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The Other Art of Computer Programming

A Visual Alternative to Communicate
Computational Thinking

Focus Group 3000 Transcription *16th September 2016*

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Focus Group 3000 Transcription

16th September 2016

Project: The Other Art of Computer Programming

Primary Researcher: Melanie Tarr

Document: FocusGroupDiscussionFinal3000.pdf

Communicator	Time Interval	Verbal Communication
<i>Leader</i>	00:00 00:08 00:12 00:16 00:18 00:21 00:23 00:28 00:30 00:32 00:34 00:42 00:43 00:50	OK so I'm going to show everyone three different types of pictures, um... and then you can tell me what you think, which word goes the best with them, so there is communication or there is meaning making or there is aesthetics. So let's just have a quick look. That one, those pictures... Is that communication, meaning or aesthetics? Which word would you pick (just quickly what comes off the top of your head)? Hands up for communication, hands up for meaning, 1 person, 2, 3 – 3 people for meaning and hands up for aesthetics. OK so most people think aesthetics in here, so that was...1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7...
<i>Teacher</i>	00:54	Must be nine.

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<i>Leader</i>	00:56 01:00 01:04 01:05 01:06 01:09 01:15 01:19 01:20 01:23 01:26 01:30 01:35 01:38 01:41 01:48	8 girls for aesthetics... Which is what I got for the results for them. It's, you know and aesthetics. So this one, lets have a look at this one. This is Seymour. He died two months ago. I'm so sad because I wanted to ask him some questions. He invented LOGO that language we did, that looks at computer geometry and that is one of the first computer robots, it was called a turtle and they used to get the three year olds to program it so they knew that really young children could program after they did this exercise with them. So what word would you use to describe Mr Papert, is he, is it a communication picture, a meaning making picture or is it aesthetic, does it look good? Hands up for communication.
<i>ParticipantC</i>	01:50	Wait. What do you mean by communication?

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<i>Leader</i>	01:55 01:59 02:00 02:06 02:09 02:12 02:17 02:18 02:20	So...we use pictures for different things. So on your iPhone, on the front of it there's a series of pictograms. So it's faster to press on a pictogram and know what it means like a stop signal rather than actually read it and that's fast communication isn't it? Do you think? Do you agree with me? And then there's different things like artworks. Some artworks are really attractive aren't they?
<i>ParticipantC</i>	02:24	Yeah
<i>Leader</i>	02:26 02:27 02:30 02:33 02:34	So when you describe those, they look good and they are aesthetic, aren't they... So like the Mona Lisa or something like that. And then there are other pictures that are used for meaning making, like a map.
<i>ParticipantC</i>	02:38	Ohhhhh (loud)
<i>Leader</i>	02:39 02:40 02:42 02:44	So that means something that is going to direct you somewhere and take you somewhere, you don't look at it because it is pretty. It's got a function.
<i>ParticipantG</i>	02:46	Ohhhhhh (louder)

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<i>Participants</i>	02:47	(Lots of talking), oh yeah, oh yeah
<i>Leader</i>	02:48 02:50 02:52 02:55	Is that easier, it's hard to understand pictures isn't it but if we can get everyone to agree on what the role of pictures are then we can get information in quicker to people's brains.
<i>ParticipantG</i>	02:58 03:00	So, was the first one actually meaning not aesthetic?
<i>ParticipantC</i>	03:03	Yeah
<i>Leader</i>	03:04 03:07 03:10	Yes, but we have gone past that, so that's OK, there is no right or wrong answer... to these. So what do you think this one is?
<i>Participants</i>	03:12	Aesthetic...aesthetic....aesthetic..aesthetic...
<i>Leader</i>	03:19 03:22 03:25	I think its aesthetic too... So I'm going to absolutely agree with you on that. But then I don't have to agree... What about this one?
<i>ParticipantC</i>	03:27	Meaning
<i>ParticipantG</i>	03:28	Meaning
	03:29	Meaning

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<i>Leader</i>	03:30 03:34 03:37	Meaning making... Who says communication? It's quite quick isn't it, cause it means what the word says... its "abstraction".
<i>ParticipantC</i>	03:38	Yes
<i>Leader</i>	03:40 03:43 03:48 03:50 03:53 03:55 03:58 04:00 04:06 04:10 04:12 04:14 04:16 04:20 04:24	Right so three people for communication. Who says its aesthetic...It just looks good and there is no other function for it... hmmm no one thinks its aesthetic anymore. OK that's good. OK so this is your results for what you thought the role of pictures are in learning and everyone thought they were mostly aesthetic. About a third of the class thought it was communication, which is what I'd expect because you're all on iPads or iPhones aren't you? So you're looking at pictograms and things like that for quick understanding and then... but most people think its aesthetic. Which is fine. So do you have any reasons why you think or thought it was aesthetic?
<i>Leader</i>	04:26	Yes

