

# That time i died and reincarnated as a school bench

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2023-12

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## “THAT TIME I DIED AND REINCARNATED AS A SCHOOL BENCH”

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### 1. Abstracts

This is a paper created to demonstrate the research, design, and prototyping process of the computer game "THIS TIME I DIED AND REINCARNATED AS A SCHOOL DESK," where, after conducting thorough research and approaching the subject, it became an experience aimed at helping young people gain a better understanding of romantic relationships and improve their performance within them.

Throughout the document, various perceptions of social relationships from experts and research found on websites and books will be presented. Additionally, the pains of the interviewed users will be exposed for analysis, leading to the creation of proposals for a prototype that will help address these issues..

### 2. Introduction

"A young man emotionally educated in fiction, in this case, the anime 'Nanatsu no Taizai,' is influenced to replicate romantic actions of the main couple with the girl he likes. These actions include using couple nicknames, always being around her,

telling her they are destined to be together, and giving her gifts out of the blue. However, he doesn't know the girl's preferences regarding such behaviors since he doesn't really know her. Lacking the ability to regulate his behavior, his insistence with the girl in question frightens her, causing his social circle to ostracize him for being seen as ridiculous and immature.

Without any guidance, the boy assumes that the girl doesn't appreciate his good intentions, leading him to develop resentment towards her and towards subsequent individuals he may be interested in who don't conform to the role he desires. Despite continuing to search for an ideal girl, this mindset confines him in a loop."

### 3. Problem statement

The intense practices of the user stem from observing these love practices in entertainment media. However, due to a lack of guidance from their parents, a lack of understanding exists that not all approaches to love are the same. Accustomed to immediacy, they leap into stages where the other person they're involved with is not yet, feeling "startled" and "uncomfortable" due to their intensity. Consequently, they face rejection.

Nevertheless, their poor emotional intelligence limits their acceptance of such rejection, turning their feelings into resentment and hatred, thinking that "nobody pays attention to gentlemen anymore" or that people no longer appreciate a "proper" romance, thus finding solace once again in the fiction they consume.

This occurs in school environments, mainly in secondary schools, as this is where the user spends most of their time and encounters individuals outside their family circle, with whom they begin to establish romantic relationships in contexts devoid of guidance or supervision. They begin to take their initial steps towards independence and feel more pressured by their peers to fit in as someone desirable and, consequently, validated.

As mentioned by Doctor Tania Rocha in the UNAM Gazette, "For a while now, we have assumed there is free will in love, idealizing it as a positive aspect, a rescuer, the best thing that can happen to us, becoming an end in itself. However, viewed in a more sober manner, we must contextualize the multiple changes at various levels, especially in romantic relationships. Despite this assumption, the predominant model remains that of romantic love—an idealized love that not only harbors strict rules and parameters influenced by power relations and gender roles but also reproduces, in many ways, sexist, heteronormative, and violent logic.

## 4. Research

For our project, we were seeking sources from both the internet and direct engagements with specialists and users. After collecting and analyzing the information, the following insight was

formulated: During the initial romantic interactions of the user studying in secondary school, influenced by entertainment media, they attempt to implement a detached vision of romance from reality. This involves giving gifts, invading personal space, and not respecting boundaries or timing, while mistaking kindness for romantic interest. However, their romantic expectations remain unfulfilled as they are based on unrealistic fictional tropes, leading to confusion and difficulties in relationships. Now, everyone in their classroom sees them as an "intense" individual.

### 4.1 Expert Interviews

We conducted interviews with two experts, in this case from the field of psychology, to better guide us on how to approach the topic and apply it to our prototype without causing discomfort to the user. Our aim was to establish a better relationship with the protagonist, focusing on allowing users to step into their shoes and empathize more, thereby achieving a more accurate interaction.

Continuing with the conclusions from our interviews:

From these interviews, we can draw fundamental conclusions for the research, such as the basic skills needed for a healthy romantic practice: 1) Openness, 2) Flexibility, 3) Knowledge. We explored how and why our upbringing context can influence our perception of love. This includes encouraging behavior amidst different practices to find something that truly works for us. Through this, we understand how we might fall into some love myths, yet we also comprehend how damaging they can be in reality, potentially

isolating the individual who holds onto them.

