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## **Human-Robot Interaction in senior health care: a qualitative cases-study research on seniors experiencing a robot-coached functional rehabilitation exercise**

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1 **Human-Robot Interaction in senior health care: a qualitative cases-study research on seniors experiencing**  
2 **a robot-coached functional rehabilitation exercise.**

3  
4 Running title: **Robot coach from seniors' point-of-view.**

5  
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31  
32 **Compliance with Ethical Standards**

33 The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest. The authors declare the Research involves volunteer  
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35 participation to this Research programm.

36

37 **Abstract.** Telemedicine and assistive robot are an issue for aging well at home. This qualitative research  
38 consisted in four study cases regarding elderly users experiencing a functional rehabilitation exercise coached by  
39 an assistive robot. It focused on the inner concerns elicited during the Human-Robot-Interaction and their  
40 evolution along the course of the experience. The data were collected and processed according to a course-of-  
41 action analysis framework. The results showed that eight typical concerns shape the users' interactions with the  
42 robot. This research highlighted that interacting with robots can produce a range of unexpected consequences  
43 such as emotional, behavioural reactions, as well as some questions about identity. This might counteract the  
44 initial design or even have a negative impact such as self-harm or rejection. One assumption guiding this work is  
45 that the activity-oriented approach provides a new, specific and better understanding of a Human-Robot-  
46 Interaction activity. This may provide guidelines for health and care roboticists and robotic interface designers. It  
47 also draws attention to the role the social environment plays regarding Human-Robot-Interaction.

48

49 **Key-words:** user's experience; assistive robots; elderly; acceptability; motivation; course-of-action.

50 **1 Introduction**

51 The late Western World demography studies report a decreasing number of births (birth rate 4,9 in 1950, 2,47  
52 today according to UNO) and longer life expectancy. Seniors aged 60 and more will represent 30% of the  
53 population in 2030. This demographic evolution, together with a shortfall of nurses and caregivers plus the  
54 health care cost, are the reasons why technology - and more specifically robotics – is being given increasing  
55 attention (Broekens et al. 2009). Technology can provide therapy oversight, coaching and motivation (Okamura  
56 et al. 2008). As an example, physical exercise has preventive effects on aging (Vuillemin 2012). It is widely  
57 recommended to seniors wishing to age in place in order to maintain their autonomy. Robots, and particularly  
58 assistive robots, have the potential to support physical activities in many ways. They are designed to be used at  
59 home and assist some physical tasks an elderly person may not be able to do in full autonomy (e.g. getting up,  
60 feeding, washing...). They also can promote physical and cognitive exercise (Görer et al. 2013). Some of these  
61 robots can fulfill a combined role of coach and social companion in order to motivate (Obo et al. 2015). Recently  
62 assistive robots have been designed to monitor the user during physical functional rehabilitation therapy  
63 (N’Guyen et al. 2016). Thus, the aim of this exploratory study was to analyse the users’ experience during a  
64 rehabilitation exercise program delivered by a robot coach to senior people. This work addresses a question of  
65 crucial importance about the perception of robots by senior people, and about their potential coaching role in  
66 functional rehabilitation exercise.

67

68 **2 State of the art**

69 **2.1 Research advances in human - robots interactions**

70 The implementation of new technology such as robots to support health care and physical activity have been  
71 investigated, and recent research has provided evidence of positive outcomes. First, studies investigated the  
72 effects of assistive social or companion-type robots on the health and wellbeing of the elderly living in nursing or  
73 collective home. Some results showed positive outcomes on health variables such as mood or loneliness  
74 (Broadbent, Stafford, MacDonald 2009), and some more positive effects on psychological variables such as  
75 social connections and communication (Bemelmans, Gelderblom, Jonker, De Witte 2012). Second, a number of  
76 studies showed the potential of robots to enhance engagement, motivation and physical activity (Fasola, Mataric  
77 2013; Obo et al. 2015). Third, robots have been successfully used for rehabilitation (Fazekas et al. 2006;  
78 Brewer et al. 2007). A recent study demonstrated that patients preferred the robot to a human assisting them with  
79 the exercises (Cherry et al. 2016). Nevertheless, those positive outcomes depend on how people accept robot  
80 interactions. Forth, the last decade has seen a number of studies focused on users' experiences of the robot  
81 interactions (Anzalone et al. 2015). In psychology, socio-psychology and ergonomics, this type of research were  
82 conducted within a variety of theoretical frameworks (Pino et al. 2015) used to understand user acceptance and  
83 user behaviour of information technology. The Theory of Reasoned action (TRA) by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975)  
84 pointed the link between behavioural aim and attitude. The Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) by Azjen (1985)  
85 added three constructs predicting intentions : attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control  
86 (Brown et Venkatesh 2005). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis 1989) has enhanced the  
87 perceived usefulness, the ease of use and perceived ease of use (determinants of Perceived Ease of Use being  
88 Integrating Control, Intrinsic Motivation and Emotion). The UTAUT model by Venkatesh, Thong and Xu  
89 (2016), for Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology, has established that performance expectancy,  
90 effort expectancy, as well as social influenced impacted on behavioural intention to use technology, whilst  
91 behavioural intention and facilitating conditions determined technology use. The TAM model is today the most  
92 commonly used model to investigate user acceptance of technology in health care (Broekens et al. 2009).

