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Design Participation Tactics: Redefining User Participation in Design

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1. Design Participation

How can users take part and what are the potential roles of users in participating in design processes? In which parts of the design processes can users take part and what are the roles of designers and of other stakeholders? These questions indicate that there are many actors (both addressees and addressors), processes, and social systems involved. They influence each other mutually and their combinations make for the great variety of Design Participation cases. The discussion of this paper starts with the proposition: Design Participation is about the interaction between designer and user. In order to understand the rationale of Design Participation, the first step is to define the words 'Design' and 'Participation' separately within the 'space' of designers and users. "Both words are ambiguous," Stringer (1972) expressed, "Design can refer either to the design, in the sense of a plan for a product, or to the process of designing. Participation can mean having a piece of something in common with others – sharing the cake; or doing something in common with others – playing in a game of football." Such simple definitions already provide many implications. 'Design Participation' is a complicated issue and it is important to understand its fundamental meaning from its terminology.

The first board concerted attempt by the design community to investigate the issues of user involvement in the design process was an international conference entitled 'Design Participation' in 1971, which was sponsored and organised by the Design Research Society (DRS), the multi-disciplinary learned society for the worldwide design research community. This conference was the first time to define 'Design Participation' as a specific field and bring 'everyman' into the design field. The common ground of the conference was the belief in the ideology of 'user participation in design'. The aim is to discuss the importance of user participation in different forms of design applications and establish a community in the design field concerned with such issues. As the editor of this design conference's proceedings, Cross (1972) expressed the importance of Design Participation, "[t]here is certainly a need for new approaches to design if we are to arrest the escalating problems of the man-made world, and citizen participation in decision making could possibly provide a necessary reorientation."



Based on this first and only conference of Design Participation development, this paper has the overall aim of identifying, describing and developing the new way to understand the concept of Design Participation, which was described by Reyner Banham, Professor of History of Architecture at the University College of London, as something “*had been non-existent had already been narrowed down to a point where it was almost useless. It had gone from something which was absolutely spit-new to all those who heard it for the first time, to a condition where everybody thought they knew what it meant, and were astonished to be reminded that the word can carry a broader spectrum of meaning than they had had in mind*” (Banham, 1972: 15).

The main goal of this paper is to introduce a new analytical tool to understand Design Participation as a contribution for design knowledge. “*After my initial experiences in character in the spring of 1979, I became gradually more adventuresome. I was living two lives; in one of them I was a designer and graduate student, and in the other I was an ‘old woman’*” (Moore, 1985:90). While in her 20s, Patricia Moore, an industrial designer from New York spent three years (1979-82) travelling throughout the US and Canada disguised as an 85 year old woman, visiting over 200 cities and experiencing life through the eyes of an old woman (Moore, 1984). Inspired by Moore’s ‘disguised’ experiment (fig.1) and her empathised design experience, this research was done in a form of a self-experiment in the field of Design Participation and attempts to redefine the concept of Design Participation in order to investigate creative ways to design with users.

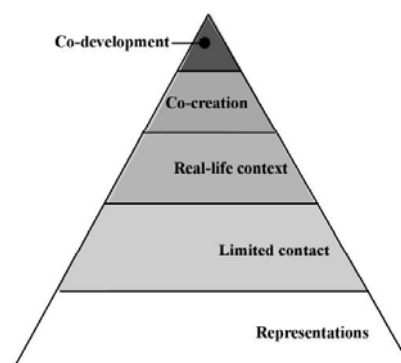


Fig.1 Christina Lindsay’s pyramid of user-led design

In this paper, French philosopher, Henri Lefebvre’s mechanism of ‘concrete space’ and ‘abstract space’ is adapted and developed as an analytical tool to understand the relationship between design experts and people related to the development of design process. Is there any common ground between these two spaces? Can experts open up the design process to let users move into the abstract space to co-design the built environment that they are going to live or work in? Can experts design in a more direct way, i.e. design *with* users in the concrete space, instead of *for* users from the abstract space? From Lefebvre’s social space concept, ‘concrete space’ can be defined as the space in which we live and experience i.e. the people’s world. ‘Abstract space’ is the spatial abstraction typically used by experts such as architects or designers to interpret cities, and projected back onto our lived environment in their designs, i.e. the expert’s world. Design experts in the abstract space such as planners, architects and designers create the physical environment in the concrete space



by the tool of abstraction and representation. Thus, people in concrete space need to use designs conceived in the abstract space.

