

DES 270: User Research 1

PAPER TWO

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Game Introduction

Mirage is a 2D platformer shooter game that is being developed by a DigiPen student studio CoolTeam. The core gameplay features controls similar to the 2d side-scroller shooter games like Contra and Terraria. Each level in this game is screen-size, takes about 30 seconds to complete, and has one of the 3 themes that define that level's shooting mechanic, level design, and art environment. The game also features static enemies that have to be shot in order to proceed to the next level. The player has to complete the level in a certain amount of time, or the level will be restarted. Colliding with enemies and hazards in this game will make the player "stunned" for several seconds, making them lose the time they have to complete the level.

Research Methods

Sampling method:

The testing will take place in GURL. The required data will be collected using a self-report form (Take-in Survey) and screen recording software. The Take-in Survey has a Likert Scale format, giving quantitative data that will help to determine if the player is a Know Persona and if yes, what is their Sub-Type. The test is based on the Big 5 Personality Factors Theory. The gameplay recording of the playtest will provide us with qualitative data about the tester's in-game actions. This data can be used to make level heatmaps, build the predicted player path and analyze the tester's in-game behavior during certain parts of the game.

Methodology

1. Once the tester enters GURL, they will be met by the moderator. The moderator will conduct the briefing and provide the subject with the Tester's Handout.

The Tester's Handout consists of the following:

- Subject Code
- Briefing information, FAQ and lab rules
- Data collection and analysis consent form

2. After the briefing, the tester will be accompanied to the testing room, where they will take a seat according to their Subject Code. The tester will then complete the Take-In Survey that will be placed on their table in advance. From this moment, the tester may raise their hand if they need any help from the test moderator or have any questions.
3. Upon completing the Take-in Survey, the tester will raise their hand. The test moderator should come to them, collect the Take-In Survey and launch the game build and the recording software.
4. After the test completion (5 minutes), the tester will raise their hand once again. The moderator should accompany them to the debriefing zone.

The tester may raise their hand in any point of time. The moderator should answer their questions according to the FAQ sections of the Pre-Pro script.

Apparatus:

The list of required hardware, software and equipment includes (per one tester):

- Tester's Handout (Printed or digital)
- Take-in Survey (Printed or digital)
- Windows operated PC
- A copy of Mirage prototype
- A copy of OBS recording software

Take-in Survey

The following statements must be marked with a number from 1 to 5 where:

- 1 – Slightly Disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Neutral
- 4 – Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

| Statements: | Answer: (1-5) |
|---|---------------|
| I am experienced in at least one skillset | |
| I'm a creative person | |
| I like playing games more than once | |
| I never leave work for later | |
| I only take a risk if I know the result will be worth it. | |
| Earning a high score is an appeal of games for me. | |
| I feel responsible for my job | |
| I like to try different meals in my favorite café | |
| I only do as much work as required | |
| I like exploring the area around me | |
| I like learning about the games I play. | |
| When I come across a new feature, I want to know how it works. | |
| I go to get help if I get stuck. | |
| I'm ready to spend as much time as needed to complete the work I started | |
| I often go out of my way to assist others | |
| I desire a leadership role | |
| Completing a task quickly is usually more important than completing it accurately | |
| I achieve my targets even if it takes more effort than expected | |
| I prefer creative solutions to the ones proven by time | |
| I'm never open to new things | |
| Knowing how games work is interesting to me | |
| I am a not a curious person. | |
| When I work on a project, I want the result to be unpolished | |
| I rarely share advice in areas I am knowledgeable in | |
| I spend the majority of my time outside. | |
| I like games that I can learn a lot about. | |
| I become upset easily. | |
| I enjoy solving problems myself. | |
| I never want to know more about the games I play. | |
| When I come across a new feature, I want to see how it works with other features I know | |

Pre-Pro Script

The playtest moderator should follow the following Pre-Production Script while conducting the playtest:

-Hello, welcome to the playtest. Please have a seat while we prepare everything necessary for the test.

(Enter the briefing zone)

-Please, proceed to room X where you will be introduced to the information about the test. Hello. During this test, you are going to playtest a prototype of a student project game called Mirage. Please, take a seat corresponding to your Subject_Number. On your desk, you will find a paper printout. This is a pre-testing questionnaire. We ask you to fill the questions in this questionnaire with your answers and raise your hand once finished. Once your hand is raised and the questionnaire completed a supervisor will come to you and help to set up the prototype. You will be playing the game for 5 minutes. Once your time is up, a supervisor will come to you and accompany you to the debriefing zone, where you can get free treats and discuss the game with other participants. If you will have any questions or technical difficulties during this playtest, please raise your hand. The supervisor will help you.

-Before entering the lab, we want you to read this handout. It contains all of the important information about the test, our lab rules, and your participation reward. Also, we want you to pay attention to the last page of this document. It contains information about your player data that will be collected during this test and a consent form. Please sign it, so that we can process and analyze the data, collected during this playtest.

FAQ

Q: *Any question about the game*

A: All of the information needed is provided in your handout

Q: Why do you need to collect data about me?

A: So that our team can analyze it and help us to improve the prototype experience. We won't collect any personal data, and your identity will be kept anonymous.

Q: What if I'll need X during the test/before the test is finished?

A: If you will encounter any problems during the playtest, please raise your hand. The supervisor will help you.

Q: *Any questions regarding formalities and admin*

A: All of the information needed including the details on X is provided in your handout. Please refer to it if you have any questions about X.

(Enter the lab space)

-Please, take a seat. Remember to fill the questionnaire and raise your hand to continue with the prototype part of the test. While answering the questions, try to choose the options which best describe you and don't spend much time answering a single question. There are no correct or incorrect answers in this questionnaire.

(Collect the player persona test)

Thanks for filling the questionnaire. Now I will launch the game prototype. I will come back after 5 minutes to accompany you to the debriefing zone. If you will encounter any technical difficulties during the test, please raise your hand and I will help you.

(Launch prototype)

FAQ

Q: X doesn't work/I need to go because of X (End the test early)

A: Please follow me, I will lead you to the debriefing zone where you can pick up your personal belongings and get your test compensation. Apologies for the inconvenience.

Q: I have a technical difficulty

A: Please stand by, I will try to fix the issue.

(Prototype text finish)

-The test is now officially over, please follow me to the debriefing zone.

(Go to the debriefing zone)

FAQ

Q: When would I get my results

A: Sorry, the results of this test are aimed at improving the prototype. There is no final result in this test that we can disclose.

-Thanks for your participation, we are looking forward to working with you again.

Test Predictions

Mirage is a game mostly built around challenge and achievement involvement types. I won't expect Know Personas to perform well on this playtest as they have a different area of interest. However, discovering new shooting mechanics might be interesting for Know Personas, so I predict that they would want to spend more time playing around with different gun types to see how they work. This might help us to discover some new bugs and exploits in our current technical design of the prototype.