

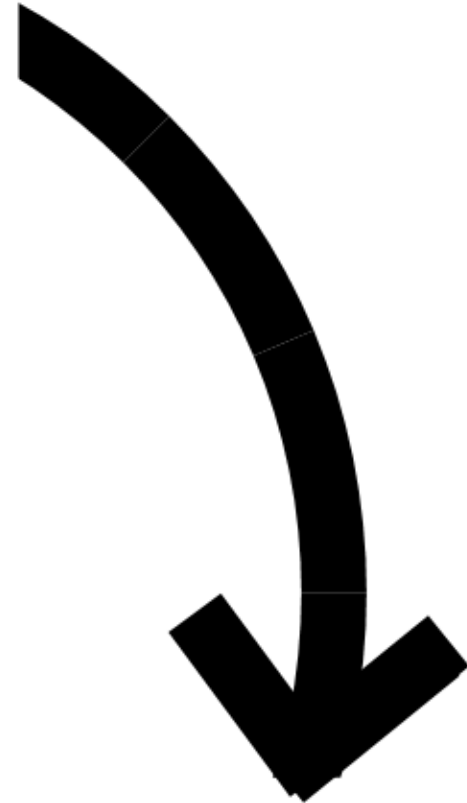
Methoden empirischer Forschung

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**Understand
Behaviour**



**Design
System**



**Examine
System Use**





Interviews and Focus Groups

Aims for today

Learn about important aspects w.r.t interviews

Contrast structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews

Contrast interviews with surveys

Understand the relationship between interviews and ethnography

Learn about interviewing challenges

Gain practical experience

An Introduction to Interviews

A way of getting direct feedback from the user

Direct conversation allows insights, perspectives and data that a survey might miss

Focus Groups

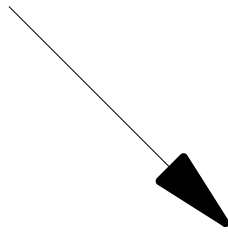
- Interviews with multiple people

An Introduction to Interviews

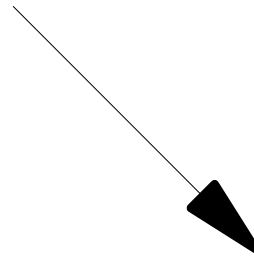
Valuable source of insight

Lots of challenges

- What you ask
- How you ask
- Who you ask
- All important



Study



Strengths

Open ended and exploratory

- Similar to ethnography

Flexible

- Course of the interview can change
- Re-order questions
- Invent new questions on the fly

Limitations

Manage Complexity

More difficult to perform than surveys

- Listen, note, direct, elicit information, decide which comments to pursue etc.
- Focus groups can be even harder

Limitations

Fewer participants

- Restricted by resources

Preparing and Analysing Data is hard and time consuming

- Up to 10 hours per hour to transcribe (Robson, 2002)

How do you separate the good, interesting stuff from poor or useless?

Limitations

Similar to surveys

- Subjective
- Rely on memory

How do we get round this?

Combining with other techniques

Personal Information Management

Combine with tours (Malone,
1982)

In-car navigation

with observation (Leshed et al.,
2008)

Finding personal information

with a diary study (Teevan et al.,
2004)

Uses of Interviews

#1 Initial Exploration

Digital artifacts

You have just been asked to investigate possibilities for helping people manage digital artifacts of their lives (videos, pictures, photos etc.)

You suspect that existing tools are insufficient, but you want to build a better understanding of what people do and need

Interviews for initial exploration

New understanding will lead to ideas for tool design

Start with a clean slate

High-level, non-specific questions

Digital artifacts

1. What sort of recordings do you make of personal events? Pictures? Videos? Audio?
2. How do you view these recordings? On a computer? On a TV?
3. Where do you view them?
4. Who do you show them to? When?
5. How do you organise these recordings?

Digital artifacts

6. Do you organise recordings? How?
7. Do you ever make multiple recordings for a single event? How do you keep these together?
8. Do you share these with family or friends? If so, how?
9. Have you ever lost track of any particularly valuable photo or video?

