



Media ethics of social artificial intelligence in games under the mediatization theory

—Take the mobile game *Honor of Kings* as an example

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Abstract. Nowadays, the media is gradually deepening. With the continuous penetration of artificial intelligence technology and game media, the social behavior, social mode and even subjectivity of players in the game are also undergoing multimodal changes. From the theoretical perspective of the media society, this paper takes the artificial intelligence recovery function of the mobile phone game "the glory of the king" launched in recent years and the gamers who deeply use this function as the research object, and uses the research methods of participatory observation and in-depth interview to examine the media ethics of social artificial intelligence in the game. It is found that excessive dependence on artificial intelligence recovery function will make gamers' emotions fragmented and hurried, and even be manipulated by AI. Players' thinking and innovation ability is gradually losing, and even making their thinking and action into a machine. Therefore, when designing and developing artificial intelligence applied to virtual social scenes of games, we should be aware of the potential impact of technology, build a healthy and good language space, and improve the efficiency and quality of game socialization.

Keywords: game social, artificial intelligence, Honor of Kings, media ethics.

1 Introduction

In 1950s and 1960s, with the birth and continuous development of digital technology, competition and sports were separated from games, and an independent research field appeared—electronic games [1]. In the next two or three decades, stand-alone games have always dominated. At the beginning of this century, online games quickly became popular with its powerful narrative effect and social attributes. The media attribute of games has also changed. It is not only the "intermediary role" in traditional communication research, but also gradually "influences" and "controls" human social communication activities. In the current mobile online games, "Honor of Kings" attracts a large number of players with its strong social, lightweight and scene attributes, which is very representative.

Honor of Kings is a MOBA-type domestic mobile game developed by Tencent Games Tianmei Studio Group and operated on the platforms of IOS, Android and NS. It was officially released on the platforms of Android and IOS on November 26, 2015. Its operation and programming are very similar to League of Legends, and its gameplay is mainly competitive. Players play PVP battles in various ways, such as 1V1, 3V3 and 5V5, which meet the requirements. According to the data published by Honor of Kings, in 2022, the average daily activity of gamers will be around 100 million people, and even when waiting in line for dinner, they can "open the black".

In the era of interpersonal communication, the public socializes through face-to-face communication. In the era of mass communication, with the development of the Internet, the popularity of online games has broadened the public's social channels. Gamers can communicate while playing games, thus creating a new communication mode of "game socialization". "Game socialization" refers to the verbal or nonverbal communication between game leaders and participants, participants and participants (including players and spectators). Socialization, as one of the attributes of game behavior, especially in the era of mobile games, its influence is "pulling one hair and moving the whole body". In recent years, Honor of Kings has introduced the AI generation and communication mechanism, which undoubtedly brings great convenience to the communication in the game, but also has many influences on the game and people's game socialization. The impact of AI technology is bound to bring ethical problems to the game media.

2 Research Status Review

2.1 The Media Society

The concept of "media society" was put forward by Stig Hjarvard in the institutional tradition, which revealed the important role of media in cultural and social changes. This concept points out the increasingly important position and role of media in society, and embodies the trend and trend of social development today [2]. Media is no longer just a tool or channel, but has become a social background, which is ubiquitous in people's social practice. The logic of media exerts a subtle influence on the development of human society. The media gradually got rid of the traditional role of "intermediary" in communication research and became the "leader", and began to gradually influence the setting and control the social form [3]. The new perspective of "medialization" reveals that the media is deeply affecting politics, culture and social life: the newspapers and periodicals of political parties have begun to be entertaining-the medialization of politics, and the traditional building blocks have become the medialization of bits and games [4]. When the media perspective extends to online game socialization, it exerts a subtle influence on the mechanism of online game socialization and shapes a new social form-the media of game socialization. Different from the traditional virtual social model, the thinking and logic of artificial intelligence machines are infiltrating into the process of virtual social interaction and becoming a kind of guidance.

2.2 Game Socialization

In the Internet age, game socialization is a common phenomenon. An important task in game design is to build a social network that allows gamers to find other players. The success of many massively multiplayer online games also benefits from the social attributes of the games [5]. In the research of Poole and others, the guild in online games is defined as a media community [6]. However, it is not enough to focus only on the community in the game, because with the development of the game and the intervention of artificial intelligence, the social behavior in the game field is also increasing, and the social attributes of the game are constantly updated and expanded.

