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TDA580 GAMEPLAY DESIGN

Assignment 3 Report

Group 2: Johnny's Journey

December 14, 2018

Contents

1   Introduction

The following document discusses the game concept we made called Johnny's Journey. We will first provide a general description of the game before going into further details by describing rules, mechanics and patterns that are used in the game. The document also presents how we came up with the final state of the game by presenting its creation and evolution through time and why we did these changes.

Throughout this document, game mechanics will be defined according to Sicart [1]: "game mechanics are methods invoked by agents, designed for interaction with the game state". Gameplay design patterns will be defined according to Björk *et al.* [2]. Unless stated otherwise, the design patterns are found in the collection of gameplay design patterns made by Björk [3]. Mechanics will be written in **bold**, design patterns in *italic*, and names of other games will be underlined.

2   General Description

Johnny's Journey is a collaborative storytelling game in which the players tell the story of a character named Johnny. The players will alternate in telling a part of the story of the main character. Thus the game results in a more or less coherent story about a fictional character. The narrative is guided by two main elements of play.

The first is set of cards that players have in their hands. At each turn, players can play one or more of these cards. These enable the introduction of new scenaristic elements corresponding to items, characters or places. The story that a player will tell should therefore be created around the different cards chosen. However, the player does not have full control over the story he or she tells. Indeed, the outcome of its part of the story is uncertain, and will be either good or bad depending on the outcome of a die roll. Players should consequently take this into consideration and be prepared for one of the two outcomes.

The second element that helps players in their narrative is the presence of objectives, called ambitions, that players must achieve during the game. It is the resolution of the latter that determines the success or failure of the players during the game. Once these objectives are achieved, the game ends with a final game turn during which the players must do their best to reach a final objective that will bring the character's story to an end. This one is revealed only after the resolution of all the character's ambitions.

2.1   Rules

The game begins with the creation of the main character. This is done through a character sheet. The personality, background, occupation and flaw are all determined by a die roll. These character traits are both elements that should be respected when telling the story as well as inspiration for coming up with a story.

After creating a character the players agree on the number of ambitions they wish to fulfill during the game, and draw the appropriate number from the corresponding deck of cards. Three event cards (one item, character, and place card respectively) are randomly drawn from their corresponding stacks of cards and are put on the table, constituting the initial situation of the story. Afterwards, the event cards are shuffled together with a fourth type of event cards called Surprise cards, and the event cards are distributed among the players, with each player receiving five of them. The game begins with the first player coming up with an idea to start the scenario based on the three drawn cards. He or she describes the initial situation to the other players and then starts his turn.

The four types of event cards are as follows:

- Place cards: These cards correspond to physical locations that can be introduced in the story.

- Item cards: These cards correspond to physical objects that can be introduced in the story.

- Character cards: These cards correspond to characters that can be introduced in the story.

- Surprise cards: They are of various types and their effects are described on the card. They can be played by a player at any time during his turn.

During each turn, a player must pick up the story from where it left off. To do this, the player can play one or several cards to describe the sequence of events. Once the player has chosen the cards he or she decides to play, the player places them on the table and reveals them to the other players. Then, a 6-sided die is rolled to determine the outcome of the events the player is going to tell:

- a result of 1, 2 or 3 corresponds to negative consequences for the main character.

- a result of 4, 5, or 6 corresponds to beneficial consequences for the main character.

Once these actions are completed, the player narrates a series of events, making sure to use all the cards he has just played, as well as to respect the outcome announced by the die. At the end of his narrative, one or more ambitions may have progressed. If this is the case, a marker should be placed on the corresponding ambition card. If there are as many markers as the number indicated on the ambition card, the ambition is considered fulfilled. After playing the cards and narrating a story, the player's turn ends. He or she draws as many cards as necessary to get a total of 5 cards in hand, and the turn goes over to the person to the right.

A player may decide not to play cards from his hand, but rather to choose to replace a certain number of them. To do so, the player discards the number of cards of his choice and then draws new ones until he has 5 cards in his hand again. After that, the player's turn ends and it is the next player's turn to play.

The game ends when all ambitions have been fulfilled, or when there are no more event cards in the deck. If all of the ambitions have been fulfilled, the player who fulfilled the last ambition gets to pick an endgame card. A final table round then takes place for the players to try to achieve this last objective, then the game is over. Whether or not the endgame objective has been achieved, the game is considered won for the players. If on the other hand the players run out of event cards, the game ends after one last round ending on the player who picked up the last card from the deck. In this scenario, players are considered to have lost the game.

2.2 Intended audience

In this kind of game where acting and storytelling are paramount, the involvement of the players in the story they are building is often synonymous with an enjoyable gameplay experience. Therefore, the game primarily targets players that already had some experience with role playing games as it will be easier for them to have the story to progress and thus have a better experience. However, as the game is played using cards, it is rather easy for beginners to enjoy it because they are provided inspiration for coming up with a story.

2.3 Implicit Rules

Over the course of the different game sessions played, several unofficial rules have emerged. For instance, since the game is collaborative and the players are facing a creative task, other players may want to help the one that is currently narrating a story. During a player's turn, suggestions can be made by other players to try to make the series of events narrated even more relevant and memorable. This rule is all the more interesting because it allows players to be active and contribute to the game at any time, encouraging them to engage in the storytelling, and leading to them feeling a sense of togetherness in playing the game.

2.4 Tutorial

Presented below are the steps taken during the initial set up of the game:

1. A character is generated using a character sheet (see Figure 1) and by rolling a die four times. The values of the die corresponds to different attributes of the character. For instance, rolling the values "1, 2, 4, 6" corresponds to the attributes "Crazy", "Criminal", "Politician" and "Liar".

2. A number of ambitions are drawn and placed on the table.

3. An initial setting for the game is created by randomly drawing a place, item and character card and putting them on the table.

4. The four types of event cards are mixed together and distributed between the players. Each player receives 5 event cards each.

