PUR – User Studies Facilitation

5th lecture

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Big Picture

Lecture

2 3 4 5 6 7

User research

Methods of data collection I
Methods of data collection II
User Studies Facilitation
Personas
Current Trends
Selected topics - mostly cognitive

Practice

User Research Project
Usability Testing

Observer room
(UI developers, programmers, test organizers)

Participant room
(test participant, moderator)

Credits: Zdeněk Míkovec
Qualitative vs. Quantitative Approach

**Qualitative**
6 – 8 participants
Less time consuming, reveals 90% of problems
Common in commercial environment

**Quantitative**
20+ participants
Statistical evaluation - metrics
Government contracts, universities, benchmarking
How Many Participants to Test?

Credit: useit.com
What Do We Need for Testing?

Participants
Observers
Product
Lab (recording equipment) – various levels of elaboration
Thorough preparation
Patience
Tasks

Imitate real usage of product
Based on real motivation (task focused)
Expressed in words of user
Do not describe in-between steps
Moderating Usability studies

Role, responsibilities and means of moderator

Session phases

Interview principles

Problematic participants

Typical mistakes
Moderator’s Role

Follow the research goals

Mediating contact between participants and stakeholders

  Take care of participants

  Take care of stakeholders

Focusing participants on the task

Moving study towards the identified goals
Participants’ Initial Setting

Do not know what to expect

Do not know what is expected from them

Nervous

Want not to feel stupid
Dealing with Participants’ Initial Setting

Do not know what to expect
Provide clear description of test situation

Do not know what is expected from him
Explain your expectations

Nervous
Be supportive and empathic, create warm atmosphere

Want not to feel stupid
Stay non-judgemental
Explain that the user is always right
Role of Stress

Performance (physical & mental)

High
Medium
Low

Low (underload)  Medium  High (overload)

Laid back  Best (optimum) performance  Anxious

Inactive

Credits: eoslifework.co.uk
Session Phases

Ice breaking (2 - 5 minutes)

Briefing, focusing, paper work (3 - 8 minutes)

Pre-test interview (2 - 5 minutes)

Data collection (30 - 60 minutes)

Post-test interview (5 - 15 minutes)

Debriefing (2 - 5 minutes)
Before-Session Preparation

• Have a solid knowledge of session guide and study goals

• Learn about the participant from screener data before the session

• Brief the stakeholders about participants’ qualities

• Make sure everything is ready - create a checklist (incentives, NDA, tech setup, drink, recording...)

• Keep enough time between session, so you can talk to stakeholders & catch breath & get prepared for next session
1. Ice Breaking

Help the participant to overcome initial stress and anxiety

First moments usually shape the whole session

Establish rapport

“Diagnostics” phase

Credit: telegraph.co.uk
2. Briefing

User is always right. Design sometimes fails.

We do not test the participant, but the product.

Think aloud

Inform about succession of the tasks (no need to accomplish them all)

Recording

Contract - NDA, personal data privacy, incentive
3. Pre-test Interview

Provides data necessary for real-time interpretation of the behavior during the test

Eventually verify if the participant meets the most important screening criteria

Should not reveal too much about the test itself, when focusing on discoverability and concept understanding
4. Data Collection

Remind to think aloud in the beginning

Primarily focus on spontaneous behavior and think aloud

Any intervention / question draws attention and changes the workflow

Interpret the data to other observers
5. Post-test Interview

Overall evaluation / often quantitative

People often fabulate when not sure why/how they did something minutes ago

Sometimes extended to repeated walkthrough

Time to eventually present alternative design
6. Debriefing

Spend some time with the participant after the session

Reveal the purpose of the study

Make sure that participants leave the lab in the same condition (if not better) than they were before the study

Let the participant express their feelings
Moderator - Participant Relationship

You are implicitly the authority / Wide range of reactions from rage to submission

You pay / Employee syndrom

You touch participants’ self-esteem / Reactions ranging from anxiety to enormous motivation
Behavior Over Verbal Reports

What people say, what people do, and they say they do are entirely different things – Margaret Mead
Babble Ratio (Mollich)

Babble ratio = (time when moderator is talking + time participant is offering opinions) / total time for usability test session

Usually: up to .30
Ideal: 0.05 – 0.1
Culture-specific
Moderation Principles

Open ended questions

Stay neutral / non-judgemental

No leading questions

No unnecessary interventions (ecological validity)
Means of Interaction With the Participant

- Verbal (IQ) 20%
- Nonverbal (EQ) 80%

Credit: uwplatt.edu
Nonverbal Communication

Dress (adequate to your target audience)

Proxemics, chronemics, haptics

Mimics, eye contact, postures, gestures, kinesics

Paralanguage – prosody (unique voice print)
Problematic Participants

Credit: bebbo.com
Dominant Participant

You are the one who is in control!

Remind the context of test situation

Usually there is some anxiety behind (yours?)

It is OK to terminate the session prematurely if you do not feel safe
Expert Participant

Designs, extrapolates to others

Stress the importance of their own experience, “others” are in your sample as well

Professionals should be screened out

Credit: simpsons.com
Insecure Participant

Insecurity manifested through:

- silence or speaking too much
- hiding their motives, camouflage
- inpunitive behavior and comments
- extrapunitive behavior and comments

Help drain the frustration towards the study goals, remind the goal of test, user is always right,...

Avoid confrontation

Credit: fistfightatthehouse.wordpress.com
Inadequate Participant

Mistakes in recruitment are quite frequent

Is there anything I could learn?

It is OK to terminate the session prematurely

Credit: defencetech.com
Typical Mistakes

Provided recommendations could be misleading when applied out of the given context.
Too Much Caring Moderator

Your goal is to achieve the study goals at first place

Little discomfort of the participant is not fatal

Credit: nannystatelorationfront.net
Too Active Moderator

Your role is to observe how the situation develops

Speaking is silver, silence is gold

Will you help the rest of your 100k target users as well?
Keep in mind that every method has its own limits.

You will not learn much beyond your observation.

Avoid any question that starts with ‘if’.
Keep in Mind

You are responsible for the outcome of the study. The purpose of the study stays in improving UX.

You provide initial experience of your company, UX approach and research techniques to the participant and stakeholders.

Stakeholders are not skilled in interpreting their observations. Their understanding is essential for success of the study. Take care of them.

You must feel comfortable! Arrange the environment to feel so. It is your right and responsibility at the same time.
Wanna Learn More?

Mike Kuniavsky: Observing The User Experience
Lazar et al.: Research Methods in Human-Computer Interaction

https://www.nngroup.com/articles/usability-test-checklist/
https://www.userfocus.co.uk/articles/moderationcomic.html
https://uxdesign.cc/ux-debriefing-methods-c9f971094c58
https://www.userfocus.co.uk/articles/creditcrunch.html
Thank for your attention
See you after the break

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