



Co-Design and Pragmatism

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TNO | Kennis voor zaken



Background

- Trained in 'industrial design engineering'. Work at TNO, a government/commercial innovation lab
- Work in design and innovation projects: user involvement, co-design, innovation management
- Parallel to my day-to-day work, I reflect what we do in our projects and on the methods we use
- *Previously, I 'deconstructed' human-centred design (PhD thesis 2008); currently, I am exploring how 'pragmatism' can help to understand and organize co-design differently*



John Dewey: *The need for a recovery of philosophy*, 1917, p. 65

Philosophy recovers itself when it ceases to be a device for dealing with the problems of philosophers and becomes a method, cultivated by philosophers, for dealing with the problems of [designers].

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Outline of my presentation

Move towards *co-design*, in ICT products/services

New fundamentals for *co-design* are needed

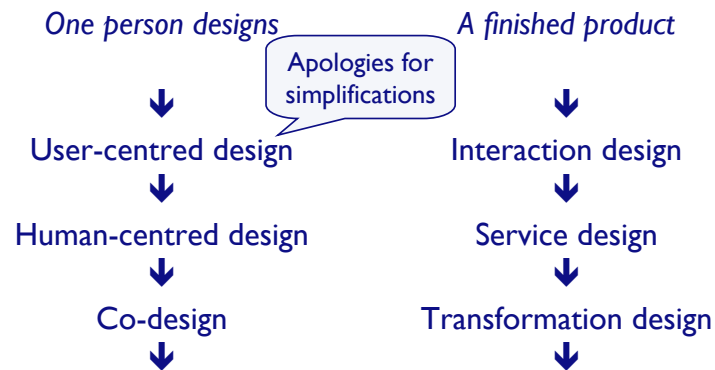
Pragmatism as a novel perspective on *co-design*

An example from practice: MiReCol for *co-design*

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Move towards co-design, in ICT products/services



Diverse people work on in an innovation project, and on organizational change – **co-design-as a process**

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New fundamentals for co-design are needed

Current fundamentals:

- Science – *about 'what is', search for universal truth*
- Engineering – *linear, logical, search one optimal solution*

(supposedly,
typically)

However, co-design is about *'what ought to be', about specific situations and specific responses, not-only-linear, not-only-logical, finding 'solutions that work'*

'Design thinking' is about: *'where do we want to be?'
'how do we get there?' (John Thackara 2006, p. 2)*

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Pragmatism as a novel perspective on co-design

- Draw from philosophical pragmatism in order to better understand (theory) and organize (practice) co-design
- Pragmatism: about 'how things work' in practice, about experience and empathy (*ethics*), about cooperation and negotiating (*politics*) and it is future-oriented (*imagination*)
- I am not a philosopher, but I draw from philosophy; in this case from parts of two of John Dewey's texts:
How we think (1910) and *Logic: The theory of inquiry* (1938)

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Co-design as a process of inquiry (1/2)

- 1 Feeling that there is a problem, making the situation 'questionable'
- *Experience (personal, subjective) as starting-point*
- 2 Defining (provisionally) the problem that will be addressed
- *How the problem is defined (cf. 'wicked problems')*
- 3 Exploring and defining the problem and possible solutions, in parallel, iteratively
- *Using perception to explore problems, and imagination to explore solutions*
- *Expressing and discussing (subjective) experiences and perceptions*
- 4 Reasoning about the problem and possible solutions
- *Discussing means and ends, and relations between them, systems thinking*
- *Expressing and negotiating different (personal) roles and interests*
- 5 Trying-out solutions, to see whether they solve the problem
- *E.g. early prototyping, trials, pilots, and learning from that*

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Co-design as a process of inquiry (2/2)

Where do we want to be?

- Idea-forming
(*beeldvorming*)
- Perception, envisioning
- Express and discuss
subjective experiences
(rather than only 'facts')
- *Ethics of co-design*
- E.g.: 'dramatic rehearsal'

How do we get there?

- Decision-making
(*besluitvorming*)
- Conception, creating
- Express and negotiate roles
and interests (rather than
look for one 'best' solution)
- *Politics of co-design*
- E.g. 'conflict management'

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An example from practice: *MiReCol* for co-design

- *MiReCol*: Mixed-Reality Collaboration
- Mixed-reality: Mixing the real and the virtual
- Tool for urban planning in a co-design fashion
- In progress...

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Multi-touch, multi-user table



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MiReCol promotional video-animation-clip



Pierre
stedenbouwer



Anita
buurtvertegenwoordiger



Anne-Marijke
wethouder



Mark
corpschef brandweer



1:14 | 4:2

Irene
facilitator

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Key elements of the *MiReCol* system

- Tools to express experiences, e.g. 'story telling' by citizens
- Tools to visualize and experience problems and solutions, in real-time, using models and simulations ('tangibles')
- Tools to negotiate perspectives ('serious gaming')
- Tools to monitor and influence group dynamics, esp. communication and cooperation

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- Thank you for your attention
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