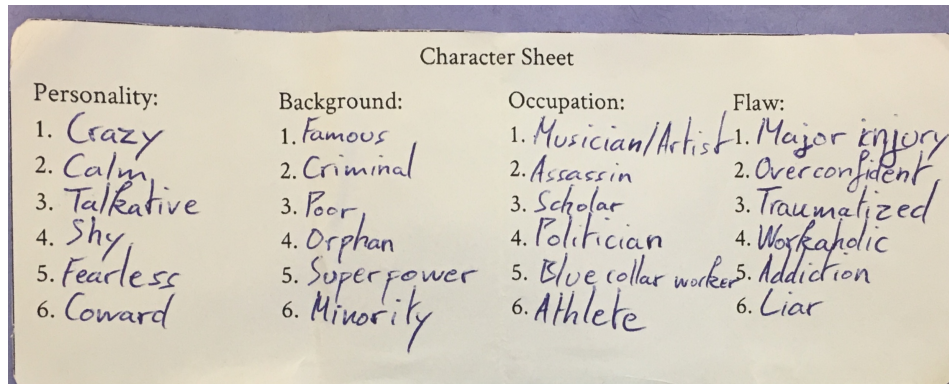5. The first player determines a scenario based on the initial setting and then begins his or her turn.

Figure 1: Character sheet.

Presented below are the steps taken during the game:

1. While there are cards available, the players take turn playing or discarding event cards. When playing event cards, the players are trying to fulfill the ambitions that have been drawn for the character. Additionally, the players have to roll a die when playing cards to determine the outcome of the played cards (see subsection 2.1).

2. If all of the ambitions are fulfilled then an end-goal is drawn. The players take one last turn trying to fulfill this goal. After this, the game ends.

3. If the deck runs out of event cards, then each player takes one last turn before the game ends.

2.5   Gameplay Example

Presented below are two examples of ambitions that have been drawn in the initial setup of the game (see Figure 2). The players will be trying to fulfill these ambitions during the course of the game session.
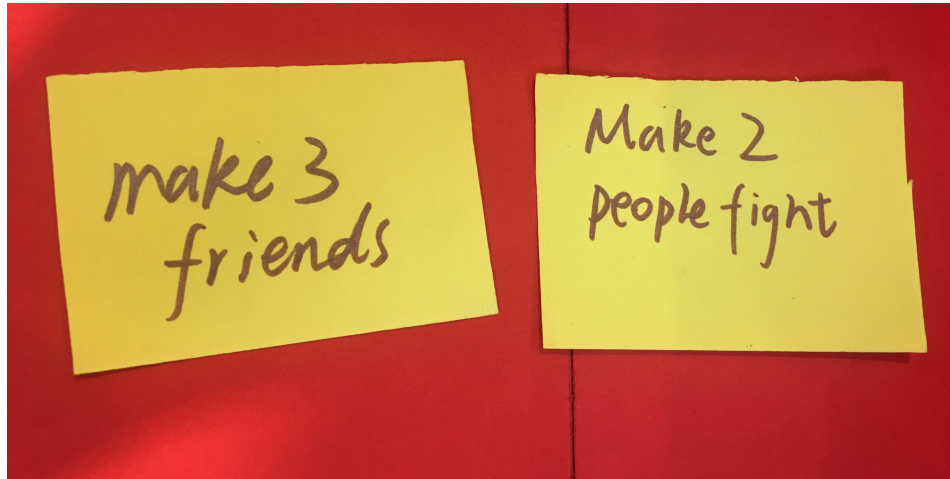

Figure 2: Ambitions

Presented below is an example of three starting event cards (see Figure 3): "A taxi driver", "A deserted street" and "A rope". An example scenario told by the first player player could then be:

> Johnny wakes up as he is pushed out of a car, and finds himself tied with a rope. A taxi driver has just stolen all his money! Looking around, he finds that he is abandoned on a deserted street. How could the day get any worse?

Figure 3: Initial game

Every turn, a player picks at least one card from the ones on hand to either play or discard. Below is an example of a hand from which a player picks the cards "A street artist", "Some money" and "the pink surprise card" (see Figure 4). To determine the outcome of the story that will be created, the player rolls the die. As an example, if the player rolls a 4, then the outcome is positive, and a story could for instance be:

> Johnny is screaming on the ground of the deserted street for what begins to seem like an eternity, when a street artist appears from around a corner. He likes to paint on the walls of abandoned houses, and has returned to the deserted street to do so. Upon arrival, he notices Johnny and tries to untie him. Johnny thanks him for his help, and proceed to tell him about his story. The artist replies that he finds the story interesting and invites Johnny to have a cup of coffee at his place. The artist asks Johnny to collaborate with him in his artistic work, and offers to pay him some money for his contribution. Johnny accepts the offer, and through their collaboration the two become friends.

Players take turns to tell their stories by using their cards like above. In this case the player was able to make a friend, which progresses towards fulfilling one of the ambitions (make 2 friends).

Worth noting is that the player has a surprise card. Playing this type of card results in some special ability being used, and in this case, that the next two outcomes (including the player himself) will be very positive.

