



2008 Comes to a Close

Just two more weeks and 2008 is over. It has been a busy and active year for the GATE project. The research part of the project came into full swing in April when the final vacant positions were filled. And we heard from the work package leaders that already a lot of interesting results have been obtained. The report over 2008, that will appear in April 2009, will give a good overview of the work done. With the start of the pilot safety in October also all pilots are now active and during the symposium in February 2009 (see below) the first results will be shown. And finally, after a lot of work, the regulations about the knowledge transfer projects have been approved and the first projects can start on January 1st, 2009.

We look forward to a very fruitful 2009 with many exciting results. The management of the GATE project wishes you all a merry Christmas and a happy 2009.

Symposium Future Serious Games

On Tuesday February 10, 2009, the GATE project will organize its second symposium under the title "Future Serious Games". The symposium takes place from 13.00-18.00 hours in the Louis Hartlooper Complex in Utrecht; the same place where we had our first symposium.

The focus of the symposium lies on the pilots but we will also have lectures on some of the research results that were obtained in GATE during the past year. The symposium will conclude with a keynote speech by William Swartout, the director of technology of the USC Institute for Creative Technology in California. He will share with us his views on the future of serious games. The full program can be found on

<http://gate.gameresearch.nl/symposium/>

You are all invited to attend this symposium. Entrance is free but it is mandatory that you register through the webpage above. Please do so at your earliest convenience as the number of places is limited. We hope to meet many of you during the symposium.

Knowledge Transfer Projects

It has taken a while but on December 1st the regulations for the GATE knowledge transfer projects were finally approved. This means that from January 1st 2009 on the first knowledge transfer projects can start.

The goal of the knowledge transfer projects is to make the research done in the research part of GATE fit-for-use for industry. A project will be a collaboration between a knowledge institute involved in the research work package and an interested company. In total there is 1.5 million Euro available for knowledge transfer of which we plan to support around 15 projects.

Applications for knowledge transfer project must be made by the work package leaders. They have all received information about the procedure. If you are interested in being involved in such a project,

you should contact the relevant work package leader. Their names and email addresses can be found on the gate website.

Workshop Emergent Game Design

By Mark Overmars (pictures by Marinka Copier)

On December 12 during the regular days for Dutch game researchers, there was a workshop on emergent game design, by Joris Dormans from the Hogeschool van Amsterdam. Emergent game play appear when a relatively simple set of rules leads to complex game play involving strategies on different levels. Emergent game play is difficult to design. The goal of the workshop was to demonstrate that by keeping an eye on the right structural qualities and patterns in game systems, it is possible to consciously steer in this direction.



After a brief introduction by Joris the participants got the assignment to design a game using some boards, chips, and cups. Each group got some game play elements that had to be included in the game. For example, our team got a drain in which resources can disappear, a converter where resources should change in different ones, and a trader element in which players should trade or switch resources. Also we got a positive and a negative feedback loop to use. The theme of the game had to be "Escape". So we devised a board game in which each player had to get



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rid of all his colored chips by either leading them to an exit (the drain), by letting them exchange places (the trader) or by turning them into chips of another color (the converter). We had great fun designing the game. The approach helped us understand some formal game design techniques, even though it turned out to be hard to put our resulting game in the formal framework.



More information about the workshop and the methodology used can be found on the following page:

<http://www.jorisdormans.nl/article.php?ref=workshopdiagra>

The next day for Dutch game researchers will be held on March 6.

Restriction of the Field-of View

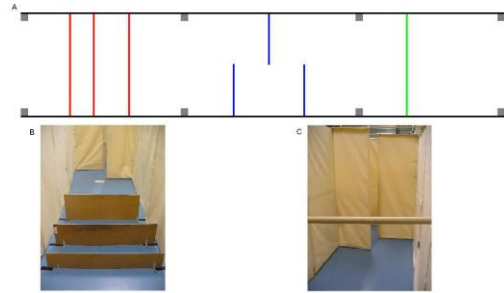
By Sander Jansen

Head-mounted displays (HMDs) are frequently used for training and rehearsing tasks in virtual environments which involve human locomotion through complex structured environments (e.g. dismounted soldiers, first responders). A central issue in the design and selection of HMDs is the Field-of-View (FoV). Unrestricted, the human FoV has an average horizontal angle of 200° and an average vertical angle of 135°. Decreasing this field impairs performance on several tasks, including: distance estimation, postural balance, and the ability to control heading direction. These are all important tasks when maneuvering through a complex environment.



