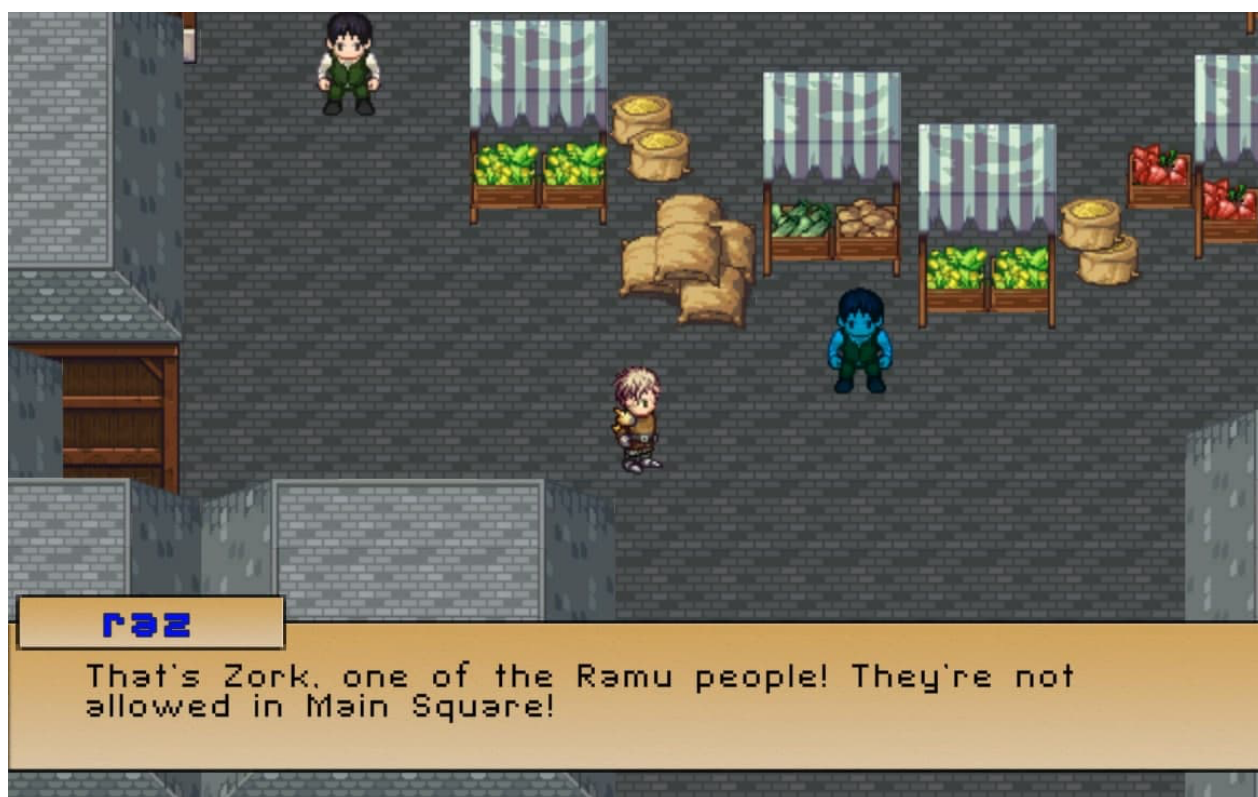




# A video game for fostering positive intercultural relationships

Guest post by Vivian Hsueh Hua Chen, Nanyang Technological University



In a culturally and racially diverse world, it is important for people to be able to live together harmoniously. Being respectful of cultural differences and fostering a genuine curiosity to better understand how and why other people are different from ourselves is one way to bridge the gap between self and others. This was the underlying motivation to create the prosocial game, Icebreaker. Icebreaker is a short role-playing game where players take on the role of the protagonist, an ice gatekeeper whose family has been tasked with protecting the village from an annual disaster known as 'The Freezing.' The goal of the game is for players to discover the true cause for this annual occurrence and to stop the event for good. The game design is primarily driven by narrative design integrated with interactive play. Certain tasks in the game require the

player to work together with a banished villager, whose race has been blamed for being the cause of the disaster. The game aims to contrast the in-game experiences of players to that of real-life interactions between ingroup and outgroup members to promote empathy and attitude change towards different others. A study was done to understand the impact of playing Icebreaker on players' attitudes towards racially different outgroup members. On an overall level, playing the game resulted in significant attitude change towards outgroup members. This is in line with existing body of theoretical and empirical evidence investigating the effects of narrative on attitude and behavior change based on transportation theory.



Trailer of the game: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmlP6W1k-WE>

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## Relevant Publications

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Shaza, M., Yu, V., Alvarez, K., Chen, V.H.H. (2021). The impact of meaningful game narratives on attitudes towards racial outgroups. In *Proceedings of the 54th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS '21)*, 1395.

Chua, C.X.Y., Yu, V. & Chen, V.H.H. (2021). In the mood for doing good: The influence of positive and negative emotions in game narratives on prosocial tendencies. In *Proceedings of the 54th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS '21)*, 1365.

Chen, V.H.H., Yu, V. (2021). A pro-social game: Icebreaker. Presentation at *Games for Change Asia-Pacific Festival*.