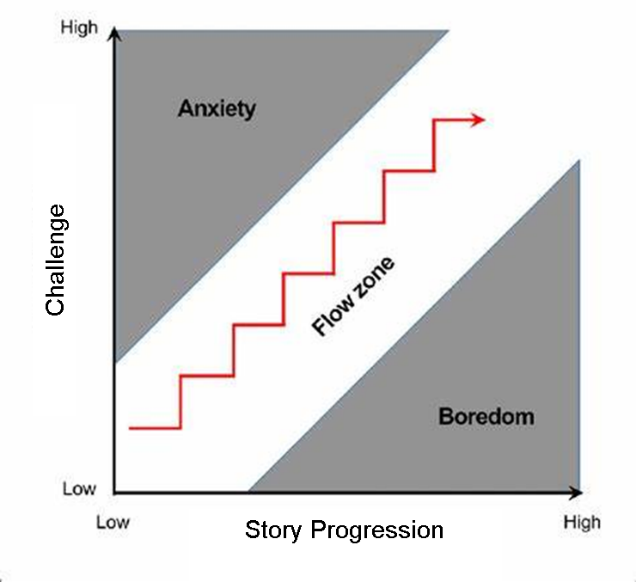
### Premise

The backstory of the game revolves around a girl named Nino, a high school classmate of the protagonist (you). Unaware to you, Nino secretly has a crush on her classmate protagonist. However, due to her tsundere personality she was seen to be cold and rude, hence she never approached her crush.

Nobody knows that Nino has split personality disorder, her second personality being a yandere who wants to claim the protagonist as well as the full ownership of Nimo’s body to herself. The control yandere Nino (referred to as “Nino” from this point onwards) has over Nino grew stronger and stronger, until one day “Nino” has obtained almost full control of the body. The last thing she needs now is you, the protagonist.

While “Nino” tries to win over your heart, you notice the unusual behaviors of “Nino”. To help Nino regain control once again, you must awaken her consciousness by calling out her name.

### Challenge



As a visual novel game, the game flow of our game is based on the story flow. Rather than an increase in difficulty as the game goes on, the game maintains flow by revealing more details about the story as the player progresses through the game, which helps to keep the player engaged and wanting to know more about Nino. The game flow follows the story’s progression, including character introductions, plot development, climax, conflicts, and resolutions.

At the start of the game, the story seems simple. The player is given the impression that the game is only about going to your classmate’s house to tutor her. However, as the player continues playing, more hints are given to indicate that something is wrong with Nino, sparking the player’s curiosity and making them want to find out the truth behind Nino’s odd behaviour. If the player makes the correct choices to unlock the true ending, the player will be able to uncover the full truth about what is happening and successfully save Nino. However, if the player does not make the correct choices, they will not unlock the true ending and will be left with unanswered questions.

### Play

“My Classmate Nino” is a game of **Make-believe Play (mimicry)**, where player roleplay as the protagonist in the game to engage with his classmate Nino. It is categized under the **Free-form Play (paidia)**.

There are two levels of engagement in the game: **Participant Play** and **Spectator Play**. In Participant Play, the player actively engages with the game by making choices that affect the story’s outcome, whereas in Spectator Play, the player can experience the narrative of the game without the pressure of making decisions.

# Game Design Journal

## Journal 1

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | 23 April 2024 (Tuesday) | **Time:** | 4:00pm – 6:00pm |
| **Venue:** | Game Design Fundamentals Lab Session (Week 5) | | |
| **Activity:** | **Ideation** | | |

**Overview**

**Goal:**

* Brainstorm some creative ideas for games that can be played on MS Teams and discuss the goals, rules and elements of each idea.
* Choose one of the ideas to be implemented at the end of this session, the idea chosen is based on attractiveness and complexity of implementation.

**Expected outcome:**

* An idea was raised throughout the discussion, along with clear concepts, rules, and the game's elements.
* All the group members are clear on how the idea will be implemented.

**The Process**

Discussion was carried out by creating a sticky note in the Teams Whiteboard for each different idea we came up with and related details written in bullet point form. Members can freely add details to each sticky note as the ideas are expanded upon. After brainstorming the ideas, we vote for the idea to be chosen by reacting to the sticky note with emojis and the sticky note with the most reacted emojis will be the idea that we will implement. Then, we will discuss in more detail how we are going to implement it along with the rules and game’s elements.

