

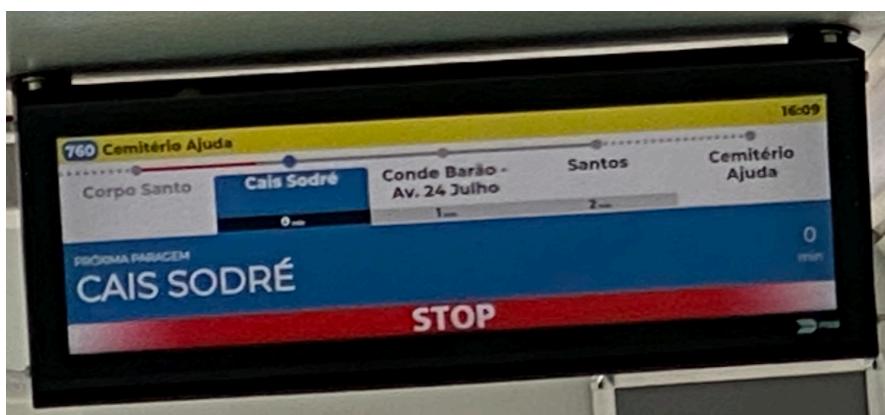
Interação Pessoa-Máquina 2024/2025

Individual Assignment

Good and bad design(s)



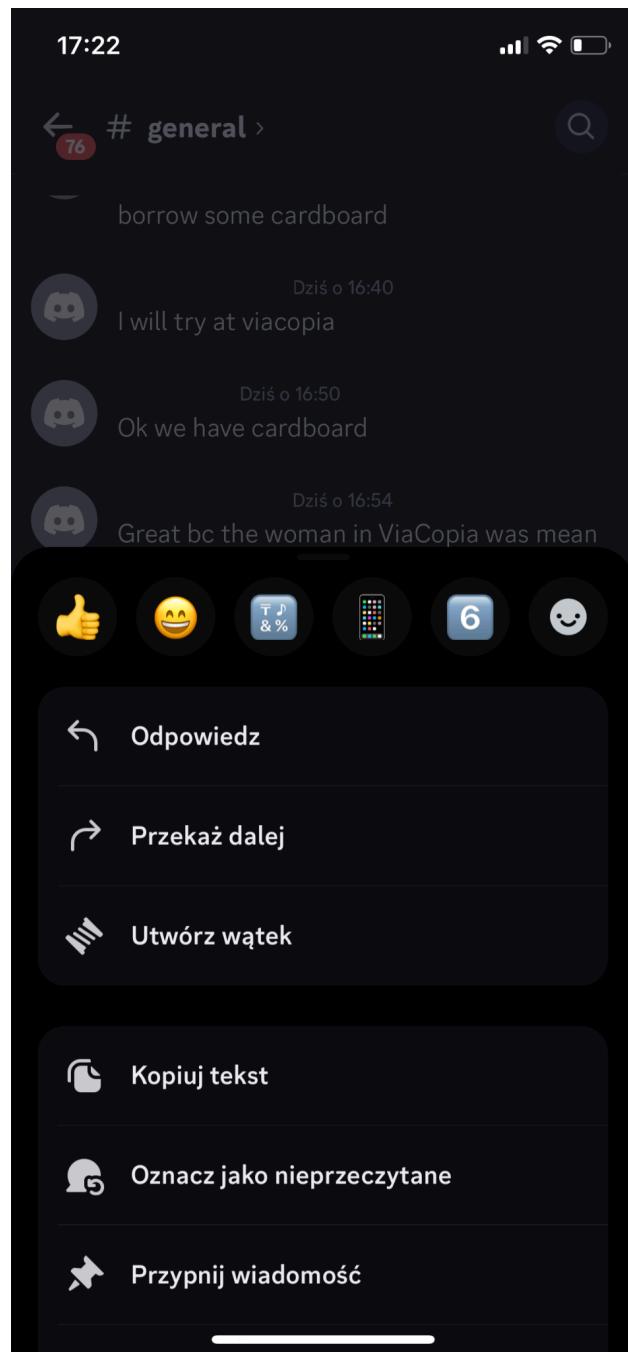
When I heard the topic of the assignment, I immediately thought about my daily experience with buses, particularly the informational screens onboard. The large screen in the center of the bus is intended to serve an informative purpose. However, I find that the layout of this content is poorly designed. The most crucial information for passengers - the name of the next stop - appears as a small line at the bottom of the screen, while the majority of the space is taken up by advertisements content. This limited space for the name of next stop results in the text having to scroll to display the full name, which is inconvenient and difficult to read. This contrasts with screens on other bus models, which offer a better design that prioritizes useful information. Below is an example of a more effective screen design:



This screen provides all the information I'd want: the next stop, the estimated time of arrival, and even the bus line number (just in case I would forget which bus I am driving in ;)). The previous interface was likely designed to prioritize ad revenue, but a fair compromise would be to display upcoming stops vertically along the right side, with the ad section on the left. I really think that this kind of split-screen design where there would be allocated a fixed, larger area for the next stop information would enhance readability. This way, passengers would naturally look to the side for relevant travel information while still catching glimpses of the advertisement, this would improve screen usability and utilize screen space in a better way.