93 Advances in research showed that robot acceptance has proved to be an important issue among staff and patients  
94 (Brewer et al. 2007). The success of such programs depends on users' acceptance (Chau et Osborne 2017).  
95 Focusing on groups in many countries, Bedalf and al. (2016) suggested that older people are open to the idea of  
96 having a robot supporting them in their daily life. A new insight to their acceptance of the robot is that they want  
97 the robot to operate at the same level of intelligence as a human caregiver. Furthermore, the acceptance of robots  
98 is culturally dependant (Broadbent et al. 2017) and perceived enjoyment (Heerik et al. 2008) is a source of  
99 acceptance for robot companion. Gaps between needs and solutions offered by the robot and lack of experience  
100 with technology have been identified as the most important barriers for robot acceptance (Pino et al. 2015).

101 Taken together, quantitative studies using TAM perspective pointed out that the users need to be aware of robots  
102 potentialities, to accept them as opportunities and to make sense of robots behaviours or motions (Broadbent et  
103 al. 2017). Though predictive, it is limited and does not provide sufficient understanding or information to create  
104 user acceptance for new systems (Mathieson 1991). Thus, qualitative investigation of the human – robot  
105 interaction (HRI) is needed.

## 106 **2.2 Qualitative investigation for HRI**

107 For over a century, qualitative researches have aimed at revealing, in a holistic approach, the sense-making  
108 process, which results from the interaction of an human or participant with his natural environment. Qualitative  
109 research explores the experiences of participants and the meaning they attribute to it. The aim of the qualitative  
110 research is to observe, report, analyse and interpret the complexity of a dynamic phenomenon, which changes  
111 continuously in response to prevailing conditions. Study case is still the dominant research method in qualitative  
112 analysis. The qualitative approach considers a reality, which can be seen as constructed *by* a user rather than by a  
113 designer *for* a user (italic added). The participant is active in the sense-making process. A qualitative approach  
114 for HRI seems to be appropriate to answer questions such as what are seniors' concerns when they experiment a  
115 robot designed to coach them rehabilitation activity? This study was conducted within the course-of-action  
116 framework as a diachronic analysis of users concerns within a test situation setting an individual exercise session  
117 coached by a Poppy robot.

118 Recent studies in psychology and ergonomics have investigated human - machine or objects interaction by  
119 reconstructing how individual cognitions adjust over time (e.g., Poizat 2010). They use the theoretical and  
120 methodological framework of the course-of-action, originally developed in the French language for research in  
121 ergonomics (Theureau 2006) after Peirce's semiotic (1902), Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of perception  
122 (1945) and Varela and Maturana's *autopièse* (1974) and *enaction* (1987) concepts. The method involves  
123 resetting of the participant in the initial activity using its material traces such as auto-confrontation video  
124 methods. The aim of these methods is to lead the participants to elicit their pre-reflexive consciousness. A major  
125 component of pre-reflexive consciousness is the focus on the dynamic of the participants concerns. Within the  
126 framework, a concern refers to participants' interests, focuses or perceptions and/or intentions. Concerns can be  
127 defined and specified at any given instant regarding what makes sense or contributes to sense making for the  
128 participant. If we assume that an participant concern orients his/her situated activity as related to a specific  
129 moment, time and environment then an investigation of such concerns and their categorization into typical  
130 concerns can be expected to describe the emotional and cognitive experience of each participant.

