

GAMES AS CO-DESIGN TECHNIQUES

What is a game?



What is a game?

The Magic Circle



real world
kicking a ball in the net

Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* (1938)

What is a game?

To play a game is to engage in activity directed towards bringing about a specific state of affairs, using only means permitted by rules, where the rules prohibit more efficient in favour of less efficient means, and where such rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity.

[...]

Playing a game is the **voluntary effort** to overcome **unnecessary obstacles**.

Bernard Suits, *Grasshopper: Games, Life, and Utopia* (p. 34)

What is a game?

Beyond Entertainment

- **Serious games**
 - Critical games
 - Game-based Learning
 - Art games
 - Persuasive games
 - Games for Health
 - **Games for Creativity**



The Graveyard, Tale of Tales (2008)

Games and Creativity

Creativity is the ability to come up with ideas or artefacts that are **new, surprising** and **valuable**.

Boden, Margaret A., *The Creative Mind: Myths and Mechanisms*, Taylor & Francis (2003)

Games and Creativity

Based on my own observations, and experience as both a player and designer of games, **games where creative expression is the objective** are either **very few** in number or they **do not exist**.

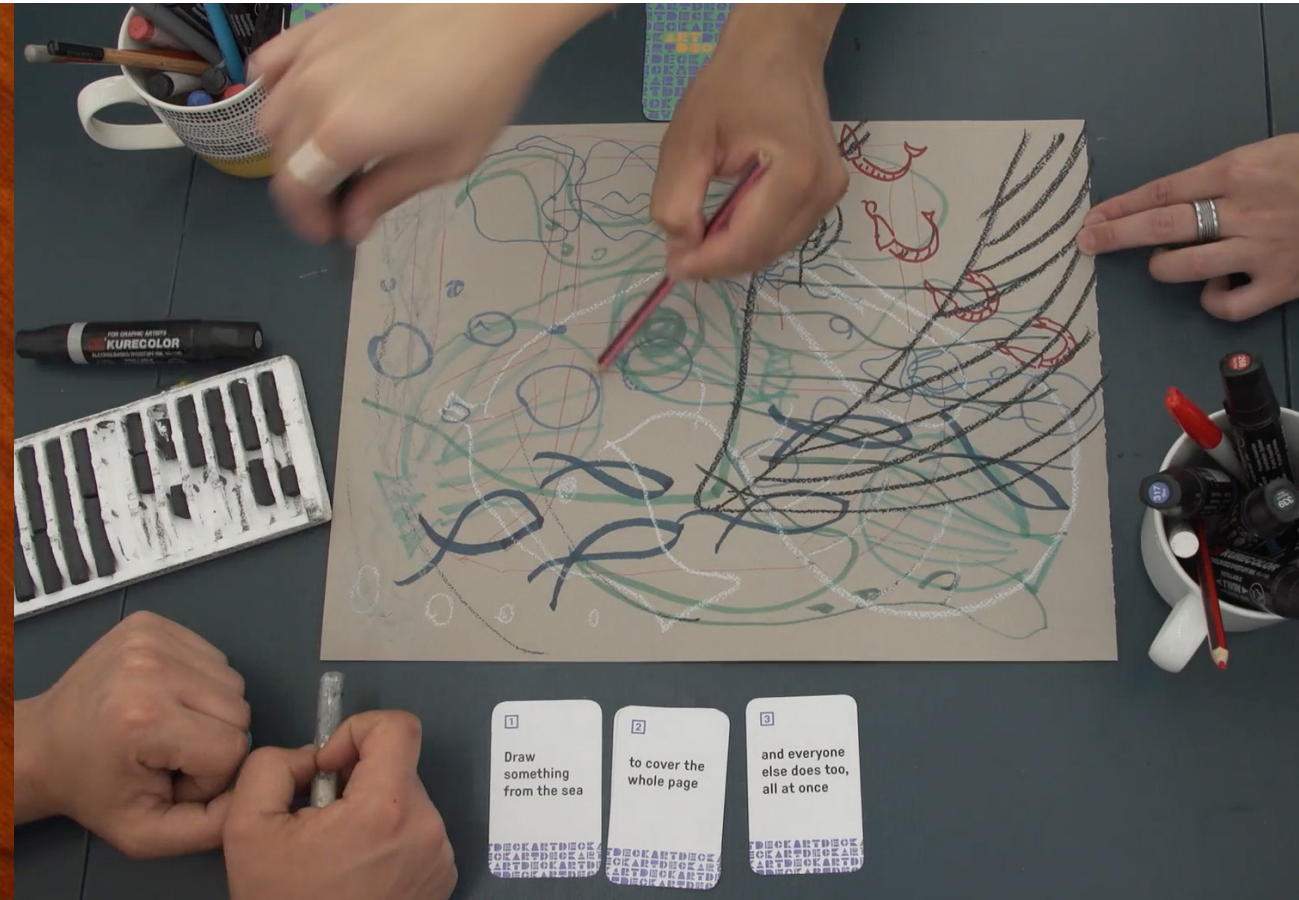
Rasmussen, Gaute, *Creative expression as the objective in video games*, Diss, Queensland University of Technology (2014)

