Game: *Valorent* (Team game)

Reading: Confronting Racial Bias in Video Games

*Valorent* is a popular 5v5 ability based competitive shooter from Riot Games. Within each match, one team aims to plant the “spike” while the other team aims to prevent or defuse it once it has been planted. Players take control of a character from a varying racial background with a distinctive personality and unique abilities. Each character, therefore, has unique roles in the battlefield, due to how their abilities support the team (offensively, defensively or in a mixture of both.)

One thing I noted as I was playing after reading the article on TechCrunch: *Confronting Racial Bias in Videogames*, was the non-token levels of diversity in the game. For example, Sage (a healer) is a Chinese looking character from China while Killjoy (a defensive expert) is a Chinese looking character from Germany. Meanwhile, Jett (a damage dealer), is a Korean from Korea. In addition, lesser seen nationalities such as Turkish, Moroccan and Swedish are portrayed. This provides a global cast of characters, who are not simply just their national stereotypes or majority race. In addition, in game dialog treats all characters as friends with one another, with digs not based off any racial or national background. This is a great example of how Riot has tackled implicit bias and have focused on inclusivity and diversity. By avoiding the examples that TechCrunch has provided on tokenisation and racial stereotypes, Riot is shown to be one of the few AAA companies that are taking responsibilities to promote racial diversity in a non-token fashion, and I do hope that others are able to do so too.