Figure 4: Player 1's cards

When the all of the ambitions have been fulfilled, the game reaches an end game state. The player who fulfills the last ambition randomly selects a blue end goal cards. Below is an example where Johnny has to flee the city (see Figure 5). When the end goal card has been drawn, all players take one last turn to let Johnny flee from the city.
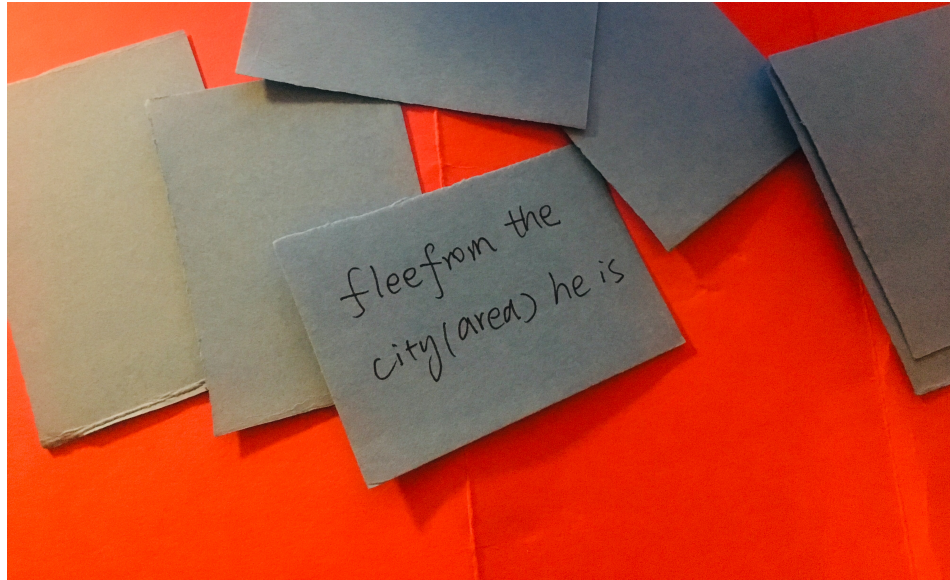
Figure 5: End goals

Below are an example of stories told by two players to fulfill the end goal:

Airport, Secret room by player one:

The zombie appeared one month ago[1] returns with a catastrophic virus. Almost everyone in the city is going crazy, trying to escape the city. A massive influx of citizens result in the airport[2] being destroyed. Johnny and his friends hidden in his secret room in fear, but they know they can't hold on for a very long time.

A key, A flashlight, A bunch of Kitten by player two:

Oh no, the noise of Zombies is getting louder and louder and it seems they have already found Johnny. The zombies start kicking and eating the door to the secret room. Johnny looks for another way out of the room and with a painful expression on his face tells his friends, "Hey guys, I know one way out of here, but it's risky". He fetches a key from inside his shoes and points at a box in the corner of this secret room. "I am not sure what would gonna happen if I open this box, cause my grandpa always warning me for the dangerous box", he says. "For now we don't have any other choice", he regretfully admits. Johnny asks for his friends' agreement and determined to survive begins walking towards the box. The locker is old and full of rust, and dust starts to fall down to the ground in the corner of the room. Something is happening...

Suddenly a flashlight makes everything totally white, followed by some strange noise. "Oh no what is this? K...Kittens? Why Kittens?" Johnny can't believe what is happening now. A bright bridge is being built by the kittens and leads to a colorful entrance. "Is it safe", his artist friend says, still confused and disbelieving. A loud noise comes from the direction of the door and the Zombies proceed to enter the room. With no other choice, Johnny and his friends rush to the entrance and flee with the magic kittens to a peaceful paradise.

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[1]introduced in a previous turn by one of the players
[2]same as 1

3 Ideation

Before starting to even think about what sort of game we wanted to make or what theme we wanted to explore, we first started thinking about what gameplay design patterns we wanted to use in our game. This was the most practical way for us to know what kind of game each person wanted to make and it would also allow us to be more efficient during the brainstorming of the game ideas. We started by making a list of all the patterns that everyone individually wanted to work with, and then proceeded by making a vote to determine a shorter list of patterns we would use for our game.
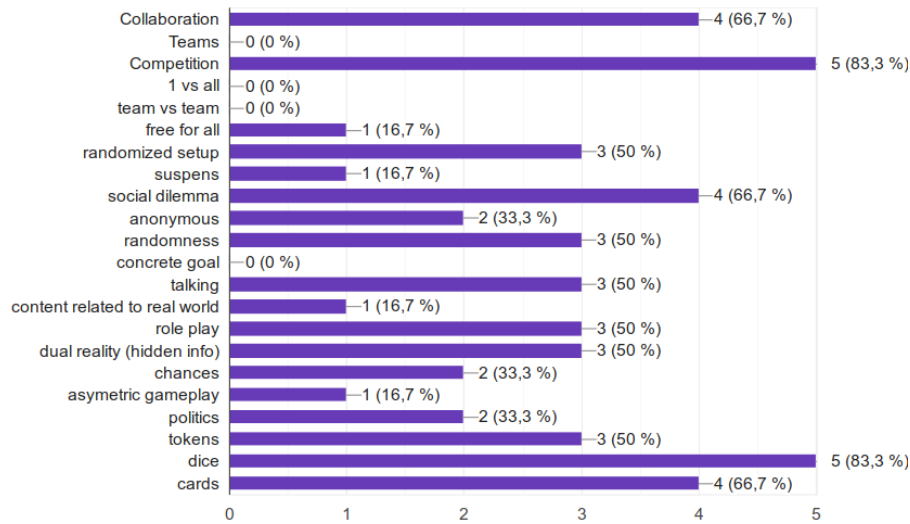

Figure 6: Results of the vote regarding patterns to use.

As can be seen on figure 6, each person voted for the three patterns they wanted to use the most and after that, we decided to keep the patterns which had at least three votes (half of the group).

Competition	Collaboration
cards	social dilemma
dice	randomized setup
randomness	talking
roleplay	dual reality
/*tokens*/	

Figure 7: List of patterns used.

