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A training transfer study of simulation games.

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Abstract : Throughout history, military warriors have used games to accomplish training objectives. Recently, personal computer-based games have emerged as viable training platforms. In this research project, we evaluated the training effectiveness of simulation games using a particular proprietary first-person view tactical trainer called Virtual

Battlespace 2(TM). Specifically, we examined squad level tactical maneuver of a combat convoy in a semi-permissive environment. We found that personal computer-based gaming was at least as effective as traditional training methods such as the sand table for preparatory tactical training. We found that trainees felt better trained after operating in the virtual environment. We also conducted an experiment to determine the extent to which the training of the simulation controller influences the effectiveness of the simulation. We found that the facilitator role can detract from a trainer's focus and that the trainer's practice and experience greatly affect the simulation training. Our findings justify the use of personal computer-based games for small unit tactical training. We conclude that personal computerbased gaming at the unit level can be a training multiplier, but the capability of the unit trainers to administer virtual training plays a large role in determining the effectiveness of the training tool.

Descriptors : *COMPUTER GAMES , *VIRTUAL REALITY , *GAME THEORY , *TRAINING DEVICES , *SIMULATION , VIABILITY , MILITARY TRAINING , MICROCOMPUTERS , TRANSFER , TACTICAL WARFARE , RECREATION , SQUAD LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS , OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS , THESES , TEACHING METHODS , TRAINING , CONTROL , MANEUVERS

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