Honor of Kings, as one of the most popular online games, not only achieved the ultimate in entertainment attributes, but also created an unparalleled game space by using 3D modeling, animation design and other information and digital technologies. Moreover, with Tencent's social apps such as WeChat and QQ, it has improved the functions of online chat, adding friends and creating communities. And in the game network, the emotional fetters of the game are strengthened through the functions of interaction, gift giving and team creation, and finally a multi-dimensional virtual game space integrating competition, entertainment and socialization is born [7].

3 Research Methodology

This study mainly adopts participatory observation and in-depth interview to show the AI-assisted social practice of players in the game. The author has personally participated in the game experience from March 2018 to the thesis writing stage, and then established the first perspective to study the player's AI-assisted social behavior through participatory observation. In-depth interviews began in July 2023, and eight players were interviewed in a semi-structured way by purpose sampling, with an average interview time of 45 minutes. The research subjects are all deep players of Honor of Kings, that is, they have more than 3 years of gaming experience and have used AI for virtual social interaction.

3.1 Participatory Observation

Participatory observation is the direct observation made by researchers who go deep into the life background of the research object and actually participate in the daily social life of the research object. By familiarizing yourself with the rules of the game, taking root in the game, making friends with the game, watching the game, joining the community, etc., as gamers, spectators and members of the community, we can participate in and observe their behaviors, collect the first-hand information of gamers, and get closer to the phenomenon of "AI communication in game socialization".

3.2 In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are mainly used to collect perceptual information such as personal experience and motivation. Because the subjective consciousness of the players is often hidden behind the actions, the fragmented presentation of the game text is not enough to provide a complete personal mental journey, but also involves the players' personal cognition and other related contents, which is often difficult to accurately grasp only by corpus collection and text analysis. Therefore, in this study, the in-depth interview method was used to interview the game players in order to obtain the first-hand information of the later paper research.

4 Analysis and Findings

4.1 From the Quick Reply of the Game Interface to the Intervention of Artificial Intelligence in the Dialog Box

Initially, in order to save typing time and facilitate rapid language communication in the game, game developers set up a quick reply column on the right hand side of the game interface, including offensive words such as "gathering in ambush" and "giving priority to pushing the tower", defensive words such as "be careful of the grass", "the enemy disappears" and "defend the highland", communication words such as "unity is strength" and "we can win" and restrictions related to various festivals or activities[8]. The above quick reply greatly improves the efficiency of "language game" in the game and establishes a common semantic space.

In the past two years, in order to make up for the slow typing in horizontal screen, Honor of Kings has launched an intelligent chat function. In the comprehensive, team and private chat channels, a number of words can be replied according to the chat content of both parties at the top of the input bar. In the public channels such as comprehensive and team, according to the player's status, different common replies will be displayed above the input box; The private chat interface will also combine the chat context and player status to intelligently recommend quick reply; In the team room, the system will provide dialogue options based on different states of the room; In addition, you can also reply quickly when you receive friends' messages in other interfaces.

There are three main types of dialogue scenes provided by artificial intelligence: the first is the dialogue related to the start of the game, such as "Ready to play" → "Anyone else?" → "Can I drive?" → "Directly open" ...; Second, it extends to real social conversations, such as "open wheat?" → "Yes/No" → "Open the wheat and ignite! /Why" → "Let's go/There's someone around" ...; Third, life-oriented dialogue, such as "Have you eaten?" → "Eat" → "What about you" This kind of topic will eventually return to the dialogue related to the start of the game. But there are also "cpdd" and "cp?" With ideological-oriented social discourses such as "adding qq", players may unconsciously make further social behaviors that would not have happened.

(Originally, we just played games together, but the "Add qq" that popped up at the bottom of the chat box made me click, and then my friends in the game became friends

who I knew in reality, but we didn't talk much. What activities did the game have or would we chat at the new meeting? Interviewee A).

(I have played several "game cp" games, but I don't remember the specific situation. (This relationship also happened inadvertently. Interviewee F).