We then started brainstorming on what kind of game we could make based on the list on figure 7 and came up with a concept fairly quickly thanks to that list. The patterns *Competition*, *Collaboration*, *Social Dilemma*, *Talking* and *Roleplay* led us to the concept of

making a story-telling game where players would need to collaborate by creating a story together and would also compete by having their own individual goals.
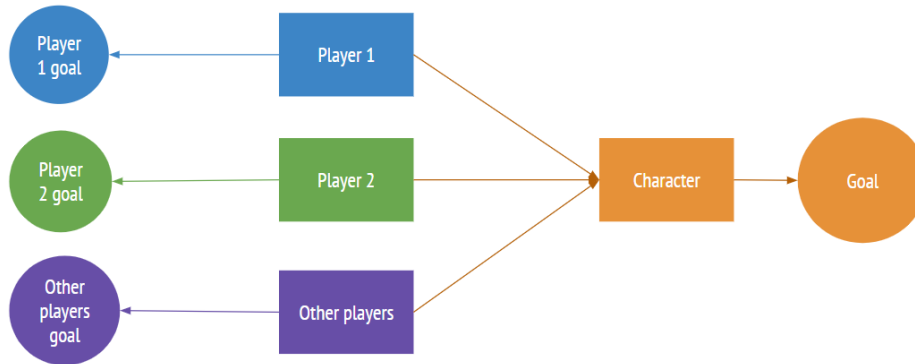

Figure 8: Initial concept

As can be seen on figure 8, *collaboration* was materialized by having all the players tell the story of a single character they would share. Since we chose the pattern *Cards*, we thought of having two different types of card called "Missions" and "Quests" that would respectively represent the character and the players' goal. However, we quickly changed the quest cards after trying to come up with ideas for these cards. Quest cards were a case of divergence [4] as we realized that these cards were too broad and that we would not be able to come up with ideas unless we decided on a theme for the game in order to put some restrictions on what the cards could be. We didn't want to do this as we wanted the players to have freedom over the theme of the story and thus decided to remove quest cards and instead thought of having three other different types of cards (Items, Places, Characters) that the players would use to come up with the story. These cards were much easier to create as they are concrete unlike quest cards, but the quest cards' main purpose was to bring *competition* between the players. The competition was instead implemented as *victory points* by granting one point to a player for every card that he would use successfully. With this feature, we had intended for the players to keep track of everyone's points and possibly create some strategic plays, by having a player tell a coherent story that would be hard for the following player to continue.

Overall, the ideation process was mainly driven by the patterns we first selected. This process allowed us to find a clear direction regarding which type of game we wanted to make and also helped in making a game that the members of the group would like, since it made use of several patterns that everyone liked. The process used was a way of creating a subspace in the design space [4] by focusing on the design goals we defined through the selection of gameplay design patterns. The competition aspect of the game went through the transformation process [4] with modifications during the prototyping part and during playtesting, after which the pattern was removed for reasons that will be explained in the following parts.

4   Design Iterations

During ideation some simple sketches were made to illustrate the various cards that would be used in the game. Once the initial concept had been decided, some card templates were made using digital tools. Throughout the entire design phase, the project was using a character sheet that was made in Figma (see figure 9).

Character Sheet			
Personality:	Background:	Occupation:	Flaw:
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.	6.

Figure 9: The character sheet specified which attributes the character was assigned through die rolls. The sheet was was made in Figma.
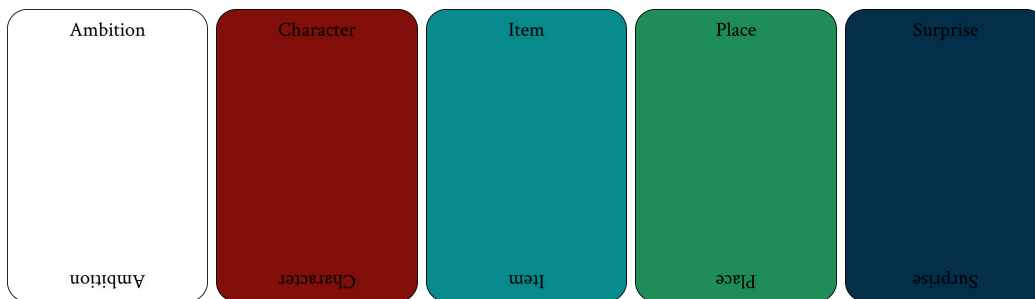

Figure 10: The cards used in the first prototype were designed in Figma.

4.1 First Prototype

While the character sheet was used throughout the entire design phase, there were two different prototypes used during the playtest sessions. The first prototype was made in Figma together with the character sheet. This choice of prototyping tool was made partly based on the designer's experience using this tool, and partly due to the need to have a template that could be mass produced. In particular, making cards is relatively simple in Figma, as they are just rectangles with rounded corners. Some text was added, copied and rotated to provide clarification of what type of card it was. Additionally, the cards were provided unique background colors. Once the cards had been made, they could easily be uploaded to a google document, put in a borderless $3x3$ table, and printed by anybody from the project team. The resulting cards that were produced in figma can be seen in figure 10.

The primary drawback of this particular prototype was that it relied on access to color printers. Unfortunately, the project team was unable to locate one in time, and as a result the cards were printed in gray-scale. During the playtests described below, this drawback led to lack of clarity, creating the need to develop a second prototype. Additionally, there were other features that needed to be designed and added to the existing prototype, which led to the first prototype being abandoned entirely.

4.2 First Playtest Session

The first playtest session was held on Monday, December 3rd, during which only the project team was participating. This session made use of the first prototype (described in section

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4.1). At this point, the rules of the game was that every player had three event cards on their hand at all times, there was only one ambition for the character, and the player that first played five event cards won the game. The ambition was intentionally made vague so that the players at all times could strive towards fulfilling it, since it would never actually be fulfilled. Finally, the surprise cards had at this point not yet been developed, but were already a part of the game concept.

The main goal of this session was to test the experience of playing the game. Some observations that were made include that the players were excessively discarding cards due to not being able to play a card on their hand. While in theory the players are never limited in what cards they can play, in practice they felt like the cards that they had did not make sense given the current state of the story that was being told. Additionally, it was also observed that the end of the game did not actually relate at all to ambitions that are a core element of the game (and the one thing that the players all have in common).

4.3   Second Playtest Session

The second playtest session was held on Thursday, December 6th, during which other groups from the course were participating. Once again, the first prototype was used for playtesting. In this session, however, it was decided that the players now had five cards on their hand at all times, which resulted in fewer discarded cards. The surprise cards were also introduced during this session, because the project team thought that they would provide an interesting twist to both the gameplay and the story. Additionally, the character now had multiple measurable ambitions, and the game was won by fulfilling all of them. At the beginning of a session, the players decided on how many ambitions that they wanted to fulfill.