Games and Creativity

Games that use Creativity as a Mechanic



Cards Against Humanity (2011)



Art Deck: Collaborative Drawing Game (2018)

Games and Creativity

Not Quite Games, But Close



Brian Eno & Peter Schmidt, *Oblique Strategies* (1975)



Koreen Odiney, *We're Not Really Strangers* (2018)

Games in Human-Centred Design

Games as Techniques for Co-Design

- **Why games for co-design and user research?**
 - Increases engagement and investment in a solution
 - Increases participant engagement and sharing
 - Provides a change of tone

Games in Human-Centred Design

Games as Techniques for Co-Design

Games are helpful because they provide a **familiar, relaxed, and relatively egalitarian atmosphere** within which the stakeholders can combine their diverse backgrounds to develop new solutions and to meet one another's needs.

Muller, M. J., Wildman, D. M., & White, E. A. (1994, April). *Participatory design through games and other group exercises*. In Conference companion on Human factors in computing systems (pp. 411-412)

Games in Human-Centred Design

Games as Techniques for Co-Design

■ Challenges for having participants create

- Lack of ability from participants
- Lack of confidence from participants
 - Participants with some ability can feel even more pressure to perform creatively
- Lack of motivation
 - Rewards can reduce creative output

Holly Gramazio, *Inviting Player Creativity Through Game Mechanics*, 2017

Games in Human-Centred Design

Games as Techniques for Co-Design

- **How to create games for creation?**
 - Tell players what to do
 - Give players an excuse
 - Distract your players
 - Use players against each other
 - Give players a disguise
 - Make it easier to create something good

Holly Gramazio, *Inviting Player Creativity Through Game Mechanics*, 2017

Participatory Design Methods to Create a Chatbot for First-Time Parents

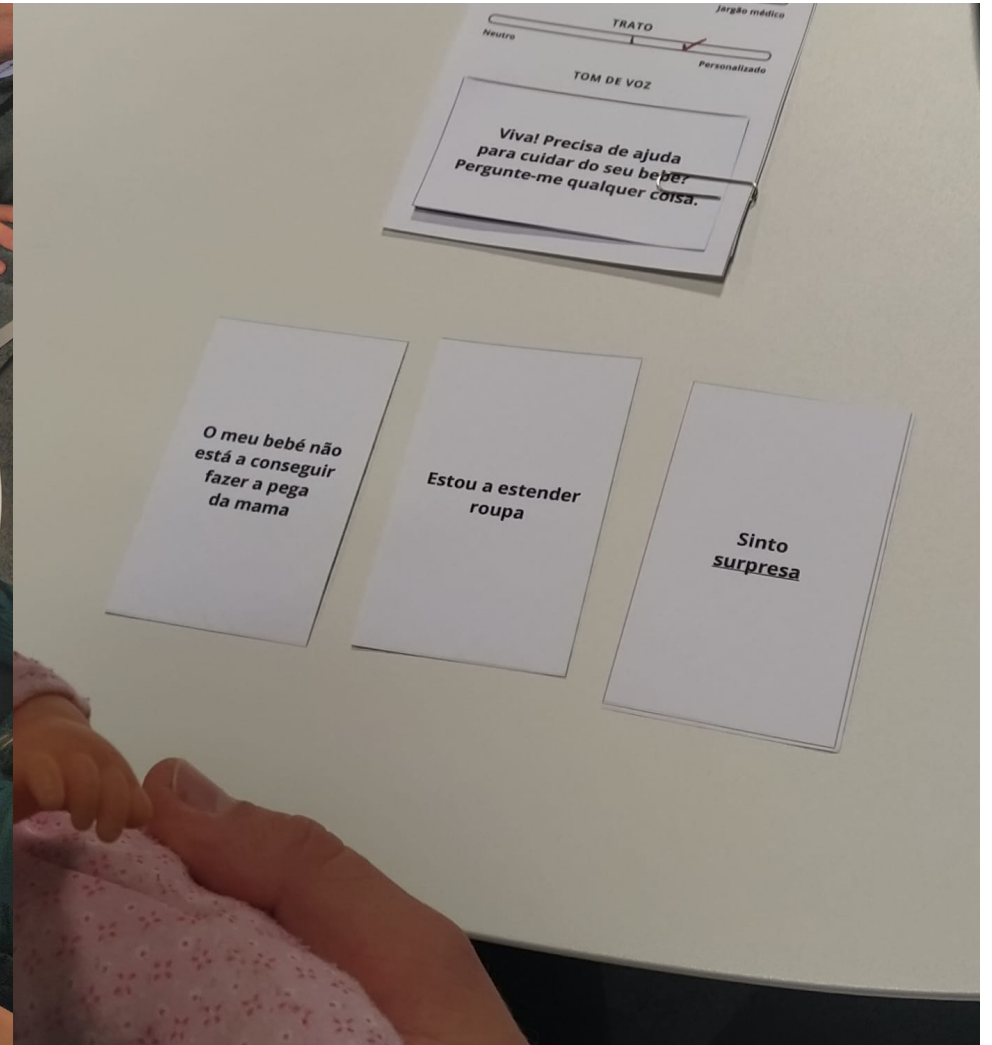
ParentCoach Project (2022/23)

