

AdvancedInterview.mp3

Transcript

Interviewer

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S1: Okay. Hello, Thanks for taking part. Before I start the interview questions, I'm going to do a rundown of the setup requirements, both physically and to actually set up a game and use the program's features. So for hardware requirements, you will require a physical chess board. Of course. You will need a single camera. So this could be either connected to your smartphone or a webcam; and to mount it or hold it at a 90 degree angle so you can capture the board from above. Okay. Now, to set up a game. Wait, so before we continue, do you have any questions on the setup or It's clear?

Participant

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S2: It's clear. Do I have to get a board physically?

Interviewer

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S1: To use the program. Yes. You will need a physical.

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S2: Board to use the program.

Interviewer

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S1: Exactly, exactly. Now, to set up a game, you will have two choices. You will have either the puzzle solver, or you will have a game tracker where you play a game, a normal game. So for the puzzle solver, it will randomly generate a puzzle for you to solve, similar to the things you do on Chess.com or LiChess. The only requirement for the puzzle solver from you is that you set up the physical board, in the way that it reflects the position given, for the puzzle. That's all. For the game tracker, you can set up a game from any position you like, and from then on, it will track the moves automatically to, of course, set up the game from this position, you will require an FEN string. I'm sure you're familiar with FEN strings.

Participant

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S2: Mhm.

Interviewer

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S1: Exactly. You can get this from a digital website where you can convert as a chessboard position to FEN. It's simple. And then, you will pass this FEN to the program, and it will start from there. Now, if you do not, touch anything, the program will assume that you are just playing a normal game from a starting position. You won't need any manual input. You just start and play. Are there any questions on the features?

Participant

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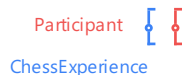
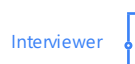
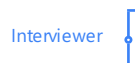
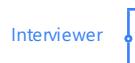
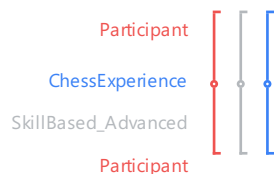
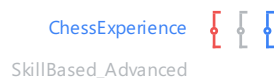
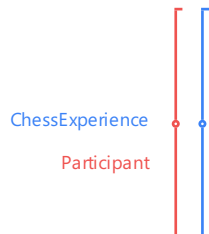
S2: Okay.

Interviewer

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S1: No questions. Okay. Now, the features of the tool, to sort of go a bit more into detail, for the move feedback, when you play, you will have the option to either get feedback on every move you make by Stockfish. So you make a move and then it will give you feedback. And then you can look at the feedback, understand it, blah blah blah. Or you can just, suppress it, and then you can just play a normal game with a buddy or whatever, and then you will get, a game history of the moves you've made. This will be available the game history both

Interviewer	22	S1: All right. From everything you've mentioned, and it can even be things you didn't mention. What do you enjoy the most about learning chess?
ChessExperience	23	S2: Yeah. Because it's different every time. You face different situations, especially in the middle game because in the openings and the end game, those are very well studied. But then in the middle game you're practically on your own. Again, if you've played your openings right the middle game would really solidify. Sometimes I usually had opponents. For instance once in an international tournament I played, I think it was a German player and the guy was rated 1800 and I was still at 1200. I was scared stiff, but I won, you know, there are. And then there would be people who are rated as much as you are or less than you are, and they would still beat you. It's very emotional. So if you don't have a very good day you don't expect to have a very good outcome. It's very emotional. it's really tight. And then-
Participant	24	S1: It feels triumphant at times and it feels a bit disappointing at times.
Participant	25	S2: Yes. But what I was referring to, if your mental state, you're anxious. Let's say, you know, I fought with the wife and then I go to play. The chances of having good play is not in your favor.
Interviewer	26	S1: Okay.
ChessExperience	27	S2: Okay. But yes, there was a good book. Chess for blood and for sport, if I'm not mistaken. I can't remember the author. Yes, it really hurts the ego. And I've seen quite a lot of people, you know, not taking it nicely. Well, inside I do feel. Yes. Especially if somebody one quarter of my age really messes me up. But it's part of the process. You have to learn it's experience. You have to learn. That's the way you learn. I mean, when you put yourself on the board for the first time, I mean, you don't know what you're going to expect. And then by the time. Yes, I mean, you see the silly tricks and traps they try to do and you say, okay, I've been through this. So this is the way to get out, and you start gaining experience. Naturally, if you expect you're going to win all your games, that would be a bit silly. There are some who do. Yes. The very top players who do. I remember a member of the Swieqi Chess Club and the league's for a lot of reasons. I mean, they use the Swiss system. I'll explain that. And they are, you know, from 1700 and above. You play in one division below 1700, you play in a lower division. And that would give you at least the chance to meet players roughly your own match.
Interviewer	28	S1: Okay.
Participant	29	S2: And in the Swiss system, what they do is first you are allocated randomly to someone. So yes, the first game could be a tough one. You could be lucky to find somebody who's starting off. Yes. Never happened to me. But then from then onwards, you're paired and you always, you know, reach your level. So you have a very good chance of winning a game, progressing a game, Yes. And I



