Autism Simulator

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Introduction

1.1 Selecting a project

The project started with the purpose of creating software to benefit someone with autism or ADHD or those in contact with these conditions such as family members or carers. Owing this is a very broad topic it was important to create multiple proposals and select the most useful. All proposals were put on a website and a selection was made after considering results from an online survey, conversing with professionals and people with ASD and considering systems and research currently available.

Project proposals:

Proposal name	Description	
Online diary	Online system to improve communication between	
	carers, parents, social workers, schools. Parties could	
	post questions and ask for suggestions when dealing	
	with certain behaviours as well as document the child's	
	day allowing easier identification of patterns of be-	
	haviour or problems	
Social simulator	Simulated social scenarios for autistic users to trial	
	various social situations and see possible outcomes	
Dynamic scheduler and	A planner that would re-schedule tasks when not com-	
planner app	pleted and present basic to-do lists with tasks broken	
	down into manageable chunks	
Environment app	Phone app aimed to encourage children to look and	
	question their environment	
Autism simulator	A 3D virtual environment where the user plays as a	
	child with autism and can thus experience some of the	
	obstacles faced through a visual/game environment	

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was anonymously completed by six people in total and included people with ASD/ADHD, professionals, carers and parents and was compiled with both qualitative and quantitative questions.

- 1. Please give some information about yourself, for example if you have ${\rm ASD/ADHD}$ or are a professional/carer.
- 2. Please select and rank three proposals you feel are the best
- 3. Please explain reasons for selection

Results

Below summarises some of the comments given in the feedback questionnaire as well as considerating factors from other areas

Proposal name	oposal name General reasons for/against		
Online diary	For: Cross communication between doctors,		
	teachers, parents and carers which is often		
	problematic with information missed. Against:		
	Good in theory but may not be practical due		
	to data protection. Relies too heavily on par-		
	ents/carers being able to read emails or noti-		
	fications. May be difficult for some schools to		
	gain access to wifi.		
Social simulator	Against: Big project given the time-frame.		
	Other companies working on a similar concept.		
	Much research on this topic already. Convey-		
	ing 'social stories' could be a better approach to		
	deal with context specific situations.		
Dynamic scheduler and	Against: least unique proposal, many other		
planner app	planners available. For: No planners available		
	that specifically target planning/executive func-		
	tioning difficulties within ADHD and Autism		
Environment app	Against: Hard to back with literature. Dif-		
	ficult concept to understand(possibly not ex-		
	plained well) For: Least amount of implemen-		
	tation work. Could be simply but effective.		
Autism simulator	Against: Big project given the time frame, no		
	previous simulators which can be drawn from.		
	For: Most unique and popular idea. Misunder-		
	standing from the general public is a big prob-		
	lem. Could be extremely helpful for teacher's		
	training.		

After considering feedback from the questionnaire, further feedback from the autism community, plausibility given the time constraints, usefulness to the community, originality and current skill-set the 'Autism simulator project was selected.

Literature review

2.1 What is Autism?

Autism is a life-long condition which affects how an individual may perceive and communicate to the world around[2]. It is currently diagnosed by the presence of atypicalities in three domains(collectively known as the triad of impairments): social imagination, social communication, social interaction. In addition to these are non-diagnostic but highly prevalent features such as sensory abnormalities, information processing difficulties and prosopagnosia[?].

As a spectrum disorder, the range and severity of symptoms are completely unique to each person and as such it can be quite difficult to diagnose. For those unaware of the condition and the more hidden aspects, it can be difficult to accept as a genuine problem for parents to seek support or sympathies from the public for behaviours such as meltdowns which appear like tantrums.

For those with autism on the high-functioning side of the spectrum (i.e Aspergers) their difficulties can be less obvious; they may develop superb language skills but have difficulty using these in a social context, leading to unintentional social offence or ridicule. Difficulties with social imagination and theory of mind can make it difficult to see another person perspective and thus understanding why they have been perceived in a way far from their intentions is made challenging. In contrast, those on the low-functioning side of the spectrum may have little to no verbal language and prefer to communicate using visual mediums such as PECS.

