MIKE ANANNY

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The Reflectory: Collaborative Writing through History

Children exchange letters that together spark the appearance of a relevant historical biography.

Encased in a traditional hard-cover volume. Opening book reveals a hidden, visually rich and engaging screen onto which children directly write their stories.

My Role: Designer, implementer.
Sam: An Experiment in Shared Reality

Embodied Conversational Agent designed to scaffold children’s storytelling play.

A mixed physical-virtual story-listening system where discourse elements and physical objects are shared.

My Role:
Co-designer, script-writer, evaluator.

Papers:
Computer-Human Interaction conference publication; numerous journal papers and conference presentations
TellTale is a storytelling kit that lets young children compose and structure oral narratives. As children create, segment, organize and link oral language they practice literacy skills critical for later written language.

My Role: Masters thesis project, designer, implementer, evaluator
Iterated in MIT product design and children’s culture classes

TellTale developed as part of Mattel toy-design workshop.

Technology and design acquired by LEGO; worked with Milan design team to incorporate TellTale into product line.

Papers:
Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning publication; Society for Research in Child Development presentation; Text, Discourse & Cognition presentation.
Over 80 children aged 4-10 played with 3 iterations of TellTale in solitary and group conditions.

They seem to …

see body pieces as linguistic units; and

use body pieces to plan utterances

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**Average Number of Conjunctions Per Word**

- Unified TellTale Stories (n=8)
- Segmented TellTale Stories (n=6)

**Average Number of False Starts per Word**

- Unified TellTale Stories (n=8)
- Segmented TellTale Stories (n=6)
TellTale revealed socio-economic based differences (also basis for Specific Language Disabilities)
TexTales: Developing Community Public Opinion

Large-scale, **interactive public installation** to help individuals and communities form **personal perspectives and public opinions**.

A 3-by-3 grid of image-text combinations; people create image captions by sending **SMS text messages** from their mobile phones. For each image, TexTales anonymously displays the 3 most recent text messages. Over time, people see their captions interplay among others’, creating a kind of **emergent community archive**.

**My Role:** Designer, implementer, community liaison, workshop leader.
Followed an iterative, user-centered and participatory design process:

- **Establish relationship** with a community or group.
- Work with **participants, local artists and community leaders** to design for installation’s focus, setting and audience.
- **Create installation content and arrange logistics** with collaborators.
- **Advertise and present** installation in a public venue.
- **Meet to reflect** upon results and plan improvements.
Four collaborative installations with communities across Europe:

**Fatima Mansions**: with low-income Dublin flat complex undergoing major architectural and social renewal

**“The Big Smoke”**: with Dublin children’s arts center investigating attitudes toward government ban on workplace smoking

**“Smokum”**: with Amsterdam Computer Clubhouse house, set in Dutch train station investigating teen attitudes toward smoking

**“cText”**: with BBC, set in Northern Ireland mixed Catholic-Protestant town, investigating sectarian tensions
Interaction Design Findings:

Intermodal Conversation Starting
image-text combinations to ground and spur discussion

Authoring for Unfamiliar Audiences
conversations with future, unanticipated and particularly accessible partners

Public versus Private Messaging
shifting between anonymous and attributed, personal and collective discussion

Framing, Editing, Censoring Dialogue
relating, revising and regulating discourse with both social and technological sensitivities

Numerous conference presentations, 2 journal publications, numerous public demonstrations, software licensed by European university.