think if you take it too seriously at times that you would, you would, you would you know, you would suffer. Why? Because. Because you lose. Even Magnus Carlsen loses games once in a while. He does take it badly, though. Yes. You know, he does take it badly. And basically basically that's it.

30 **S1:** So there are many things. There are many things you enjoy.

31 **S2:** Yes, yes, yes, I like the social aspect as well because at times after the games we even could discuss. Listen, this is what you missed here. And yes, you could have done this and yes, you know, yes, most of the time, even after the game finishes, then they would give us the, the PGNs of the, of the games and you could, see what you've done and you see how other people are playing as well.

32 **S1:** Okay.

33 **S2:** Because part of the regulations games have to be, have to be annotated.

34 **S2:** Okay. So even during the game when you're playing competitively, you would have paper and you would annotate the moves, your moves and your opponent's moves. And those two papers then would go on to the arbiter who would be moderating the game. Okay. You know.

S1: Okay. One more question. Would you personally say that you prefer playing chess digitally or over the board?

S2: Listen, over. The board is better. Over the board is better. I prefer that, but I don't get too much contact. And now I'm facing at the end of this month, a competition that would be over the board and digitally. It would be flat. You know, the experience is different. And even when you play against a computer, the way computers come out with the best possible moves, is different from a human being. So at times, yes, they do blunder, of course. In AI we call that hallucination. At times they do blunder. But again, I would prefer against humans.

S1: Because, digitally, you can still play online, do you play online against people?

38 **S2:** Rarely, but I do.

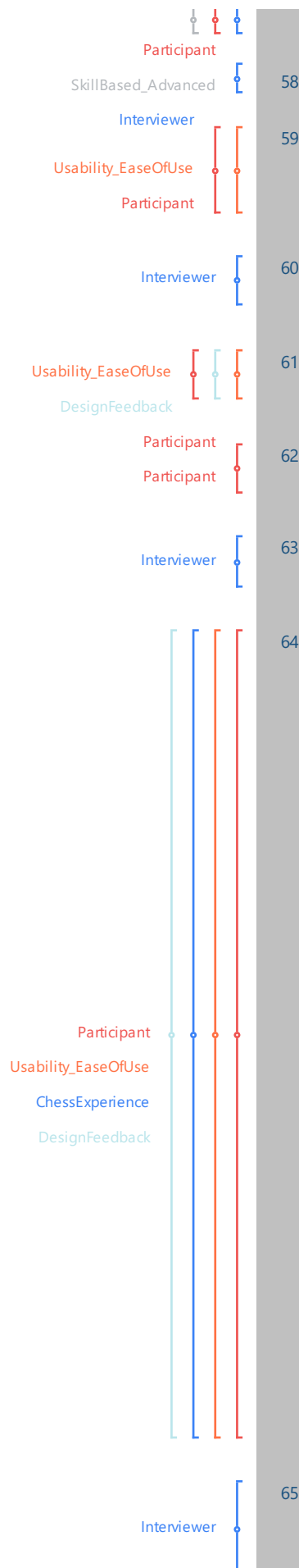
39 **S1:** Okay, then I think it's safe to assume that you would prefer playing a human over the board than a human digitally.

40 **S2:** Mhm.

41 **S2:** Because it's anonymous, you know, you don't really know (the opponent).

42 **S1:** You cut the social aspect as well like you mentioned.