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<i>ParticipantC</i>	04:27 04:28 04:32 04:34 04:38	I think it's probably because we are so used to pictures being things to look at that are pretty, and learning from like reading stuff so its kind of probably new for us. For pictures its...
<i>Leader</i>	04:42 04:47 04:51 04:55 04:57 04:59 05:00 05:11 05:10 05:14	That's... I think that's a great explanation, does anyone want to add anything to that. Does anyone want to add anything...no...just to let you know... I have a couple of girl's schools and this one talks so I said to xxx could I please come back and ask them some questions. They are... The other one is like so quiet and I thought please can I talk to them...OK dual coding theory. So how did you feel about the circuit?
<i>ParticipantC</i>	05:18	Oh... a bit confused
<i>ParticipantG</i>	05:19	It was different
<i>ParticipantC</i>	05:19	Different
<i>ParticipantG</i>	05:20	A different way to understand...

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<i>Leader</i>	05:22 05:27 05:30 05:35 05:37 05:40 05:46 05:48 05:49 05:53 05:58 05:59 06:00	That is the inside of every computer, it, its one or zero and then they do millions of circuits on top of it and its all abstracted and then every two years we shrink the amount of things we can store on a resistor so it gets tinier and tinier...but...I mean that's basically all it is, and those tables there, the Difference Engine was out of 10, so it was more cleverer than what we do now. So did you feel... Did the picture and the table go together? Did you understand what was being asked? You know how some of the gates are AND gates and some of the gates are NAND gates.
<i>ParticipantMimi</i>	06:01	Yeah
<i>Leader</i>	06:02	Did that work or was that confusing?
<i>Participantmimi</i>	06:02	Confu...
<i>Participantx</i>	06:04	I think it was
<i>ParticipantG</i>	06:05 06:10	I didn't totally get it if it was the shape, AND or NAND or whatever.
<i>Participantx</i>	06:11	I didn't understand if it was NAND ...

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<i>ParticipantG</i>	06:12	I think if it said the shape...
<i>Leader</i>	06:13	OK. So did you want the words in the ... next to the actual table?
<i>ParticipantG</i>	06:18 06:19 06:21	Yeah then you don't have to kind of think about, Oh this shape goes with that gate which goes with this operation.
<i>Leader</i>	06:25 06:27 06:29 06:32 06:36 06:38 06:41 06:43 06:45	OK...That's good! Um, did you consider the table and the circuit diagram together when you were reaching the conclusion? This is actually really early engineering, too like this is the way they teach engineering when they move it into high schools so they give the picture and then have another way of communication as well. So did you look at the table and the picture together?
<i>ParticipantJ</i>	06:46	Yeah

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<i>Leader</i>	06:50 06:52	Cause it would have been too hard to try and work out. OK great. Nearly finished.
	06:57 06:59 07:02	Right with the binary tree. Umm...Could the pictures have been reorganised so that it was easier to spot a pattern?
<i>ParticipantG</i>	07:05	Yeah
<i>Leader</i>	07:08 07:11	How could I have drawn that better? Everybody. I'm trying to represent sequence or order.
<i>ParticipantJ</i>	07:14	I think its pretty good.
<i>Participants</i>	07:15	I, I, I,
<i>ParticipantsM</i>	07:16	I thought it was fine.
<i>ParticipantO</i>	07:22	So that the path goes from one to two to three to four...
<i>Leader</i>	07:24 07:26	So I'll give you another example that I gave to another school. Can I just rub this off?
<i>Teacher</i>	07:29	Yeah
<i>ParticipantG</i>	07:32	It's awful

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<i>ParticipantO</i>	07:34	We are learning what xxx means
<i>Leader</i>	07:37 07:39 07:41 07:44 07:55 08:00 08:05 08:07 08:10	I might be able to explain this a little bit better. So this is the way a computer stores information its got nine there, maybe a minus there then its got a two then a three there. So it's all stored like that. So when it goes through and retrieves it, it will go down and it will get the 9, and then it will get the two and the three and it will put those in brackets so it's two take three. So that's how it retrieves the order of the information. Does that...
<i>ParticipantC</i>	08:12	Ohhhh
<i>ParticipantO</i>	08:13	So it's like a sum.
<i>Leader</i>	08:14 08:20 08:24	This is hard for me to explain binary trees...I struggle with them. But...does that explain it a little bit clearer... to you?
<i>ParticipantG</i>	08:26 08:27	Yeah so it's kind of like a specific order, it creates order.

