

BenLong_P144121

by Ben Long

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CAN COOPERATIVE VIDEO GAMES IMPROVE SOCIAL SITUATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS



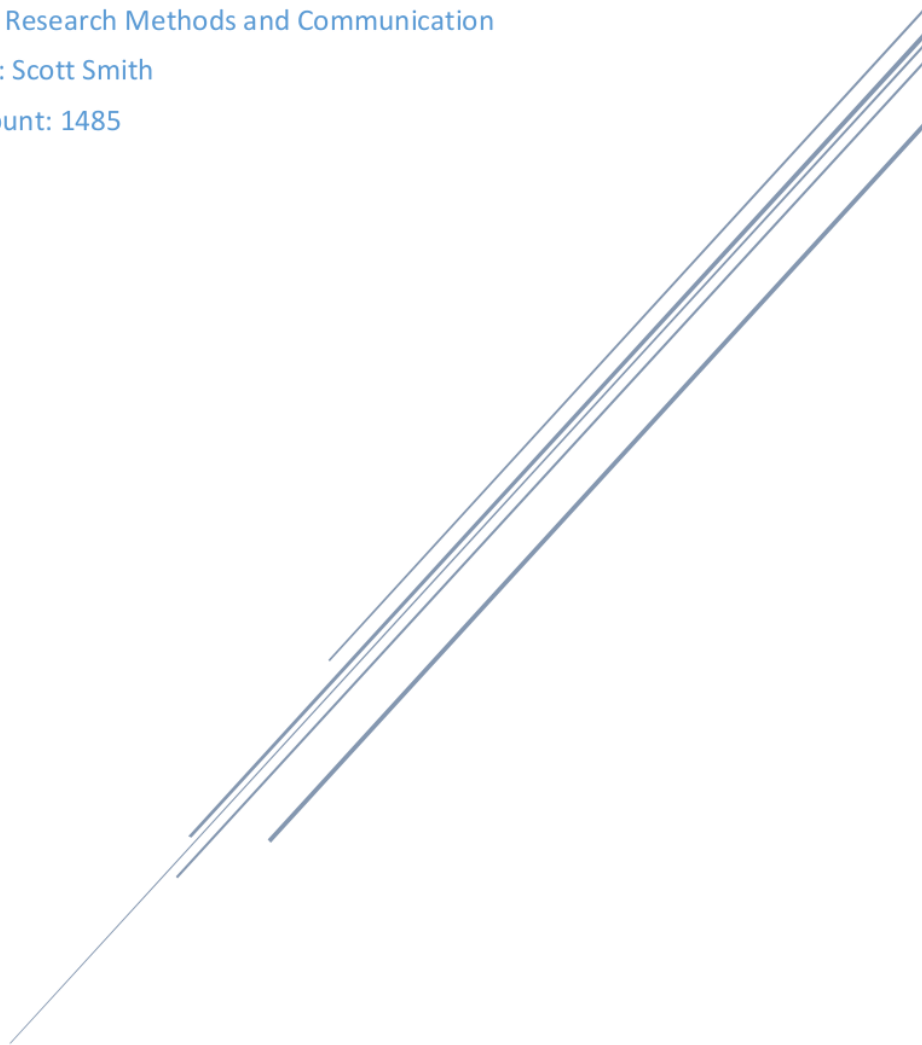
Project Proposal

Course: Creative Computer Games Design Marts

Module: Research Methods and Communication

Lecturer: Scott Smith

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University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Ben Long – P144121

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Introduction

This proposal will aim to show the research and methodology regarding a test to see if social situations and relationships can be improved by video games. The research for this proposal has been varied between mathematical sums, game theory, health articles and game industry reports. The games proposed for the test are already pre-existing and no games will need to be fabricated for the purpose of the test. The time it would take to produce the necessary games would be too long. The project outcomes are defined by typical behaviour of participants from public goods games in which players will contribute to the conclusion of the game, however when one participant does not give a fair contribution but shares in the success of the game it may alter the rest of the participants attitude towards them (Nakamura, Contesini and Martinez, 2018). The main goal of the test is to see how working together in cooperative games can improve relationships among likeminded peers and also how they react when they are competing in a friendly scenario.

Project Specific Research

The main theory for a cooperative game is that 'the two individuals are supposed to be able to discuss the situation and agree on a rational joint plan of action...' (Nash, 1953). The Nash Equilibrium (Nash, 1950) occurs whenever a player cannot improve their own outcome by changing their current strategy (Nakamura, Contesini and Martinez, 2018). While they refer to games as mathematical equations it can be applied to video game theory. In a competitive multiplayer game, each player will have their own strategy to try and win and there is only one winner at the end.