		43	S2: Yes of course, of course of course. Okay.
Interviewer		44	S1: No that makes sense. Okay then. Moving on from a general chess sense back to the tool. So, as a first impression, based on what I've told you. What's your gut reaction? Does anything seem counter-intuitive or confusing?
Participant	Usability_EaseOfUse	45	S2: No. Not really. No. With my experience with chess and that I'm familiar with the setup.
Interviewer		46	S1: Definitely.
Participant		47	S2: It would be nice to see somebody who just knows, you know a little bit about it and wants to start playing it.
Interviewer		48	S1: Okay.
DesignFeedback	Participant	49	S2: That that would be really nice. I think it's a good tool. I think it's a good tool to get people, you know, up and running.
Interviewer		50	S1: Exactly.
ChessExperience	Participant	51	S2: But most of the time, I feel—It's my opinion, nothing scientific—that when you play people. In fact, in Malta, we don't have. But, in America especially, and there are other places. In parks, they do have chessboards where you could go there and you find a trash talker and you start playing, and they even play for money and whatever. And at times they would be very good. Although they don't play professionally, they would be very good players. There's that social aspect, you know.
Interviewer		52	S1: Exactly.
Participant	ChessExperience SkillBased_Advanced	53	S2: After all games, that's what they do. It started as a parlour game. That's the way it started off. So, people in high society started to meet. They drink, they eat, and, you know, they play chess. And then I would be better than that one. And then we start, you know, competing. And it formalised itself like, I think most games, if not all, most games, if not all.
Interviewer		54	S1: Okay, okay. So, imagine you're setting up the program to actually used it to actually use it. You know, you are setting up your camera, your physical board, etc. Do you think that there would be any questions that might arise or maybe some complications?
Participant	Usability_EaseOfUse	55	S2: For me, no, but for a person who's not really conversant. Possibly. But from what I see it shouldn't be a hurdle, you know?
Interviewer		56	S1: Okay.
ChessExperience	Participant	57	S2: But I had friends who were extremely good chess players, something which I couldn't understand. But outside of chess circles, they're just as dumb as an



ass.

S1: Okay.

S2: So when you put them on the board, they're just a genius. They're a machine. So when you start asking people now you need to set up your camera here, the guy would probably be lost.

S1: Okay. No that's that's very understandable. Okay. So you think for the people who are less tech savvy it might be difficult.

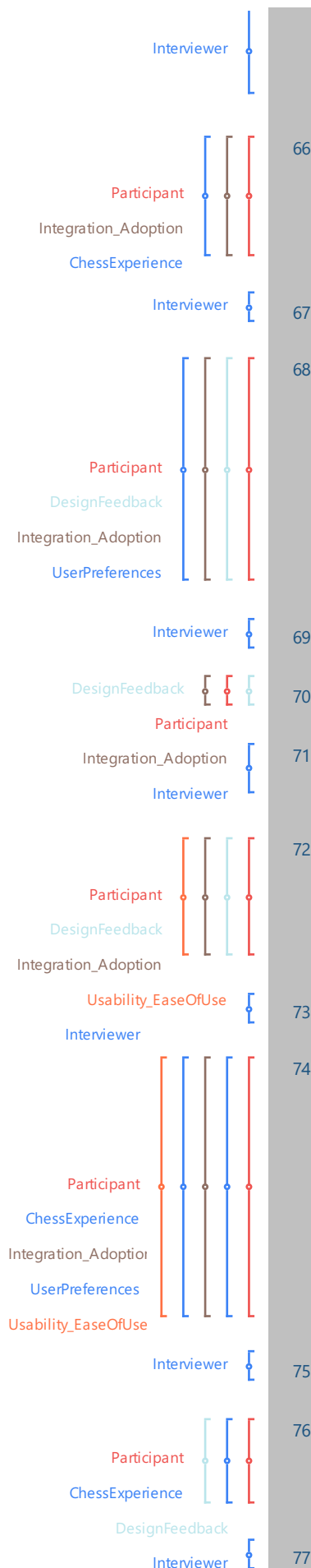
S2: Yes, yes, yes. And unfortunately, there are still quite a lot of people who are not or at least are afraid rather than not tech savvy, you know.

S2: Most of the devices are just plug and play. You just put them in and they'll set themselves up. I mean, it's not all that much, you know. It's not all that much.

S1: Okay. So as a tool, how confident would you be that it correctly detects moves you make? Or would there be any doubts to its accuracy?