**\*Teams Whiteboard Link:**   
<https://mmuedumy-my.sharepoint.com/:wb:/g/personal/mu231207_office_mmu_edu_my/ETNH8ToLx5lNo9uMltB9i2QB-NY87MuqhBoyq_lrHb2g-Q?e=CQJcqh>

**Ideas:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Idea | Description | Accepted/ Rejected | Justification |
| Mafia | * Communication for All: Call using microphone * Communication for Special Roles:   + ALT1: Whiteboard (only joined by Mafia)   + ALT2: Text file in OneDrive   + ALT3: Use MS team to message host (who mafia wants to kill, etc.) * ‘Dead’ people are put in a breakout room | Rejected | Doesn’t fully utilize the features of the platforms and doesn’t require much preparation before the game. |
| Visual Novel | * Using PowerPoint to create a visual novel game by using the built-in features such as transition, animation and hyperlink. * Inspired by “Doki Doki Literature Club”, a visual novel game * Implement branching paths that’ll lead to multiple endings | Accepted | The idea is interesting, it fully utilizes the features in PowerPoint, and it is not too complex to implement. |
| Draw and Guess | * Using Microsoft Whiteboard to draw & make guesses on what the drawing is * Score based on how fast the player guesses the correct answer as well as using the right spelling | Rejected | Too common and not interesting, doesn’t require much preparation. |
| Quiz Game | * Using Microsoft Whiteboard to answer the quizzes * Score based on the accuracy of the answer and the time taken for the player to provide the answer. | Rejected | Too common & not that interesting, doesn’t require much preparation. |
| 2D pixel game | * Using programming in excel to code the behaviors of each cell, e.g. color * Inspired by a Code Bullet, a YouTuber who created Flappy Bird using file explorer | Rejected | Very difficult to implement as it required much technical skills to do this. |
| Connect 4 | * Take turns to color the cells. * Same concept as tic-tac-toe, players will take turns to fill a cell in the designed area with color that represents his/her team, the first team to connect 4 of their color in vertical, horizontal or diagonal will be the winner. | Rejected | Game concept is too simple and easy to implement (does not require much technical skills) |
| Capture the area | * Color the cells as fast as you can. * The team with the most cells colored within the time limit wins. * Comes with rule (e.g. can only color one cell at a time). | Rejected | Very easy to implement (does not require much technical skills) |

**Conclusion**

We have brainstormed and discussed possible games that could be played on MS Team and decided on doing Visual Novel. We would look on the Internet for more information and possibly search for some sample cases and refer to them to avoid being in confusion and lacking ideas. To better prepare ourselves if we were to redo this Ideation discussion again, we could list out all the MS apps and think of game ideas based on each app instead of brainstorming for ideas from scratch.

## Journal 2

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | 26 April 2024 (Friday) | **Time:** | 3.00p.m. - 6.00p.m. |
| **Venue:** | Discord Meet | | |
| **Activity:** | **Prototyping #1** | | |

**Overview**

**Goal:**

* Validating the concepts discussed during the ideation session to ensure we are having the right direction before we start the full-scale development of the game.
* Visualizing the ideas discussed for a better understanding and making the further discussion easier.

**Expected Outcome:**

* Designed and validated the concepts to make sure the prototype is aligning with the user preferences and requirements.

**The Process**

The prototyping process is divided into the following four phases:

1. **Backstory/Premise**

To begin the prototyping process, we first wrote about the background story for the game. Then, based on the background, we wrote out the scenes and general plot for the game.

1. **Script**

A detailed script is written for each of the scenes in the game, including the different options and paths for different endings.

1. **Resources**

The resources used are the character’s model, background image and the elements in Microsoft Power Point.

* 1. Character’s Model – We found a website that provides the preset of the character, which allows us to modify the outlook of the character to fit in the story.   
     Link to the website: <https://picrew.me/en/image_maker/2122621>
  2. Background Image – We found a website with various background images that match our themes and get some images from that website.  
     Link to the website: <https://noranekogames.itch.io/yumebackground>
  3. Elements in Microsoft Power Point – Since the game is made with Microsoft Power Point, we used a lot of shapes and word art to build and decorate our game.

1. **Transition/Animation**

The prototype is built with Microsoft Power Point, using a lot of slides for different branches and a lot of animation to make the game more interesting. The transitions are added between the slides to ensure the scenes change smoothly.

**Conclusion**

During this period, we’ve built a prototype of the game based on the concepts discussed during the ideation session. A complete backstory of the game is written, along with parts of the scripts. We will prepare a simple test plan as preparation and make sure our prototype is working properly before the playtesting session. The test plan will include the testing methodology, test scenario and the success criteria.

## Journal 3

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | 29 April 2024 (Monday) | **Time:** | 3.00p.m. - 6.00p.m. |
| **Venue:** | Discord Meet | | |
| **Activity:** | **Playtesting #1 (Internal)** | | |

**Overview**

The goal of this session is to playtest internally among us to determine if the game is fun to play, any loophole or major bugs, and so we can immediately fix it on the spot. The game mechanics we tested were the choice making part where if we mapped the choice to the respective slide.

