Human-Machine Interaction

2017/2018

Study Helper

Stage 5: Heuristic Evaluation

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Introduction

For the fifth phase of our project, we performed a heuristic evaluation of "Can I Cook It?", an Android prototype application by David Mendes, Ricardo Esteves and Tomás Pessanha. Following proper evaluation guidelines, we criticized constructively and pointed out what we considered to be good and bad aspects in terms of usability or general UX.

We received the project for evaluation on the 25th of November and delivered this report to our colleagues on the 28th of November.

Detected Problems

We'll start out by presenting our table of detected problems during the evaluation period. To keep the table structure within the limited width of the page, we used, for both usability heuristics and severity levels, the number mapping that's presented on the slides. We've also mapped our screenshots – presented below the table - to numbers.

Usability Heuristics by J. Nielsen

1. Match the real world.
2. Consistency & Standards
3. Help & Documentation
4. User Control & Freedom
5. Visibility of System Status
6. Flexibility & Efficiency of Use
7. Error Prevention
8. Recognition, Not Recall
9. Error Reporting, Diagnosis and Recovery
10. Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

Severity Levels

1. Cosmetic: correction not mandatory
2. Minor: correct, low priority
3. Major: correct, high priority
4. Catastrophic: correction is essential

| Nº	Problem	Heuristic	Description	Severity	Solution	Screenshot
1	Line thickness	10	The selection lines feel a bit too wide and thick in comparison to the surrounding elements.	1	Reduce the thickness in about 40-50% and change to a lighter, easier-on-the-eyes colour.	1
2	Animation duration	5	The *add/check* and *star/favourite* animations take a bit too long, and so the feedback isn't as fast as it should be.	1	To grant faster feedback and a more responsive feel, reduce the animation time considerably.	-
3	Misleading hint text	3	Even though we are searching for ingredient(s), the hint text displays "search for a recipe".	2	Simply change the hint text so something more appropriate, like "search for ingredient".	3
4	Label resembles an editable text field	2	Being surrounded by a box gives the idea that the list items are editable text fields (they aren't).	2	Find a simple and cohesive label/list item style and apply it throughout the application.	4
5	Feedback on emptiness	5	All over the application, *empty* UI elements (e.g. lists) don't give any information that they are empty. The simply stay blank.	3	Show appropriate *"Nothing to show!"*-like information on empty UI elements.	5
6	Inconsistent button styles	2	Buttons with similar purpose are often found with different styles. Some have just an icon, others just text and others are mixed.	2	Use different button styles for different types of actions, consistent across activities.	6

| Nº	Problem	Heuristic	Description	Severity	Solution	Screenshot
7	Inconsistent element spacing and margins	2	The spacing between UI elements feel *arbitrary* at times (for both related and unrelated elements)	2	Review what elements compose the UI and establish some margin/padding guidelines.	7
8	Tiny modal space	2	The edit modal is tiny, to the point where it makes it surprisingly difficult to touch its individual UI elements.	2	Make the modal window bigger and give the elements proper spacing.	8
9	Confusing Routing	4	The application's routing (specifically going back through activities) feels broken and deeply affects the experience.	4	This was the most critical error we found, and thus we think it should be addressed as soon as possible.	-