131

### 132 **3 Method**

133 This qualitative approach complies with the recommended report standards (O'Brien et a. 2014).

#### 134 **3.1 Participants and setting**

135 The size of the sample was an empiric choice. The participants consisted of 4: one woman and three men (M age  
136 = 70, SD = 9). They will be designated as A, B, C and D, and collectively as the participants or the actors. None  
137 had any previous experience of exposure to any assistive robot. This robot was a 3D humanoid Poppy robot  
138 conceptualized by INRIA laboratory, France. It was visibly a moving mechanical object (exposed plastic parts,  
139 mini-motors, screws, nuts and wires). At that point of its development it had no expression and no capacity of  
140 interacting with its environment. The participants were selected according to three *criteria* related to health care  
141 assistive robots potential users: (1) aged 60+ (aged from 60 to 79), (2) living at home in a rural environment, and  
142 (3) no known or obvious cognitive mental decline. D had had a stroke five years before, and still suffered from a  
143 left shoulder and arm movement deficiency. D was looked after by a medical team, part of whom stood in the  
144 test room during the test. A simple description of the robot had been given to A, B and C the day before the test :  
145 “*The robot looks like a mechanic Lego, or a Meccano, it is rather small, just the top part, it will not talk*”. They  
146 were given a consent form to read, fill up and sign as well as an authorization for the use of their image for  
147 scientific purposes to which they fully and with no reserve subscribed to. The setting of the test meant to  
148 reproduce the conditions of a senior ageing at home and living alone. Four video cameras were placed in the test  
149 room in order to capture the robot as well as the participant’s motion. The test involved a multidisciplinary team  
150 of ergonomics scientists, medical scientists, computer scientists (CS), physiotherapists and engineers  
151 collaborating in designing the study case. The CS team needed to compare two different 3D capture motions  
152 equipment to find out which would be best for a future evolution of the Poppy robot to detect and measure the  
153 difference between the movements shown by the robot and the one performed by the participants. An important  
154 consequence of this multidisciplinary test was that the participants were asked to wear sensors and other bits of  
155 equipment before starting the test. They rather enjoyed “*looking like a robot*”. A second consequence was that  
156 there were 4 video cameras and up to 7 people gathered in the test room.

### 157 **3.2 Procedure**

158 First, the robot had to be programmed to be able to demonstrate a movement. One possible way was to code a  
159 specific program. The alternative we chose was for the researcher to manipulate the robot and perform the  
160 required movements while they were being computer-recorded. Therefore, by pressing “play”, the student in  
161 charge would make the robot execute the movement. The test consisted of seven different sets of movements  
162 defined by the multidisciplinary staff. Only the torso and the arms were involved. The motion had been planned  
163 to be realistic enough to map human gestures and was progressively more difficult to perform. The general  
164 sequence involved an one-arm gesture, then a symmetrical repetition of the movement with the other arm, then the  
165 use of the two arms simultaneously. Some movements were horizontal, others were vertical. They were some up-  
166 liftings, pushings and circles makings. The last one was a leaning and bending on one side with an up-lifted arm  
167 above the head bending the same way. The student explained to the participant that the robot would perform one  
168 sequence whilst the participant, who was seated facing the robot, would observe. Then the robot would repeat the  
169 sequence and this time the participant would copy it. There would be a pause between each sequence, due to the  
170 time required to record then bring the robot back to its original posture and set the next sequence. For each  
171 participant, the test followed the same pattern and lasted approximately a half hour. Apart from occasional visits  
172 from the lab director and the CS supervisors, the student and the researcher were handling the test. The medical  
173 team (doctor, physiotherapist) stepped in the lab only for D.