**The Process**

**How playtesting is conducted:**

* We played through the prototype multiple times and tested every possible choice that the player can make to ensure that each choice is linked to the correct branching path.
* We attempted to play the game from an actual player’s perspective and thought about what would make the experience more enjoyable and immersive for the player.
* We experimented with many different ideas (i.e. different transitions between scenes, different font choice and text size, colour schemes, etc.) to see what would be most appealing to players.

**Observations and discoveries:**

As we conducted internal playtesting, we made the following observations:

* Certain choice buttons were not linked at all, causing the player to become soft-locked when arriving at the choice screen.
* Certain choice buttons were linked to the wrong path, causing the story to become illogical and continue in the wrong direction.
* We had to make it so that the player is only able to progress in the story by clicking the designated “click to continue” button. Otherwise, if the player was able to simply proceed to the next slide in numerical order, it would result in the story becoming out of order and the player would be granted access to slides that were not yet supposed to be accessible to them.

**Feedback:**

* Transitions between dialogue should not be too visually distracting so that they do not take away from the story.
* The colours should be soft and easy on the eyes so that players are not bothered by it.
* Transitions and animations between slides should be interesting and applicable to what is happening in the story, but not too exaggerated.

**Improvements:**

* As of right now, the story is too short and could be expanded to make the player more invested in the game.
* More choices could be given to the player so they feel that they have more control over what happens in the game.
* Characters could be more fleshed out to make them more interesting.

**Conclusion**

We made sure each of the choices were mapped to their respective outcome slides, adding a few animations that would make this game visually interesting.

## Journal 4

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | 30 April 2024 (Tuesday) | **Time:** | 4.00p.m. - 6.00p.m. |
| **Venue:** | Game Design Fundamentals Lab Session (Week 6) | | |
| **Activity:** | **Playtesting #1 (External)** | | |

**Overview**

The goal of conducting this session is to allow people to play our game and give us feedback regarding the playing experience and any improvements that could be made.

**The Process**

**How playtesting is conducted:**

* We invited 2 playtesters to play our game.
* They will give feedback throughout the game.
* When the game ends, we will ask questions regarding the formal and dramatic elements of the game and they will answer it.

**Observations and discoveries:**

As we conducted external playtesting, we made the following observations:

* Since this game is a part of the “dating simulator” genre, players who are attracted to the female character’s design are more likely to become invested in the game.
* Playtesters seemed to easily figure out how to play the game and intuitively understood the controls, though this may have been because they have experience with visual novel games.
* Playtesters seemed interested in choosing the options that led to “bad” endings to see what would happen.

**Feedback from playtesters:**

* The story is good.
* It is easy to understand how to play the game.
* The first impression they got was that the game was story driven.
* They prefer to play the game alone than with others.
* The dialogue was too simple.
* We needed to clarify whether the dialogue was a monologue or a spoken line by the character.
* There were too many monologues.
* We were recommended to add audio cues and background music. This would help immerse the player in contrast to a game that is completely silent.
* We were suggested to add voice acting to help the characters feel more “alive”.
* We were suggested to add character customization as everyone’s preference in character design is different. Giving players more choices for the female protagonist’s appearance would help them feel more attached to the character.

**Improvements:**

* Adding audio cues and background music as recommended would help set the mood of the story and create impact where needed.
* Reducing the number of monologues would let the main character be more of a blank slate, allowing the player to imagine themself as the character.
* Giving the player a few preset options for the female character’s design would help the game be more appealing to a wider range of players. However, the number of options would have to be limited as creating a game with extended character customization in PowerPoint would be too time-consuming and complicated.
* Making the dialogue more interesting would help to draw in the player’s attention and make them want to find out more about the story.

**Conclusion**

The feedback we gathered would allow us to have insights of where to improve in terms of formal and dramatic elements.

## Journal 5

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | 26 April 2024 (Friday) | **Time:** | 3.00p.m. - 6.00p.m. |
| **Venue:** | Discord Meet | | |
| **Activity:** | **Prototyping #2** | | |

**Overview**

**Goal:**

* Refining the game based on the feedback we received in the first external playtesting session.
* Implementing more details to make the game more enjoyable.
* Fixing the bugs that were discovered during the playtesting processes.

**Expected Outcome:**

* The prototype is improved based on the feedback provided by the playtester during the playtesting process.
* The progress of the prototype has increased compared to the previous version.

**The Process**

* Fully completed the script and slightly edited previous parts of the dialogue to make it more concise.
* Continued building the game on Microsoft PowerPoint whilst also adding more animations to the previous slides.
* Added the ability to click on the entire dialogue box to proceed to the next slide instead of just the “Click to continue” text.

**Conclusion**

During this period, we've continued to build and improve our prototype of the game based on the feedback from the first playtesting process. An improvised and more complete prototype is built for a smoother gameplay experience. We will prepare a simple test plan as preparation and make sure our prototype is working properly before the playtesting session. The test plan will include the testing methodology, test scenario and the success criteria.