The discussion from the Design Research Society's (DRS) 1972 Design Participation Conference and Lefebvre's social spaces study of the distinction between concrete and abstract space inspired the new way of defining and articulating Design Participation. Fig. 2 shows the evolution of this new analytical tool, the *DP analytical tool*: from a simple defining tool to a complex diagram for mapping the flow of projects. Step 1 was based on Lefebvre's social spatial concept that divided the world into two worlds or practices: abstract space for experts and concrete space for people. From mapping different people-centred design practices, the in-between space called the realm of collaboration was introduced in Step 2. Applying this tool to design practice, 'designing with designers' and 'design close to user' are opposite poles of an axis that can be mapped parallel to this diagram of the new relationship between the three spaces. More design practices were studied and a detailed re-definition of Design Participation was established in Step 3. Design practices working in abstract mode with limited contact with users are called Design Participation for innovation. At the other pole, people are working as designers for their own projects and these practices are called Design Participation for motivation. More complicated Design Participation practices are happening in the realm of collaboration. The common ones are those Design Participation practices for collaboration, which aim to encourage co-design processes. Comparatively, Design Participation for emancipation requires more time and effort to conduct but their effects are longer-term. These four types of Design Participation brought about a rethinking of its relationship with the bigger social system. In Step 4, three modes of participation are identified and distinguished including Public Participation (PP) in abstract space, Community Participation (CP) in concrete space and Design Participation (DP) across the overlap space of the realm of collaboration.

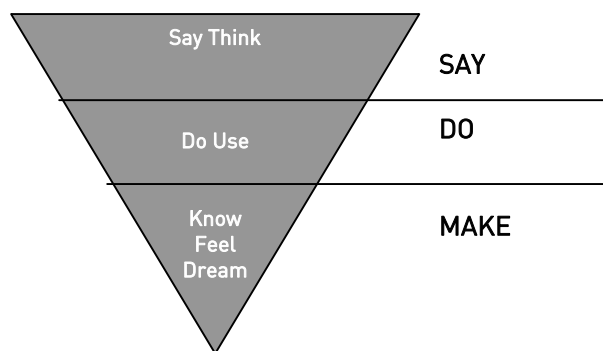


Fig.2. Sanders' (2002:4) diagrams of user research tools

2. Design *for* or *with* people?

"User-research: Understanding users is key to deliver inclusive and user-friendly environments, products and services. User research can be carried out by designers themselves, in which case it is most likely to be based on direct, often one-to-one contact with appropriate users, and result in an empathic engagement with the users needs and aspirations."

(Coleman, R. Lebbon, C. Clarkson, J. and Keates, S., 2003:602)



Moore's experiment is described as *"the first substantial piece of user research to address the implications of population ageing"* (Coleman, R. et al., 2003). Her innovative methods inspired a range of simulation and immersive studies and methodologies such as a training programme, 'Through Other Eyes', 'age suits' and other simulation tools. They aimed to help designers and business decision makers to understand the challenges faced by older and disabled people while developing their products. The other influence of Moore's design experience in inspiring is the origination of a range of user research methods by different design consultancies such as IDEO, individual designers including Moore and research institutes and design schools (Coleman, R. et al., 2003:19-20).

However, from my personal contacts with Moore during my research process, in my opinion, the most important inspiration from Moore's experiment for designers is about empathy with users and passion to design. As Moore expressed, *"As much as I appreciated the salary I earned at traditional design firms, the work itself was not very satisfying. It took me to interesting places and put me in touch with important people, but it had little relevance to my own particular design interest – that of creating better products and environments for consumers throughout their life span"* (Moore, 1984:91). This expression reflects my motivation for this doctoral research.

'Designing for people' and 'empathy with people' are two main developed 'slogans' of user research methods development in the past two decades. It is important to point out that there is difference between the *'for'* and *'with'* user research methods. As Mikellides (1980) explained the aim of his edited book, *Architecture For People*, is to *"explore new areas broadly and in depth which could have profound effects on our living environments in the immediate and long-term future."* This is a typical or traditional user research concept of designing for people which tells designers plenty about what is, but very little about what might be (Bontoft and Pullin, 2003:523). For both the design community and the people for whom designs are made, the concept of user research is changing. Thackara (1995) quoted a strong expression by a group of older people who his team met at the beginning of their **Presence** research project, *"We don't need your patronising help, you designers. If you've come here to help us, you're wasting your time; we don't want to be helped, thanks just the same. Yet we do have some interesting observations to make about our daily lives, about our lifestyles, about our communication, and about all of their attendant dysfunctions. If you could kindly change your attitude and help us explore how we will live, then perhaps we can do something together."* This people-response provoked a re-assessment of the way the team asked the research question and brought an understanding of the distinction between design *with* and *for* people: *"rather than setting off on a project with a preconceived idea about what we're going to do, now we're all committed to working with real people in the real world and starting there, rather than starting with a technology and imposing it on a given situation"* (Thackara, 1995).