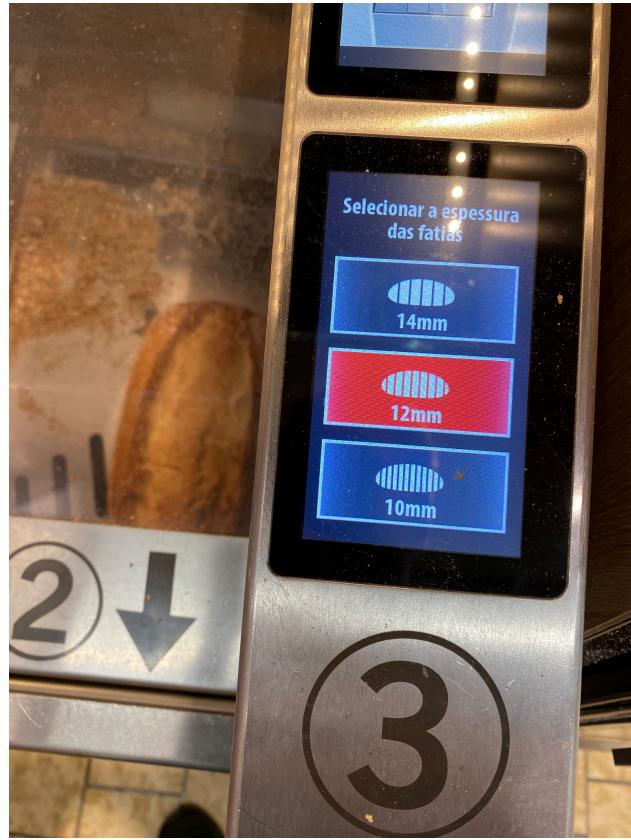
Secondly, I want to highlight an interface design that I really appreciate: the doors in the FCT library. While effective doors ideally shouldn't require any instructions, these have helpful stickers that enhance user experience. I particularly like the graphical illustrations because they effectively convey the action needed - whether to push or pull. They refer to life experiences and that is something that is independent of the language. Additionally, the doors feature handle on the correct side - the one for pulling. However, one aspect that I believe the designers overlooked is in which direction the door opens. After washing your hands in the restroom, you are forced to touch the handle in order to exit, which is less hygienic. Ideally, the door should be designed to allow for a hands-free exit.



Next I would like to discuss an example from the messaging application Discord, focusing specifically on its mobile interface. It can be quite challenging to figure out how to access a wider selection of emojis in order to react to a message. That is because the app uses another emoji as the button to open the menu. I find this design choice unintuitive; it took me quite some time to discover how to access the palette of emojis. It's unclear what led to this decision, but it seems to be an aesthetic choice rather than user functionality. To improve usability, they should consider replacing the current emoji with a more recognizable symbol, such as a plus sign or an arrow, to clearly indicate that pressing it will expand the emoji options. Additionally, making this button stand out more would draw users' attention and enhance the overall user experience.



Another interface that caught my attention was one on the drying machine. I had no issues while drying clothes on the middle setting, but when I wanted to dry my clothes quickly on the highest setting I encountered a problem. Although the interface is quite simple, featuring only a few buttons for selecting temperature, pausing, and an emergency stop, it can be misleading. The graphics used on both the buttons and the display are visually appealing and helpful, but the numerical indications are not intuitive. As the number increases, the temperature actually decreases! This inversely proportional relation is counterintuitive. I accidentally selected the highest number which I thought would be the hottest setting but this was not the case. I suppose that designers probably wanted a neat arrangement in the manual on the right or perhaps the highest temperature is the most commonly used, but this design choice can be quite misleading for users. They should consider reversing the order of the buttons, making "3" the highest setting and "1" the lowest.



Lastly, I want to highlight the user interface design of the bread cutting machine at Lidl, which I find particularly effective. The steps needed to use the machine are clearly explained without using any words - only numbers. The digital screen has an easy and simple to use three button layout with the size of bread slices indicated by icons. One aspect that raises some doubt is the decision to use red as the indicator for the selected size. Red typically indicates something wrong which could potentially confuse users. Maybe designers chose red to contrast with the blue color of the buttons or potentially they wanted to catch user attention that this is a final decision that cannot be reversed. However, I would suggest using green as an alternative to indicate that the bread-cutting process is proceeding smoothly.