

Usability vs UX

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Reflection

¿How are HCI, Usability and UX related? To answer this question I'm going to define each concept first to see what they have in common, if there is something in common at all. According to the Interaction Design Foundation "HCI is a multidisciplinary field of study focusing on the design of computer technology and, in particular, the interaction between humans (the users) and computers" [1]. Don Norman, the inventor of the term "user experience", explains UX this way: "User experience encompasses all aspects of the end-user's interaction with the company, its services and its products" [2]. The Interaction Design Foundation, say, "Usability is a measure of how well a specific user in a specific context can use a product/design to achieve a defined goal effectively, efficiently and satisfactorily" [3]. UX and Usability seem like small subset of HCI, after all HCI studies the interaction between computer and humans, the experience is a part this interaction. Usability is just a part of the experience, the part that asks: ¿How well can a user use X product? I think that HCI, usability and UX are not the same, altho people tend to treat the concepts as the same thing, HCI is a big topic and UX is just a part of it, just like usability is a fraction of UX.

The boundary between usability and UX may seem blurry at times so I will provide one difference to make it clear. In my project we are working with minecraft as a tool to include kids in urban planning, if the kids desire to participate in the project, that does not mean that the kids can use well minecraft to achieve the goal, although the desire is part of the experience it has nothing to do with its usability. A UX feature that could be included is a reward system. When they finish building in minecraft the kids could be rewarded with a medal. This is clearly a UX feature, it doesn't make the project work better, but improves the experience.

REFERENCES

- [1] Interaction Design Foundation - IxDF. 2016. What is Human-Computer Interaction (HCI)? Retrieved March 26, 2024 from <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/human-computer-interaction>
- [2] Interaction Design Foundation - IxDF. 2016. What is User Experience (UX) Design? Retrieved March 26, 2024 from <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/ux-design>
- [3] Interaction Design Foundation - IxDF. (2016, June 1). What is Usability?. Interaction Design Foundation - IxDF. <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/usability>