3. Two Operating Spaces and Three modes of Participation

Design with participation is a way to improve the designer - user relationship, a way to inspire designers and a way to make designs usable and desirable for users. This is the central proposition of this paper. The definition of 'proposition' in the Encarta Online Dictionary is *"an idea, offer or plan put forward for consideration or discussion"*, *"a statement of opinion or judgment"* and *"a statement or theorem to be demonstrated"*. Actually, these three meanings cover all the aims of this thesis. It is a discussion, a judgment and also a demonstration of the implications of participation in design.



“The mechanism is fairly obvious on the theoretical plane: concrete space has been replaced with abstract space. Concrete space is the space of habiting: ... Instead, it (concrete space) takes off into the abstract space of vision, of geometry. The architect who draws and the urbanist who composes a block plan look down on their ‘objects’, buildings and neighbourhoods, from above and afar. These designers and draftsmen move within a space of paper and ink... They’ve (architects and urbanists) shifted from lived experience to the abstract, projecting this abstraction back onto lived experience.” (Lefebvre, 1970:183)

In the 1970s, Lefebvre introduced this concept of ‘concrete space’ and ‘abstract space’ to illustrate a disturbing urban problem: *“the extraordinary passivity of the people most directly involved, those who are affected by projects, influenced by strategies”* (Lefebvre, 1970). Abstract Space (AS) is the space of vision and geometry, used by architects/designers to design our cities. Typical designers will work in the abstract space in which they are trained and do not interact with people in the concrete space. Concrete Space (CS) is the space in which we live and experience. Techniques of ‘Design Participation’ happen in the realm where the AS and CS overlap. There are different levels of user involvement and engagement of user-centred designers to work in the in-between space: the realm of collaboration (Fig.3).

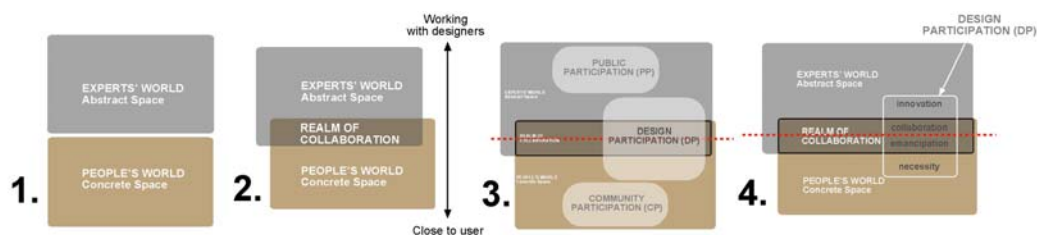


Fig.3 Evolution of the analytical tool for Design Participation

The term ‘participation’ can mean different things for different people in societies or even the same community. Three modes of participation are defined which are working across the three different spaces (Fig.4). First of all, Design Participation is the centre of this thesis, involving a process of re-possessing of participation in the design field, taking inspiration from the 1972 Design Participation Conference. It is about working across spaces. Additionally there are some other participation activities that refer to participate in public policy decision-making processes and some other general social responsibilities such as voting and doing volunteer work. They can be called Public Participation, which aims to facilitate active citizenship. The activities of Public Participation involve a lot of expert involvement and try to enable the public to take part in public decision-making. Alternatively, another mode of participation, which can be called Community Participation, has a close relation to community development activities. Its programmes usually follow bottom-up approaches sometimes initiated by social workers or users organisations that try to influence public policies. As stated before, it is the most common practice of participation and has a longer history.