### 174 **3.3 Data collection**

175 The data were collected according to a procedure defined by the course-of-action methodology (Theureau  
176 2006). Two types of data were gathered: (a) non-verbal data, based on video recordings of the participants’  
177 behaviour during the sequences (see Photo I below) and ethnological observations written down by the  
178 researcher and (b) verbal-data, informal for some, formal for others, collected in the course of the tests and some  
179 pre- and post-tests interviews, among which a self-confrontation interview (see Photo II below) This later  
180 consisted for each participant in viewing his/her own test-film and stopping the video at any time whilst  
181 watching it, in order to show, explain, mime or comment on it. The researcher conducted the interview and could  
182 also stop the video and question the participant. The questions, according to Theureau’s theory, dealt with the  
183 “Actual”, that is what was happening and perceived in this course-of-action, with questions such as “*How do you*  
184 *feel now? What are you aware of? What are you doing here?*“. Another range of questions deal with what  
185 Theureau calls “Potential”, that is to say what was expected to happen, might happen, was wished or feared. This  
186 was related to questions such as “*What do you think would happen next? What were you expecting? What did*  
187 *you intend to do here?*“. The self-confrontation interviews were filmed. One camera was settled so as to capture  
188 the screen on which the film of the test was played, as well as the participant watching it. To minimize the  
189 possibility that the participants would forget, inference or generalize about their thinking, the interviews were  
190 conducted within 24 to 72 hours after the test. The interviews lasted between an hour and an hour and a half  
191 each. This technique of self-confrontation interview is designed to account for the level of activity that is  
192 meaningful to the participant and the emergence of their pre-reflexive consciousness that guides their activity.

193

194

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195

Photo I about here

196

Photo II about here

197

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### 198 **3.4 Data processing**

199 All the verbal exchanges, which occurred between the participants and the main researcher during the interviews,  
200 were then fully transcribed in a four columns board names Table I.

201

-----

202

Table I about here

203

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204 One column was related to the time precisely quoted to match the following columns, the second contained the  
205 *verbatim* of what had occurred during the experience. The third column contained the *verbatim* of the self-  
206 confrontation interview. The last column consisted in ethnographic notes and photos taken by the researcher  
207 during the test and/or the self-confrontation interview. The data were then processed in four steps: (a) identifying  
208 discrete sense-making units, (b) categorizing these units into typical concerns (what the participants focused on),  
209 (c) ensuring trustworthiness of the data and analysis (d) analysing temporal evolution of typical concerns.

### 210 **3.5 Identifying meaningful units**

211 Data were processed by selecting discrete meaningful units. These units are assumed to be the expression of the  
212 participant’s experience (Theureau 2006). They were feelings, focuses, perceptions, actions and  
213 communications. During the exercise sequence, a total of 242 such discrete units were identified: 72 units for A,  
214 28 units for B, 101 units for C and 34 units for D.



215 **3.6 Categorizing the meaningful units into typical concerns**

216 An analysis of the successive participants' concerns enabled them to be organized into more general categories  
217 of similar types of concerns, that is to say typical concerns. They were distinguished on the basis of three  
218 *criteria*: a) the meaning of each category of typical concern, b) the same level of generality across the categories,  
219 and c) a label sufficiently discriminating to avoid overlap (Corbin et Strauss 2008). The categories were defined  
220 one by one. A new category was created each time a concern did not match an existing category or when a  
221 sufficient number of units pointed to a common and specific concern. Eight categories of typical concerns were  
222 identified.

223 **3.7 Coding the categories**

224 A code was given to every single unit. (i.e: C6-S3-AC2-09:57). It reported the category number, the participant  
225 name, the designation of the film and the time the Unit occurred in the film. The purpose of it being to data-  
226 visualize the relationship between the evolution of the concerns and the exercises progression in time. (See  
227 Figure I below).

228 **3.8 Coding the time line**

229 T0 stood for the time before exercise 1 started. T1 stood for the time to perform exercise 1 and so on. T8 stood  
230 for the time following the end of exercise 7. (See Figure I below).

231 **3.9 Trust worthing the data and analysis**

232 To ensure the credibility of the data categorization two trained investigators processed them. These two  
233 researchers had already coded protocols of this type in earlier studies, and were familiar with course-of-action  
234 theory. The reliability of the coding procedure was assessed using Bellack's agreement rate (Van Someren,  
235 Barnard, Sandleberg 1994). The initial agreement rated 83% for the categorization of typical concerns. Any of  
236 these initial disagreements were resolved by discussion between the researchers. They debated their  
237 interpretations until a consensus was reached regarding the number of categories and their labelling. Finally,  
238 agreement rate reached 98%.

239

240 **4 Results**

241 This section is divided into three parts: (a) the eight typical concerns, (b) the dynamic of concerns during the  
242 exercise sequences, and (c) four cases focus on the human-robot interaction.