With some of the disadvantages that may come with having autism, there are reported strengths as a result of having a unique cognitive style for example a talent for spotting details[9] or having an impeccable memory of facts in relation to their 'special interests'.

Public perceptions of autism as discussed later in more detail greatly differs. Aspergers syndrome has only been included in the DMV since 1991 and as later seen from interviews of those with late diagnosis, it was still hard for their own parents to accept it as a condition and tangible explanation and not simply an excuse for "bad behaviour". In the last decade there has appeared to be improvements in public perception and understanding of autism and other cognitive differences such as dyslexia and adhd, but there is still much left to be desired.

- add a bit of information/brief introduction on repetitive behaviours

2.2 Triad of Impairments

There are three key areas of difficulty that people with autism share.

Social communication

People with autism have difficulty with verbal and non-verbal language such as body language or tone of voice. Language tends to be interpreted literally and thus metaphors, sarcasm and jokes can be difficult to understand[2]. An example of literal interpretation is where a person with autism misunderstood the question "What's up?" and proceeded to look up at the ceiling. Other communication difficulties include echolalic language (repeating language said to them) or speaking excessively about their 'Special interests' without detecting that the other party may be bored[2]. Although people with autism will usually understand what is being said to them they may prefer to use visual symbols such as PECS(Picture Exchange Communication System).

Due to literal language interpretation, it is important that language communicated is clear, concise and unambiguous, one of the needs the public were most unaware of [5].

Most things I take at face value, without judgement or interpreting them. I look at them in a concrete, literal and very individual way. [6]

Social interaction

Autistic people have to understand scientifically what non-autistic people already understand instinctively - Mark Segar, Autistic Survival Guide.

Many people with autism have difficulty giving eye contact, one person described eye contact as "physically painful". By not giving eye contact, it may cause social queues such as facial expressions to be missed, potentially leading to inappropriate responses. Lack of eye contact could be perceived as rude or not paying attention to the speaker, causing possible unintentional offence. Other social interaction difficulties reported include trouble understanding social rules[2], for example why people say 'thankyou'.

Social imagination

Social imagination deficits result in difficulties 'Putting themselves in another person's shoes', also known as 'Theory of mind'. Other resulting difficulties include problems predicting events or identifying possible dangers such as running across a road and consequently, new situations can be difficult.[2]

Social imagination difficulties can make it hard for a child with autism to engage in imaginative play, preferring to act out scenes from films identically which can make it difficult for other children interacting with them if they prefer to deviate or explore a new plot.[2]

2.3 Information processing

It is suggested that people with autism process information holistically, a theory known as Gestalt perception. Gestalt perception is posited to be a cause of fragmented or distorted perceptions in people with autism[6]; processing information as a whole instead of in parts make it difficult to drawn connections and thus make predictions about the world. "I had always known that the world was fragmented. My mother was a small and a texture, my father was a tone, and my older brother was something, which was moving about" [12].

It is argued that people with autism perceive the world more accurately because their inferences are less dependent on previous experience but a negative consequence of this is being less able to filter irrelevant stimulus [9]. Difficulties filtering information can cause problems differentiating between background and foreground noise and so in a room with many people talking it may be hard to tune into an individual conversation [9].

Delays in information processing are a common feature in autism. In extreme cases, it can take weeks, months or even years to process information and one of the reasons given to the cause lye in the theory of gestalt perception. Processing information as a whole leads to over-selectivity and thus even familiar environments are looked upon as entirely new and thus one small change to the environment can cause a large amount of distress[6]. This would offer a suggestion as to why people with autism have a strong desire for strict routine. Questioned asked to a person with autism should be given ample time for a response, if their process of thought is interrupted it can cause a complete disruption and the individual has to start this process again[6]. As a result of distorted perception, it may take someone with autism longer to adjust to their surroundings.

Distortions are reported to become worse in the state of nervous over-arousal and information overloads[6] and thus a cycle of problems occurs; the more stressed a person with autism may be, the more these distortions occur and the harder it is to make sense of the world, consequently resulting in even more stress.