The different glasses used in the experiment

We investigated the effects of both vertical and horizontal FoV restriction on maneuvering performance while traversing an obstacle course consisting of three different types of obstacles. A restriction of both the vertical and horizontal angle of the visual field resulted, independently, in increased time needed to traverse the course.



The obstacle course that must be traversed.

Enlarging the display of an HMD increases optical complexity and costs. Therefore, it is useful to know how enlargement will affect performance. Our results show that enlarging the vertical angle causes more performance improvement than enlarging the horizontal one. This information can be used to formulate guidelines for the selection and creation of HMDs used for these kinds of tasks.

This research is part of work package 2.1. For more information contact Sander Jansen at sander.jansen@tno.nl. You can read the full papers at <http://people.cs.uu.nl/sanderj/pubs.html>.

News in Brief

In NRC Handelsblad of 10 december an interesting article appeared about a study at the university of Illinois that shows that elderly people stay more focused when they play games. You can find the article at

<http://www.nrc.nl/wetenschap/article2089337.ece/>

Internal Events

Here we list interesting meetings and events organized by GATE or its partners. Please notify us of events that should be added, by email to rita@cs.uu.nl.

- 10 February 2009, 13.00-18.00: GATE symposium on *Future Serious Games*. Louis Hartlooper Complex, Utrecht.
- 16 February, 11.00-16.30: MUSE meeting on educational games. TNO, Soesterberg. <https://www.surfgroepen.nl/sites/muse/>
- 6 March, 15.00-18.00: Meeting Dutch Game Researchers, faculty club, Achter de Dom 7, Utrecht.
- 15 May, 15.00-18.00: Meeting Dutch Game Researchers, faculty club, Achter de Dom 7, Utrecht.
- 17-19 June: Computer Animation and Social Agents (CASA 2009), Amsterdam. <http://hmi.ewi.utwente.nl/casa09>
- 22-24 June: Third International Conference on Intelligent Technologies for Interactive Entertainment, Amsterdam. <http://intetain.org>
- 14-16 september: Ninth International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents (IVA'09), Amsterdam. <http://iva09.dfki.de>



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Events in the Netherlands

Here we list interesting meetings and events in the Netherlands. Please notify us of events that should be added, by email to rita@cs.uu.nl.

- 6-14 June 2009: Festival of Games 2009, Utrecht. <http://www.nlgd.nl>

Events outside the Netherlands

Here we list interesting meetings and events outside the Netherlands. Please notify us of events that should be added, by email to rita@cs.uu.nl.

- 27 February – 1 March 2009: I3D 2009 - ACM SIGGRAPH Symposium on Interactive 3D Graphics and Games, Boston, USA. <http://graphics.cs.williams.edu/i3d09/>
- 23-27 March: GDC 2009 - Game Developers Conference, San Francisco USA. <http://www.gdconf.com/>
- 30 March – 2 April: EG'09 - Eurographics 2009 Munich, Germany. <http://www.eurographics2009.de/>
- 6-7 April: AISB'09 Symposium: AI & GAMES, Edinburgh, Scotland. <http://www.dcs.shef.ac.uk/~daniela/AISB09/>
- 26-30 April: Fourth Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games (FDG), Orlando, USA. <http://www.foundationsofdigitalgames.org/>
- 3-7 August: SIGGRAPH 2009, New Orleans, USA. <http://www.siggraph.org/s2009/>

GATE Publicity

- In the Intermediar of 11 december an article appeared on the usefulness of gaming for future jobs, in which among others Mark Overmars was interviewed.

Acknowledgements

It is important that all publications that are (partially) the result of the GATE project contain an acknowledgement with the following text:

"This research has been supported by the GATE project, funded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) and the Netherlands ICT Research and Innovation Authority (ICT Regie)."

Or in Dutch:

"Dit onderzoek werd mogelijk gemaakt door het GATE project, ondersteund door de Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO) en het Nationaal Regieorgaan voor ICT-Onderzoek en -Innovatie (ICT Regie)."

Please realize that also the publications of employees that are used as matching for the GATE project must contain such an acknowledgement. Please send a pdf file of each publication to Rita Jansen (rita@cs.uu.nl). These are important for the yearly reports and for the archive. All publications will be made available through the website.

Colofon

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Website: <http://gate.gameresearch.nl>