An essential highlight is the more identifiable stages of love our expert emphasizes: the first being attraction, followed by the approach. Finally, and perhaps less discussed in society, is the necessity to develop the ability to end a relationship. Failure in this aspect can lead us to become stuck in a dysfunctional partnership.

Drawing from these interviews, we derived fundamental conclusions for our research. We reaffirmed certain guidelines obtained from expert #1, such as the idea that many of our perceptions of love stem from our upbringing. However, it's crucial to reflect and discern what is genuinely healthy for us to practice. Furthermore, expert #2 offers a new perspective related to capitalism and how it uses novels, movies, social media, etc., to introduce the mythification and idealization of our topic, creating a vicious cycle with vested interests.

Moreover, we learned that love doesn't have specific stages beyond an initial visualization followed by verbalization, but it isn't exact in terms of generation time. The advice, nonetheless, remains not to rush and always get to know the other person, allowing us to navigate differences and decide if we want to be part of that relationship or not.

#### 4.2 Approaches

We made our approaches through video calls and it made it easier for our user to take the time they needed and express their ideas more faithfully in the exercises.

#### 4.3 LOVE & BREAK UP LETTER

The goal of this methodology is to discover the user's true feelings about their context and how it affects them, this will help reveal the true relationship between the research topic and the individual. What elevates him, what depresses him, and how these two visions contrast each other.

It was applied to a user and after the application of the methodology, a conclusion was drawn based on the results

As we can see in the love letter, many of the audiovisual media can influence the mythification of love, here particularly talking about soundtracks and something unique that will never exist again.

However, in its counterpart, the break up letter tells us the repercussions that remain of thinking about love, boredom and feeling incomplete, as well as the love established in society one can even become afraid because it is not enough, that there is a time limit and that it is even a competition.

As the user says, love is not bad, the bad thing is to make us think that only with it can we be happy and complete.

#### 4.4 CARD SORTING

The objective of this methodology is to discover how the user identifies and relates concepts within the research topic, to understand how the user understands and categorizes these ideas to later listen to their own voice their thought process to conclude how the social construction of love is reflected at the individual level

It was applied to two users and the result of the application of this methodology was as follows:

Both users relied mostly on their intuition and prior knowledge, neither added categories, but they did mention feeling conflicted as some options seemed to fit well into two categories.

Most notably, options such as "Emotional dependence" and "The spark needs to always be alive" were placed in realistic practices/views of user #1 while user #2 placed him in potentially dangerous beliefs.

In turn, "Love will change someone" and "Love alone can be the basis for a long-term relationship" were placed in realistic practices/views by user #2, while user #1 placed them in potentially dangerous beliefs and myths, respectively. "Love is an emotion" was placed by user #2 in social construction, while user #1 placed it in realistic practices/visions.

In their other differences, they are interspersed between myths and social constructions.

## 5. Proposal

Here we briefly explain our proposal for our project based on all the information gathered previously.

### 5.1 Design Proposals

We will make an interactive visual novel, we think it is ideal since it is a medium with which, according to our insights, our user feels comfortable and is already familiar, captures their attention and manages to see themselves reflected within it. It will serve as a sort of exercise or practice of how your actions look from more perspectives besides your own without doing any more damage and that you can begin to understand your situation

with the confidence of being in a private setting.

Figma, on this platform it is easy for any user to run, which makes our proposal available to everyone, besides, we are familiar with this tool so we will have more ease when making the proposal.

A stylized 2D style, this will make it easier for the user to identify with the characters in the novel.

We will use flat colors, depending on the situation, the color palette will vary based on the psychology of the color (warm in moments when the user makes more accurate and cold decisions, on the contrary, for example)

The mechanics used will be based on point & click, the interactive novel is based on choosing dialogues, this involves text box, audios, interface design (consistency, usability, functionality)

The theories on which we base ourselves are psychological stemming from our approaches to experts in our research, as well as some secondary sources

### 5.2 Design Principles

To provide a pleasant and hassle-free experience for our team and our users, we took them based on our previous Insights, and the following principles came out to be implemented in our project

1. Design to build confidence in the resolution of critical situations in social settings
2. Design to recognize flaws and problems caused by media illusions adapted to real life

3. Developing effective communication skills within a loving relationship to reach agreements and solutions
  4. Development of tolerance to frustrations of problems that arise in love relationships.
- Invite personal reflection and questioning of knowledge within love relationships for the betterment of the user.

