Interaction Design – HW 10

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November 1, 2021

Consider the schedule page for this class.

1. Norman suggests testing with a pair of people rather than a single person. Discuss pros and cons of this approach.

   It can be helpful to have a pair testing a device when the product usage is for a single person. It can be useful to have one person operate the prototype, and the other person can guide the actions and interpret the results aloud. The two participants can openly discuss their ideas, questions, and frustrations openly while bouncing ideas off of each other.

   There are also drawbacks of testing with a pair that may affect whether you get accurate feedback. For one, the two people in the pair could influence each others' opinions, creating a form of group-think. There may also be social pressures to not make mistakes or do tasks in a certain way when another person is there, depending on the relationship between the pair. It's also possible for the participants to get distracted easily.

2. *In theory, there's no difference between theory and practice. In practice, there is. (unknown)*

   Give an example of this that you've seen or experienced.

   In my human-centered design class this semester, my group worked on a solution to re-design an aspect of the Pomona Farm in order to turn it into an inclusive de-stress hub. We originally had an idea to host a food fight rage room at the Farm, and in theory we were really excited about the idea. When we actually tested a prototype of an idea at the Farm, we realized that there were lots of issues with accessibility, cleanliness, and appeal. We also tested a few other ideas that we realized were not feasible even though they were exciting ideas in theory. I think this statement resonates a lot with design and software projects because these proposals can sound exciting in theory, but their feasibility might be questioned in practice.

3. *Hofstdater's Law: It always takes longer than you expect, even when you take into account Hofstadter's Law. (Douglas Hofstadter, G¨odel, Escher, Bach)*

   Give an example of this that you've seen or experienced.

   Hofstadter's law describes the tendency for people to underestimate time requirements for a project or system. Unfortunately I see this happen a lot with students in the CS class that I am a teaching assistant for. They tend to underestimate the time required to finish their lab assignments and might be working on it late into the night before the deadline. Though, this is something that most of us can relate to, it would be in their and our best interest to take into account Hofstdater's Law :)