During this session, other players experience during the playtest was observed and notes were taken. Additionally, it was tested whether or not people preferred having both competition and collaboration (where the players win by using the most event cards), or if they preferred only collaborating to fulfill ambitions. Based on the reactions that the players expressed, it was clear that they did not care about this particular competitive system, and preferred the collaboration only gameplay.

It was observed that due to the event cards being printed in gray-scale, this drawback caused lack of clarity. Other observations include that the endings felt rushed, that the "good" and "bad" outcomes seemed ambiguous and that the game lacked some track-keeping method for the now measurable ambitions. To solve these issues, another prototype was made.

4.4   Second Prototype

In the second prototype, the cards were re-written by using colored card stock papers that helped with distinguishing the different types of cards. Furthermore, the feedback we received from the previous playtest session led us to create the "End goal" cards that are drawn after ambitions are completed.

The drawbacks from having these card stock papers as cards are the same as the ones we had on the first prototype since these still don't feel like actual cards and can't be shuffled using the common shuffling techniques.
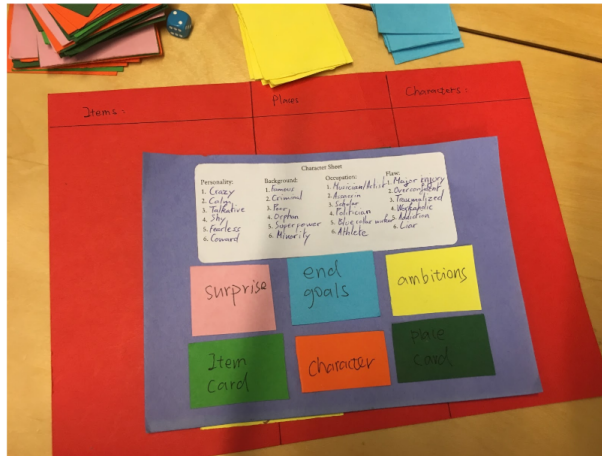
Figure 11: Second prototype of the game.

We also added a playboard to provide more clarity to the game sessions since playtesters (and ourselves) noticed that the game quickly becomes confusing with all the cards that were played.
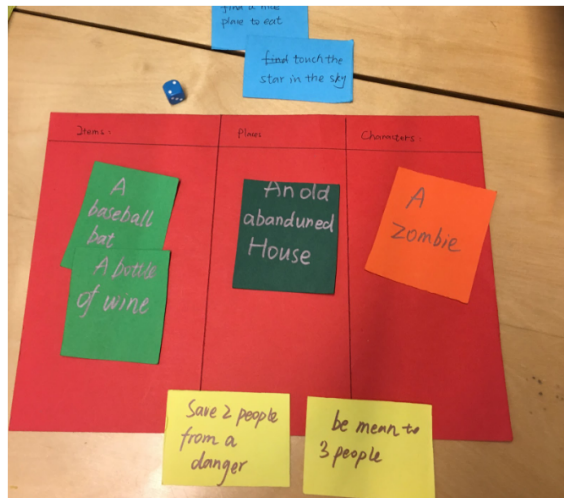

Figure 12: Play board.

The playboard is divided in three parts representing the different types of event cards. Cards are placed on their corresponding category in the order they were played, which helped in bringing more clarity. Finally, small tokens were added to help the players count the achieved ambitions.

4.5 Third Playtest Session

The third playtest session was held on Friday, December 7th, and similarly to the second playtest was done together with other course participants. This time, the second prototype was used, which meant that the new end-goals were to be tested.

It was observed during the playtest that the "good" and "bad" outcomes were still found to be unclear and require further clarification. Additionally, some of the ambitions and surprises were found to be either not interesting or to not be clearly phrased. Most of the character attributes were also found to be very bland, and as a result often only one or two of them were considered when creating stories.

5 Concept Analysis

5.1 Competitors

There are some games in the market that are similar to Johnny's Journey. Let's describe the competitors of the game :
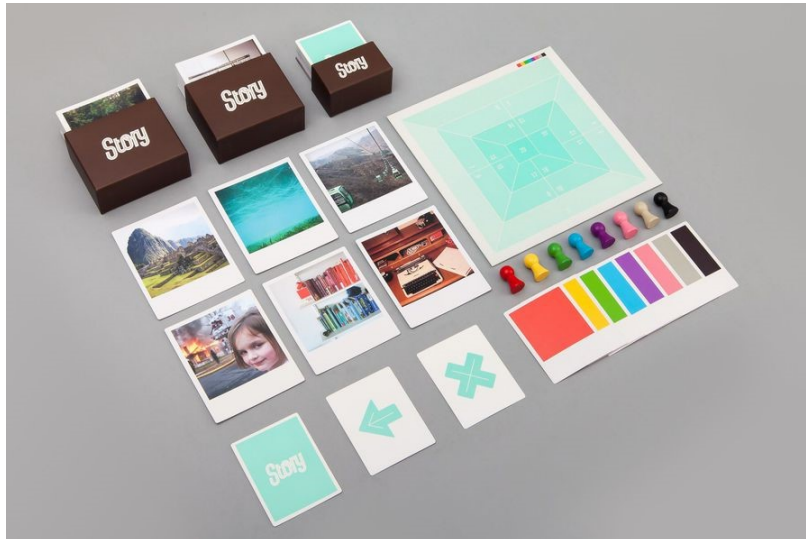
First, we have Story in figure 13 :

Figure 13: Story board

Story is a story telling game where players match pictures and have to explain why they belong together by telling a story based around them. After every player told their story, they are asked to vote for their favourite one. The player who received the most votes is awarded 1 point, and every player who voted for him gains 3 points. So the game rewards both good story tellers, and players who recognize a good story. The first player to obtain 20 points wins the game.

Next, we have Aye, Dark Overlord! in figure 18:

Figure 14: Aye, Dark Overlord!