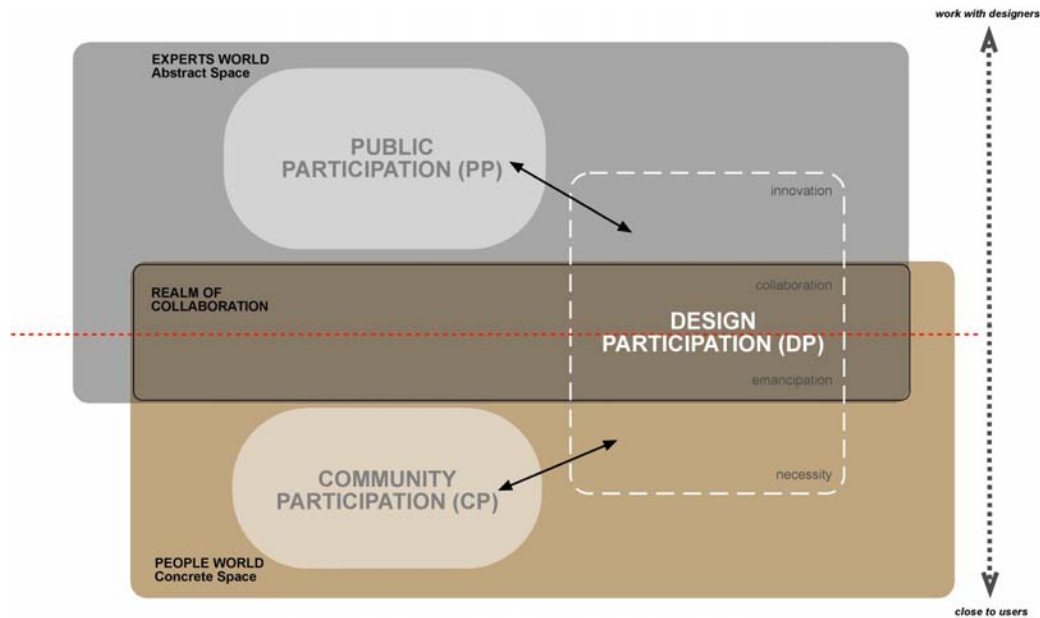


Fig.4 Design, Public and Community Participation in the abstract and concrete space

In fact many participation projects are characterised by conflicts between the different parties working for users. For the design community, Community Participation projects become part of Design Participation when there are a lot of design inputs in the processes or when designers take the initiative. When Public Participation projects involve design, especially involving the public realm, they will start to merge with the domain of Design Participation. Who initiates the process is the main criterion to classify the mode of participation. Table 1 intends to distinguish between different ways in which people practice participation and articulate their characteristics.

<i>Types of Participation</i>	<i>Operating Space</i>	<i>Initiator</i>	<i>Expected Outcome</i>	<i>Approach</i>	<i>The roles of architects and designers</i>
Design Participation	<i>From Realm of Collaboration extends to the other spaces</i>	<i>Designers or users</i>	<i>Design –oriented (design innovation)</i>	<i>can be top-down or/ and bottom-up</i>	<i>Strategists aiming to develop innovative design or better design to improve people’s lives.</i>
Public Participation	<i>Expert World, Abstract Space</i>	<i>Policy –makers or public service agents/ public sector</i>	<i>Policy-oriented (civic education)</i>	<i>top down approach</i>	<i>Producers under the instruction of public policy makers</i>
Community participation	<i>User World, Concrete Space</i>	<i>Social workers from NGOs or users, especially from grassroots community</i>	<i>Social service - oriented (social justice)</i>	<i>bottom up approach</i>	<i>Advisers to give professional advice</i>

Table 1. Comparisons between public, community and design participation



3.1. Design Participation (DP)

This term was first adopted collectively by the 1972 Design Research Society (DRS)'s conference entitled 'Design Participation'. It developed as a type of participation in this research. This type of participatory project is initiated by designers, design-related stakeholders or users groups. They spread across the worlds of experts, users and the realm of collaboration. Their common aim is to generate user-centred design. They can be for innovation, collaboration, emancipation and motivation as discussed later. Designers take on the role of actively trying to improve design and at the same time people's lives.

3.2. Public Participation (PP)

'Have Your Say' or 'We Need Your Voice' are the common slogans of public participation projects. The organisers, usually governmental departments, publish consultation papers and invite people to express opinions on particular issues. The idea is that people are invited to influence the decisions made by the organizers by expressing their positions. People are encouraged to take the opportunity to have their say. Their comments are then collected using different methods and are used to inform policy reforms or civic education campaigns. These consultations are initiated by policy-makers, public service agents and other public sector figures. Since most of these projects are policy-oriented, their aim is to understand some specific public issues from the policy makers' perspectives i.e. top down approach from the world of experts. Designers are part of the expert group that give advice on the construction of the project.