2.3.1 Sensory processing

While social and communication difficulties are core symptoms and most commonly associated with autism in the public view, "Many people with Asperger syndrome/High functioning autism define their sensory processing problems as more disabling than the deficits in communication/social behaviour[6]. Sensory processing differences in autism are highly reported, 81% of respondents reported differences in visual perception, 87% in hearing, 77% in tactile perception, 30% in taste and 56% in smell [13]. Senses play a vital role in how we model and perceive the world around us so if one senses the world in a differently, their view and resulting behaviours will also be different.

Senses in autism can be hyper(more sensitive), hypo(less sensitive), agnostic or fluctuate between hyper and hypo[9]. As with all areas of autism, sensory atypicalities differ and are unique to each individual, however, these fluctuations make it an area of particular challenge for carers and for a person with autism to identify or predict troubling sources before they occur. Fluctuations can be described as a 'FM radio that is not exactly tuned on the station when you are driving down the freeway. Sometimes the world comes in clearly and at other times it does not" [6].

When a sensory channel is in a state of agnosia, although able to see, one may not be able to assign it to any meaning. The result is one can become 'mind-blind', or 'mind-deaf' where the person can appear as if they are genuinely deaf.

Catering with for the many different sensory needs for many different children can be very demanding. In the classroom if a child is hypo-visual and feels a need to stimulate their visual senses by constantly switching on and off a light, in contrast to another child in the class being hyper sensitive, the result could lead to a sensory or information overload (this was commented on in one of the interviews from the teacher...).

Below are some examples of the effects someone with autism may experience depending on the state of their sensory channel:

// (below is probably not much use at the moment, but useful for later justifying the game character's traits and responses to the environment if I can structure it in properly...)

Sense channel	Hyper	Нуро	
Vision	Vision may be magnified	Attracted to light or fasci-	
		nated with bright colors	
Auditory	Sounds are amplified. Temple	Is attracted to sounds/noises	
	Grandin a write with autism		
	described her ears as like 'mi-		
	crophones'		
Tactile Clothes may hurt. One person		Enjoys being hugged or seeks	
	with autism described clothe	pressure by crawling under	
	labels as feeling like 'barbed	heavy objects.	
	wire'. May not like being		
	hugged.		
Taste/Smells	Smells or texture of foods may	Mouths and licks objects	
	be intolerable.		
Vestibular	Difficulty with walking or	Spins, runs round and round,	
	crawling on uneven or unsta-	rocks back and forth	
	ble surfaces.		

Sensory processing patterns can be categorised into four-types[13]:

- 1. Sensory avoidance pattern: Low sensory threshold.
- 2. Sensory seeking patterns: A high sensory threshold and make seek out stimulus.
- 3. Sensory sensitivity patterns: Low thresholds and may respond to stimulus more intensely or for a longer period of time.
- 4. Low registration: High sensory threshold, may appear not to detect incoming sensory information and also show a lack of responsiveness.

Correlation between sensory difficulties and difficult temperament characteristics such as activity level, adaptability to changing context, quality of mood, threshold of responsiveness, intensity of reaction and persistence [8].

2.3.2 Sensory and Information overload

When the amount of information required to be processed comes in large volumes and too quickly to processes it can result in someone with autism experiencing an 'Information' or 'Sensory' overload. Overloads can result in hypersensitivity causing lights becoming brighter or sounds becoming louder. Visual/auditory causes of overloads can cause tactile sensitivity and so being touched might be painful whilst experiencing a sensory overload could possibly be painful. Donna Williams reports that "sensory overload caused by bright lights, fluorescent lights, colours, and patterns makes the body react as if being attacked or bombarded, resulting in such physical symptoms as headaches, anxiety, panic attacks or aggression" [9].

The resulting behaviours again differ for each individual and are discussed in the following section.

2.3.3 Resulting behaviours

Meltdowns

If a sensory overload is not dispersed quickly enough it can lead to a full sensory shut-down in which all senses enter a state of agnosia and the person with autism withdraws from the world. Another reaction to a sensory overload is entering a state of 'fight or flight', running away from the source without any sense of danger, or exhibiting temper-like tantrums or self injurious behaviour. These behaviours can be collectively known as 'meltdowns'; the individual experiencing them feels a loss of control. Meltdowns can be caused by not only by sensory, but an emotional and cognitive overload.

