

Henry Korkeila:

The revisions have carefully responded to all comments. All four reviewers returned, none of whom had further requests for notable changes.

Regarding the few potential suggestions in the new reviews, I discussed with the author and concluded that a new version would not be practical at this point, considering the minor role of the suggestions and the possibility to discuss them in the results later. I agree that further methodological changes are not necessary.

The current Stage 1 plan was thus confirmed to meet all RR criteria without further revisions or review.

Veli-Matti Karhulahti

Review 1: 6.2.2025

Thank you for the opportunity to revisit this interesting research plan. I see that the review comments have been mostly addressed.

I am happy to see that the scope of the research project is now clearer, as the focus is now squarely on games. While I would have loved to have seen 'play' included, leaving it out does make the task significantly more manageable. This delimitation is quite valid. However, limiting the work to just *digital* games I find unfortunate -- and quite odd considering the historical contextualization. (A hundred years of studying games seems hardly relevant if the focus is on just digital games; then the precursors are to be found in the 1990s.) It is also not in line with the current delimitation of the game studies as a field (for example, journals *Game Studies*, *Games and Culture*, *Simulation & Gaming*, *Eludamos*, etc. and conferences like *Digra* explicitly call for and practically include work that is on non-digital games). That said, this does give the author a clear focus. Even so, identifying articles that are about games generally or about non-digital games from the ones that are specifically about digital games will likely require significant manual labour. (The proposed key search words are about games in general.)

A point I had not caught on the first round, but another reviewer did, is the question of work in Swedish. The exclusion of Finnish digital game research in Swedish, an official language, is unfortunate, and makes the title of the article slightly misleading. I would encourage the author to do a trial with a few Swedish key words to see how big of a task it would be to include works in Swedish. (That said, this move of ignoring the other official language is unfortunately very common in Finland, see for example *Pelaajabarometri*.)

The choice of the year 2003 remains unconvincing to me, as it is linked to *Digra*. The addition of game-related courses at Finnish universities -- especially without a single citations or example -- is not making the case stronger for me. But the author is absolutely right that any choice here is arbitrary. Even so, I would significantly prefer something that would allow for the possibility of comparing numbers before and after the foundation of *Digra*. For example, 2001, famously proclaimed "Year One" of game studies by Espen Aarseth, would be an easy choice. Similarly, 2002 with the first international conference on (digital) games organized in Finland (Computer Games and Digital Cultures Conference in Tampere). However, I will drop this issue now, I suppose this boils down to an aesthetic preference.

I look forward to learning about the results of the study!

Review 2: 21.2.2025

Apologies for the delay in reviewing the revised protocol. I have now read the revised submission and the author's responses to the comments. The paper has been improved, and both the study rationale and methodology are now clearer. My main concern was (and, to be completely honest, still is) the feasibility of the study. However, the author

reflected on this in the response letter and appears to be well aware of the laborious nature of the proposed protocol. I thus have no further comments and suggest proceeding with Stage 2.

Best,

Matúš Adamkovič

Review 3: 6.2.2025

The author has adequately addressed my comments and taken into account the feedback from other reviewers. The concepts are now clearer, and the justification for the lack of hypotheses and the omission of research questions is sufficient. However, I find it somewhat unusual that in Chapters 2 and 4.1, the author has merely mentioned certain studies by name rather than briefly elaborating on their content. This could still be revised to better serve the reader. Otherwise, the plan has become more precise following the revisions, and I believe that excluding the Finnish term *leikki* will significantly facilitate the research process. The use of passive voice in the text has been a good correction, lending it a more professional tone. I wish the author success in the next phase of the study and look forward to the results with great interest.

Review 4: 27.2.2025

I am happy with the final version of the document. I don't have any further comments for the author. -Enrico Glerean, Aalto University.