3.3. Community participation (CP)

Compared to Public Participation, Community Participation projects are more about problem solving than strategic development. Most of them are initiated by social workers or NGOs who work closely with people providing social services to help people's lives. These workers are working in the world of people and the participatory processes are customised to deal with the needs of specific communities. The aims are to empower people to fight for social justice within the experts' world. This bottom-up approach requires advice from different experts such as designers or architects to generate strategies to deal with experts who have an influence on the built environment, especially governments or big corporations.

4. Four Types of Design Participation

Based on the earliest definition from the 1971 DRS conference, 'Design Participation' is about 'user involvement in the design process'. This paper focuses on the field of Design Participation and how its development relates to the other two modes discussed. After this conference, the field was more clearly defined and more and more ideologies were developed but the term 'Design Participation' began fading out in the course of further development. At the same time, the status of the conference as a rallying-point began to fade, with everyone moving on to different ideologies with their own definition of 'users'. All the sub-titles in the conference (social technology, participation in planning, adaptable environments, computer aids and design methods) had been developed into separate interest groups. The new topic of participatory design in IT system inspired an influential group who hold their own conference, the Participatory Design Conference (PDC),



organised by the Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility (CPSR) since 1990 and held in a different city every two years in different parts of the world.

Moreover, as described, most Design Participation practices have developed from the various viewpoints of different design community members. As ‘Design Participation’ is re-defined in this research as the mutual relationship between the designers and people, it is about collaboration between the different ‘spaces’ i.e. of experts and users, the different ideas of the old and new generations of Design Participation practitioners, and different ideologies using different terms. Referring to Lefebvre’s terms about social spaces, ‘Design Participation’ is about how designers’ space (abstract space) and users’ spaces (concrete space) relate. All design activities require some kind of interaction between designers and users. Therefore, most designers can be described as working in ‘Design Participation’ in different ways. Under this definition, four types of Design Participation are distinguished. The aim of this scheme is to map everyone in and encourage collaboration by mutual understanding.

This new Design Participation typology (table 2) starts with the question of where the Design Participation happens i.e. the space of operation. Following the logic of abstract (designers’) and concrete (people’s) spaces, Design Participation can be divided into three basic types according to where in this conceptual space the participation actions are happening:

Space of operation	What’s Design Participation for?	The relationship between the designers’ space and the users’ space	The role of ‘designers’	The role of ‘users’
1. Designers’ space	1. Innovation (designer only)	Two spaces are separated	Masters/ authorities	Imagined user/representatives
2. Realm of collaboration (between designers and people)	2a. Collaboration (designer-driven)	Overlapping at the corner and formed the realm of collaboration	Co-designers/ facilitators	Co-workers
	2b. Emancipation (User-driven)	People’s space taking over experts’ space	Stimulators	Creative people/advisers
3. Users/people’s space	3. Motivation (user only)	Overlapping as one entity	Craftsmen/builders	Active clients

Table 2. Four Types of Design Participation (Fig.5)

Then the second question is ‘what is Design Participation for?’ Four potential answers to this question are identified. It also represents purpose of the specific type of design participation. Lyotard (1984) identified two



major narratives for the legitimisation of modern science: narratives of speculation and of emancipation. As McGuigan (1999:12) elaborates, “[narratives of speculation] comes closest to scientists holding the exclusive right and power to legitimise their own work: ‘science for science’s sake’... narratives of emancipation have stressed the social usefulness and purpose of science and modern knowledge generally.” Although there is no hierarchical intention in the new classification of Design Participation, there is a difference between the uses of names. Design for ‘innovation’, ‘collaboration’ and ‘emancipation’ are all initiated by designers but they have different designer/user relationships. In Lyotard’s terms, the ‘innovation’ and ‘collaboration’ Design Participation practitioners are working on the system of performativity, that is, “the optimisation of the global relationship between input and output” (Lyotard 1984:11). They are mission-oriented. For them, knowledge is reduced to its instrumental value. They are conducting Design Participation activities with designers only for people while the ‘emancipation’ practitioners are designing with people.

