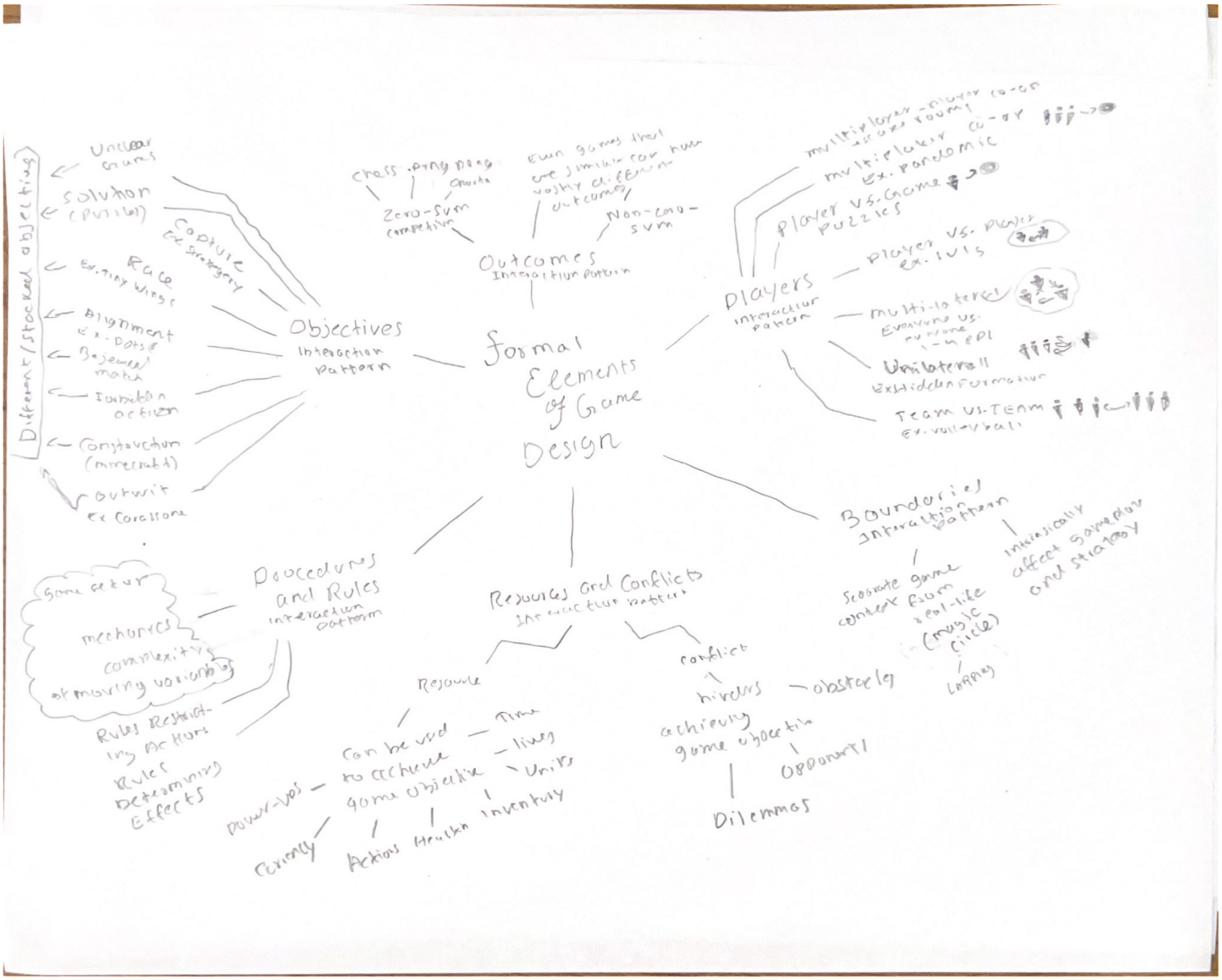
Formal Elements of Game Design
Objectives
Interaction Pattern
Different/stacked objectives
Unclear Games
Solution (Puzzles)
Capture
Ex. Strategy
Race
Ex. Tiny Wings
Alignment
Ex. Dots
Bejeweled match
Forbidden action
Construction (minecraft)
Outwit
Ex. Carassone
Outcomes
Interaction Pattern
Chess
Ping Pong
Zero-Sum competition
Even games that are similar can have vastly different outcomes
Non-zero-sum
Players
Interaction Pattern
multiplayer-player co-op
multiplayer co-op
Ex. Pandemic
Player vs. Game
Puzzles
Player vs. Player
Ex. 1v1s
multi-lateral
Everyone vs. everyone
1-4 PPL
Unilateral
Ex. Hidden Formation
Team vs. Team
Ex. volleyball
Boundaries
Interaction Pattern
Separate game context from real-life (magic circle)
Lapping
Intrinsically affect gameplay and strategy
Procedures and Rules
Interaction Pattern
Game setup
mechanics
complexity of moving variables
Rules Restricting Actions
Rules Determining Effects
Resources and Conflicts
Interaction Pattern
Resource
Can be used to achieve game objective
Time
lives
Units
Inventory
Health
Actions
Currency
Power-ups
conflict
hinders
obstacles
achieving game objective
Opponents
Dilemmas