

WSOA3003

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Short Analysis

Report on Communication Design Prototype

The prototype worked on by designer takes a previous prototype that was built with data design in mind and expands on it through work on communication design, or the process of conveying important information to the player. Some changes were also made to this prototype, and these changes will be explored within this report. The report also aims to look at the designer's intention behind what is implemented in the prototype, the process of implementation as well as an overall reflection on the prototype.

The prototype features a turn-based combat system between one player and one enemy. The previous version makes use of an "Attack" and a "Heal" feature for the player as well as a placeholder "Flee" function that would be changed in later versions to other mechanics for the player. The player starts with a maximum of 100 health and the damage they deal would be randomized between 1 and 15. The player may also heal themselves for 10 hit points on their turn, however, can only take one action per turn. The enemy also does randomized damage between 1 and 15, however cannot heal and their maximum health is 130 hit points. The winner is that who reduces their opponent's health to 0 first. In the newest prototype, the "Flee" feature (which would automatically end the battle) was replaced with a "Magic" feature which would consume player "Magic Points" or MP in order to deal double the amount of damage they would have from a regular attack. This version also makes use of an added MP slider to track the player's MP as well as a screen-shake animation when the player is attacked by the enemy and particle effect systems to show healing and magic use by the player.

The original intention behind the flee function was to have it be there should there be more added to the game instead of just the combat system that currently exists. It would have worked in order to preserve player health and other resources without losing the battle. In the previous versions, it acted as a placeholder should more features be added. In this build, the Magic feature replaces it. The intention was to add variety to player attacks. The process of implementing this saw the designer create a more powerful version of the attack, but to prevent the player from only using this action on their turn instead of using other actions as they needed, the MP resource was created to put a limit on it. It gives players a resource to track and in doing so, gives them a choice on when they would like to use their abilities.

The screen-shake was intended to show players that the enemy had attacked them as currently the flow of combat is extremely fast paced and therefore was used to provide the player with this information should they miss the information provided to them through the dialogue box found at the bottom of the screen. The way this screen shake was implemented was through a short animation clip that would move the camera horizontally repeated and was set to activate on the enemy's turn as currently the only action the enemy has available to it is an attack.

The particle effect system was intended to act in a similar way as due to combat being fast, the player will understand they've either healed or used magic if they missed the information provided

in the dialogue box or if they mis-clicked and used the wrong action. The process of going about this saw the designer use two different particle systems that can be differentiated by colour; green for healing and purple for magic. To make this information more understandable for players, these colours are the same as the health slider and magic point sliders (green and purple respectively) in order for the link between these to be seen. Once either the heal or magic button is pressed, the corresponding particle system is played to reflect it.

In conclusion, the designer would like to reflect on these changes and additions. The main aspect that needs to be worked on is the pace as the dialogue box succeeds in conveying important information to the player, but due to the fast pace of the game this information can be missed. The particle systems, however, do their job in providing this information as they are easy to spot against the game's black background and offer enough movement to attract the player's attention. The screen-shake is effective, however, could be improved. An alternative would be an animation in which the sprites shake instead of the camera. This would also be easy to convey attacks similar to how the particle effects do and could be done to show an attack by the enemy as well as by the player. Other features that could be improved is the enemy's actions on their turn as it could be expanded on in order to have more variety in it's actions.