Axelrod and Dawkins (1990) state that the problem with cooperation is that people will look after themselves before others. They go on to say;

'...in situations where each individual has an incentive to be selfish, how can cooperation ever develop? The answer each of us gives to this question has a fundamental effect on how we think and act in our social, political, and economic relations with others. And the answers that others give have a great effect on how ready they will be to cooperate with us'. (pg.3)

The latest essential facts of the video game industry report (The Entertainment Software Association, 2018) state that 42% of gamers are playing online with their friends and that 55% of the most frequent gamers say that video games help them contact with their friends. It is clear that a large portion of the video game audience are playing games together in a social scenario.

Przyblski (2014) conducted a test into the effects of playing video games for children aged 10 – 15 years and aimed to see if they would improve their social skills as well as general wellbeing. According to Przyblski (2014) over three hours of video game engagement was linked to higher life satisfaction and improved social behaviour. However the longer the period of game engagement the effects were almost the complete opposite.

Webber (2018) says '...social benefits of playing video games are greatest when players play games specifically designed to reward pro-social behaviours such as effective cooperation, support, and helping other players.' And Granic (2014) backs up this claim by stating "that children who played more pro-social games at the beginning of the school year were more likely to exhibit helpful behaviours later that year." It is clear that with younger audiences video games can influence good social behaviour and improve peer relationships.

Proposed Methodology

Due to the nature of the test an ethics form will need to be submitted as the test aims to try and stimulate social behaviour and the subjects will need to sign a form of consent during the interviews. The candidates will be chosen from the Creative computer games course, they have a higher experience with the video games in general and are more likely to participate in the test. A small qualitative survey will be written for each candidate to fill in. The survey will ask questions such as; what is your experience with cooperative games, how often do you play, what is their opinion on cooperative games, do you know any other candidates'. This will make the dividing of candidates easier as they can be divided into groups of similar experience and with no pre-built relationships. One candidate shouldn't be able to outmatch others if they are better. However, this could also an opportunity to see how other candidates will react when they are outmatched and compare to results to equal candidates, for now this test will focus on candidates of equal experience.

There will be a total of five groups and three subjects per group. Each group will have a one subject from each year of the creative computer game design course. They will have one level 4, one level 5 and one level 6. Since the test will be looking for how relationships can form, having each member from a separate year will give a higher chance of the subjects not knowing each other. The groups will be labelled A – E and each subject will be given their group identification by their number, for example group A will have subject A1, A2, A3 and so on for each group. This will be used to conduct notes when the subjects are playing and keep their anonymity.

Three games will need to be chosen for the study. There needs to be a game that is purely cooperative, a game that is cooperative versus a player and a competitive versus game. Each game will need to have simple controls or mechanics as this will allow accessibility for the subjects. The cooperative game suggested is New Super Mario Bros U (Nintendo, 2012). The game has simple mechanics of moving and jumping and can be played with up to 5 players. The subjects will have to get through the first world as the levels can be quite short so having a longer play time should yield better results. The cooperative versus player game will be Mario Party 10 (Nintendo, 2015). The game has up to four players working together to move across a game board and it has minigames at the end of each round. A fifth player can play as the enemy and will try to catch up with them on the game board and steal any items or ruin their progress. The fifth player will remain the same throughout as they will be with a new group each time and won't have any prior relations. The game shows tutorials at the start of every minigame so it can be very accessible to all subjects. The competitive versus game is Towerfall (Matt makes Games, 2013). Towerfall is a fast-paced game in

which the players must jump around a small arena and either shoot or jump on the other players heads. The game is very easy to play as it is just move, jump and shoot so it is accessible to all subjects.

The subjects will be monitored throughout the entire play session and notes will be taken. The notes will consist of any problems the candidates had, any successes, any direct subject to subject interaction and so on. The notes will then be compared among all the groups to see if there are any anomalies or similarities to draw from.

Proposed Outcome

The predicted outcome is the subjects will work together towards a common goal in the cooperative games and then turn on each other in the competitive. The cooperative game outcome will have the subjects in a relaxed state working together to complete a level. However, if one subject makes a mistake and the subjects lose because of it, it will be interesting to see how they react to that player. The cooperative versus player game will be interesting to see if it has the same effect of one subject making a mistake. If it is also the same subject, then the others might both blame them if they lose. The competitive versus game. The preferred outcome is that they will all work together to beat the enemy player, if the subjects lose then the results will be interesting. The competitive versus game will have the players working against each other and any relationships formed throughout the test will be tested. However the main goal of the test is too not ruin the relationships that the subjects have created. The versus game is a 'stress test' to see if they will all still be friendly towards each other even though they have worked against each other.

