With play in mind: A game for briefing school buildings

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INTRODUCTION

School buildings:
- Support the complexity of education
- Support the dynamics in education
- Impact learning and psychology of students:
- Research shows the importance of physical space on teaching and learning
- Influence the capacity of learning of students and their ability to social interaction

Importance of the Design Brief of School Buildings

Creating a Positive School Environment!

What does this mean?

- Activities and their space needs
- Learning
- Leisure
- Social interaction
- ...

Who should help to do this?

- Participatory Process
- Teachers, Students, Staff, Parents, Architects, Engineers, Community Members, ….
WHY A PARTICIPATORY PROCESS?

- **Challenge:**
  - Many people, different personalities
  - Difficulties to focus on the subject
  - Ethical process – do not promise something that is not possible
  - Establish commitment between professionals and users

- **Opportunities:**
  - Identify wishes and necessities of all users
  - Establish priorities of the project, mission, goals, …
  - Think about new methodologies, new learning methods, new spaces…

**Future Users** ➔ Learn about diverse challenges of the project ➔ Architects and other professionals

Debate the specific situation of the Project to be developed
Using tools to support the process:
- but what kind of tool?

Literature: Games!
- many games available to help design process phase

Advantages of Games:
- Help to focus the discussion
- All users have the same importance:
  - encourages the participation
- Engages people
- Inspires Creativity
- Fun!
A BRIEFING GAME: “BARALHO DA ESCOLA”

- **Goal:**
  - to support the development of school design program

- **Development:**
  - Creating the elements to support the application of the game:
    - cards, boards, etc.

- **Description:**
  - Card game: similarity to a deck of cards - familiarity
  - Illustrations: aids comprehension; debate’s stimulation
  - Keywords: concentrates discussion
  - Easy manipulation
  - Can be applied individually or by groups
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND:

Design patterns: can help to ensure or improve design quality!

- Theory from C. Alexander: A pattern language

Methodology to set:
- Priorities
- Relationships
- Minimum Criteria

Design Indicators of architectural quality
- Establishes guidelines for the architectural program
- Can be used as quality indicators: Project’s Evaluation

Design Patterns for schools:
- The Language of School Design (NAIR et al., 2009)
A BRIEFING GAME: “BARALHO DA ESCOLA”

- Deck of Cards: 15 suites
- Each suite:
  - Important themes for school architecture
    - 4 patterns
- Each card (parameter)
  - Name of a Concept
  - Illustration of a Concept
  - Concept Description
  - Suite (Group of concepts)
# THE SUITES OF THE GAME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suite</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suite 1</td>
<td>Pedagogical Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suite 2</td>
<td>Learning Modalities</td>
</tr>
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<td>Suite 3</td>
<td>Urban Issues</td>
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<td>Suite 4</td>
<td>Users</td>
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<td>Suite 5</td>
<td>Learning Spaces</td>
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<td>Suite 6</td>
<td>The School Yard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suite 7</td>
<td>Special Spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suite 8</td>
<td>Support Areas</td>
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<td>Suite 9</td>
<td>Service Student Areas</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suite</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suite 10</td>
<td>Social Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suite 11</td>
<td>Ambiental Comfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suite 12</td>
<td>Circulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suite 13</td>
<td>Environmental Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suite 14</td>
<td>School Concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suite 15</td>
<td>School Behaviours</td>
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</table>
THE IMPORTANCE OF “PLAY”

- Play as part of learning modalities
- Open Areas and the whole school complex should embrace the idea of “play”: oxygenizing the brain
- Spaces for physical education, artistic activities and circulation areas should be programmed to reinforce social contacts and socialization
GAME PARTS — THE BOARDS

Example of Board and Game Parts

Baralho da Escola - Desembaralhando a Arquitetura Escolar

Tabuleiro III: Os espaços

Espaços de Exposição

Administração

Sanitários
GAME PARTS — INSTRUCTION MANUAL

- Game’s Descriptions:
  - The rules
  - The content
  - Indications on the preparation to apply the game
  - Orientation to elaborate the brief: how to organize information

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Baralho da Escola - Desembaralhando a Arquitetura Escolar

Esse manual foi elaborado com as instruções do jogo Baralho da Escola-Desembaralhando a Arquitetura Escolar. Ele pretende explicar as etapas do jogo e da elaboração do programa arquitetônico completo.

Bom jogo para sua equipe!
GAME PARTS — SHORT DESCRIPTION OF CONCEPTS

- Participatory Process:
  - not always all the users understand the meaning of a design pattern from the cards

- Importance of a manual was identified in the tests of the game
  - All Design Patterns are explained
  - Brief definition
  - Important points for reflection in relation to each parameter
  - Illustrations and the keywords of each card are repeated
  - Extra references are suggested.

Privacidade

O conceito de privacidade, cada indivíduo percebe o ambiente conforme o seu ponto de vista, originando um espaço ao seu redor no qual ele está em paz e segurança.

- Espaços de grande público como no caso das escolas, pouco se fala da importância em serem criados áreas onde seus usuários possam descansar, estar sozinhos, sem fazer de alguma situação de dificuldade, etc.;

- Privacidade está relacionada com espaço pessoal. O espaço pessoal é um espaço imaginário, em torno do indivíduo, onde este impõe limites, evitando uma aproximação indesejável por parte de outras pessoas. O homem está envolvido pelo meio; então, é natural que ele delimita a sua zona pessoal, ou seja, o seu entorno mais próximo e onde ele tem o poder de domínio;

- Nas escolas, deve-se pensar também em privacidade para que pais e alunos possam ser atendidos e orientados.

Você precisa saber mais?

Alguns referências interessantes sobre esse assunto...


Palavras-chave:

- Espaços de descanso e relaxamento. Poder estar sozinho.
**HOW TO PLAY?**
**THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS**

- **Methodology for data collection:** indicated for participatory processes
- **Importance of interaction**
  - produces data and insights
  - produces group discoveries on a subject
- **Group Focal Organization:**
  - participants:
    - who, number, how to interact,
  - number of topics per session
  - tools to apply and to control productivity
  - how to conduct a session
  - how to analyze data obtained
PRODUCT: 
A PROGRAM

- Summary of participation
- Organization of information
  - Facilitated by results on boards
- Final program:
  - Stimulates design phase
  - Indicators for design evaluation
RESULTS

- Focus Group tests:
  - rich programs – designing a learning environments with more fun
- Make people (users) passionate
  - programming, designing, building and using
  - about teaching and learning spaces
- Opportunity for change
- Better use of spaces
  - Community use and space appropriation
  - Increases security and minimizes vandalism
CONCLUSION

"play" (Game) as start for a design process

- More productive
- More inclusive

Importance of Participation

- Better insights
- Better understanding of solutions

Importance of play in the school environment:

- Essential characteristic of school architecture
- Robustness
- Play is for learning

Sacred Heart Schools Atherton, CA, Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects, 2010

Buckingham County Primary and Elementary Schools VMDO Architects, Virginia, 2012

Ordrup School, Charlottenlund, Denmark 2006 Architect: Bosch and Fjord
THANK YOU

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