I have had this cp, but later I found that the cp in the game is not necessarily the case in reality. In reality, I will not play games together again. Interviewee D.

4.2 AI Technology on the Emotional Manipulation of Social Games

AI technology gradually got rid of human control, and strengthened deep learning ability through self-learning and processing of algorithms and computing power. The algorithm recommendation system was born in the Internet era, which greatly improved the social efficiency of the game. However, at present, AI technology is still in a "black box" state. It can independently calculate and simulate according to the messages input by gamers, but it is not known whether the words recommended by it meet the ethical requirements[9]. People are easily influenced by the emotions implied in AI technology, and even lack the ability to distinguish emotions. They lose their rationality in the game and become a "rabble" in the new era.

The different types of words in Honor of Kings mentioned above will drive the players to make a "fixed" choice in a short time, and then conflict with other players during or after the game, or even directly start a scolding battle. In short, AI technology not only brings convenience to the socialization in the game, but also makes the players' emotions fragmented and hurried, and even manipulates the players' emotions, which has a negative impact on the game socialization.

(Some people insist on driving wheat, which I don't particularly understand. Sometimes we just don't want to drive. After a few words, he is still in a hurry. Interviewee B).

(It was obviously not my fault when I played in the league. I kept signaling at that point, and the people who clicked were upset, which affected the operation and didn't cooperate well. Finally, I lost the game and scolded me when it was over. I really couldn't bear it, so I scolded back a few words and was banned for a while. Interviewee H).

4.3 AI Technology Automates Thinking and Action

With the advent of the media society, the infiltration of AI technology in game socialization weakens people's innovative ability and thinking ability, and threatens people's dominant position. "The intelligence of the machine comes from the study of human information, knowledge and thinking. The behavior of machines is also the study and imitation of human behavior. [10] "From ancient times to the present, the development of any industry is inseparable from people's innovative ability, such as the industrial revolution and the computer revolution. The new technology created and developed by human beings will change the way of life and thinking of human beings to a certain extent, but relying too much on new technology and falling into the trap of "algorithm" will gradually lose people's thinking and innovation ability, and even make thinking and action fall into mechanization.

The artificial intelligence reply in "Honor of Kings" may not be suitable for all social scenes. In the process of participating in the game, the author found that no matter what the topic, the reply words appearing above the chat box will return to the theme of promoting the start of the game, which is a gamification behavior logic, and this logic will gradually integrate people into the real social scenes and rewrite people's words and even thinking logic.

(I often play games with a good friend of mine, and sometimes I often talk about the words in the game when chatting on WeChat, as well as expression packs and so on. Interviewee C).

(The kind of reply in the game is really convenient, especially easy to use, and very simple. I feel that I don't know how to play without these quick replies in the game... Interviewee E).

According to the social sentences provided by the context, artificial intelligence can imitate human tone and send corresponding words with one click, that is, artificial intelligence also participates in human language games, and its influence has two sides. On the one hand, artificial intelligence can improve communication efficiency and promote the generation of background relationships, enhance the virtual social experience, make it easier for players to express themselves and establish closer ties with other players. On the other hand, artificial intelligence may also have a negative impact on virtual social interaction. For example, communication is limited to the surface, and even too exposed language appears, which has a bad direction for the young people group whose values are not formed-the main player group of Honor of Kings, and even penetrates into real social interaction. Carry out the next social activities, such as adding WeChat, QQ, online dating, running around, etc. If you make friends carelessly, your physical and mental health may be hurt or even more serious events may occur.

5 Conclusion

In the media society, AI technology is still in constant updating and iteration, and it plays an increasingly important role in the game scene, making up for the slow typing of the horizontal screen of the game and making the social interaction of the game faster and more convenient. However, the intervention of artificial intelligence also brings media ethics problems of the game. Players rely too much on artificial intelligence recovery function, which will make gamers' emotions fragmented and urgent, and even be manipulated by AI; Players' thinking and innovation ability is gradually losing, and even making their thinking and action into a machine. Therefore, when designing and developing artificial intelligence applied to virtual social scenes of games, we should be aware of the potential impact of technology, build a healthy and good language space, and improve the efficiency and quality of game socialization.

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