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FINAL GRADE

60/100

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

Ben Long

Module

Research Methods and Communication

M7X01586

Assignment Title

Project Proposal

Contribution to Module

50%

Tutor

Scott Smith

Assessment Mark

60.2%

(Assessment marks are subject to ratification at the Exam Board. These comments and marks are to give feedback on module work and are for guidance only until they are confirmed.)

1. Engagement with Literature Skills 10%

For this research proposal task, make sure to identify adequate sources for your literature review using some in text where appropriate but also having an adequate body of reading identified and accessible to support the whole project for Section 5. References.

Generally, the literature is appropriate, there could be a greater effort to locate current research in games and social behaviour, although it is important to sometimes establish foundational

research, there should also be a large proportion of more recent research. You need some methodological sources, on designing research methods and methodology, as well as research ethics.

62%

2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills 20%

Throughout your proposal but especially in your 1. Introduction and section 2 Project Specific Research, you should identify the rationale or importance of your research in relation to the disciplinary field.

The rationale for a project is established, the test approach is sometimes problematic as this is difficult to pin down, what the exact contribution would or could be and how it fits with the rest of the field.

64%

3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills 30%

Throughout your proposal, but especially in Section 3. Methodology and 4. Proposed Outcomes, you should engage with examples of other current research in your field and outline your methodological approach and decisions as well as identify the outcomes that will emerge from your research. These outcomes will need to relate to the methodology and methods that you choose.

Need to look at methodological sources to explore the design of studies or tests in the field specifically and consider the approaches and methods-discussing the design choices made. This doesn't need to be too long but should refer to ways of doing research in the games discipline from a social science or psychological perspective most likely, with perhaps some design approaches as well.

58%

4. Practical Application Skills 30%

This task encourages you to follow a practice-based approach, where you will be reflecting on your practice (i.e. drawing, painting, sculpting, animating, etc) and providing audio or visual

examples that tie in with your writing, this approach lends itself well to your disciplines, but this area can also be demonstrated in just your writing and research pursuits without penalty, if so then the particular context you are pursuing will be clarified in tutorials and in reference to the above Practical Skills guideline, most likely in relation to case-studies.

The choice of the games to be tested are considered case studies, although methodological sources could also have been used, as you have chosen to design a test for this project. Completing of a draft ethics form at this stage would have been good, any other supporting materials as well, such as charts or tables that describe methods, or previous results etc

58%

5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice 10%

For this task you should ensure that your work is free from typographical or grammatical errors and is appropriate to a research audience. The 'tone' of your writing should be professional and at the postgraduate level, exhibiting independent learning and sound judgement in approaches and arguments.

The tone comes across well, and text is mostly free of typographical errors and has generally good grammar. The approach would be sounder with research methodology for the design of the study taking a more primary role, but in general is good.

64%

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Comment 1

no comment

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ENGAG W/LIT

GOOD TO
VERY GOOD
(Merit)

Engagement with literature (including current research, referencing, academic conventions and academic honesty)

FAIL 0-29%	Little or no evidence of reading and/or reliance on inappropriate sources. Views and findings mostly unsupported and non-authoritative. Referencing conventions used incoherently or largely absent.
FAIL 30-44%	Poor engagement with essential reading. No evidence of wider reading. Reliance on inappropriate sources, and/or indiscriminate use of sources. Heavily reliant on information gained through class contact. Inconsistent and weak use of referencing.
MARGINAL FAIL 45-49%	Engagement with a very limited range of relevant and credible sources. Some omissions and minor errors. Referencing conventions evident though not always applied accurately or consistently.
SATISFACTORY (PASS) 50-59	Engagement with an appropriate range of research-informed literature, including sources retrieved independently. Some over-reliance on texts. Referencing may show minor inaccuracies or inconsistencies.
GOOD TO VERY GOOD (MERIT)	Engagement with a wide range of research-informed literature, including sources retrieved independently. Selection of relevant and credible sources. Very good use of referencing, with no/very few inaccuracies or inconsistencies.
EXCELLENT (DISTINCTION) 7	Engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature, informed by the latest research. Consistently accurate application of referencing.
EXCEPTIONAL (DISTINCTION)	Exceptional engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature, informed by the latest research. High-level referencing skills consistently and professionally applied.

