

Architecture Design

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May 20, 2016

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1 Introduction

In the Virtual Humans for Serious Gaming context project each group will develop a cognitive agent. Each cognitive agent will represent a role in a Tygron game, making it possible to run a simulation with only agents. In this document the architecture of our product for the Virtual Humans context project will be described. It should give insight in the design of our system. First we will identify our design goals, which should represent the things that are important for this project. Second, the software architecture views are given, including a description about the subsystem decomposition, the hardware/software mapping, persistent data management and the concurrency. The last section contains a glossary, which will explain the definition of the terms that might be unfamiliar to certain readers.

1.1 Design goals

In this section, a more detailed description about the design goals is given. Each subsection includes an explanation about manageability, performance, scalability, reliability, securability or availability.

Manageability

In this project, multiple groups work together to maintain the same code for the connector. It is important that the groups keep this code manageable, enabling every group to make modifications as needed, without breaking other parts of the code.

Performance

From our previous MAS project, which was a project for making agents in the first person shooter game Unreal Tournament, we know that GOAL code can get really slow when you do not take performance into consideration while coding. Although there is a new version of GOAL which have solved some performance issues, the design should be as efficient as possible to prevent these kind of problems.

Scalability

Although the development of our agent is based on just one scenario in this project, there is a chance it will be used in larger scenarios and the design should be in such a way that this would be possible if ever needed.

Reliability

The agent that will be developed by our project group will be used to replace a player that is absent in a game. It is important that this agent is reliable. If during a play session with multiple users the agent fails and the game has to be restarted this is not only frustrating for the players, but can also cost a lot of money since some of the players are well paid employees.

Securability

The agents that are developed by the project groups login to the system of Tygron and have a direct connection to their server during a game. The direct connection could give some problems in terms of security, this should be taken in consideration while designing the system.

Availability

There should be a working version at all times, so that when a player is missing for a game the game can be played anyway. If an agent is not available, it could cause an unplayable game, which results in a not proper end result.

2 Software architecture views

This section describes the software architecture views, it explains the subsystem decomposition, the hardware/software mapping, persistent data management and the concurrency.

2.1 Subsystem decomposition

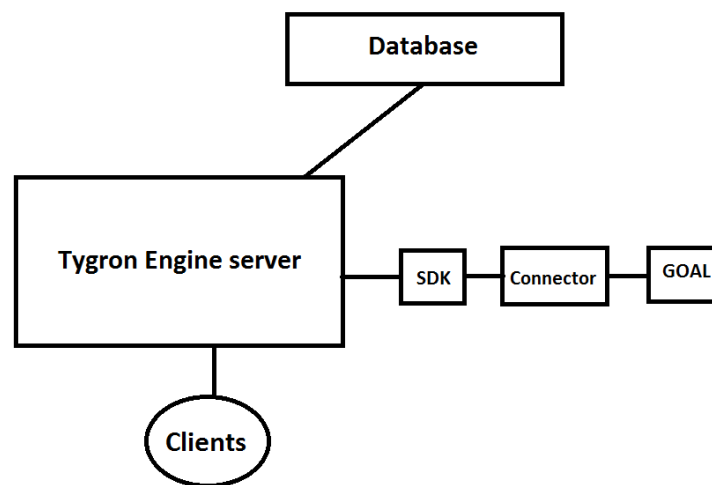


Figure 1: Diagram of the Tygron Engine connected to the database and the GOAL agent.

The architecture is divided into different subsystems. It consists of the database, Tygron engine server, several clients and several agents. In this section we will explain what each part is and does.

- **The Database**

The database in the system is used to save all kinds of data that is used to build the environment. This data contains for example the roads, buildings, rivers, etc.

- **The Tygron Engine Server (TES)**

The Tygron Engine server is used to serve all the data to the correct clients and agents. The engine is an online 3D project software for urban planners, architects and engineers. It is a tool that streamlines the planning process and substantially reduces the time and costs involved in urban projects according to the Tygron website.

- **A Client**

A client is a human interacting with the Tygron Engine Software. There can be multiple clients per *TES*. The client can be a stakeholder and play the game according the strategy the stakeholder has in real live.

- **The SDK**

The SDK (Software Development Kit) is used to connect agents to the *TES*.

- **An Agent**

An agent is a computer controlled entity that acts like a client. There can be multiple agents per *TES*. The agent can replace a client.

2.2 Hardware/software mapping

In this section the hardware/software mapping Tygron uses will be explained, as well as the way our agent will be connected to this.

2.2.1 Tygron

Tygron has its own servers, from which it communicates with all other entities. For each group of users, there is a separate server which contains the world that is used for the game and which this group of users can work on. The general Tygron server knows these other servers and will redirect the user to the particular server. So, when a customer wants to connect to Tygron, it will first connect to this general server. Also, this general server has contact with other servers which are not connected to Tygron. For example, when a customer wants to build a part of a city to play on, the general server will connect to some other servers that give information about this place, like where the buildings are and what the use of those buildings is.