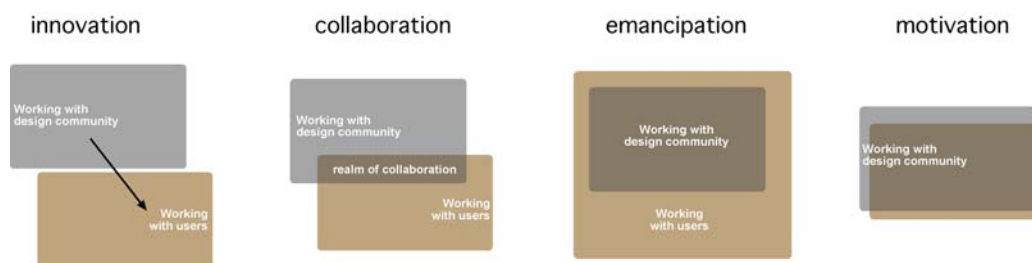


Fig.5 Four types of Design Participation

The ‘motivation’ category is about design processes that are motivated by people. With this type of Design Participation, the users have autonomy to steer the design process. In order to make the designer-user game more interesting, it is better to have no fixed rules. This is called “*The Alternative Culture*” for Design Participation by Banham (1972:17), who concluded that the only real Design Participation is ‘do-it-yourself’ in which the people invent their own rules. However, this “*Alternative Culture*” totally neglects the role of designers. Therefore, by adapting Lyotard’s terminology, I introduce Design Participation for ‘Emancipation’. The criterion for it is not working for a specific mission but for general human improvement. Compared to Design Participation for ‘motivation’; the difference is that there is involvement of the design community. They will not be the authority but co-work with many stakeholders in order to develop new and better ideas to improve people’s lives.

4.1. Design Participation for innovation

This first type of Design Participation is the result of the separation of the designers’ space and users’ space with the development of professionalism. As Giancarlo De Carlo, Italian architect and a key figure in Team Ten, a radical architectural group that criticised the shortcomings of the Modern Movement and sought a new direction, commented on the ambiguity of the architect’s role, “*Bourgeois society, famous for taking care of everything and leaving little room for manifestation of independence to insinuate themselves, also tried to classify the role of the architect, situating it within the more general concept of the profession. As a professional, the architect became a representative of the class in power*” (Carlo, 1992, 2005:5), The architects’ power forced the abstract space (where designers work) to



separate from the concrete space (where people live). When the two spaces separated, designers focused mainly on the design outputs. “[W]ith the rise of bourgeois professionalism, architecture was driven into the realm of specialisation, where only the problems of ‘how’ are important, because the problems of ‘why’ are considered solved once and for all” (Carlo, 1992,2005:5).

Many designers who seek for interesting design concepts develop various ways to understand their users and hope to get inspiration from the interaction. One of these design methods is the ‘probe study’. The probes are the physical tools that aim at enabling empathic interactions between users and designers. There are important questions regarding how the probes are created and implemented: Who designs the probes? What do they expect from the probes? How do the probes work in the whole design process? How does one analyse the data gathered by the probes? What is the role of the users in the processes of creating the probes and analysing the results? The most famous probe studies example is the “Cultural Probes” study (fig.6), which was carried out by a group of design researchers from the Computer Related Design Department at the Royal College of Art, London (now called Interaction Design). The aim of the probe tools was to understand the private lives of the elderly in different cultures. Packs containing disposable cameras, maps with instructions, stickers and pre-stamped postcards were sent to different focus groups in different parts of the world, to be used in recording the subjects’ daily lives and returning the records to the researchers. Designers used the collected information from the probes as inspirational materials to develop new design concepts for information technology.

Although the ‘Cultural Probes’ study was criticised for a lack of formal analysis (Gaver and Dunne, 1999), they set a good exemplar of how to draw the attention of designers to the importance of user involvement.



Fig.6 Cultural Probe by Bill Gaver and Anthony Dunne, Interaction Design, Royal College of Art, London. Photograph from The Netherlands Design Institute (1995), Presence: New Media for Older People.

4.2. Design Participation for collaboration

This type of Design Participation is based on the spread of community action and social movements fighting for social democracy in the 1960s and early 1970s. These projects and proposals are reactions from the design community to critiques from the public, especially those against functionalism and form-oriented design practice. These groups react and work in an area where abstract and concrete space merge. They form platforms for designers and users to interact in order to get better design feedback. Some design community members have developed new methods to interact with users and are initiators of Design Participation for



collaboration. Their aims are to encourage user involvement as an extension of design processes and an enhancement of user experience. These new methods can be divided into two main applications: community based environmental design and product development, especially in IT system design.

