PV255 – Game Development I
Playtesting Session
Autumn 2022

Goals of playtesting

- To try carefully "observe" how others are playing your game and gather feedback about the game. Also, you will (probably) gain some experience in emotional handling, e.g., if players will "break" your game in a way you didn't even imagine ;-)
- To try "commented playthrough" with the "think aloud" principle (see details).
- Enjoy the games of your colleagues ;-)

Organization of play-testing:

There will be three roles: "Player", "Observer," and "Teacher". Each person in the room will play one of these roles at the time. The assignment for the Teacher role is fixed already (sorry for that :-), but most students will be swapping between Player and Observer roles.

- **Players** will be testing games and giving comments and feedback.
- **Observers** will be watching **Players** and will gather and write down feedback. Please write everything down - there is a high probability that you will receive more feedback than you can remember.
- **Teachers** will be just additional, silent observers - we will not interfere with playtesting if not necessary, as we will be just watching and keeping an eye on the time. Just ignore us :-) and focus on playing/observing. In case there will be a missing player in the room (e.g. for a multiplayer game), the teacher will switch to the role of Player.

During the seminar, there will be several "sessions" (depending on the speed of the initial setup, possible technical issues, etc.). During each session, all games will be play-tested in parallel. The workflow of one session will be as follows:

1. Assign the roles and move around the room:
    1. In the scope of the team, decide for yourselves who will be the Observer and who will be the Player. Start with exactly one Observer, other team members will be the Players. The number of needed Players and Observers depends not just on games (multiplayer games requiring more than one player) but also

on the number of people in the room, so it is impossible to plan this in advance.

2. Players randomly select some other game and move to their "stations".
3. Settle down phase
   i.   If there is no free seat for you as a Player, you will become an extra Observer. Return to your station.
   ii. If some game will need an extra player and no more players are available, one or more teachers can become extra players.

2. The Observer will start their game and explain the controls to the player(s). Limit explanations strictly only to controls - do not tell the players story behind the game, and do not explain how they should progress through the game ("first, you need to finish the quest with a dragon egg, and then you can …").
3. The Player(s) will play-test the game for **10 minutes** - trying to provide audio comments ("think aloud"). During that time, the Observer should not interrupt the Player nor comment on what/how to do in-game. The Observer(s) should observe silently and collect feedback. Only in the case the Player is really "lost" (e.g., does not know how to start a level) should the Observer interfere.
4. The Player(s) and the Observer will discuss the game experience and feedback for an additional **5 minutes**.
5. Sessions end - all players return to their team station and swap the Player/Observer roles.
6. After a short break, a new session will start.

Try to swap roles in a way that each of you will spend roughly the same amount of time as the Player and as the Observer.

Setup before the seminar:

To be able to do that all, there has to be some setup in advance:

- Submit the latest build - see Task III for details. Double check that it is runnable (on a different machine that was used for the build).
- Prepare your favorite tool for gathering feedback and bring it to the seminar. This could be pen+paper (still the most versatile tool out there), digital notebook, Notepad++, vim, etc. Mobile phone is not recommended - you will waste too much time just typing notes and will not be able to pay full attention to what is happening on screen.
- Optional
    - bring your own headphones to enjoy the sounds of the games.
    - bring your own game controllers.

- - We have some supplies, but they are quite limited.
- If possible, at least one member of each team should arrive a few minutes before the start of the seminar to set everything up in time.
- Seating order - try to distribute yourselves in the room in a way that we use all the available space and each team has some space for itself.
- Everyone - please arrive on time.