## Journal 6

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | 7 May 2024 (Tuesday) | **Time:** | 3.00p.m. - 4.00p.m. |
| **Venue:** | Discord Meet | | |
| **Activity:** | **Playtesting #2 (Internal)** | | |

**Overview**

The goal of conducting this session is to play the game from a player’s perspective and try out all the possible outcomes to ensure there are no loopholes or major bugs present in the game.

**The Process**

**How playtesting is conducted:**

* Once again, we played the game multiple times to ensure all the choices are correctly linked and result in the proper ending.
* We attempted to play the game from an actual player’s perspective and thought about what would make the experience more enjoyable and immersive for the player.
* We tested the features that were added according to the feedback to see whether it meets the requirements (e.g. suitability of music and sound effects)

**Observations and discoveries:**

As we conducted external playtesting, we made the following observations:

* Some of the buttons do not link to the correct slide.
* The playtester seems to be confused when the game suddenly shows the ending page due to the incomplete prototype.

**Feedback from playtester:**

* Missing punctuation in the action dialogues.
* The bookshelf image does not match the rest of the game’s art style.

**Improvements:**

* Fixing all the minor issues mentioned above.
* Adding some description at the ending page to inform the player that this game is still in progress.

**Conclusion**

The feedback we gathered would allow us to have insights of where to improve in terms of formal and dramatic elements.

## Journal 7

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | 7 May 2024 (Tuesday) | **Time:** | 4.00p.m. - 6.00p.m. |
| **Venue:** | Game Design Fundamentals Lab Session (Week 7) | | |
| **Activity:** | **Playtesting #2 (External)** | | |

**Overview**

The goal of conducting this session is to allow people to play our game and give us feedback regarding the playing experience and any improvements that could be made to our improved version of the game.

**The Process**

**How playtesting is conducted:**

* We invited a playtester to play our game.
* They will give feedback throughout the game.
* When the game ends, we will ask questions regarding the formal and dramatic elements of the game and they will answer it.

**Observations and discoveries:**

As we conducted external playtesting, we made the following observations:

* The question marks in the first scene make it ambiguous as to whether it is the character’s thoughts or their spoken dialogue.
* The playtester seemed confused as to what was going on in the first scene of the game, indicating that what we are trying to convey in that scene may be unclear.
* The playtester seemed invested in the story, but tended to choose options that would not prolong the gameplay (i.e. refusing to go to the convenience store with Nino, only examining one item in Nino’s room)

**Feedback from playtester:**

* The story was interesting because they did not know if the girl, Nino, was human or not, and they were unsure of what would happen to the protagonist.
* The dialogue was engaging, not too wordy but not too lacking either.
* Playtester was confused as to which parts of the dialogue were thoughts at first, particularly in the first scene.
* Playtester seemed unsure of the protagonist’s identity (i.e. the protagonist’s gender)
* Playtester mentioned that the game could be difficult to find the timing to proceed to the next part of the dialogue if the game is being played by many players on Microsoft Teams.
* Similar to the first external playtesting session, the playtester suggested adding background music and sound effects.
* Playtester mentioned that the player could just click their mouse continuously and proceed to the next slide without fully reading the dialogue.

**Improvements:**

* We added sound effects and background music to make the game more immersive.
* We made the dialogue clearer by differentiating the inner thoughts, spoken dialogue and narration.
* We have tried to play the prototype in Microsoft Teams to adjust the timing of changing the slides, releasing and closing the polls so that the player cannot spam the clicks as the slides are controlled by us.

**Conclusion**

The feedback we gathered would allow us to have insights into where to improve in terms of formal and dramatic elements, and the game itself.

## Journal 8

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | 10 May 2024 (Tuesday) | **Time:** | 2.00p.m. - 5.00p.m. |
| **Venue:** | Discord Meet | | |
| **Activity:** | **Further Improvement** | | |

**Overview**

**Goal:**

* To implement more details to make the game more enjoyable.
* To improve the gameplay method on Microsoft Teams for a better gameplay experience.
* To discover and fix bugs such as linking issues.

**Expected Outcome:**

* Thinking of extra things to be implemented in the game such as more animations, transitions, and better background music for certain scenes.
* Improving the gameplay experience and fixing the bugs that we discovered.

**The Process**

* We slightly edited some parts of the dialogue to make it more concise.
* We added some transitions and animations in between the slides.
* We have observed the reaction from the players and improved the gameplay experience based on what we observed such as reducing the time each slide is shown, fixing the bugs that appeared during the gameplay, and improving the quality of the background music.

**Conclusion**

During this period, we’ve improved our prototype and fixed the bugs. We are confident that the players will have a better gameplay experience after we have made the improvements.