An example project that demonstrates this particular type of Design Participation is Kroll's planning and design process of the Medical Faculty buildings at Woluwé-St Lambert, Brussels (fig.7). Kroll described how the story started, *"in the late '60s the Catholic University decided to move its medical faculties from Louvain to Brussels, and consulted the students and their organisation 'La Maison Medicale' (Mémé) about the new development. The student body suggested a more fluid kind of organisation than already proposed, with its rigid zones and functional buildings, but the University proved unsympathetic. Disappointed, the students turned to our office, inviting us to design the buildings of their 'social zone' with their involvement. Thus arose the opportunity to conceive a varied series of buildings amounting to some 40,000 square metres floorspace, with direct participation by clients and inhabitants"* (Kroll, 1986:38). Technologically, Kroll's team adapted and reinterpreted the SAR modular with fixed 'functional zones' and infill partitions. Being one of the pioneers of Design Participation, Kroll's team constructed a large and robust (1:20) model of the project and invited future inhabitants to participate in a design workshop about the mobility system. *"This mobility was pursued initially for two reasons: most obviously and primarily to allow evolutionary change, but above all also to allow users to create their own spaces as they had already done 10 years earlier thanks to an 'industrial' product...With people who are committed and interested, participation is straightforward and enjoyable"* (Kroll,1986:62). This design process was a typical example of Design Participation for collaboration which is described as *"an area of freedom to help creativity"* (Kroll, 2005:186).



Fig.7 Medical Faculty buildings, Woluwé-St Lambert, designed by Lucien Kroll (1970s) Photo by Yanki Lee

4.3. Design Participation for emancipation

The other type of Design Participation within the realm of collaboration is Design Participation for emancipation. The editor of *Non-Plan: Essays on freedom participation and change in modern architecture and urbanisms*, Jonathan Huges (2000:182), wrote, *"It seemed that the involvement of the users of architecture in the design process was now a serious (and realizable) consideration. The need for such involvement was at its greatest in mass-housing projects where the official patron was the local housing authority, not the resident. Moreover, in these situations, the social difference between an overwhelmingly middle class architectural profession and the typically working class residents could be cited as an explanation for the failure of public housing"*. Comparatively, this type of Design Participation is more towards users or even initiated by people than is the case with Design Participation for collaboration.



Diagrammatically, the design expert's space is surrounded by the people's space which indicates that designers are part of the public i.e. people and designers have different roles but a similar social status. It is about enabling, empowerment and evolving.

Empowering people by design is another example of this model of design participation, which worked better for small-scale projects in which designers work closely to their clients. Clients are not just brief givers but active partners in the design process. The 'users' had ideas about what they wanted and sought out designers as their 'master masons' to realise their dream but not to dominate the process as 'masters'. Self-build Design Participation can be well illustrated by the UK architect Walter Segal. Introduced in 1986, a special timber-frame construction system, the Segal method, was a simplified building method for laypeople to build their own homes (Fig.8). This flexible self-build users to make their own design and make changes to improve it over years. After two decades of development, this method has provided professional help for people to participate in the process of designing their own environment and has been developed into the Walter Segal Self Build Trust (WSSBT). Its aim is to help people to build their own homes and community buildings through educational programme and professional advice to different organisations. The Segal Method is an exemplar of architectural implementation of process-oriented design, which focuses on transforming the conventional way of architectural design and empowering passive users. Through transferring design knowledge, people are set free and are given control of the design process of their own built environment. This innovative participatory design processes were developed with the invention of interactive device systems. Design/architectural academics, Professor John Frazer and Julia Frazer, worked with architects like Cedric Price and Walter Segal and designed electronic devices for users to visualise their design through interactive systems. Fig.9 is the 'self-builder design kit' that is the result of a collaboration between Frazer and Segal which aimed to develop another way to transfer abstract design knowledge.



Fig.8 Self-build village, Walter Way, London Photograph, Yanki Lee



Fig.9 Self-builder design kit, working electronic system (left) and user demonstration (right) , designed by John and Julia Frazer, consultants, with John Potter, research assistant, for architect Walter Segal, 1982.



4.4 Design Participation for motivation

The final model of Design Participation works in the situation in which that there is no separation between the designers' space and users' space. In other words, there is no distinction between the 'designers' and the 'users'. There is one space which means people are the designers. It is about the self –motivation from people in the design participation process that they create.