Mono-processing

Mono-processing is described as an involuntary response to information overloads where all but a few sensory channels are closed. Vision may become hyper-sensitive whilst but the individual may not be able consciously hear. Subconsciously however, this information may be absorbed and processed later, further increasing the information processing delay.

Unusual fears

It was found that 40% of children with autism had unusual fears in comparison to 0-5% of typical children, the vast majority of these were made up of mechanical objects. Children with autism have higher levels of anxiety than typical children[7] and increased anxiety from being faced with more fears on a day to day basis will only increase this and further impact on functioning. For example, not leaving the house because it's cloudy, or not taking a shower because of the noise from the drain, not going to school due to being afraid the fire alarm will sound. The top five reported unusual fears were toilets, elevators, vacuum cleaners, thunderstorms, tornadoes. The cause of many of these unusual fears in children with autism are thought to be related to sensory perception differences[7].

Repetitive and restricted behaviours

// Note: find information on 'attractive stimulus' and Sensory soothing objects. Relate it more to content that can be use as justification for simulator choices.

Repetitive and restrictive behaviours are highly prevalent in people with autism and are thought to be caused by:

- 1. Needing to induce sensory sensory stimulation[18].
- 2. As a reaction to sensory stimulation[18].

Repetitive behaviours and sensory issues have been found to be positive correlated[19][?]. High levels of restricted behaviours were associated with less severe levels of depression, indicating that such behaviours may act as a mechanism to protect against or be a direct cause[?]. Those with low-functioning autism were more likely to engage in repetitive behaviours such as 'stimming', repetitive manipulation of objects and self-injurious behaviour in contrast to high-functioning autism having restricted interests, language or attachment to objects[?]. People with high-functioning autism

were reported to have higher levels of anxiety with restrictive behaviours thought to a developed coping mechanism[?].

93% of children with autism were reported to be distressed by change [7]. With an ever changing perceptions of the environment, routine can be their only sense of familiarity and reassurance. Interestingly it is reported that people with autism can have more problems with small changes in a familiar environment in comparison to entirely new situations[9].

2.4 Effect of Autism

Social interactions are unpredictable following no set guidelines or rules and differing from culture to culture. For one to feel part of a group we need positive reinforcement that our actions fit within that group. Continuity helps us build feelings of safety and security which can be transferred to social trust, allowing us to predict the behaviours of people around us and reduce uncertainty. For many of us, we take for granted our innate ability to know when and how to communicate, but for someone with autism they have to learn scientifically what we have learnt naturally. Receiving negative feedback in social encounters can result in feelings of embarrassment or ridicule, threatening an individuals ontological security which has further possible consequences; a negative self-image, the world and future.

It is proposed that it is our moral duty to be compassionate and sympathetic towards the group, to monitor our facial expressions and reactions as to not cause offence. This can be problematic in two ways - if the group have little understanding of someone who is different the group cannot adjust to the individual. Likewise if the individual struggles to understand the workings of the group, they cannot adjust and consequently feel an outcast.

One person with Aspergers syndrome(a form of high-functioning autism) it as like "living in a bubble or living on the other side of a plate glass window to everybody else. It is like you are just a spectator in this thing" [20]. In interviews conducted by Sara Ryan and Ulla Raisanen (2008) three themes emerged: not belonging, trying to fit in and the need for safe spaces. Inspite of this, interviews showed their desire was not to rid themselves of Aspergers but to simply fit into mainstream society. Interviewees were extremely aware of their differences but inspite of desperately trying to learn the rules and social norms it was often felt their efforts were not reciprocated by neurotypical people.

Of course, one solution to aid those on the Autistic spectrum to fit into main-stream society would be increase public awareness, acceptance and understanding. However, explaining emotions and feelings has proven to be extremely challenging for some individuals which makes such possibilities difficult to achieve. The act of trying to express themselves with words was described as painful [20].