S2: Well it depends. You have to use it, really. But if it does give good results, you know, in the coaching sense, because that's where I see, especially here in Malta, that we suffer a lot. There aren't a lot of people playing chess, and you can imagine the number of people which you could say are coaches. Again, I say there are good players, and some of those good players do not have the wish or the want to teach other people, but there are 2 or 3 which I know that are even good coaches and that have represented Malta even on the Olympic teams and did reasonably well. I think yes, I think it would be, it would be a useful, very useful tool. Why? Because I could go home and train even without maybe a coach. Without a coach. Now what they're doing, even in leagues here in Malta, at least the club where I am, they partnered up with a Sicilian club, so that when Maltese members go to Sicily to play. You do not need to become members or whatever. They would, could come here and the top people in the First Division league would then be able to play in their own league. So again, you get the experience by exposing yourself to different people, different styles. Why? Because when you play the same ten people. Mind you, there aren't many playing chess, especially competitively. When you're playing the same ten people, it tends to be to become stale. Deja vu. I know what you like, so I prepare for that. I Would know you really well. I mean, when we go to play club games, I think it would be lucky if we could collect 20 people. And even to the point. Not that it should. I don't like it that in Malta we don't separate women from men. Abroad. they do, they have the luxury of numbers. But over here is just one, one big pot. So you play women, you play men, you play older people, younger people, irrespective.

S1: Okay then. Okay. Speaking of because you mentioned that, you know, it would depend on its actual performance. So let's say, hypothetically, that this tool was merged into an application on your phone where you can take it



anywhere you go, and the features would work perfectly fine in a perfect world. Then this would increase the chances pretty heavily on actually adopting this tool into your usual regime.

66 **S2:** For me? Yes. You know why? Because I need to play across a physical board. So when you have something that adapts your board and gives you electronic feedback, you're still playing sort of physically. Okay. Your opponent is not there. That makes a lot of a difference.

67 **S1:** Okay.

68 **S2:** In the club, we've got electronic chess boards. Very expensive. That detect moves, but that's all they do. They just, you know, annotate the game for you. And then, what we do then, if I had such an app, I think I would take it, even consider buying it. Because then you would set a camera on top and you could play. And now I think with a mobile phone you could play everywhere, anywhere. You've got internet accessibility, you could be outside. The only issue would be, would be probably mounting it.

69 **S1:** But you'd need a tripod.

70 **S2:** Yeah. No but yes that that's I think that would be very good. That would be.

71 S1: Okay. So that's interesting to hear. Okay then. What are some things on the other hand that might hold you back?

72 **S2:** Well, I really don't know. I really don't. Know. Possibly. You know what? Just thinking on the top of my head, the LiChess and the Chess.com are readily available. You need to set up nothing. So I think an applike that has to have minimal setup, so to speak.

73 **S1:** Okay.

74 **S2:** Has to have minimal. Because listen, if you're a player like I am a club player who likes to play, you know, in a club and test yourself that way, that would be okay. But if you're somebody who plays it casually, most of the time you just go onto a computer or even your mobile phone. I use my mobile phone, for instance, the Chess.com or LiChess when I'm waiting for an appointment, you know, you're waiting for a doctor's appointment. You say, I've got 20 minutes, half an hour, let me run a game. Okay, so it just keeps you going. Yes. So as long as it has an easy setup it should work fine.

75 **S1:** Good.

76 S2: And I think even even it has to be directed against, what type of niche market, so to speak. You want to focus on. But to tell you the truth, I haven't seen products like it.

77 **S1:** Okay.