The direct example is vernacular buildings, in which the owners are the builders of their own houses. These ordinary houses are built based on the owners' own experience or collective knowledge from a particular local living experience. When 'architecture' becomes a profession, architects are in charge of public buildings and big public and private commissions. Thus, there is distinction between the vernacular and formal buildings. In other word, it intended to change our perception of the art of building by introducing the unfamiliar world of non-pedigreed architecture. Apart from 'vernacular', these types of buildings can also been called anonymous, spontaneous, indigenous, rural, local (Fig.10) etc.



Fig.10 Local built house at Macau, China Photo by Yanki Lee

5. Conclusion and Discussion

Functionalism, Design Research and Design Methods all belong to Design Participation for innovation at the pole of designer autonomous design participation. The next two types are those working in the in-between spaces. Community Architecture, Participatory Design, Collaborative Design, and Inclusive Design are examples of Design Participation for collaboration that are one of the mixed realm of designer + user. The next one is about those involving users in order to emancipate them and transfer design knowledge, which include Self-Help, Cultural Jamming, and Non-plan experiments. Finally is the other pole of user autonomous design participation, which includes DIY and vernacular architecture under the model of motivation.

Design Participation can be described as design professionals inviting laymen to participate in the design process and the ideal situation is to create collective solutions to problems, especially those that are socially related. However, many practices of Design Participation become just other means of professionalism. As Banham (1972:16) defined, "Professionalism is a way of organising competence, of getting certain specialist skills together in a place and in a condition where they can aid the rest of society." The crisis of professionalism is actually due to the concept of professionalism itself. Professionals work on solving problems. If there is no problem, we do not need experts to help us. In Banham's word, "professionals are trained to be problem-oriented". However, the way they



solve problems is traditionally based on their interpretation of others' perceived needs but not others' formulation of their own needs.

Through Lefebvre's definition of abstract and concrete space, stakeholders in both spaces are changing with changes in society. Therefore, Design Participation needs to work in a tactical way more than a strategic way so that it can deal with the never-settled relationship between the spaces and the DP modes over time. Under this finding, what are the new roles of designers? Unlike 'architect', the term 'designer' is not legally bound and it is generally used to describe anyone who is designing. Every designer has a different way of working. This research started from personal questions about designing with people and the process was also a personal experience as well as a self-experiment in the field of Design Participation to understand the practice of other participation practitioners. Therefore, this paper concludes with a new viewpoint of designers' obligation to society. In other words, this is an action plan for designers. The action plan (fig.11) is developed on the basis of the DP analytical tool with the three modes of participation. The role of designer will be to become a free agent with special knowledge of Design Participation i.e. designing with people and trying to work with three groups from the three modes of participation. These multi-directional weaving activities aim to encourage more collaboration and more tactics to deliver different forms of participation in different operating spaces.

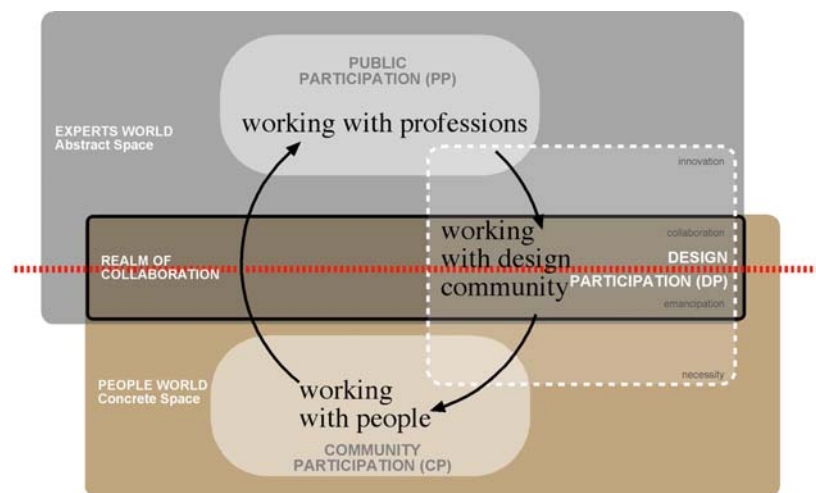


Fig.11 action plan of Design Participation Tactics - more collaborations between those from different operating spaces

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