2.4.1 Effects on children with ASD

- Focus on ASD and pre-school - effects of difficulty with understanding children. Actually, might it be worth getting some comments on parents of children with ASD who don't have it themselves? From some of the presentations I've been too, not being able to understand their children in order to help was expressed as heart breaking.

2.4.2 Effects on families

- this probably links into public perception...

2.5 Impact and Prevalence

Figures drawn from the 2011 census estimate that 1.1% of the population have Autism[2]. This figure appears to be rising across the globe as awareness and understanding of the condition increases alongside broadening criteria[1], Aspergers syndrome is one example addition and which has only been a formal diagnosis since 1990. Early counts of people with autism spectrum conditions were less than 10 in 10,000, this has grown to a new prediction of 110 in 10,000 in the USA [1].

It is estimated that only 22% of teachers have been trained specifically in autism and the majority of training given is typically one to four hours. 54% of all teachers in England do not feel they have had adequate training to teach children with autism.[3] 30% of parents of children with autism in mainstream education are satisfied with the level of understanding of autism across the school[4]. 23% of parents are dissatisfied with SENCO's level of understanding of autism.

Figures obtained show that approximately 40% of children with autism have been bullied at school. 1 in 5 children with autism have been excluded from school [4] and only 24.4% of pupils with autism achieved 5A*-C GCSEs in 2010/2011 in comparison to 58.2% of the overall population[3], a surprising figure owing people with autism are deemed to have above average intelligence, indicating difficulties at school may be a reason for not for-filling potential.

Danny would not have been excluded if the school had understood the difference between 'normal' behaviour and Aspergers syndrome. They inflamed situations because they didn't understand that my son finds physical contact, or being touched by teachers, really difficult [4]

If I could make one change...I would ensure compulsory, thorough training about autism and how it affects learning is given to all school staff. [4]

2.6 Public perception

Although there is some level of awareness of autism in the public domain, there is still much left to be desired. A survey carried out by the National Autistic Society showed that 92% of respondents had heard of Autism but only 48% had heard of Aspergers syndrome which has less obvious difficulties. Most were able to identify key characteristics of autism such as difficulty communicating or making friends. Other common characteristics such as a need for 'clear unambiguous instructions' and sensory hypersensitivity were less known[5].

If I could make one change... every person who comes into contact with my daughter would have some form of training in autism.[4]

2.7 Previous work

2.7.1 Education software

How other education software can be used to help children with understanding autism or general learning. Include information from the paper Alyssa sent.

2.7.2 Other Autism simulations

In Febrary 2013 a playable 3D virtual environment depicting sensory difficulties in autism was released. The simulation allowed the user to walk around a playground with other children who are all identical and if the user gets too close to them, visual distortions occur and high-pitched sounds are played. The simulator from the public perspective was very well received and thought as a good step in increasing awareness and understanding of autism. From those with autism the feedback was mixed with some commenting that the portrayal was not an accurate representation and whereas to some it was which highlights the breath of experiences these individuals have.

In addition to playable simulators video representations have been produced both by charities and by people with autism, mostly depicting sensory differences. ** Do I put video links to these? Or write a brief explanation of each with 1-2 pictures?

- simulators that have been used to convey other disabilities if I can find them...Perhaps offering an argument as to why simulators may not be a good idea/useful. For example it could give misinformation if people take them too literally and think that all people with autism experience things in this way.

2.8 Other

Just for now, some information that might be of use to put somewhere, not sure where. Not sure whether to use this...or where, but it's quite a powerful quote...