Screenshots
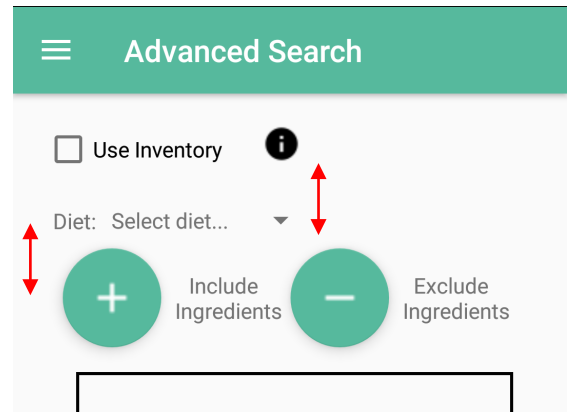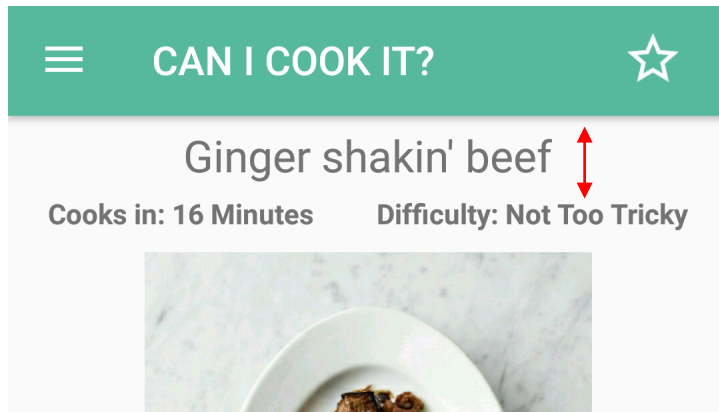
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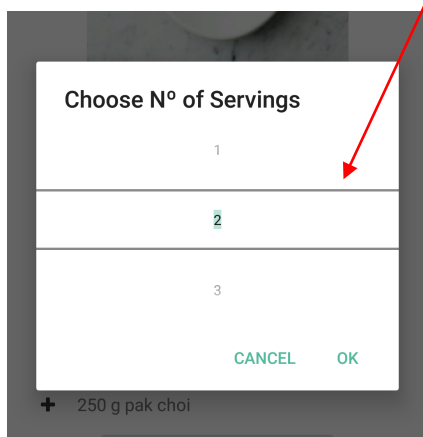
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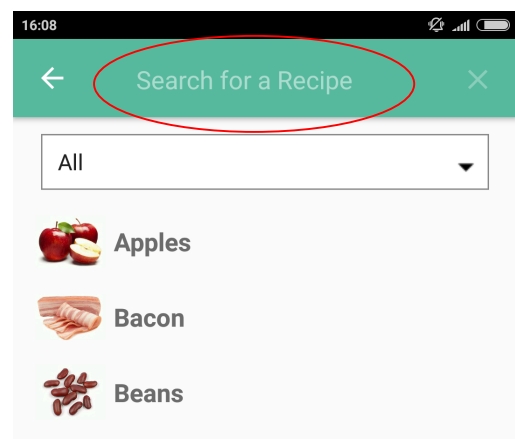
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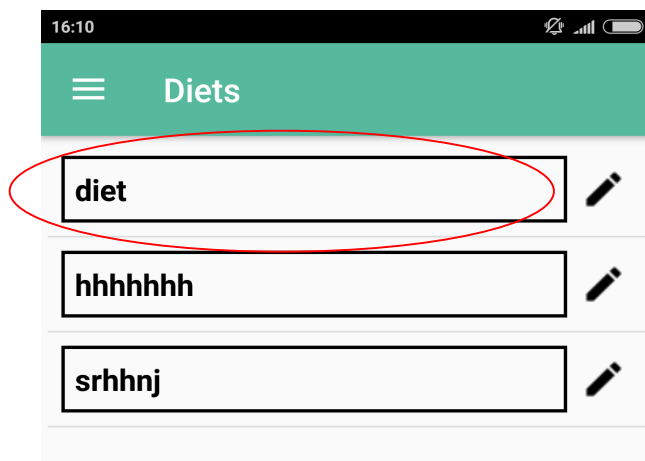
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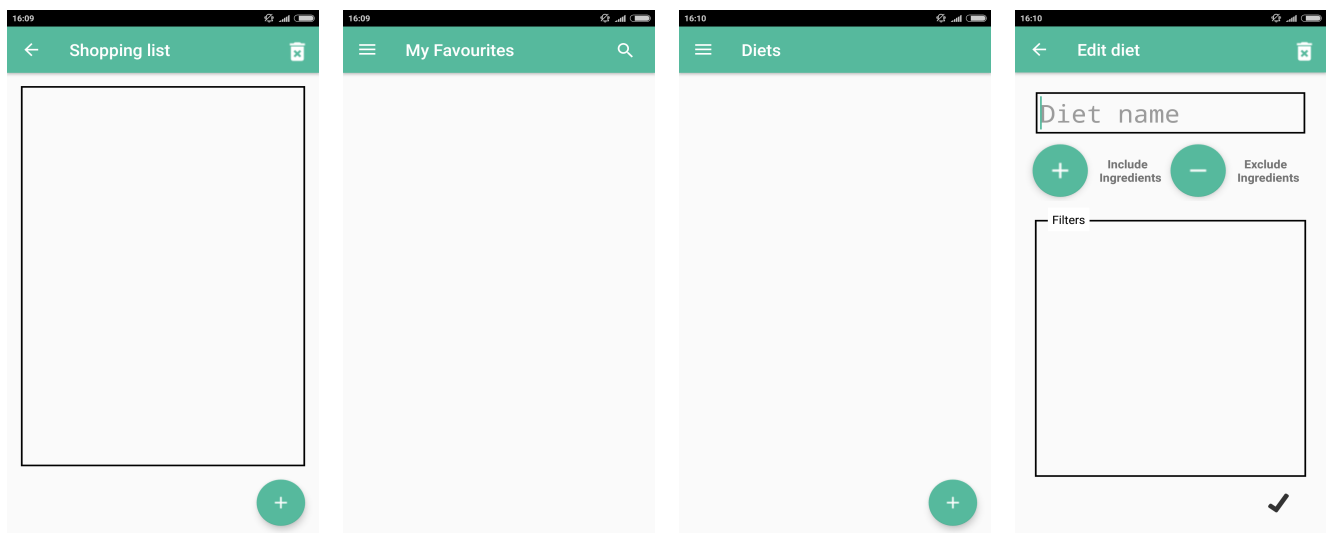
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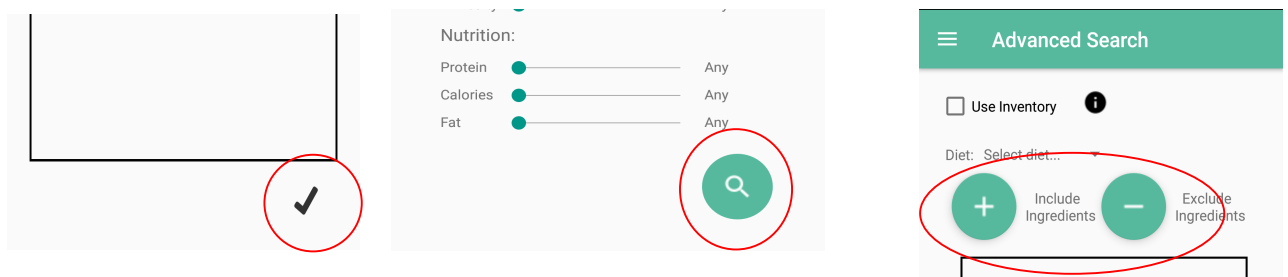
7.