Digital artifacts

10. Do you edit photos or video?
11. Do distinguish between recordings that you've made and those that were made by family members or others?
12. Have you found yourself interested in doing something with your recordings that your tools did not support? If so, what?

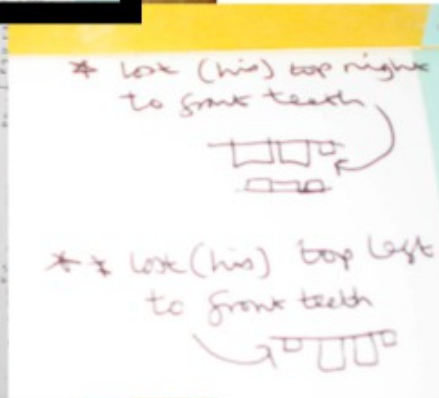
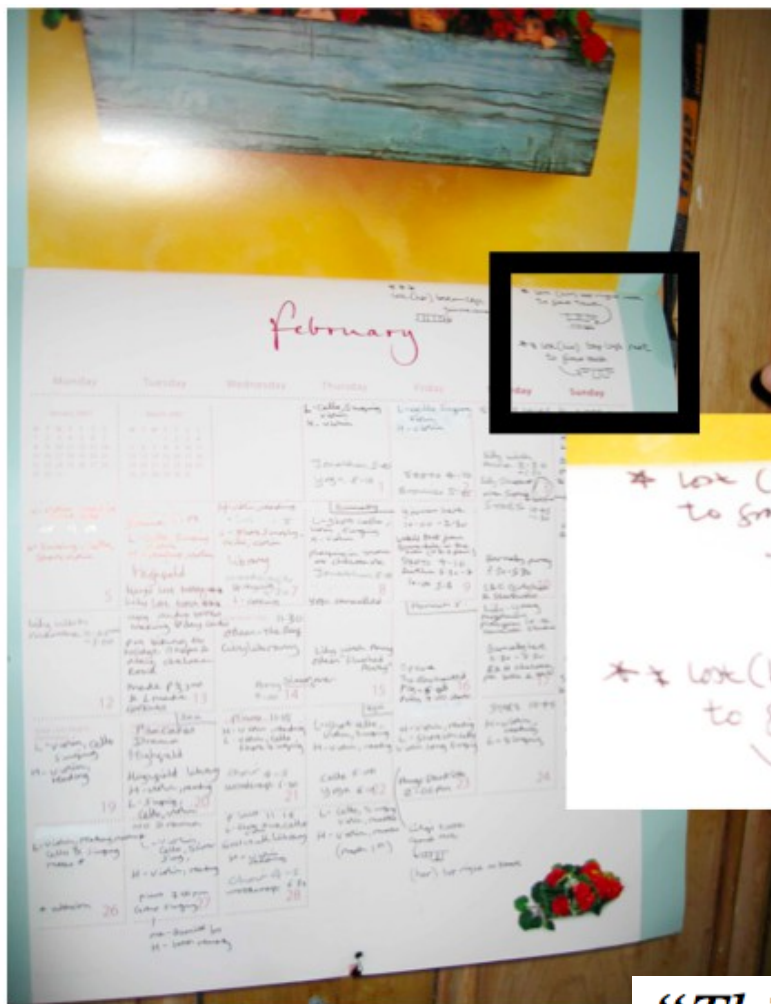
Interviews for initial exploration

Focus on activities not on specific questions of functionality and design

Understand complex and multi-faceted situation

- Similar aims to ethnography

Petrelli & Whittaker (2010)



“This calendar. I write everything in here so that [the children] know what they were doing at various times: they’ll know when they lost their teeth (see inset) and when they started speaking, what their first words were, when they first walked and how many steps they walked and things like that [...] everything is documented.”

Uses of Interviews

#2 Requirements
gathering

Interviews for requirements analysis

User opinion and ideas regarding solutions to identified problems

Understand user goals in a given situation

How do current tools (if available) support these?

