Teddy bears and talking chairs: designing from the meaning in experiences

Jesper Legaard Jensen

Department of Technology and Innovation

Research output Thesis › Ph.D. thesis

Abstract

This PhD project aims to extend the knowledge and methods of experience design by exploring how we might better understand - and design from - the meaning in experiences. I first establish that there is a gap when it comes to ways of understanding the subjective level of what an experience means to a person. This shows in the way that most research and design projects focus on somewhat objective aspects (see e.g. Ylirisku and Buur, 2007; Forlizzi and Battarbee, 2004; Sanders, 2002). Designing for experiences typically focuses on user-product interactions (see e.g. Forlizzi and Ford, 2000) where I propose to explore the meaning in the experience first, as the key for exploring interactions second. Some researchers (e.g. Hassenzahl, 2010; Wright and McCarthy, 2010) acknowledge the need to consider deeper levels of an experience than are directly related to the use-situation, but offer little insights as to how this should be done. This challenge was considered both interesting and an appropriate issue to study from a design research perspective. This research was accomplished by obtaining an understanding of what is meant by the 'meaning in experiences', and using these theoretical foundations to explore the territory further through empirical research.

The project was conducted with focus on two different types of experiences in two very different empirical settings; the workplace experience (in the CSSD project) and the experience of taking on adult responsibility - i.e. exploring a period of a young person’s life (in the MyLife project, also involving a local government social service setting).

The first empirical research (CSSD) was conducted as a reflection on the use of ethnographic methods in design (often termed design anthropology, see e.g.: Halse, 2006; Buur and Matthews, 2008). While the ethnographic interpretation of such data (interpreting what people do and why) can aid to a better understanding of behaviors, actions and processes, it rarely opened up the question of what made the experience meaningful. I conducted a second study, this time intending to explore the use of a design game. The game led to uncovering new insights, but again the perspective of ethnography did not prove sufficient to fully uncover what was meaningful about the experience.

With a primary goal of understanding the meaning in an experience, a need to understand the deeper subjective levels of the experience was therefore identified. Such understanding does not focus on 'how' something is done (e.g. pushing a button), but rather the meaning behind it, uncovering the more profound 'why' it is meaningful for a person. I thus applied a phenomenological perspective focused on uncovering meaningful themes for a new exploration and coding of the data. The findings and structuring process that followed, revealed possible categorizations that in turn led to a better understanding of the meaningful themes. An outcome of these findings was the creation of an Experience Scope Framework (ESF). This framework enables the researcher to make the broader scope of the meaning structures in an experience explicit, pointing design activities toward the profound meaning in an experience, not restricting it to only use-related issues.

The both theoretical and empirical exploration of meaningful themes beyond the use-situation also led to suggesting a division of an experience in three dimensions; Instrumental (the physical artifact), Usage (the interaction) and Profound (the understanding of meaningfulness). I established that the profound dimension contained what I call experiential meaning, and could be reached through moments of immersion. Such moments require a personalization of the experience, which may again be a reason why a subjective perspective on the experience rather than structured explorations of user-groups, is necessary in order to understand meaningfulness.

The second empirical setting focused on young peoples’ experiences of taking on adult responsibility. This project was accomplished in collaboration with the municipality of Odense in Denmark. It was named the 'MyLife' project, underlining its subjective nature and the need for young people to take control of their own lives. This part of the project trialed a prototype framework (ESF) through an experience-based design process. This process consisted of four stages: Explore, Understand, Share and Show how. These stages lead to gaining an understanding of the experience that forms the basis for the design process. In the experience-based design process four young persons were interviewed and the interviews were analyzed to uncover their individual meaning structures by coding into themes. These themes were structured using the ESF, leading to what I call an ESF-representation which depicts an understanding of the experience. The understanding was revised based on interpretations of the data, and negotiated with the participants until it was considered to be valid (when interpretations and negotiations no longer added to or detracted from the understanding). This process led to the design of a game, explicating how, and for which purpose, the developed framework (ESF) can improve the process of designing from
Teddy Ruxpin, the hugely popular talking bear from the 1980s, is making a comeback. Teddy 2.0 will still tell stories, but he's getting a few upgrades. The toy bear made a splash when he launched in 1985. He was a first-of-its-kind animatronic toy with motorized eyes and mouth, and he told stories through a cassette player (remember those?) in his back. "Kids adored Teddy Ruxpin so much that he became a multi-billion dollar product in five years," said Jeremy Padawer, co-president of Wicked Cool Toys, the company behind Ruxpin 2.0. (The original Teddy was created by Ken Forsse and Alchemy II in 1982. Wicked Cool Toys is working with Alchemy II on the new iteration.) Why is the toymaker bringing Teddy Ruxpin back? Design A between-groups design was used. Two lists were created, each comprising 38 experimental items, with the conditions counter-balanced so that each list contained either the weak or strong version of each item. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two groups. Figure 2 shows the mean reading times per word from the start of the sentence up until three words after the experimental items. Up until the onset of the manipulation (A), reading times between conditions are closely aligned. As a behavioural system, language lends itself to predictions: we are experienced as both producers and comprehenders, and the system is predictable on many linguistic levels e.g. phonotactics, syntax, discourse. 373 teddy bears talking products are offered for sale by suppliers on Alibaba.com, of which stuffed & plush animal accounts for 69%, toy robots accounts for 1%, and...
A wide variety of teddy bears talking options are available to you, such as bear, panda, and lion. You can also choose from plush, plastic teddy bears talking. There are 372 suppliers who sells teddy bears talking on Alibaba.com, mainly located in Asia. The top countries of suppliers are China, Taiwan, China, from which the percentage of teddy bears talking supply is 99%, 1% respectively. Related Searc Teddy bears have long been collectibles, from the classic (and pricy Steiff bears) to a simple home-loved collection of teddies one has found here and there over the years. Whatever your reason for collecting teddy bears, there are... wikiHow is a “wiki,” similar to Wikipedia, which means that many of our articles are co-written by multiple authors. To create this article, volunteer authors worked to edit and improve it over time. This article has been viewed 15,597 times. Learn more Teddy bears have long been collectibles, from the classic (and pricy Steiff bears) to a simple home-loved collection of teddies one has found here and there over the years. A teddy bear is a stuffed toy in the form of a bear. Developed apparently simultaneously by toymakers Morris Michtom in the U.S. and Richard Steiff in Germany in the early years of the 20th century, and named after President Theodore “Teddy” Roosevelt, the teddy bear became a popular children’s toy, celebrated in story, song, and film. Since the creation of the first teddy bears which sought to imitate the form of real bear cubs, “teddies” have greatly varied in form, style, color, and material. They