ZenZe: A serious Platformer

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ABSTRACT
UPDATED—October 26, 2017. This mobile app aims at informing the user about different, mostly mental health issues and how to deal with them. It does so by turning various diseases into enemys that the player has to fight in a classic 2D platformer. Therefore "ZenZe" falls into the category of serious games. This paper contains information about similar applications already in the market and shows the latest research in the area of serious games in a health related context. It also illustrates the key desing of the project and describes the important parts of the implementation.

ACM Classification Keywords
Human-centered computing: Ubiquitous and mobile computing

Author Keywords
Mobile Games; Platformer; Serious Games; Health.

INTRODUCTION

Definitions
Games in the category of **serious games** are not primarily aimed to entertain the user, but to combine the fun ascpect of playful activities with a pedagogical value. **Platformers** are a game genre that make jumping between suspended platforms a integral part of the gameplay. They typically include elements of other genres like action and shooter games, leaving the player to collecting items, avoiding obstacles and battling enemies with various attacks while navigating through multiple levels.

Rationale and Goals
The basic idea behind this app is to inform the player about mental health issues and how to handle them by having the enemies in a classic platformer embody different ailments.

Whenever the user encounters a new type of disease an information screen opens up to help him understand more about this particular disease. In the course of the game the player will find usefull items that help to overcome different health issues and gain more knowledge.

To make the gameplay more challenging the status of the world changes depending on the current weather in the players location. The enemies will also reflect the mood of the weather state and drop items that are more usefull against a type of disease that only occures in another state. Thus the user is encouraged to play the game under different weather conditions.

A second goal, apart from gaining knowledge, is to relax the user through playing the game. Therefore the design aims to be not overloaded and easy on the eye.

MARKET ANALYSIS

LITERATURE REVIEW

ORIGINALITY

KEY DESIGN
The application consists of seven different views in total. An overview of those views and the transitions between them is given in figure 5. At the beginning you see a **main menu** with the options to start the game, read the instructions on how to play and adapt some settings.

The **game view** contains the current level and some vital information for the gameplay like health and available attacks. The game dynamics are as follows: The state of the game changes based on the weather. In the current configuration it supports the three states sunny, rainy and snowy. The user can move the avatar by tilting the mobile device to the left or right. To jump the left side of the screen has to be touched and to attack the right side. The height of the jump can be controlled by the length of the touch, but is limited to a maximum jumptime.

The player has one standard attack, but can gain special attacks by defeating enemies. These special attacks come in three categories reflecting the three game states and give the player a certain bonus or malus depending on the type of enemie it is used against as shown in figure 5. As these attacks are more usefull against enemies in a different state, the player is encouraged to wait for the weather status to change throughout the level.
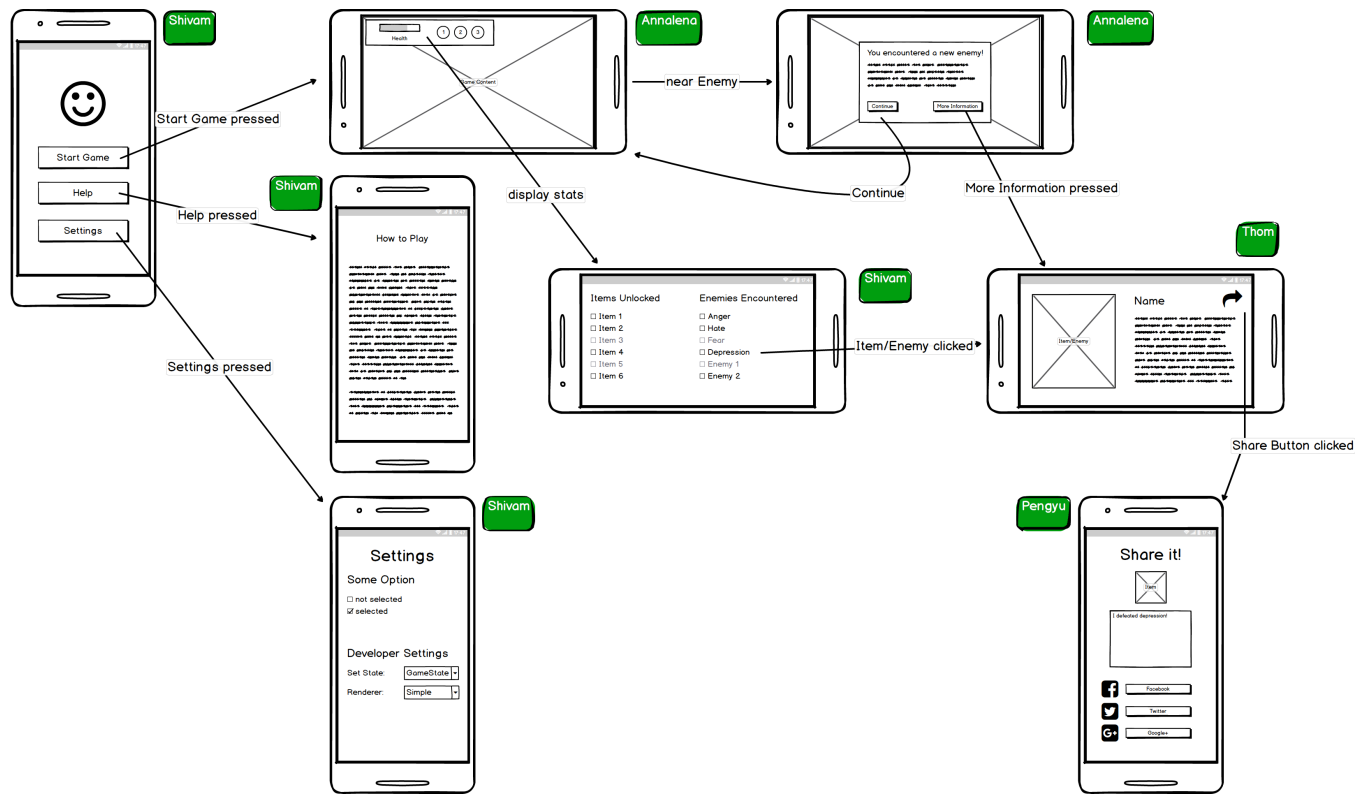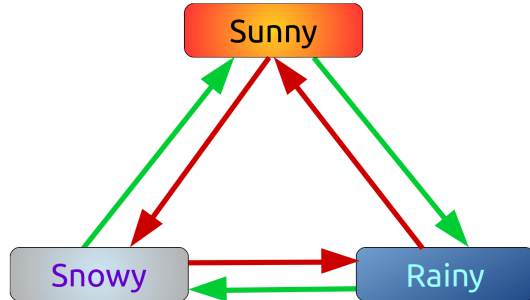
Figure 1. A storyboard of the app created with Balsamiq Mockups

During a level the player can also collect various pick-up items. Whenever a new item or enemy is encountered a message pops up giving the user the option to view more detailed information about this item or enemy. By clicking onto *some symbol next to the players health bar* the user can review statistics like which items he/she already collected.

TODO: Stats view description

TODO: Info view description

TODO: Share view description

IMPLEMENTATION

For the full source code please refer to https://github.com/Zen-Ze/ZenZe.

PROJECT CLOSEOUT

CONCLUSION

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