- **Co-creating with real users** (i.e., parents, educators, clinicians) using ludic participatory design methods, in Portugal and South Africa, to create a ***chatbot for first-time parents***.



Participatory Design Methods to Create a Chatbot for First-Time Parents

ParentCoach Project (2022/23)

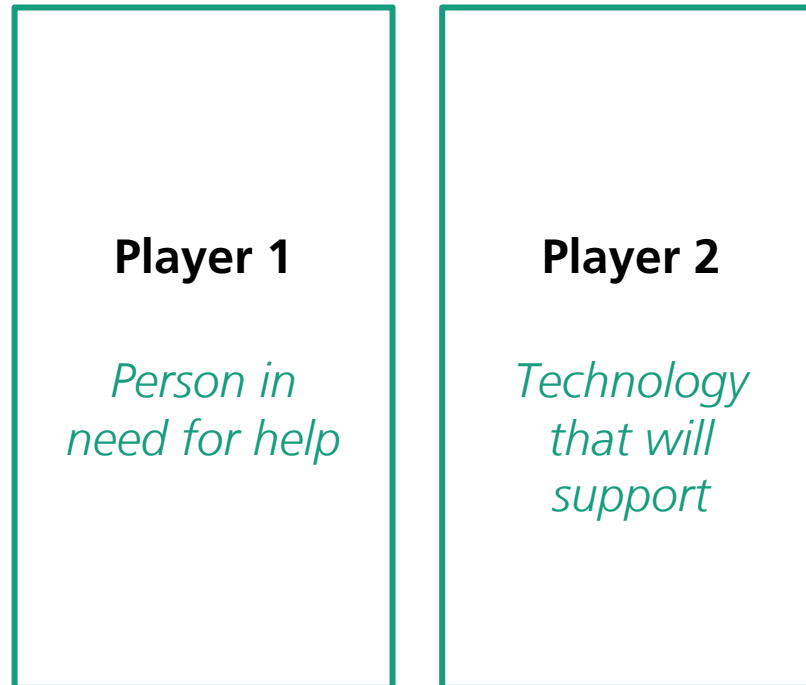


Role Play

15 minutes (in pairs)

Hands-On Activity | Role Play

Players' Roles



Hands-On Activity | Role Play

Card Decks



Activity #4 | Role Play

Scenario

*I'm at [CONTEXT],
because [EVENT] and
I'm feeling [EMOTION].*

Hands-On Activity | Role Play

Rules

1. In pairs, choose who will play a **person**, and who will play the **technology**.

2. With the cards faced down, take **one card from each deck**, and **set the scenario** for the roleplay.

3. **Role play** this situation, and the user experience, to speculate about the use of a technology.

Note: use props, change your voice, make sounds, etc.

THANK YOU!

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