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<i>Leader</i>	08:30 08:33 08:35 08:36	Yes...so is there a way I could have drawn that better? Because what you are doing now for me is that you are designing the curriculum for year 8s next year...OK?
<i>Participant</i>	08:37	Oh god...pressure
<i>Leader</i>	08:39	So... Is there a way that I could do that better?
<i>ParticipantO</i>	08:44 08:47	Well I think that...um... With the flight path thing, that was cool but I was a bit confused as to what that actually meant.
<i>ParticipantC</i>	08:51	mmm
<i>ParticipantO</i>	08:52	I think, I can't quite remember.
<i>Leader</i>	08:54 08:55 09:00	Yes, I think that I should actually make, once its gone through the node...fainter...And I should bring out the node that's current really dark.
<i>ParticipantG</i>	09:02	Oh Yeah...the circle.
<i>Leader</i>	09:03	So use opacity?
<i>ParticipantG</i>	09:06	Oh Yeah

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<i>Leader</i>	09:07 09:09	Yeah the circle...In the second box across, make that really lighter than the top one.
<i>LeaderG</i>	09:10 09:11	So make the orange one stand out more, and then
<i>Leader</i>	09:13 09:15	Yep...100%...I think I need to use more opacity.
<i>ParticipantO</i>	09:19	Ohhhh I... I just... I've got itOK.
<i>Leader</i>	09:22 09:25 09:27 09:30 09:31	Everyone OK with that? And also put it all on one page because what happens is that is the pseudo code for that order. Of traversal through the nodes. So the way I do the curriculums is an instructional comic.
<i>Leader</i>	09:32	Its so weird computer science isn't it xxxx?
<i>Teacher</i>	09:34	Yes...
<i>Leader</i>	09:38 09:42 09:43 09:50 09:55 09:58	So, basically the way I do the curriculum is they are comics. They're a special kind of comic called an instructional comic. So everyone thought they learned facts faster with comics. Most people thought that. Why is that? Does anyone want to add anything?

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<i>ParticipantG</i>	09:59 10:03	I think its more visual and so we understand more because of the pictures and stuff.
<i>Leader</i>	10:09 10:11	Yeah... I'm just checking that my phone is on. Great
<i>Leader</i>	10:12 10:15	Um. Everyone thought that learning comics would be easy for them?
<i>ParticipantG</i>	10:19	Yep
<i>Leader</i>	10:20	Is that true?
<i>ParticipantF</i>	10:21 10:23 10:24 10:25	Because I think explaining stuff with pictures is easier than explaining stuff with words or like to read stuff cause I know when I'm cooking I really like to read a book and watch a video on it.
<i>Leader</i>	10:29 10:34	So you said cooking so you like to watch a video or it's a recipe?
<i>ParticipantF</i>	10:35 10:36 10:39	It shows you how to do it and same sewing because reading the instruction book is just soooo confusing.
<i>Leader</i>	10:42	Right, because a recipe is like an algorithm. Yep

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<i>ParticipantO</i>	10:43 10:45 10:49 10:50 10:55 10:57	I think that, um... I think it kind of depends on the way different people learn because some people might learn faster with like pictures and stuff but um some might learn better with words, I think that for me I kind of like words and then a picture to go with it, that's just me though.
<i>Leader</i>	11:00 11:06 11:07 11:10 11:12 11:17 11:23 11:24	And some people are like that. I have a computer science teacher who I work with and he says he thinks in code. He doesn't think in pictures he says he actually thinks in code so some people are like that they think in code and code is words. So that's OK. Um So would you, would you like learning things in the future with comics?
<i>Participants</i>	11:27	Yes, yes, yes
<i>Leader</i>	11:30	Is there anyone that would not like to learn through a comic? Yep
<i>ParticipantM</i>	11:32	Words are so much easier to comics.
<i>Leader</i>	11:33	Words are easier and Yep
<i>ParticipantF</i>	11:35 11:37	Well I don't know...like I feel like a video would be better.

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<i>ParticipantJ</i>	11:39	<i>Labelling like things?...that lists what like steps we do?</i>
<i>ParticipantF</i>		Yeah like the ones on Khan academy.
<i>ParticipantF</i>	11:47	The Khan academy's good...that was good
<i>ParticipantF</i>		Yeah like Khan academy they have videos like in sewing when you get Miss xxxx to show you...
<i>ParticipantF</i>	11:50	Yes. That is so true.
<i>Participants</i>		
<i>Leader</i>	11:52 11:53 11:54	When you are doing that, watching the Khan academy do you let it play through and you know it or do you stop it?
<i>ParticipantJ</i>	11:56	I stop it
<i>ParticipantF</i>	11:56	I stop it
<i>ParticipantF</i>	11:57	I play it through
<i>Participant</i>	11:58	I play it through
<i>ParticipantJ</i>	11:59	Play it through... play it through then I get a question and I forget so I have to go up and stop it.