243 **4.1 Typical concerns**

244 First, the analysis revealed that the four participants shared eight typical concerns experienced during the course  
245 of their interaction with the robot. The concerns were designated as C followed by a concern category number  
246 from 1 to 10 (see Table II). The ones which gathered the most important number of units were : C3 - to self-  
247 evaluate oneself (33 units) ; C5 - to catch up with speed, the rhythm (33 units) ; C7 - to notice or admit a  
248 difficulty (30 units) ; C8 - to notice a human-robot difference (29 units).

249 -----

250 Table II about here

251 -----

252 **4.2 Dynamic of concerns during the exercise sequence**

253

254 The Figure I (see below) showed that some concerns (C3, C5), not all, were expressed all along the test.

255 -----  
256 Figure I about here  
257 -----

258 The spectrum of concerns also started at a high range: T1 started with 39 units and T2 with 71 units. Most  
259 concerns had a peak moment: C1 at T1 and T2, C5 and C7 at T2, C3 at T4 regarding the participants' focuses  
260 and interactions at that moment in time. A peak of concerns rose at T2 but for C2 and C4.

261 The specific exercise required at T2 was an horizontal lift-up movement of the upper-arm whilst the elbow was  
262 kept loose. This exercise had to be performed by one arm, then the other, then two arms simultaneously. It had  
263 been planned to be "second" in term of difficulty in the progress of the sequences. All participants faced  
264 ergonomic difficulties to perform it, some found it unusual, unnatural or "*never to be asked*". A wide range of  
265 unexpected concerns raised: speed, self-evaluation, starting time, emotions, robot identity, the nature of the task.  
266 After the peak, the concerns generally lowered and smoothed towards the end of the exercise. Six units were  
267 registered at T5, 14 at T6 and 25 units at T7.

268

269 **4.3 Four cases focus of a human-robot interaction**

270 According to the course-of-action framework, singular and personal experiences emerge from the coupling of the  
271 environment with each participant's previous experience. The data revealed that though the purpose of the test  
272 was announced in the same way to the four participants, each one experienced a different situation according to  
273 one's perception of this human-robot interaction. The following part of this paper defines each participant's  
274 experience then presents some unexpected aspects of the complexity of the situation that was studied.

275 *4.3.1 Various profiles of engagement*

276 Participant A focused on moving at the robot's rhythm and speed (16 units) and on starting just at the same time  
277 (8 units). This required a lot of efforts (9 units). A main categories profile was: C5-C8-C4. B focused on the  
278 difficulty B met (10 units) on copying the movement (5 units) and on all that prevented B from copying right (4  
279 units). B main categories profile was: C7-C1-C6. C was hugely concerned by self-evaluation (25 units). C  
280 wanted to perform and focused on finding ways of catching up with the speed (13 units), noticing all the  
281 differences (11 units) which might have helped him/her not to be surprised and be able to anticipate (11 units). C  
282 main categories profile was: C3-C5-C6-C8. Finally, D focused on the difficulties he/she met (10 units) to simply  
283 copy the movements (8 units). The differences between D and the robot enhanced them (6 units). D main  
284 categories profile was: C7-C1-C6. This results showed how specifically each participant interacted with what  
285 was supposed to be a similar situation.

286 *4.3.2 The test recalled emotional memories*

287 C (aged 76) took an RAF pilot test fifty years ago and failed for “lack of reflexes”. A reason he/she never  
288 subscribed to, being an athlete. C still felt he/she had to prove being quick enough and they were wrong at the  
289 time. C competed with the robot and with oneself. C : “An awful lot of things physical that I’ve done in my life  
290 have been done euh because... when you’re told you’re not good enough to be an RAF pilot, that sits with you  
291 for the rest of your life”, “there you are, with a lot of technicians around you and you get in to know unfamiliar  
292 equipment and put on unfamiliar clothes and, and then, you, you know you’re not gonna crash it, are you ?”, “I  
293 could make a mess of the test... by just simply not managing to do it properly”. Though C was fifty years older  
294 this early experience of failure put C under pressure in order to catch up and never be late especially since no  
295 sign and no indication was given about when to start or stop, time had not mentioned as being an issue.

#### 296 4.3.3 *The test challenged unexpectedly*

297 B (aged 79) attended a senior gym class on a regular basis and felt quite fit. He/She faced difficulty trying to  
298 copy the second exercise and was not happy with it. B: “*It’s hard but these are not, these are not movements one*  
299 *would normally do*”, “*I practise gym, gym for seniors, and we do not do these kind of movements. And I think*  
300 *our coach is pretty qualified herself*”. He/She accepted personal failure but blame the robot for its lack of  
301 competency in comparison with what a real professional gym coach would do.