The overriding theme was a desire to fit into mainstream society and 'get' its tacit rules. Given this desire and the efforts participants described to try to achieve this, future research might explore or question the moral obligation of the rest of society to facilitate and support the inclusion of people with AS in mainstream life. [20]

Action to increase understanding of autism across the whole school and to provide support with social activities can make a huge difference to whether a child with autism feels included at school.[4]

"if you deal with 'challenging behaviours' in autism, do not focus on the iceberg; do understand the underlying causes of the behaviours and try to develop an approach not based on symptoms but on prevention. Challenging behaviours are caused by problems of communication, social understanding, by different imagination, by sensory problems...Therefore try to understand autism 'from within'. It is easier said than done, because it requires an enormous effort of imagination: we need t learn to put ourselves in the brains of autistic people and then we will understand better through their eyes the obstacles in their attempts to survive among us" - Theo peeters [6]

It doesn't appear that mainstream teachers have had access to training. The fundamental issues relating to communication, behaviour and language disorder continue to be misinterpreted as 'bad behaviour', 'not listening' and so on.[4]

Design process

As the project selected has a very large scope it was important to identify the most important goals and decide on restrictions. Autism as previously described comes with a vast amount of difficulties, some of which may be too complex or time consuming to convey(such as social difficulties). Owing the vast environments a child can be exposed to on a day to day basis(school, work, parks, etc), a house was chosen as this is the place we will most often be and with understanding the pitfalls and hazards around the house for a person with autism, understanding could then be generalised for the player to other environments. Once the environment was selected, interviews and a consultation from the LAER group aided narrowing which autism difficulties may be the most important.

3.1 Interviews

Interviews were carried out with five people from varying backgrounds and exposure to autism:

**** what is the best way to convey interview information? Do you know if the previous method used in a prior report was acceptable?

- 1. Candidate one: teacher of a school for autistic children
- 2. Candidate two: special needs teacher of a school with varying disabilities.
- 3. Candidate three: parent of a teenager with Aspergers syndrome and ADD. Described themselves as neurodiverse having severe sensory difficulties but less social ones.
- 4. Candidate four: parent of a child with Aspergers syndrome and is themselves neurodiverse. Candidate describes having high sensory issues and less social ones.
- 5. Candidate five: person with high-functioning autism whom has higher social difficulties and less sensory.

3.2 Difficulties chosen

Following interviews and reviewing literature available, the following aspects of autism selected are:

1. Sensory atypicalities: selected as the primary difficulty to convey due to their prevalence and hidden nature which is less known to the public

- 2. Meltdowns: As these can be caused by sensory atypicalities and it is important to convey to the user the impact of difficulties, not just the difficulties themselves.
- 3. Special interests: A means in the game to 'soothe' the character and counteract meltdowns.
- 4. Ambiguous instructions and processing delays: commented as a problem in the classroom.

3.3 Game design

3.3.1 Autism aspects

What aspects of autism and discussion/ideas of how they will be conveyed and why it will be conveyed in this way/what the visualisation will represent. What was chosen and why it was chosen. Mock ups.

3.3.2 Design of sensory system

3.3.3 Character

The character the user will play as. What difficulties they have/ what age they are.

3.3.4 Tool selection

For the first version of the simulator a game engine will be used, allowing focus to be directed on the higher level aspects and quicker development. Blender will be used as the modelling tool as it is freely available, powerful and well supported with lots of tutorials and documentation.

Game engines

** Put this in a table when I care to find out why Latex won't put bullet points in tables! Grr.

Unity

Unity is one of the most popular game engines available with good support for models. Unfortunately the licence costs 1500 and the free version comes with limitations.

Advantages: popular game engine to use. Quick development with scripting. Phone app support.

Disadvantages: Interface heavy, limited to just scripting, costs, good computer required to run it efficiently.

JMonkey

JMonkey is a java 3d game engine that has been in development around for a few years. It has an extremely active and helpful community, allows complete customisation and holds little limitation being open source.

Advantages: Provides development environment with scene graph. Active community where you often get responses from developers themselves. Java is quick to develop in. Support for online use and phone apps.

Disadvantages: Java is not seen as the preferred language for graphics or games.

Panda3D

Originally created by Disney, Panda3D is an engine which can be used via python or C++ although support is mostly for python.

Advantages: Quick to develop for with a choice in language. Good community with lots of tools.

Disadvantages: No phone app and limited online support. Lack of documentation.

Ogre3D

Ogre3d is primarily a graphics rendering engine and but it does have additional plugins such as 'physics' or drawing interfaces.