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<i>ParticipantF</i>	12:02	Actually no I play it through once ...
<i>Leader</i>		Right OK
<i>Charlie</i>	12:08	And answer those questions ...???
<i>Leader</i>	12:11	I like the Khan academy too, I think its good
<i>Julie</i>		Yeah
<i>Leader</i>	12:14	Ummm. Any one else want to add anything?
<i>ParticipantL</i>	12:16 12:17 12:22 12:23	I think the comic is quite cool but I think I'd probably like a little bit more words to explain it. But the comic, like the pictures to go with it is good.
<i>Leader</i>	12:25	Yes
<i>ParticipantJ</i>	12:23	I find comics are quite hard to understand, just
<i>ParticipantJ</i>	12:26	I know
<i>ParticipantJ</i>	12:30 12:35	because, although they are simple, there's some information that words could probably fill in.

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<i>Leader</i>	12:36 12:39 12:40 12:42	Is that the layout? Are you talking about the layout of the comic, like you don't really understand the order or is it the pictures you don't understand?
<i>Participants</i>	12:47	
<i>ParticipantJ</i>	12:50 12:52	It's just that sometimes the pictures don't fill in the information that words could be able to...
<i>Leader</i>	12:53	Because its really open, isn't it the interpretation, because I have some comics done by a man in New York named Chris Ware and I look at them and it takes me a little while to know what's going on. Yep
<i>ParticipantF</i>	13:06 13:12 13:19	I find that it's easier to use words because say when you're answering something or explaining, you have to use words to explain it. So it's kinda and for some reason its clear I visualise words.
<i>ParticipantF</i>	13:23 13:24 13:26	Yeah it's like when I like for example, when I memorise something. I actually visualise the words that I understand. Yeah it's weird.
<i>ParticipantC</i>	13:29	It sounds really weird
		I really can

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<i>ParticipantJ</i>		I do that
<i>ParticipantM</i>		I do that
<i>ParticipantG</i>		You realise that you visualise <i>what you would do</i> .
<i>Josie</i>	13:46 13:47 13:48 13:49	To me its actually ... and I'd rather have a clue book of pictures and a couple like headings it makes me imagine more so I think about it wholly and it goes in my brain a lot.
<i>Leader</i>	13:53 13:56	So that imagination is important to you and that picture? Like the graphic novel thing?
	14:02 14:04 14:11	It's easier and say if um on the book if you want to make the activity, I think it would be clearer with words, headings and words. This paragraph is for this ...That would be quite helpful.
<i>Leader</i>	14:12	Yep, that's great. Yep
<i>Julie</i>	14:13 14:18	I feel like for me probably a comic, and then words explaining what it means
<i>Julie</i>	14:22 14:25	Cause like the picture helps me remember <i>what it is</i> and the words help me understand.
<i>Participant</i>	14:26	mm
<i>Participant</i>	14:26	mm

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<i>Julie</i>	14:27	Yep
<i>Leader</i>	14:32 14:33 14:38	That's good information, that's really great information. So people want to use comics more often when they learn, I think we have already covered that. Does anyone want to add anything to that?
<i>Leader</i>	14:47	These were the statistical trends that came out from all the schools
<i>Leader</i>	14:55 14:56 14:57	Um. So do you expect, do you expect to learn something about programming if you learn with comics?
<i>ParticipantG</i>	14:58	Yep
<i>ParticipantM</i>	14:59	Yes
<i>Leader</i>	15:00 15:02 15:04 15:08	Would you expect to learn something, why, what would be the reason? We have already given reasons haven't we? I've got lots of information. OK next one.
<i>ParticipantJ</i>	15:10	Wait, When you say comics do mean just like a picture with words?

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<i>Leader</i>	15:16 15:17 15:20 15:23 15:26	I mean like the ones I showed you that I did. Remember when you did your thing? They're, they're different they are a bit more specific than a normal comic. They're like, called an instructional comic.
<i>Participant</i>	15:27	Oh OK
<i>Leader</i>	15:28 15:30 15:36 15:37 15:41 15:43 15:48 15:49	But a lot of people look at teenagers and saying oh they like it because it's emotional or something like that but I like to use it because its just knowledge transfer. It's quicker for x and I to get information into people's brains in that way. So that is why I'm looking at it. Not for any other reason. Yep
<i>Larissa</i>	15:50 15:52 15:56	I just...I think that probably the context is quite hard as well, I think that probably added to it. I don't know.
<i>Leader</i>	15:57	Is that the pictures are difficult to
<i>Larissa</i>	15:58	Well I think that the...
<i>Leader</i>	15:59	...Decipher?