Aye, Dark Overlord is a game where one player personifies as the Dark Overlord who sent the other players (the Dark Overlord's minions) to an impossible mission. The minions obviously fail and have to report their failure to the Overlord. The game then consists for the minions to use cards in order to come up with lies to explain why they failed the mission and avoid the Overlord's wrath.

Finally, we have Once Upon a Time: The Storytelling Card Game in figure 15:

Figure 15: Once upon a time

Once Upon a Time is a game where players have to tell a story together using cards that show typical elements coming from fairy tales. One of the player is the Storyteller, so he has the right to play cards in order to make his story progress; the goal of other players is to interrupt his story to become the new Storyteller and guide the plot towards their own ending. The game ends when a player was able to play all his cards and end with a special card call "Happy Ever After" Card.

5.1.1 Similarities and Differences

Now that we described the competitors, let's compare it with Johnny's Journey.

Obviously, these games have all in common that they are storytelling games that use cards in order to tell a story : players pick cards from a stack and then use their imagination to come up with a good story. Aye, Dark Overlord and Once Upon a Time also have in common with our game the fact that players share the same story whereas in Story, players' stories do not have any connection with one another. However, Story and Johnny's Journey have in common the fact that they are turn based games; Aye, Dark Overlord and Once Upon a Time both are real time based games where players can interrupt the one telling the story in order to be the new storyteller and thus try to be the winner.

That last point is an important and major difference between Johnny's Journey and its competitors : Johnny's Journey is a cooperative story telling games where players build the best story they can by helping each other. The competitors however are all games that involve competition : Story has a point system which determines who wins at the end of the game; in Aye, Dark Overlord, players playing as minions are against each other in order to save their own skin; and in Once Upon a Time, players always try to interrupt the storyteller so that they can be the new one and be the first player to finish. Whereas in Johnny's Journey, the game ends when players achieve the characters goal, or when the stack is empty, it is then a cooperative game where players win or lose together.

5.2 Thematic and Dietetic aspects

Basically,This storytelling game is about a main character named Johnny and the purpose of this game is to create the story of his journey towards his ambitions and end goals. In each game, the character changes personality and role depending on the players and the character's random initialization. For instance, in the first game, Johnny could be the leader of a secret organization. In the next game, he could be a kind and honest barber but happens to need to kill his clients for some reason because his ambition cards tells him to.

The combinations are infinite and only limited to the players' imagination: from a crazy and famous criminal in a wheelchair who has to make new friends, to a coward, liar politician belonging to a minority who has to kill someone, through a calm and famous workaholic musician who has to make two people fight each other; anything can happen to Johnny in his journey and thus, the game does not have a fixed thematic because the players create their own, and it can change between games.

The game progresses in a world similar to our current one : all items and places can be found in the real world such as a screwdriver, a car, an amusement park, an airport, etc. . . And the same goes for most of the character cards : for instance the character can meet a firefighter, a street artist, a dentist, etc. . . However there are some characters that actually do not really belong to the real world such as the zombie and the vampire for example. The reason for this is that we did not want to force the players to perform in a realistic world, and so we introduced these characters as an invitation to go a bit crazy. Moreover, players can do basically whatever they want with their story, so if they decide to actually perform in a fantasy world per say, they could say that the screwdriver is actually a magic sword for instance; and the reverse is also true : if players want to stay in a realistic world, they can always say that the zombie and vampire are people in disguise or just regular people but for some reason the character happens to believe that they are fantastic creatures. In the end, it is all about the players' imagination.

6 Gameplay Analysis

6.1 Mechanics

Johnny's Journey is a game that is fairly easy to learn and tries to emphasize the game experience. This is made possible in particular by a limited number of game mechanics, each of which is of significant importance.

If we had to mention an essential game mechanics, it would certainly be **story telling**. It is truly the one that is at the root of the game. Using the different cards in their hands, but also the existing story, the players must tell a part of the story of the main character alternately.

It is during this narrative that other underlying game mechanics appear, notably those of **roleplaying**[5] and **acting**[5]. Since the players all play the same character, when the main character is brought to life, his actions must be globally consistent with the story, but also and most importantly with the character's personality. Players must therefore constantly be able to role-play. Regarding acting, it is a game mechanics that arises almost naturally when players create situations involving several characters. Indeed, during the narration, the players are led to animate the characters by interpreting them and making them express themselves. **Acting** is probably the game mechanics that makes it easier for players to immerse themselves in the story.

There is also a last important game mechanics which, this time, is not directly linked to storytelling. This is **dice rolling**[5]. At most of their turns, players must roll a die to determine the outcome of the story they are about to tell. This mechanics is relatively simple and allows to add a little challenge to the players without breaking the immersion. The use of the **dice rolling** in this game is similar to the one used in traditional tabletop role-playing games.

6.2 Design Patterns

Johnny's journey is a rather simple game both in terms of its game mechanics and by the rules that constitute it. However, this is not in contradiction with a large number of design patterns. To be honest, a fairly large number of design patterns could be identified in this game.

Some of them are immediately identifiable at first glance. In the game, in order to randomly distribute scenaristic elements to players, cards are used. *Cards*[3] are a frequently used design pattern that allows information to be distributed to a player without revealing its content. In our case, only part of the information is shared with other players. Indeed, each type of card has a unique back face that is distinct from the others. Players can therefore differentiate a Place card from a Character card in a player's hand, without knowing the exact nature of the card. This leads us to a second design pattern: *Hands*[3]. Throughout the game, players must always have 5 cards in their hands. This set of cards represents different solutions that players can use to advance the story. During the game, players are regularly called upon to roll a die. Like cards, *dice*[3] are a very common design pattern. They are used to randomly determine a consequence (good or bad) for the players' stories.

The designs patterns of the *dice* and *cards* go along with another design pattern: *randomness*. Whether through card dealing or die rolls, the randomness component is omnipresent in the game and allows to create stories with an uncertain outcome (providing suspense).