2.2.2 Our project

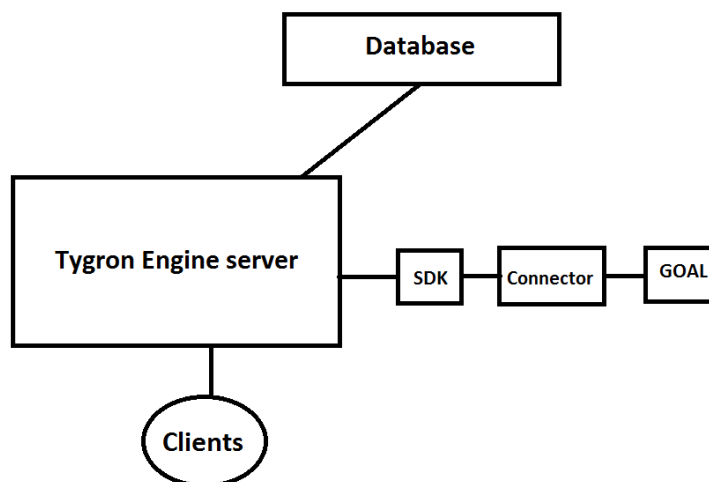


Figure 2: Diagram of the Tygron Engine connected to the database and the GOAL agent.

In this project there is an own server with all TU Delft students. But there is another thing that needs to be different: the way the connection is set up to that server. Since there are no humans, but agents to play the game, those agents need to connect in some way to the server. To do so, there is

a connector between our instance and the server. This connector will use the goal code that is written by our group and will translate this into actions in the game. This way the agent can play the game. Figure 2 illustrates this.

2.3 Persistent data management

The data management for our project envelops multiple parts. We have a part where the data for the game is stored and the data we need for running the agent. The first part is done by Tygron. When a new project is created it is stored in the Tygron database to which the clients can connect via the Tygron server. Any changes made in a session are then updated in the database, which are visible to all the other clients. Figure 2 shows the diagram of the Tygron Engine connected to the database and the GOAL agent.

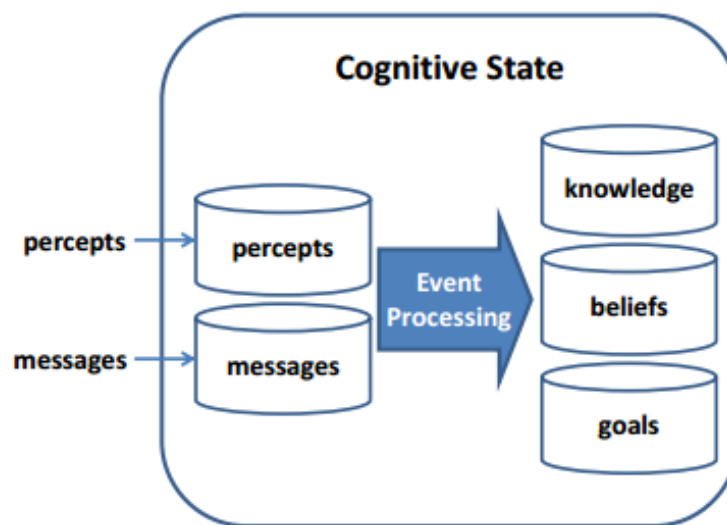


Figure 3: Updating the agent's database.

In GOAL the data used by the agent is stored in multiple databases. The agent has a knowledge base which is the same for every environment that it might find itself in. This data is simply stored as GOAL code in the agent's GOAL files. The rest of the data that the agent uses is dynamic and its state is updated constantly according to the situation that the agent is currently in. Our agent maintains two different databases of facts. One database called the goal base consists of targets the agent wants to achieve. The other database is called the belief base and consists of facts that the agent believes are true (now). Figure 3 (?, ?) shows how the databases of the agent are updated.

2.4 Concurrency

Each group in the Virtual Humans for Serious Gaming context project will develop a cognitive agent, so there will be five roles and therefore multiple agents. An agent itself does not make use of concurrency, but all the agents together will run parallel and are running in one environment. When there are multiple agents running, there is concurrency. When we connect to an online server in the end, the overall system uses some networking, which also causes some concurrency. A crucial thing to find solutions for city design and development projects in a game is communication between the agents. The agents have to be able to communicate and find a solution together that fulfill the goals of the agents as much as possible.

3 Glossary

Agent

An agent is an autonomous entity which observes through sensors and acts upon an environment using actuators and directs its activity towards achieving goals.

Engine

An engine is a type of software that generates source code or markup and produces elements that begin another process, allowing real-time maintenance of software requirements.

Connector

A software solution that enables the GOAL agents to connect to the SDK of the Tygron environment.