#### 302 4.3.4 *The test questioned the identity of the robot*

303 The participants designated the robot as “Poppy”, “the robot”, “ the computer” or “the machine”. D: “*the robot*  
304 *does it, well it is programed to do so of course, so it does it naturally*”, A: “*I had dehumanized the robot, I was*  
305 *just noticing the mechanical part of it*”, “*We had to twitch ours arms there, for the robot that was somehow*  
306 *difficult to do*”, C: “*the way that robot comes to rest is particularly robotic*”. When the test was done, D kissed  
307 the robot goodbye for D liked it, found it was a “*smart little one*”.

#### 308 4.3.5 *The test raised human identity questions*

309 Interacting with the robot led the participants to reflexive questions about what they were really doing, what they  
310 were really asked to do, and even whom they were, regarding to whom they thought they were. A: “*I had to*  
311 *overcome this personal challenge*”. C had to succeed, for “*physical problem might lead to mental problems*  
312 *about physical competence*”, “*if you want to love someone you must first of all love yourself. And if you wish*  
313 *them to love you then you must be lovable, physical competence is... is important, at any age*”. B: “*I noticed it*  
314 *was... more flexible than me !*”. C: “*There are some elements of competitiveness. Whichever can do this better?*  
315 *Me or the machine?*”.

#### 316 4.3.6 *The test raised ambiguity*

317 The dynamic of the relation – who imitates who? - as well as the adjustment to the machine produced questions  
318 and doubts.

319 C : “*Do I have to imitate the robot or is the robot imitating me?*”, “*Was I expecting to take copy of every tiny*  
320 *movement Poppy made? Or was I expected to copy the general movement? That Poppy made?*”, “*It’s just that,*  
321 *just that you have to imitate a limited joint movement with a much more flexible joint movement.*”

#### 322 4.3.7 *The test reveals a need for guidance and reassurance.*

323 Participants suggested that the HRI should be mediated. *C did not hear well: “that’s another instruction that I*  
324 *missed. Or wasn’t made clear.” B: “Oh well, if I had been put there on my own, I may not have felt that proud,*  
325 *no, no; having people around makes you feel all right.”. D: “I was trying to meet somebody’s eyes, I was trying*  
326 *to know if I was ok, if somebody would raise the thumb up to mean “yes, great”, I was not looking for*  
327 *compliments but some encouragement to pursue”.*

328 As a result of the *couplage* (Theureau 2004; 2006) in the enaction process, these singular experiences revealed  
329 the Human-Robot-Interaction complexity and raised unexpected reactions regarding to the aim of exercise.

330

## 331 **5 Discussion**

332 Because exercise is medicine, and robotics used in health care offer resources for sustaining physical activity  
333 (e.g., Fasola et Mataric 2013), this exploratory study investigated participants’ experiences in a rehabilitation  
334 exercise session coached by a robot. It focused on the types of concerns elicited during their experience. As a  
335 result, the study cases of four seniors showed that a) eight typical concerns impacted their interactions with the  
336 robot, b) the concerns evolved within the progression of the experience, as in a learning process, c) each  
337 participant had a singular experience regarding robot acceptance. These results furnish insights about the  
338 potentialities and the limits of robots used to coach physical exercise to the elderly. The results are hereafter  
339 discussed according to three points that could address new insight for acceptance: robots sustain motivation;  
340 learning the task and the robot’s use; and contributions for designers.

### 341 **5.1 Motivation: Robots challenge us**

342 Previous research demonstrated that robots have the potential to enhance motivation and physical activity (Obo  
343 et al. 2015), and that perceived enjoyment (Heerik et al. 2008) is a source of acceptance for robot companion.  
344 Our results showed how a robot coaching experience could motivate senior people. In this study, A and C were  
345 motivated to perform the task, while B was challenged by a personal cognitive difficulty and D by a physical  
346 deficiency. Complementary, motivation came from the test conditions: the sharing of the experience, the clothes  
347 change, with equipment and sensors (to wear for the motion capture test taking place at the same time) that made  
348 them look a little robotic themselves. By analysing the recovery-from-stroke-situations using assisting robots,  
349 Cherry and al. (2016) demonstrated that patients preferred the robot to a human assisting them with the  
350 exercises, despite technical and ergonomic difficulties. Here, D trying hard to do as good as possible worried the  
351 physiotherapist who thought D would harm oneself by reaching too wide an amplitude according to D’s  
352 capacity. D was aware and paid attention to the difficulty but not as much to the stress put on her/his body.