During the game, players are exposed to a wide range of choices. It often happens that some players spend some time thinking about the actions they will take and their possible consequences, temporarily blocking the course of the game. This corresponds to a design pattern called *analysis paralysis*[3]. This behaviour is generally seen as negative by other players and breaking the fluidity of the game.

If players sometimes have difficulty making a decision, it is partly because they have a direct influence on the narrative structure of the game. The *narrative structure*[3] is a design pattern that appears when players can directly influence the story of the game. This goes in conjunction with other narrative-related design patterns.

The most obvious one is *storytelling*[3], which basically is the design pattern that represent the act of telling stories. Another important one is also *roleplaying*[3]. When telling Johnny's story, players often have to take on the role of Johnny and behave like him, respecting his personality and experience. But it also happens that the players play other characters in addition to Johnny, which leads to a second design pattern: *Characters*[3]. During the narration, the player is often led to take control of one or more characters or even creatures.

However, as mentioned above, the story told is uncertain, and players do not always know the outcome. This often forces players to improvise, making *improvisation* a key design pattern of our game.

It is through this whole narrative aspect that the player will be able to achieve a certain number of ambitions. The latter can be compared to *quests*[3], corresponding to a design pattern where players must complete several objectives. In the case of our game, ambitions are quests that must be completed in order to reach the end of the game. The completion of the quests allows us to access the end-game phase, which leads us to introduce a last design pattern: *End Game*[3]. Simply defined, this corresponds to the last phase of the game, here the last round of the table which aims at achieving the endgame goal.

All of the relations between the different design patterns can be seen in the Design Pattern Graph in the next subsection on Figure 16.
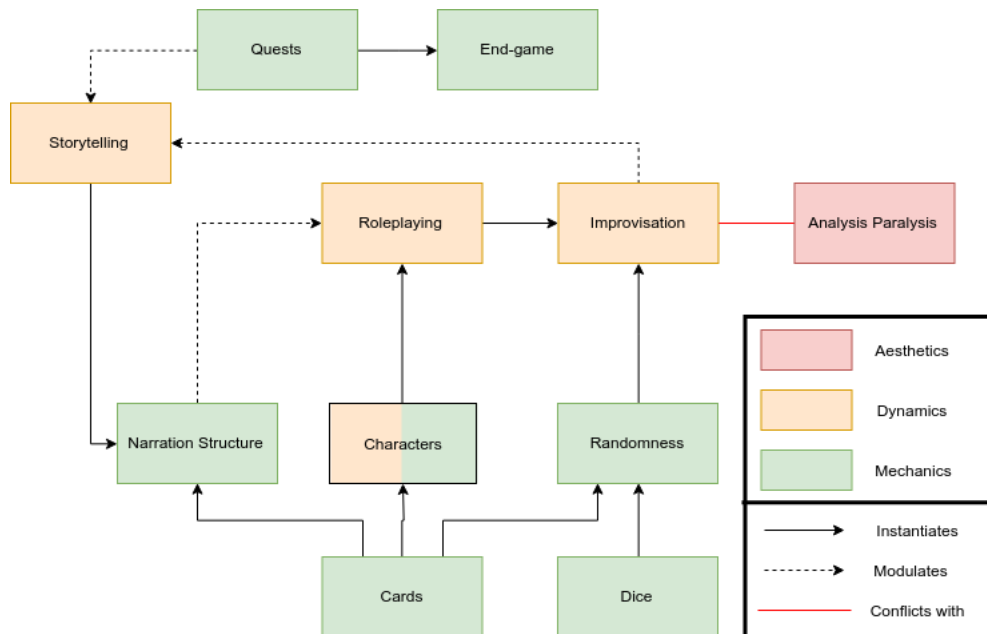
6.3 MDA Model

Figure 16: Design Pattern Graph showing MDA model[6]

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6.4 i* Diagram

The i* diagram is shown in Figure 17. Basically the largest green character is our shared Johnny, every player contributes to him as a virtual player. Player add story pieces to Johnny's story. Players play cards as resources, surprise card may help player to get more card resources, ambition card comes up with ambitions and when they are achieved, the end goal cards come up with end goal.
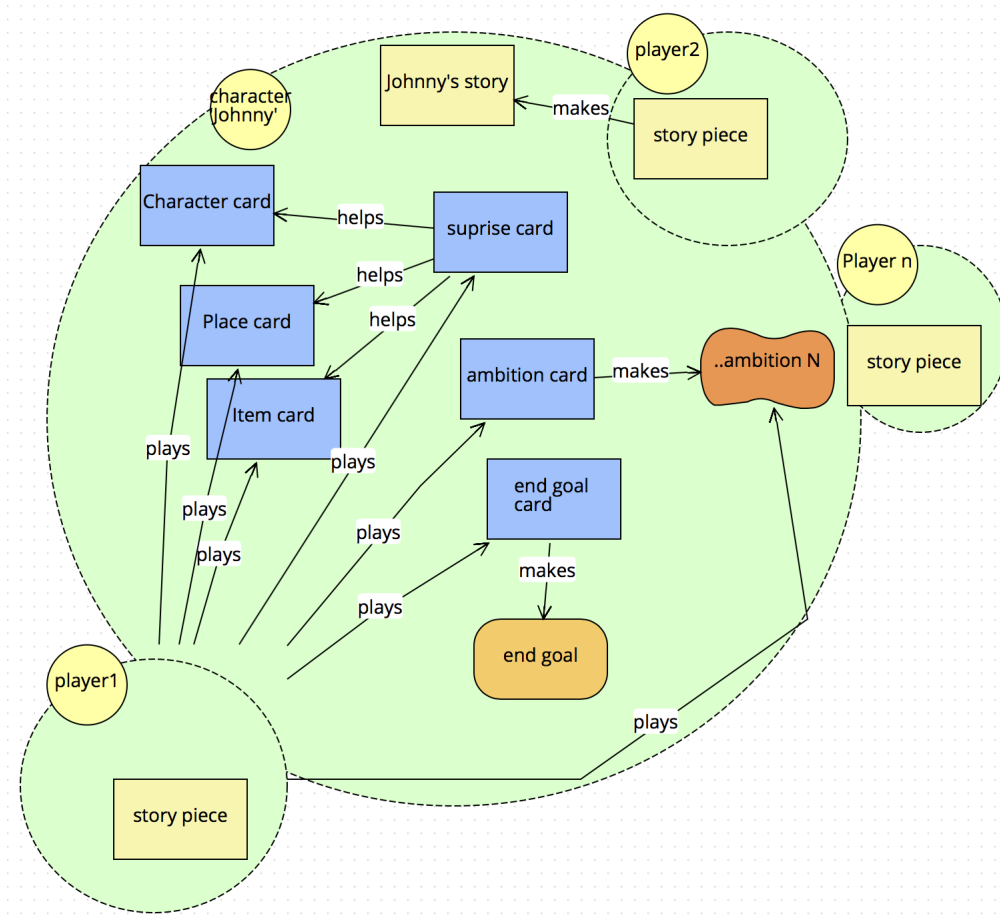