Participant	78	S2: The closest you could get coming to think of and there are electronic boards you can buy.
Interviewer	79	S1: Exactly.
DesignFeedback Integration_Adoption Usability_EaseOfUse SkillBased_Advanced Participant	80	S2: There are electronic boards which are relatively small. And prices vary quite a lot. But there are some within the hundred euro range which I think are affordable. They play decent level of chess. And you're playing with pieces. The board would be sensitive—It won't have a camera—from the underside. And, and it would know how to then it would then on a display LCD display tell you its move and you would move whatever it tells you to move. And yes, I don't know how popular they are, but I think, I think I would get one. The downside of such a thing, which the version you're proposing would have, is that, Stockfish would be updated regularly. This, of course, once you've bought it, it's fixed into the hardware and with time, it probably would get old.
Interviewer	81	S1: It would require version updates, for sure.
Participant DesignFeedback	82	S2: I doubt it. If they have them for the hardware ones. But for the one you're proposing. Yes. Once Stockfish has been updated, it's a matter of changing the version of Stockfish.
Interviewer	83	S1: Okay, so let's say hypothetically now moving on towards something different, something that you've actually brought into my mind. Let's say with the app, you would have included a tripod, which is tailored for the app. A perfect tailored tripod which gives you the perfect amount of distance. Would you think that would increase the chances heavily of buying such a product?
DesignFeedback Integration_Adop Usability_EaseOfU Participant ChessExperience SkillBased_Advar	84	S2: I think so, yeah. Unfortunately in Malta we still do not have the culture of going to a park, finding someone and playing chess, which is unfortunate. Having said that, a lot of members do congregate, so to speak, in cafes. Yes. That happens. I mean, there is a cafe in Gzira, my cafe. The owner is an avid chess player. And so he invites people and there are clubs. 65th square, a good club. They invite me. I've never been. They used to play an Msida, The square there near the police station. There used to be a restaurant. Uncle Matt's kitchen, or something of the sort they used to play there. Now with the roadworks going on, they've moved, which I think is next to the, national swimming pool somewhere down there. And they go there and then there is book bites in Sliema where they go as well.
Interviewer	85	S1: Okay.
ChessExperience Participant SkillBased_Advanced	86	S2: Okay. So you're having a coffee? We're playing a leisurely game. We don't play for points, but we play, you know, to exercise ourselves, meeting people, taking a coffee or a beer. And there's that social aspect which is just brilliant. Okay. It is brilliant.
Interviewer	87	S1: Okay, then that's that's very insightful.

Participant	88	S2: I would I would personally I think I would use such a thing as a tool.
Interviewer	89	S1: Okay. I so I think this would vary a lot on depending on the location. I think where this culture is rich, it would be much more popular.
Participant	90	S2: Probably yes, mhm. In Bugibba, I remember once I used to see a couple of old men play chess. But probably they were just friends and they meet on a regular basis and play. But I've never seen them again. But knowing one of them. Yes. They must be very old today.
PersonalExperience		
Interviewer	91	S1: Okay, okay. So, which of these features would make you sceptical? That they might not meet the standards of your existing routine? Maybe some limitations. Is there anything missing?
Participant	92	S2: The game features?
Interviewer	93	S1: Yes from the game features.
Participant	94	S2: From what I see you could set up a game from a position and then continue. So there you could test for end games. You could try middle games openings and whatnot. I don't see much as long as the chess engine behind it is good. Which is Stockfish, you know?
Integration_Adoption		
Usability_EaseOfUse		
ChessExperience	95	S1: Yes.
SkillBased_Advanced		
Interviewer	96	S2: Of course. I think it's the best regarded.
Participant	97	S2: No, it's the best open source engine. Closed source, there are others which are really good as well. But open source is the best. And I think they use it as a benchmark at times.
ChessExperience		
ChessExperience		
Participant		
SkillBased_Advanced	98	S1: Okay. It's highly regarded from what I've researched.
Interviewer		
Participant	99	S2: There's something called Lea Chess. I have never played it. Mostly I play stockfish. As long as it has Stockfish and you could change the level because Stockfish, you could set a level to it.
ChessExperience		
PersonalExperience		
UserPreferences	100	S1: Okay.
DesignFeedback		
Interviewer	101	S2: So what I normally do is I play above my level. I know I lose a lot, but you learn a lot.
PersonalExperience		
UserPreferences	102	S1: So you think that if the program would have a feature where you could actually play against computer as well, because at the moment it's not. It's not a feature.
ChessExperience		
Participant		
Interviewer		
Participant	103	S2: Ofcourse. So I think such a feature would be a very, very good. Most of the time I train alone.
DesignFeedback		
PersonalExperience		
UserPreferences	104	S1: Agreed. Okay. that's a very good observation.