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<i>Larissa</i>	16:00	Well, not necessarily I think that, just like
<i>Mandy</i>		Stuff that's in there
<i>Participant</i>	16:03	Whichever way we learn it, it would still be hard for us to learn...
<i>Participant</i>		Yeah, it's hard.
<i>Mandy</i>		...Because it's a different way of thinking.
<i>Participant</i>		I just...
<i>George</i>		Learning is hard.
<i>Participant</i>		Mmm
<i>George</i>		Learning is hard.
<i>Leader</i>		Girls, Ladies, sorry just a quick question about narrative design, are you interested in the stories... in computer science...like do you know how the first bug was discovered?
<i>Participants</i>		Mumbling

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<i>Leader</i>	17:04	I'm going to give your teacher this poster of Grace who invented the first compiler and she also helped John von Neumann solve a quadratic equation that invented the atom bomb, but that's a bit sad so we won't talk about that, but she... the first bug was an actual moth that flew into this machine that was twice as big as this room. It was very big
<i>Participants</i>		Was it was a moth? How big was the computer? So it was a literal bug?
<i>Leader</i>	17:09 17:12	And twice as long in Harvard in America, so it wasn't a bug it was a moth.
<i>Participants</i>		Talking...
<i>Leader</i>	17:20 17:23 17:25 17:27	So they could not find out what was wrong with it so the bug was actually taken out of the machine and stuck in a book and she said, "This was the first bug".
<i>Participant</i>	17:30	So its like a literal bug

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<i>Leader</i>	17:34	And then Alan Turing, he loved... His favourite book was Snow White and he ended up poisoning himself with an apple.
<i>Participants</i>	17:45	Ah...
<i>Leader</i>	17:44 17:46	So that's a bit gory but are those stories interesting?
<i>Participants</i>		Yes...yeah
<i>Leader</i>	17:48 17:50	To weave into the curriculum. They are aren't they?
<i>Leader</i>	17:56	OK. Last page. What about games in comparison to learning with comics?
<i>Leader</i>	18:07	This is an interesting area at the moment. So if I put a timer on each page and I got you and was timing you as you completed each page, how would you feel about that?
<i>Participant</i>	18:17	A bit rushed
<i>Participant</i>	18:18	I feel like its better if we just work
<i>Leader</i>	18:20	Give you a bit of a headache?
<i>Participants</i>	18:22	Yeah

Focus Group 3000 Transcription

16th September 2016

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Communicator	Time Interval	Verbal Communication
<i>Leader</i>		Don't want that?
<i>Participant</i>	18:32	Yeah what x said, otherwise you can't
<i>Participant</i>	18:33 18:34	People do naturally work...like some people might work fast...
<i>Leader</i>	18:36	Yes?
<i>Participant</i>	18:40	I think it would be good to.....that pushes you faster to do better. When you're learning.... It helps you pushes you and tests your brain.
<i>Leader</i>	18:52	So some people are OK for timing and some people don't want it. What about achievement badges...with each unit?
<i>Leader</i>	19:05	So if you did the Grace Hopper on compiling or a unit like that you'd get a little bug as a badge.
<i>Participant</i>	19:09	Yeah, that would be cool cause then you could be like "oh...I want to get this little badge".
<i>Leader</i>	19:12	What if you need to get your teacher's attention if you could contact them or message them instead of putting your hand up?
<i>Participant</i>	19:24	That's cool
<i>ParticipantG</i>	19:25	Yeah

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Communicator	Time Interval	Verbal Communication
<i>Participant</i>	19:28	If you messaged would they come and then explain it over.
<i>Leader</i>	19:32 19:34 19:35 19:38	Well it might be, you might be able to just send her a message, an anonymous one or one with your name on it like, I need help on this and no one else can see it.
<i>Participant</i>	19:42	Yep
<i>Leader</i>	19:43	Um, what about a score? At the bottom of the page that tested as you go?
<i>Participant</i>	19:47	Yep
<i>Participant</i>	19:49	Oh yeah, I'd like that so much.
<i>Leader</i>	19:56 19:57 19:58	OK that's it ladies. Thank you so much for your contribution. I've got a lot of valuable things in that. And... How do I stop this?

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