KNOWL&UND.

GOOD TO
VERY GOOD
(Merit)

Knowledge and understanding (A systematic, conceptual understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline; a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research)

FAIL 0-29%	Major gaps in knowledge and understanding of the subject matter is not systematic. Substantial inaccuracies. No awareness of current problems, insights or the latest research and/or advanced scholarship within the discipline.
FAIL 30-44%	Gaps in knowledge, with only superficial systematic understanding. Some significant inaccuracies and/or irrelevant material. No critical awareness of current problems, insights, or latest research within the discipline.

MARGINAL FAIL 45-49%	Limited knowledge and systematic understanding of the concepts and principles within the subject area, which to some marginal extent, is informed by current research and scholarship. Some critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, but often under-developed.
SATISFACTORY (PASS) 50-59	Knowledge is accurate and reasonably detailed. A systematic understanding of the field of study informed by, to some extent, current research and scholarship, A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights though this may be under-developed occasionally.
GOOD TO VERY GOOD (MERIT)	Knowledge has a well-defined focus, which is reasonably extensive, coherent and detailed, with a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. Exhibits good understanding of the breadth and depth of contemporary and established views, and the work is, at least in part, well-informed by current research and scholarship.
EXCELLENT (DISTINCTION) 7	Excellent mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge. A systematic, excellent understanding of the concepts of the subject informed by current research and scholarship. Highly critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. A critical, awareness of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research.
EXCEPTIONAL (DISTINCTION)	Exceptional mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge. An exceptionally critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. An outstanding understanding of the concepts of the subject, well-informed by current research and scholarship. A critical, sophisticated and nuanced awareness of how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research.

COG&INTSKILLS

SATISFACTORY
(Pass) 50-59

Cognitive and intellectual skills \n(Critical evaluation of current research and methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses; make sound judgements in the absence of complete data.)

FAIL 0-29%	Wholly or almost wholly descriptive work. Little or no evaluation or critique or attempt at a systematic approach. Failure to develop arguments, leading to illogical or invalid judgements. Unsubstantiated generalisations, made without use of credible evidence.
FAIL 30-44%	Largely descriptive work, with superficial use of critical evaluation of research and methodologies. Absent or weak development of hypotheses and judgements. Information accepted uncritically, uses generalised statements made with scant evidence and unsubstantiated opinions. Ideas sometimes illogical and contradictory.
MARGINAL FAIL 45-49%	Limited attempt at critical evaluation/ critique of current research and methodologies, tending towards description. Limited attempt to propose new hypotheses. Can deal with complex issues but not systematically or creatively. Some evidence to support emerging judgements but these may be underdeveloped or with a little inconsistency / mis-interpretation. May assert rather than argue a case.

SATISFACTORY (PASS) 50-59 Some critical evaluation/ critique of current research and methodologies, though slightly underdeveloped in places, Proposes adequate but limited new hypotheses, where relevant. Can deal with complex issues but not fully systematically or creatively. Ability to make judgements based on data (that may be incomplete) but with some tendency to assert/state opinion rather than argue on the basis of reason and evidence.

GOOD TO VERY GOOD (MERIT) Sound critical evaluation/ critique of current research and methodologies, Proposes new hypotheses, where appropriate. Can deal with complex issues systematically and with some creativity. Ability to make sound judgements based on data (that may be incomplete)

EXCELLENT (DISTINCTION) 7 Excellent critical evaluation/ critique of current research and methodologies, Proposes innovative hypotheses, where appropriate. Can synthesise complex issues systematically and creatively. Ability to investigate contradictory or incomplete information and make strong, persuasive, arguments and sophisticated judgements.

EXCEPTIONAL (DISTINCTION) Exceptional critical evaluation/ critique of current research and methodologies, Proposes innovative hypotheses, where appropriate. Exemplary systematic and creative synthesis of complex issues. Ability to investigate contradictory or incomplete information and make strong, persuasive, arguments and sophisticated, nuanced, judgements. Potential for journal publication or doctoral research.

PRAC.SKILLS

**SATISFACTORY
(Pass) 50-59**

Practical skills\n(Originality / creativity in the application of knowledge, tools and techniques and in tackling and solving problems in complex and unpredictable professional situations; practical use of established techniques of research and enquiry to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.)

FAIL 0-29% Limited or no use of methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Little or no appreciation of the context of the application. Limited understanding of the application of theory to practice or making appropriate links between the two. Very weak problem-solving skills in complex and unpredictable contexts.