8.

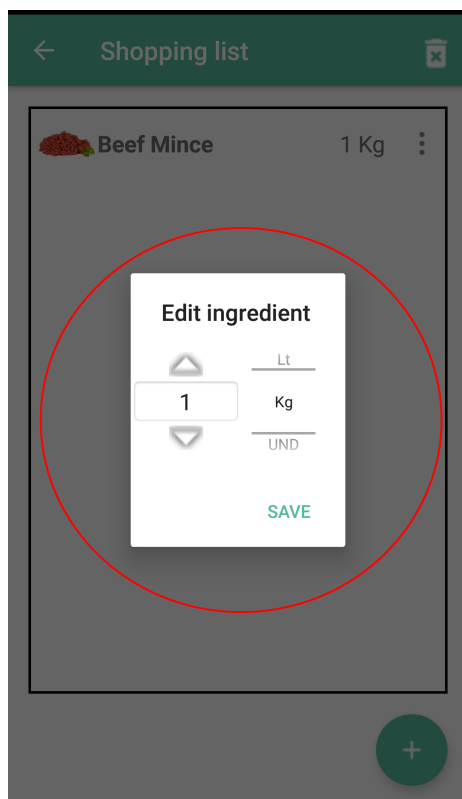**Honourable Mentions**

We pointed out errors in the above table. Now, we'd like to talk about the things that, in our view, they did *particularly* well.

To start off, the chosen colour palette was solid. There's little room to go wrong with a {*Black, White, Tones of Grey, Single Accent Colour*} scheme, and so we think they took a nice approach there.

The use of cards to display a recipe's preparation steps was also a nice touch, as it split big chunks of text into more manageable ones, making the reading much more pleasant.

They also made some investment on error prevention with the usage of alert/confirmation dialog boxes in relevant places. These weren't obstructive and worked really well.