PersonalExperience				105	S2: And, you know, after a day's work I come here, do some work extra, prepare for lessons or whatever. And then I say, I have an hour in the evening. I mean, you just go in, log on to LiChess, and you start your regimen and say, yes, I'm doing half an hour of this.
UserPreferences					
Participant					
				106	S1: So in your opinion, if you could do the same routine you do now, where you go play against Stockfish, etc., but you could do so over the board. It would be a very nice addition.
Interviewer					
				107	S2: I think it would be a nice addition. Yes, I think it would be a nice addition. I mean, imagine that even in a club, you know, when you have people playing. A camera and you have somebody, you know, either assisting you or playing playing a machine, so to speak. But physically, I mean, especially these young ones, physically. And you know what you should add maybe to it as well. Time control.
Integration_Adoption					
Participant					
DesignFeedback					
				108	S2: So but that could be a bit tricky because what happens I used to train a lot on ten minute games. And that's good to keep your mind literally razor sharp. But when I go to competitions I just rush through my moves. A competition would be 90 minutes each side. I prefer the classical although I play blitz rather than bullet. The ten minute things. I prefer the classical one.
Participant					
PersonalExperience					
UserPreferences					
SkillBased_Advanced				109	S1: So, to add more on to it, I would say that when you play on your own. I think such a thing, like, voice, text to speech, which tells you the moves that have been made by the computer, you won't need to manually check. So you get feedback and then you play it for.
Interviewer					
				110	S2: Depends because there's something called blind chess.
Participant					
SkillBased_Advanced				111	S1: Okay.
ChessExperience					
Interviewer				112	S2: I never played it. But yes, people do play it. You have to imagine the board, so to speak.
Participant					
PersonalExperience				113	S1: Okay.
Interviewer					
				114	S2: Okay. So that would be nice.
DesignFeedback					
Participant				115	S1: What could what could be implemented maybe is that there are no black pieces on the board but digitally it's there for the computer. So you're playing on your own.
Interviewer					
				116	S2: Yes. Yes. All, all you need to do is have a video output. That's all.
DesignFeedback					
Participant				117	S1: That's okay. That's that's really insightful. Okay. Then. So.
Interviewer					
				118	S2: Again, I don't know, people with disabilities, what they, if they play chess or not in Malta, I'm not aware. I will not be surprised that, you know, outside Malta there would be people with disabilities. And why not after all.
Participant					
SkillBased_Advanced					
ChessExperience					

		119	S1: For sure.
PersonalExperience		120	S2: Why not? After all, why not? I think most of the time it should be again that, you know, puts people together rather than separate them.
Participant			
Interviewer		121	S1: Definitely. Okay. Even some support for disabled people might be a very nice.
Participant		122	S2: Of course, of course, of course, of course.
DesignFeedback			
Interviewer		123	S1: Very, very good.
DesignFeedback		124	S2: Okay. And you've got even people who do see but they have limited vision. It would be nice to get.
Participant			
Interviewer		125	S1: The, all the feedback. I mean, if this (the text-to-speech function) is added, this can also be an adjustable setting in reality. So it's nothing too complicated.
Participant		126	S2: Yes of course, of course, of course, of course.
Interviewer		127	S1: Okay then. So, if you could tweak one aspect of the current existing implementation, so nothing hypothetical. What would you actually tweak to make it maybe increase its value? Or would you rather leave it to what's already been discussed?
DesignFeedback		128	S2: Well, most of the features are there, but probably I would put a larger board, a larger board, and maybe, maybe, a digital representation of the board.
UserPreferences			
Participant		129	S1: A digital representation of the board. I'm to be honest, I'm working on it.
Interviewer			
Participant		130	S2: Okay. So it sees the 3D thing. And I mean, imagine you have a hot game and you want to display it on some larger screen where people are just watching it. Generally when it's games they play, you know, these super champions like Fabiano Caruana. The the the what's his name? Magnus Carlsen. And then there's the Japanese. I can't remember his name, should be ashamed of myself, but yes. When, when when they're playing, you know, against two titled players and it's not a whole league.
PersonalExperience			
SkillBased_Advanced			
ChessExperience			
Interviewer		131	S1: It's nice to have that digital representation. Okay. So, would you recommend this technology to your peers?
Participant		132	S2: Yes, I think so. Yes yes yes yes yes definitely. I think it's a very good teaching tool. It's a very good teaching tool.
Integration_Adoption			
DesignFeedback			
Interviewer		133	S1: Okay. No. Okay. Then. Then, that's all from my questions. I'm not sure if there are any other things you wish to add.
Participant		134	S2: No. Not really, not really, not really. I mean, it was fun, thinking about them and all.

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S1: Okay, then. That's all for the interview.

Participant

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S2: All right. Thank you.