

Value Representation through Digital Games Development in a Classroom Context

Educational games, games for social change, or activist games refer to a new generation of games that have a purpose in addition to entertainment. There has been a rise the games with a social agenda designed to inform or challenge (Klimmt, 2009). This approach to socially conscious games design builds upon the suggested intrinsic representation of the values of the game designer (Flanagan, 2007). This research blends the notion of value representation in games design with children's play - taking play in children as culturally situated and therefore representative of cultural values (Sutton-Smith, 2001). In this research games design is used as a creative research method in young (12 to 13 year old) learners in a classroom context. Over 14 weeks learners researched, designed and developed a digital game around a social issue. Early findings of this research will be discussed in relation to the representation of 'social values' through game mechanic, narrative, and aesthetics as well as 'game' categories (Huzinga, 1955; Opie & Opie, 1984). Additionally, an evaluative element will be included exploring the 'learning' that took place throughout the project. Finally contextual and methodological challenges in this research will be identified along with recommendations for future work.

Flanagan, M., 2007. *Values at Play in Digital Games*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Huzinga, J., 1955. *Homo ludens: a study of the play element in culture*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Klimmt, C., 2009. *Serious Games and Social Change: Why They (Should) Work*. In: U. Ritterford, M. Code & P. Vorderer, eds. *Serious Games*. New York: Routledge, pp. 248-271.

Opie, I. & Opie, P., 1984. *Children's games in street and playground..* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sutton-Smith, B., 2001. *The Ambiguity of Play*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.