Figure 17: i* diagram for Johnny's Journey

6.5 Machination

Machination is shown in Figure 18. From left to right, the event cards are resource which contribute to player's story piece, and the piece is evaluated by other player and added to Johnny's story. The fx1 checks if Johnny achieve ambition and then add one to a counter, when the counter fulfill the required ambition numbers, the end goal is added to process the Johnny's story. If fx2 checks the story fulfill end goal, the story come to an end.
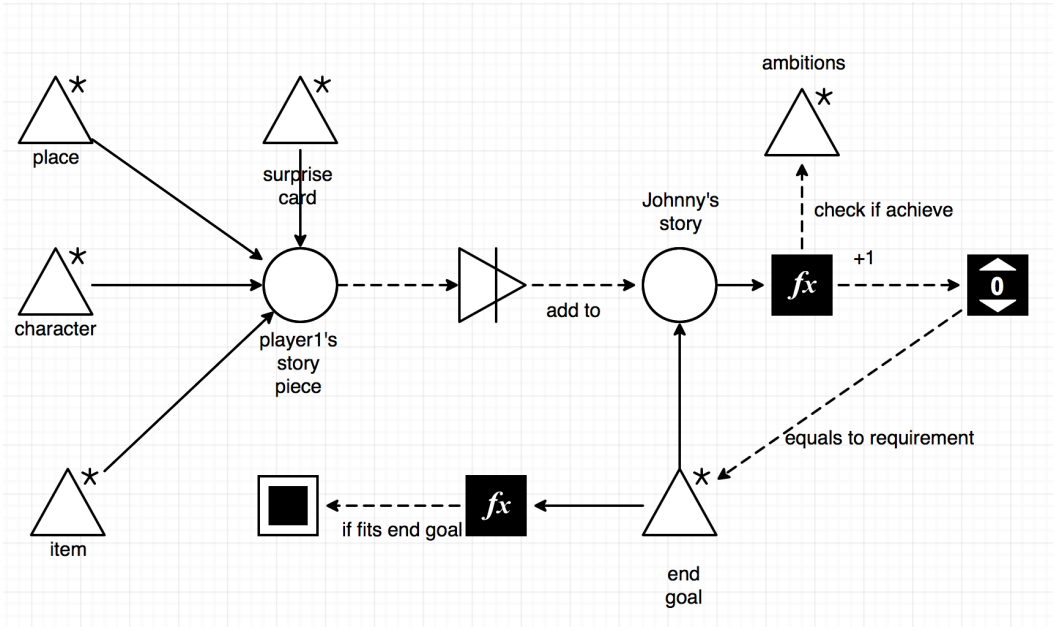
Figure 18: Machination diagram for Johnny's Journey

6.6 Gameplay Progress

A gameplay session consists of a limited number of event cards. Each turn a player has to either play or discard at least one event card, thus using it. This means that the maximum number of turns is the same as the number of event cards.

In practice, the game lasts far fewer turns, because not only can the players play or discard multiple event cards at once, but they can also progress towards victory by fulfilling ambitions. This progress is tracked using tokens, which means that the players can tell how close they are to ending the game by checking the number of tokens as well as the number of event cards left.

7 Reflection

All of the process we described through this document allowed us to come up with a game that is playable and (hopefully) enjoyable by most people of our intended audience. Although we are happy with the current state of the game, we still think that it could be improved in several ways, starting with some clarifications regarding the rules and the meaning of some cards.

Another thing we wanted to change is the text of some ambition card and character traits. In fact, when we designed the game, we wanted to quickly try out how the game goes and therefore we didn't put much thought in the cards and traits that we wrote, as a result, some of these are not so interesting to play. For instance, having the character to be 'shy' is not that relevant in a story telling game and slows down the pace of the story. Same goes for ambitions that requires you to 'make new friends', it does not help the players in making an interesting story because of the fact that it is too plain. Therefore, we would like to spend more time in making ambition cards and character traits that allow the players to really be creative, by having them more unconventional and crazy. The same goes for the event cards to a lesser extent, as the ones that we wrote were the first ideas that came to mind. It

would be interesting to settle down and come up with items or places that are much more unconventional and versatile in the way we could use them.

One thing we are pretty content with is surprise cards because they worked as we intended them to in the sense that it brought unexpectedness in the flow of the game. However, we also were thinking about having them a bit more spontaneous by having them played as soon as a player draws one. We will have to playtest this change, but we are confident that it would bring even more unexpectedness and result in interesting and memorable moments.

Finally, we still wanted to reconsider competition in the game as it was one of the patterns that we first decided to work with. Having competition for the sake of it cannot be successful as we actually witnessed it, but it could still be interesting to think of implementing it into the game in a way that would directly influence the players' storytelling. We still do not have a concrete example of it but we look forward to coming up with something exciting. This game project has overall been a great way for us to use methods and tools that we learned about in the course and also to get a deeper understanding of what the challenges are when it comes to creating a game.

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