

An Introduction and Disclaimer

Generative AI (AI referring to Large Language Models (LLM's) such as ChatGPT or text-to-image generation techniques such as Latent Diffusion, such as Stable Diffusion) is a potentially transformative set of technologies and techniques that use the increasing processing power of modern high performance computing to quickly generate human-like output, in the form of either text (in the case of ChatGPT) or images (in the case of Stable Diffusion).

This technology may be able to push humanity, if developed in the correct way, towards new understanding and boundaries. It also has the current capability to invasively push humanity out of the creative processes in favour of quick and cheap generated content to service the ongoing requirements of the generation of infinite growth.

Before I get into the main body of this report, I feel that I can not continue past this point without stating that, as a creative, I have a very strong, negative opinion of what is currently referred to as 'Generative AI' or 'AI' technologies. The disregard shown by the companies making and raising enormous quantities of money (Browne, 2023) off the back of a near uncountable number of creatives whose work is being used without permission (Belci, 2024) or compensation is, in my opinion, highly immoral and should be illegal.

Consequentialism

Consequentialism as an ethical framework is a methodology for judging whether something is right by looking at its consequences (McCombs School of Business, 2020).

Consequentialism has fundamentally close ties with utilitarianism (they can be considered to be subsets of each other, depending on which way you approach the argument), while the methods by which Utilitarians and Consequentialists determine if something is right or not, both views hold to the idea that the morally right action is the one that causes the most good. It should be noted that this does not mean an action that causes a small amount of good in a large number of people, but failed to provide the same good to a small number of people who lose much more than the greater body of people gain. (Sinnott-Armstrong, 2019)

For the purposes of this article, this will form the basis by which I analyse the uses of generative AI in games.

Potential Uses of Generative AI in Games

The Finals:

In *The Finals* (released 7th December, 2023), AI voice synthesis has been used to generate dialogue and contextual barks (short voice lines used during combat to add to the immersion of the game) for the in game announcers and the player characters (Carter, 2023). During a podcast interview in 2023, one of the audio directors, Andreas Almström, claims that “it gets us far enough in terms of quality” and “it allows us to be extremely reactive to new ideas and keeping things really really fresh”, and only using human voice acting for sounds that aren’t found in everyday language (Embark Studios, 2023).

Embark Studios clearly believe that the use of ‘AI’ voice synthesis techniques is the way forwards, although they claim that “making games without actors isn’t an end goal.” (Middler, 2023).

There are a few ways that you can, taking a consequentialist view of the world, look at the use of AI generated voice lines.

The game was initially very popular, with a peak player count of 242,399 concurrent players (*THE FINALS* - *Steam Charts*, n.d.), consequently the game brought good to a lot of people (as they were playing it). This argument, however, suffers from a significant drop in player numbers over the next few months, losing approximately 83% of it’s player base in 3 months.

Another argument that can be made about the use of AI generated voice lines in *The Finals* is that it has shown to some members of the game development world that the vast majority of players do not care about the use of generative AI in such a consumer facing part of the game as voice acting. The consequences of this could be devastating to the voice acting community. Voice acting is a profession, a livelihood for many people, and the impact of companies turning to generative AI to produce voice lines “in hours rather than months” (according to Almström (Embark Studios, 2023)) would be devastating.

Some members of the voice acting community have spoken out against the statement by Almström. Gianni Matragrano, a voice actor (IMDB, n.d.) said in a tweet that “We are constantly banging out rush order sessions for like, within a day or two.”, going on to claim that professional grade voice over costs “less than a grand total” for “a couple [of] recording sessions” (Matragrano, 2023), which indicates that there could be fast turn around voice acting done.

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