Gender-Inclusivity Framework (GIF)

A Conceptual Framework for Supporting Gender-Inclusivity in Games

Introduction

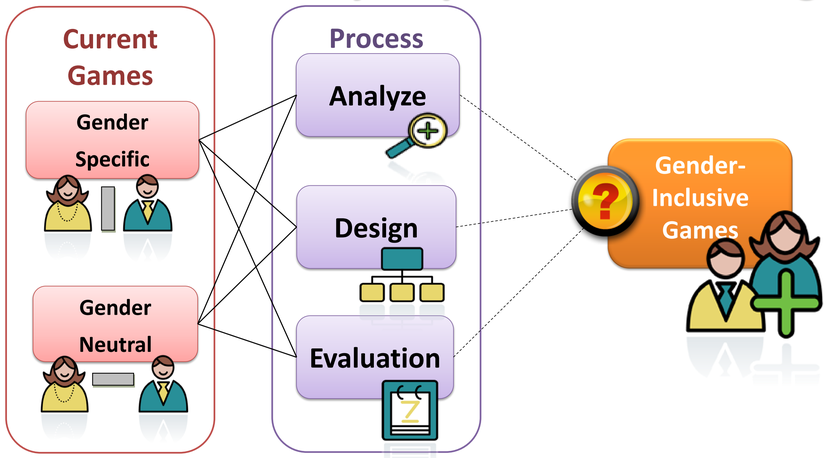
Gender-inclusivity in games may support certain features and in turn may even determine the features of applications built based on it. This poses a challenge: although we have good techniques for analyzing, designing and evaluating current games, our techniques for gender-inclusive games are much less formed

A framework was proposed to provide a theoretical context and scope about gender-inclusivity in games. The framework defines gender-inclusivity in three components:
(1) gameplay, describes the game behaviour,
(2) content, describes the aesthetics content and;
(3) genre, indicates the type of game.

Gender issues in games are concerned with [1], [2]:

- how different gender competes and their style of conflict resolution ;
- how each gender responds to stimulation ;
- how each gender views rewards in games ;
- which genre and game content each gender prefers;
- what kind of play environment each gender prefers ; and
- what kind of design features each gender prefers .

Gender-inclusivity Gaps In Games Design



Most previous research focused on identifying gender preferences and did not sufficiently include the application of gender-inclusivity nor does it provide guidance about how to design games with some level of gender-inclusivity .

The questions that arise from this situation include:

How to define gender-inclusivity in games?
How to incorporate gender-inclusivity into a game creation process?
How to measure gender-inclusivity in games?

We propose a framework, **Gender-Inclusivity Framework (GIF),** which contains description of gender-inclusivity components and sub-components with its corresponding behaviour description.

The Gender-Inclusivity Framework (GIF) aims to:

Help define gender-inclusivity in games.
Guide the gender-inclusive game design process.
Measure the level of gender-inclusiveness in games.

Gender-inclusivity Framework (GIF)

GENRE			
• Action	• Children	• RPG	• Sports
• Simulation	• Strategy	• Adventure	• Classic/board
• Educational	• Racing	• Shooting	• Puzzle/Quiz

GAMEPLAY	CONTENT
• Non-violent action (NVA)	• Character/avatar portrayal (AVP)
• Game support (GS)	• Gameworld Graphics (GW)
• Forgiving gameplay (FG)	• Sound/music (SM)
• Non-violent challenge (NVC)	• Storyline (STOR)
• Feedback system (FEED)	
• Variety of activities (ACT)	
• Personalization (PER)	
• Collaboration (COLL)	

The components are :

1) ***Gameplay,*** which describes the game behaviour and has 8 sub-components: non-violent action (NVA), game support (GS), forgiving gameplay (FG), non-violent challenge (NVC), feedback system (FS), variety of activities (ACT), personalization (PER) and collaboration (COLL).
2) ***Content,*** which describes the game aesthetics in 4 sub-components: character/avatar portrayal (AVP), game world graphics (GW), sound/music (SM) and storyline (STOR).
3) ***Genre,*** classify games into 12 broad genres including racing, simulation, classic/board, strategy, sports, shooting, role playing game, platform, children, puzzle/quiz, action and adventure.

Some potential uses of the framework:

Serves as a reference point.
Serves as a boundary.
Serves as a filtering tool.
Serves as a design guidelines.
Serves as a measuring tool.

UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

Roziana Ibrahim [ri07r@ecs.soton.ac.uk]
Learning Societies Lab (LSL), School of Electronics & Computer Science
http://www.ecs.soton.ac.uk/people/ri07r

Acknowledgements:
1st Supervisor: Dr. Gary Wills
2nd Supervisor: Mr Lester Gilbert

References:
[1] Ibrahim, R., Wills, G. and Gilbert, L. (2010) deGendering Games: Towards the Development of a Gender-Inclusivity Framework (GIF). In *Grace Hopper Conference 2010: Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing*, September 28th – October 2nd, 2010, Atlanta, Georgia.
[2] Ibrahim, R., Wills, G. and Gilbert, L. (2010) deGendering Games: Towards A Gender-Inclusive Framework For Games. In: *IADIS International Conference: Games and Entertainment Technologies part of the IADIS Multiconference on Computer Science & Information Systems (MCCSIS 2010)*, July 26th – 28th, 2010, Freiburg, Germany, pp. 127-130.