FAIL 30-44% Rudimentary application of methods, materials, tools and/or techniques but without consideration and competence. Flawed appreciation of the context of the application. Weak understanding of the application of theory to practice, with only occasional evidence of making appropriate links between the two. Weak problem-solving skills in complex and unpredictable contexts.

MARGINAL FAIL 45-49% An awareness and mostly appropriate application of well-established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques, with occasional errors. Basic appreciation of the context of the application. Theoretical knowledge and understanding applied in practice, but not always making logical links between the two. Can identify problems and propose basic solutions without fully appreciating the complexity of unpredictable contexts.

SATISFACTORY (PASS) 50-59 An appropriate application of standard methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Clear appreciation of the context of the application. Mainly consistent, accurate and logical application of theory to practice, making appropriate links

between the two. Can identify problems and propose mostly appropriate solutions in complex and unpredictable contexts, with elements of originality.

GOOD TO VERY GOOD (MERIT) A very good application of a range of methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Very good consideration of the context of the application, with perceptive insights. Can identify problems and propose appropriate solutions in complex and unpredictable contexts. Evidence of originality and creativity.

EXCELLENT (DISTINCTION) 7 An advanced application of knowledge, methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. The context of the application is well considered, and insightful. Can identify complex problems and propose excellent solutions. An excellent grasp of techniques applicable to own research or advanced scholarship. Shows originality in application of knowledge and techniques, and of how established techniques of enquiry create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.

EXCEPTIONAL (DISTINCTION) Exceptional application skills in complex, unpredictable, contexts, drawing skilfully on the latest research within the discipline. Can identify complex problems and propose sophisticated, original solutions. An outstanding application of techniques applicable to own research or advanced scholarship. Shows originality in application of knowledge and techniques, and of how established techniques of enquiry create and interpret knowledge in the discipline with assimilation and development of cutting edge processes and techniques.

TRANSF.SKILLS

GOOD TO
VERY GOOD
(Merit)

Transferable skills for life and professional practice\n(Exercise of self-direction, autonomy and personal responsibility; plan and implement tasks at a professional level; independent learning; use appropriate media to communicate effectively and professionally to a variety of audiences; fluency of expression; systematic approach; clarity and effectiveness in presentation and organisation.)

FAIL 0-29% Communication medium is inappropriate or misapplied. Work is poorly structured, disorganised and/or confusingly expressed. Very weak use of language and/or very inappropriate style. Little or no evidence of autonomy (or collaboration, where relevant) in the completion of tasks. Little or no evidence of the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment.

FAIL 30-44% Communication medium is poorly designed and/or not suitable for the audience. Work is poorly presented in a disjointed manner. It is loosely, and at times incoherently, structured, with information and ideas often poorly expressed. Weak use of language and/or inappropriate style. Weak independent initiative (or collaboration, if relevant). Limited evidence of the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment.

MARGINAL FAIL 45-49% Can communicate in a suitable medium but with some room for improvement. Mostly ordered presentation and structure in which relevant ideas / concepts are reasonably expressed. Work may lack coherence in places. Can work as part of a team, but with limited involvement in group activities. Demonstrates some but not all of the basic skills required in professional, postgraduate employment, with some areas of minor weakness.

SATISFACTORY (PASS) 50-59	Can communicate effectively in a suitable format, but may have minor errors. Mostly coherent, organised work, in a suitable structure and is for the most part clearly expressed. Can work effectively independently and/or as part of a team, with clear contribution to group activities. Demonstrates the skills required in professional, postgraduate employment, with some areas of strength and some of minor weakness.
GOOD TO VERY GOOD (MERIT)	Can communicate well, confidently and consistently in a suitable format. Work is coherent, fluent, well-structured and organised. Can work very well autonomously and/or as part of a team, with a good contribution to group activities. Demonstrates comprehensive professional, postgraduate employment skills.
EXCELLENT (DISTINCTION) 7	Can communicate professionally confidently and consistently in a suitable format. Work is coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally. Can work autonomously with initiative. Where relevant can work professionally within a team, showing leadership skills as appropriate, managing conflict and meeting obligations. Demonstrates excellent professional, postgraduate employment skills and a strong appetite for further development.
EXCEPTIONAL (DISTINCTION)	Can communicate with an exceptionally high level of professionalism. Work is remarkably coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally. Can work outstandingly well and professionally within a team, showing advanced leadership skills. Demonstrates exemplary professional, postgraduate employment skills and a strong appetite for further development.