

## Rutger Hooffman (1673149) - Reflection Constructive design Research

This is my reflection on the course DCM100, being part of group 8, with the topic being 'Memes'. In this reflection, I would like to reflect on the insights this course has given me and how this relates to my personal learning goals; to experience writing an academic paper and to learn more about the 'field method'. In the past months, I have learned about the methodological direction in the community of 'the field', how to extend this to our daily lives on a deeper level. I have generated knowledge through conceptual thinking and design by constructing a complete new evaluation method. I learned to apply theories to the research, to gather relevant data and to analyse this data and to present these insights in a clear manner; all by means of writing a team article and research poster. On top of that, I gained awareness of the underlying principles of field research and plan/approach the corresponding challenges. In this reflection, I will elaborate on these events and our research process.

One thing that got the group and me very excited is the fact that we did research on a self-invented evaluation method, in other words, our prototype was the method itself, instead of using exciting methods to validate the prototype. It kind of felt the other way around. At one point it felt like the group and I kind of drifted away from the essence of the project. This showed that repeatedly scoping the project is key to making it successful. Considering that, the main learning point here is that everyone always has their own interpretation and that you have to keep re-scoping the process, and refining the research question. One of the main challenges here was the overall small time span and the level at ambitiousness. In the beginning of the project, I had not a clear impression of when the prototype was 'good' enough and 'ready' for real-world interaction. This required me to be flexible and comfortable in the process. I learned to make rapid and iterative decisions as a response to the constraints and opportunities we encountered, like the choice to switch between settings. For example, I have suggested to the group if we could take the final presentation as a part of the research.

I personally was most interested in identifying the setting, because it really fits my vision of designing new dimensions in public experiences. I was responsible for the identification of the "waiting environment". In that sense, I think this course really complements my identity & vision. It not only taught me to design an installation/prototype, it also taught me to actually understand the data and 'create' insights for future studies. On top of that, because we framed the setting pretty well, it kind of naturally created a lot of new opportunities and research possibilities within the Field methodology.

Talking about the prototype, I am very proud of what we achieved as a group. The prototype is designed in a way that is widely applicable and easily is picked up by follow-up studies. A comprehensive and working meme-community platform that can be used to create, like, and view memes. (I was working on the front-end interaction of the prototype). On the other hand, a fundamental limitation of the research was the motivational threshold the participant had to cross. It was just too big. The combination of factors like scanning a QR-Code, the location, and the lack of time were just not matching, which automatically resulted in disappointing results. It felt more like a pilot research. In future research, I would try to prevent this by reducing the number of factors and clarifying the possible scenarios. My main focus during this course was to learn to reflect on the quality of this data and to find the relevance behind the data. Because we had very little data and worked with both qualitative data and quantitative data it was of importance to understand the data and what areas should be highlighted or need any follow-up research. On the other hand, I do like to mention that the qualitative data did give a lot of interesting insights.

The course has guided me to explore and experience a new perspective of connecting constructive design research in general to real-life settings and gave me insight about approaching such projects. I would like to practice a similar type of research in the future and wonder how it would be if there were less time restriction. Sometimes it's easier to have less time, who knows. I definitely think it fits my Identity & vision very well, and I am looking forward to applying this to my upcoming M1.2 project. All in all, a very valuable and fun course.