353 A robot is far from being a neutral coach for physical activity. The use of robots as technological artefacts to  
354 provide physical activity needs more investigation in order to understand how it could sustain motivation for  
355 exercise, and what kind of motivation sustain acceptance.

### 356 **5.2 Learning the task and the robot’s use**

357 A few studies suggest that robots are effective for physiotherapy (Fazekas et al. 2006), or that old people provide  
358 better assessment of the physical robot coach compared to virtual systems (Fasola et Matarić 2013). In this study,  
359 the effectiveness of the movement learning process was not assessed. Nevertheless, many concerns aimed at  
360 learning, and performing the movements the robot demonstrated. Regarding the evolution of the main concern  
361 (39 units in T1, 71 units in T2, down to 6 units in T5), an hypothesis can be made that the participants learnt the  
362 movements as well as they learnt to deal with the robot, so that they elicited less typical concerns about efforts,  
363 emotions with on-going the course of action. It could be hypothesized from the dynamic of concerns that HRI  
364 provides a learning situation with transform the actor's activity.

365 One major difficulty the participants concerns revealed may be interpreted as a consequence of  
366 anthropomorphism. When trying to understand or interact with an unfamiliar non-human agent, people use their  
367 knowledge of themselves as a basis for understanding these entities (Broadbent 2017). They try to recognize  
368 human attitude or movement behind the robot. B: *“There you had to swirl its arms so the robot could perform  
369 that movement. It has motors, not articulations, he is not as flexible as us”*. In this study, C6 could be considered  
370 as a consequence of this anthropomorphic tendency. D: *“The robot is quite closed to the movement to  
371 demonstrate”*. Because old people want the robot to manifest the same level of intelligence as a human coach  
372 (Bedaf and al. 2016) in this study they provided advices for next design process. Broadbent (2017) showed that  
373 the more social agent a robot is planned to be, the more it has to perceive and understand human behaviour on  
374 top of acting in a human like way to favour acceptance. The appearance of the robot (shape, face, eye contact,  
375 tune of voice) will depend on the task, and the expectation the person has of a human performing that task. Thus,  
376 based on our results, anthropomorphism could indeed be a design principle to support acceptance in HRI.

### 377 **5.3 Contribution to assistive robot design**

378 Qualitative studies provide insights on complex phenomenon such as human-robot interaction during learning  
379 and performing a movement sequence. Such research in ergonomics also aims at providing feedback for  
380 designers and developers (Theureau 2006). Because gaps between needs and solutions offered by the robot have  
381 been identified as the most important barriers for robot acceptance (Pino et al. 2015), our results should furnish  
382 precious information. Especially, the main typical concerns (C3, C5, C7, C8) provide information, which would  
383 be useful for robot designing and robot-coaching situation setting and using. First, one way to favour the use of  
384 such a robot would be to eliminate all sources of ambiguity, regarding identity, tasks, expectations, aims, issues  
385 and coherence of tasks... The less ambiguity, the less questions that may detract from the purpose of the exercise.  
386 To evaluate the potential ambiguity of such an interaction, a guide or question form would need to be conceived  
387 and tested. A second way of favouring acceptance would be to limit the stress due to the situation by reducing or  
388 eliminating any kind of competition or challenge between the human user and the robot. A solution may be to  
389 reinforce the authority of the user over the robot that should be able to choose the task difficulty or the exercise  
390 levels. The suppression of ambiguities would also contribute to lower the stress level. A third way would be to  
391 prepare the users to share feelings, emotions and reactions, even unexpected ones. The interest of such  
392 perspective to enhance robot acceptance would require further inquiries.

393

## 394 **6 Conclusion**

395 In this study, some results have confirmed that acceptance is linked to personal factors such as motivation and  
396 self-esteem. Results also provided insight about how to develop seniors' acceptance for assistive robots.  
397 Nevertheless, a common charge against case study research is that its findings are not generalizable. Advocates  
398 of case study respond to this by arguing that case study gives access to the inner lives of people, to the emergent  
399 properties of social interaction, and/or to the underlying mechanisms which generate human behaviours (Gomm  
400 et al. 2000). Though one case produces a small piece of evidence, the repetition of observations across a series of  
401 cases can build a database of evidences, and shape theory in an inductive way (Meganck et al. 2017).  
402 Furthermore, new researches with a larger sample are needed to verify how robots' potentialities and behaviours  
403 impact users' learning and performing.