Advantages: Lots of modules and plugins. Powerful and used commercially. Active support community.

Disadvantages: Longer development process. Lack of tools such as a scene graph. No support for putting online.

JMonkey was chosen due to it's active community, speed of development/development environment and ease to put online. An ability to put the project online will increase availability and hopefully, feedback. Although Java is not perceived to be the ideal programming language to be creating a 3D environment, JMonkey offers far more advantages that outweigh this and should allow the project to be created in ample time.

3.3.5 Story boards

As a way to navigate and prompt the user to inspect and learn about their environment, the concept of "Missions" arose. Missions are effectively tasks given to the user such as "Obtain a drink from the kitchen" and the user is required to complete these tasks whilst circumventing any obstacles which may cause sensory overload or meltdown.

For the proto-type version of the game, two tasks were given. To get dressed and proceed to obtaining a drink from the kitchen.

Prototype

4.1 Implementation

What was in the prototype. Overall concept and pictures of house.

4.1.1 Technical

- Explanation of missions interface
- Scenes
- object states
- player class
- gui
- action manager
- Class diagrams

4.1.2 Autism aspects

Which aspects of autism were conveyed and what the final results looked like.

4.1.3 Sensory system

- meltdowns
- contentment
- sensory level
- ${\sf -}$ filters

- 4.1.4 Interface
- 4.2 Evaluation
- 4.2.1 Expert feedback
- 4.2.2 User feedback
- 4.3 Improvements planned

First version

5.1 Storyboards

5.2 House design

Following a need to compartmentalise the previous house environment in order to contend with performance issues, a new and more structured plan of the house was created:

Room	Object	Action	Game description	Effects
Bedroom	Dinosaur	Play: Increases contentment by playing with it	People with autism have special interests. These special interests help with xyz	
	Touchside lamp	Turn on/off: Can slowly adjust the light so it does not go from on-¿off too quickly. Contentment goes up when the light is turned off slowly		If the light goes on-; off too quickly, contentment increases slightly but then rapidly declines. The room looks strange/scary as eyes have not yet adjusted and it becomes clearer and contentment stops decreasing
	Collections of items(could be on shelf)		Explains that children with autism have an obsession/need to complete collections	
	Wardrobe	Action: get dressed	"Ouch that hurts": sandpa- per explanation	
	Spinny object			All noise blurs out. Calm can be felt
Upstairs hallway	Fluorescent light	Turn on/off. Same effect as bedside lamp	Explanation about fluorescent lights. Effects are like ten camera flashes in your eyes	Lights flicker and cause a 'high' effect on sensory system. Disorientation if exposed too long. Put a plug next to it and prompt player to turn off light at plug.
	Mirror	"Look into"	I don't recognise this person. Not normal having yourself peering back at you	Causes dizzy/disorientation because it is an odd image to see.
	Wallpaper	2	1	Make wallpaper material move and cause dizziness/sensory effects.
Downstairs hallway	Flowers			They can either smell good or bad.
	Door bell	Automated: on/off	When it is a nicer sound 'thoughts'	If player rings it it is fine. If

Room	Object	Action	Game Description	Effects
Kitcher	n Washing	Turn on/off	Could become trans-	Noisy, need to move
	machine		fixed with spinning na-	away.
			ture	
	Kitchen		Particle emitters to	Reduces contentment
	sides		show germs/smells	
	Frying pan			Sounds, smells, content-
				ment reduction
Living	TV	Turn on/off	Description indicating	TV being too loud may
room			that child may think	hurt.
			items on TV are iden-	
			tical to what they will	
			get	
Bathro	o ıB ath	Empty bath		Horrible/scary noises.
	Tooth			Brushing teeth causes
	brush			contentment to reduce.

5.3 System changes

5.3.1 Overview

Followed by more technical sections on: - rewrite of scenes.

- introduction of gamestate manager.
- $\boldsymbol{\cdot}$ rewrite of sensory system.
- GUI changes

Formative evaluation

Final version

Summative evaluation

Conclusion

- Discussion, i.e things that could have been done better. - Future improvements

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