Chen, Peiyi

DES 157

Don’t Make Peiyi Think

In the first chapter of the book “Don’t Make Me Think,” Steve Krug prioritizes the one rule of usability: “Don’t make me think!” Krug thinks that the user should spend as little time as possible in “thinking” about how to use the website. Where is the specific information located or what does a certain word mean should be “self-evident” and “self-explanatory.” Things that make user think include: jargon, inconsistency in displaying information, messy layout, etc. Krug emphasizes that someone who has little interest in the subject, or an average user should be able to know what the website is about and where to find the information they need. Krug also explains why making things self-explanatory and self-evident is important. Krug points out that there are competitions out there, and if the user is not satisfied they can leave the website and choose other options. People also spend less time on a website than expected, according to Krug. Making a website that is self-explanatory makes the user stay after the first glance.

I agree that website users really don’t spend much time on a website, and making the information self-evident is crucial to usability. They are (or I am) impatient when browsing a website, and I would just give up if I can’t find what I want. In my project, I will try to make the layout as straightforward as possible. I will ask friends for feedback because as the creator I may not notice how the app may make others think. However, I partially agree with how Krug emphasizes that the use of names should be universal. Every product has target audience, and using interesting and unusual wording may attract and connect with the audience better.

Krug says that it is hard to make everything self-evident, but at least we should aim for making everything self-explanatory. For example, layout plays a big role in making the webpage self-evident, but it might be hard to come up with the perfect layout that is straightforward to everyone. However, for the names on the website we can make it as universal, understandable as possible.

Why is not making user think so important? There is competition everywhere. If your website is not self-explanatory that the user cannot find what they want within the limitation of patience, they might just give up – like I am not gonna buy the product anymore, I am gonna check out this other option, they have a good website, so I think their product is better. Even if you are lucky enough that there’s no competitor, the user stuck in the website might not be pleased using it. For example, I use this website called Revel for my psychology class. It has terrible user experience design – some buttons are way too small and take a long time to move my mouse to that exact position. Small things like this just adds anxiety to the already anxious me who is always trying to finish my homework last minute. But I have to use the website because my textbook and graded exercises are on it, not because it is easy to use. However, if I had the choice to choose a textbook, I would not choose it until they improved their UX design. Krug also says that it is no guarantee that there is no competition forever.

* Consider aspects of the chapter that are relevant and interesting to our class
* Include a critical response to the content of your research
* Show a contemporary (and hopefully innovative)  
  example that illustrates th e essence of the chapter
* “Don’t make me think”
* Works or does not work
* “self-evident” “obvious” “self-explanatory”
* Who has no interest should know how to navigate
* “get rid of the question marks” – make user take as little mental detour as possible
* Don’t use jargon
* Distractions might add up, annoys user, slows down user
* “Eliminate question marks”
* Care about the average user
* Why? Users just leave. You are not the only option they can go to. Unless you are the only one but they might just stick to your site just because. Not that they love your site
* Truth: People spend less time looking at the page we design
* Key: self-evident, self-explanatory