404 Future study could complete the first-person point of view with a third-person point of view. According to Poizat  
405 and al. (2012) first-person data is suitable for retracing the dynamics of individuals' lived experience, whereas  
406 third-person data could help the researcher to highlight behaviours or constraints that could not spontaneously be  
407 described by actors. For an example, the biomechanical measures could help us to compare the gap between the  
408 movement the robot demonstrated and the movement the patient did (N'Guyen et al. 2018). Finally, by  
409 combining qualitative and quantitative analysis, future research could provide significant issues on the  
410 relationships between robots' artefacts and users' experiences.

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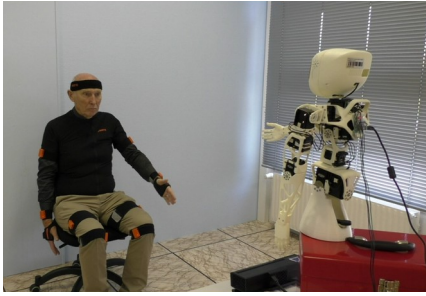




498 **Annexes**

499 **Photo files**

500 Photo I. C attends the test.



502 Photo II. C attends the self-confrontation interview.

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510 **Table files**

511 Table I. The four columns board

512

Time	Verbatim of the activity	Verbatim of the self-confrontation	Ethnographic notes and photogram
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03:25	<p>D : « je vais vous montrer l'exercice 2 »</p> <p>Poppy montre exo 2.</p> <p>S4 monte le bras D et plie son coude</p>	<p><b>18:23</b> Par contre la rotation je vous dis euh, surtout regardez l'autre là-bas (il montre robot)<b>18:35</b> Ouais c'est celui là que j'avais du mal. Parce que lui montait son avant-bras comme ça (il mime) et moi je pouvais, je pouvais pas (il plie son coude D, se ravise, change de bras) j'étais comme ça là (il plie son coude G).</p>	<p>A : (mouvement de tête, ne semble pas satisfait de son mouvement)</p> 
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Concern category number	Category name (units number)	Meaningful units
C1	to perform the task well (27)	<i>"I was told I was to copy the movement of the machine. So copy the movements of the machine means copy the movements of the machine !...machine does it you do it" , "Indeed you just had to copy what it did"</i>
C2	to deal with personal emotions (17)	<i>Is it a matter of personal pride that you can manage this kind of thing ? I am an able bodied person I am not, you know, hm, .... Physically pretty competent and I would aim not to make a mistake in this kind of thing", "I was mainly afraid I would not succeed", "if you miss, you are quite annoyed and I don't like it"</i>
C3	to self-evaluate (33)	<i>"So I'm not giving myself more than 6 out of ten for this" , "Well, I have uplifted my arms too high, see, I haven't observed properly"</i>
C4	to keep producing an effort (13)	<i>"I concentrated very hard on seeing how, how the robot moves.", "One minute was enough for then you were quite happy to relax again", "I'm fairly well involved in the task"</i>
C5	to catch up with the speed, the rhythm (33)	<i>"The speedier the movement is, the riskier it is to make a mistake and not copy exactly", " it's to be in time...that was the exercise", "the rhythm was not too fast", " sometimes I would slow down then to catch up the pace I had to speed up (sigh)"</i>
C6	to notice a human-robot difference (29)	<i>"there for instance I've bended the elbow whereas there's no bend in the elbow at all", "Because the robot is not a human skeleton, right, does the human skeleton imitate the robotic skeleton or is the robotic skeleton imitating the human skeleton ?", " It has motors, not joints, not as souple as us"</i>
C7	to identify a difficulty (30)	<i>"No I can't bend my elbow the way it does it, no I can't. Can anyone do by the way ? ", "In that movement you see there are different rotations which go on in way which doesn't go on in you arm. Or don't go in mine anyway."</i>
C8	to try not to be surprised (21)	<i>"one is on the alert. What's gonna happen next ?", "When one does it for the first time, on might be surprised", "There may be a bit of confusion, there, see ? the movement is quite sudden"</i>