

PERSONAL REFLECTION

REFLECT ON ACTION

In my projects, I like to involve the user. Last semester, I have taken the elective of Designing for User Experience. I learned that my approach is closely related to the theories about user experience: focusing on the characteristics of one or few specific people from a specific target group.

This elective is about social innovation. Though there is an overlap between my approach and social innovation, I noticed that designing for social innovation focusses on the totality of a target group; the community.

My greatest learning point of this elective was becoming familiar with the DRIVING Framework for Transformative Practices. I liked that this framework offers a foundation for a project. We could use this framework as guidelines to make deliberate choices for what steps to take next. As a result, it forced us to reflect on each step we made. This was positive as we could clearly explain and improve our concept.

I found it interesting that the approach of this elective was aimed at developing a great concept instead of rushing a concept in order to make an appropriate prototype early on in the process. In my opinion, this is in contrast

with projects and electives in which I see that students do a lot of iterations to improve the prototype instead of the concept.

Due to the fact that we worked in multidisciplinary teams, it was nice that part of the team could already be considered part of the target group. Though we used other means to gather information on the target group, we could constantly check our design decisions with these team members. Moreover, thanks to the different backgrounds in the team, we were able to complement each other within the process. Though this diversity had many benefits, a small issue was that only one other team member was familiar with the way we work at our faculty; what is expected. This caused some misunderstandings within the team. Therefore, I took responsibility to make sure the deliverables were meeting the requirements.

Next to the insights about designing for the user, I learned how to communicate the concept with a prototype as a probe. The focus was on creating an aesthetically strong prototype, instead of creating an actually working prototype. Therefore, we were able to create an experience at the exhibition that allowed us to receive insights about the concept instead

on the specific characteristics of the prototype. This knowledge allows me to make deliberate decisions with regard to what I want feedback on during a (Midterm) Demo Day. If I want to receive feedback on the concept, I will develop a story instead of a functional prototype.

In conclusion, this elective gave me insights in both how design for a community, but also how to develop and convey a concept. Both will help me during the development of my Final Master Project, as it is important to communicate my concept and design decisions with my client, and to design for the community of children with autism in the Netherlands.

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