(Figure 1)



Figure 1. Outline of Design Principles

### 5.3 First prototypes

Our first prototypes are found with a very early version of the story where human characters were used and the protagonist was also human, it was mainly set in a school and the first interaction route had been planned where you could briefly appreciate the way to move and perform actions according to the story (figure 2).

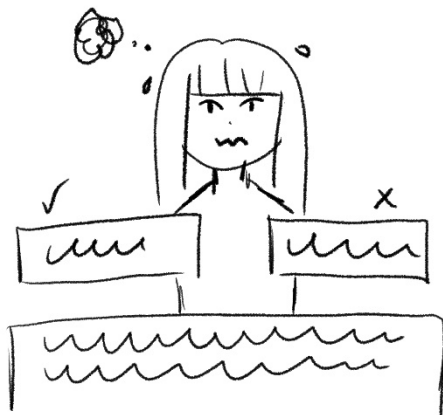


Figure 2. Low-fidelity prototype.

Our script was shaped in such a way that the actions carried out by the user were reflected in such a way that they had a negative, positive or neutral impact on the way of relating to the characters, generating an advance in them or making it impossible to create a healthy relationship.

### 5.4 Fine Prototype

After going through a process of refining the story and having significant changes after the review of our advisor, it was decided to change the owner where the story took place, changing the race of our characters, changing them from being human to becoming demons with a more varied form than what we are used to (figure3).



Figure 3. Character in the novel

In this process, we finished integrating all our assets to the figma platform for their programming of the route in which we will be focused on this half-fi prototype.

## 6. Experience

After finishing prototyping the medium project, we took on the task of carrying out some user tests in order to identify if our principles of the three taques were

implemented correctly and that there were no problems when playing this beta version.

## 6.2 User Testing

We conducted five user tests in which they were divided into two parts, one in which the user had not tried the game and the other in which they had already experienced the game.

Users comment that in order to have a successful relationship it is necessary the cooperation of the two individuals in it, in another case they mention that if it is very common to see in series or other audio-visual media the idealization of an impossible romance to achieve and that generates more harm than good, another comment that users have in common is that they try to stay out of situations without generating greater harm discomfort to their interest unless they are very involved they could cross lines that they themselves or the other person, another factor is that it is very important for them the first impressions and stages of the relationship so that they can be guided about what the other person is like and if they are able to understand limits or if they are not interested in insurance or comply with them (Figure 4)

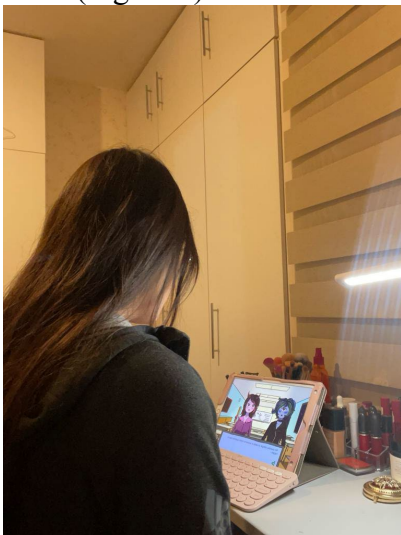


Figure 4. User performing test

After playing the beta, the users answered the other part of the questionnaire and it was concluded that it is important to keep in mind that relationships are based on mutual respect, communication and commitment by both parties, that users realized that they had to change some attitudes that for them could be common but can make other people uncomfortable and that thanks to the project it was easier for them to understand the limits of a person and how good or bad the beginnings of a love relationship can be.

## 7. Conclusions

It is important to take into account how we relate to other people, to try that audio-visual media do not completely permeate our vision of what romantic or loving relationships should be, there are many factors that lead people to have this type of uncomfortable or harassing behavior and our project seeks that these people have a way to be able to carry out their first romantic interactions in a way that does not negatively affect another person and they may experience whether the decisions they make can turn out to be a good step forward in a relationship or on the contrary generate discomfort and end up alienating their romantic interest.

## 8. Acknowledgements

We thank our advisor who guided us throughout the project, our friends for encouraging us to continue and certain movie characters for keeping our sanity for the conclusion of this project.

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