What do users want that they currently cannot do?

What would a dream solution look like?

Back to digital artifacts

Initial interviews led to the idea of building a digital scrapbook where people can combine photos, audio, video, text and other multimedia.

To build such a tool we need to understand what a user might like to do with it. We need to meet their needs

Interviews for requirements analysis

Ask the participant to imagine they were to create a scrapbook for some purpose (based on previous interview scenarios), give them some time to think and then return for an interview.

Interviews for requirements analysis

1. What sort of scrapbook are you making?
Will it cover one event or many? Who is it for?
2. What would you like to put in your scrapbook
3. How would you arrange your scrapbook?
4. How would your scrapbook be viewed?

Interviews for requirements analysis

5. How would you like to link the scrapbook to other people? Would it be interesting to link it to social networking sites etc?
6. What might you like to be able to do with this tool?

Focus on specific features and not on existing tools

Focus groups are really good for this purpose

Uses of Interviews

**#3 Evaluation and
subjective reactions**

Interviews for evaluation

Not ideal *in isolation* for evaluation

Excellent to get feedback for design iterations

- Information flow
- interaction style
- look and feel
- Use of language

Validate approach and identify refinements

Interviews for evaluation

1. Do you find this interface easy to use?
2. Do you understand the menus, icons and language? ***Why?***
3. Are any parts of the interface particularly useful or helpful?
4. How does the interface compare to your existing tool?
5. What (if anything) would you change?



Who to interview?

Asking the right people

Last time we talked about sampling

Smaller numbers mean representative
sample is hard

End users are a good starting point

Different categories of users with different
views

- Experts, novices, administrators,
power users

Stakeholders

Anyone affected by the use of a system

Think of a university administration system (e.g. LSF).

- Lecturers
- Students
- Secretaries
- Estates Management

Not always end users e.g. patients and family with respect to hospital info system

Key Informants

Larger scale projects may required
some people to be repeatedly
interviewed

Key informants provide important
insights over extended time periods

Need to manage relationship

Need to be chosen carefully

Starting point for ethnography

Interviewing strategies

How much structure?

Structured Interviews

- Rigid script, well-defined order
- All participants asked same questions
- No scope for creating new questions on fly
- Similar to a survey, but there are differences (explaining, different access to participants etc)

How much structure?

Structured Interviews

- Often deliver quantitative data
- Analysed differently
- Often easier to analyse
- You will have answers for all of the questions from all of the participants

How much structure?

Unstructured Interviews

- No script – starting point is a topic
- Participant driven, participant responds as she chooses
- You learn about things important to the participants
- Only when the participant stops do you add a point or topic.

How much structure?

Semi-structured Interviews

- Loose script but chance to be flexible, can respond to / be directed by participant responses
- Can ask questions you hadn't previously thought of
- Use when you want to focus on depth

How much structure?

Fully structured

No structure



Low skill

High skill

Easy to analyse

Hard to analyse

No flexibility

High flexibility

Quantitative data

Qualitative data

Shallow

Deep

Focused and contextual interviews

Demonstrate not just talk about something.

- Mail sorting, office tours example (Kwasnik, 1989)

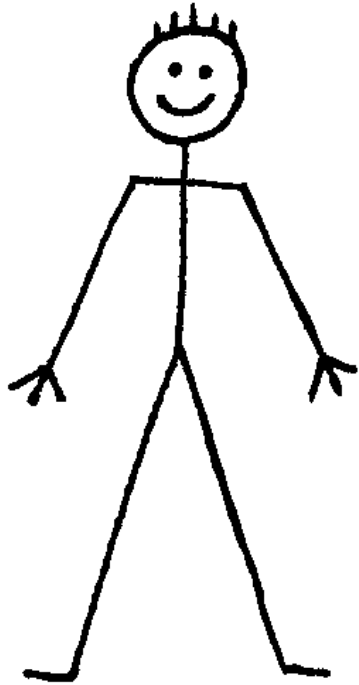
Artifacts as probes

Technology Biographies

- Participants discuss past technology uses and speculate about future

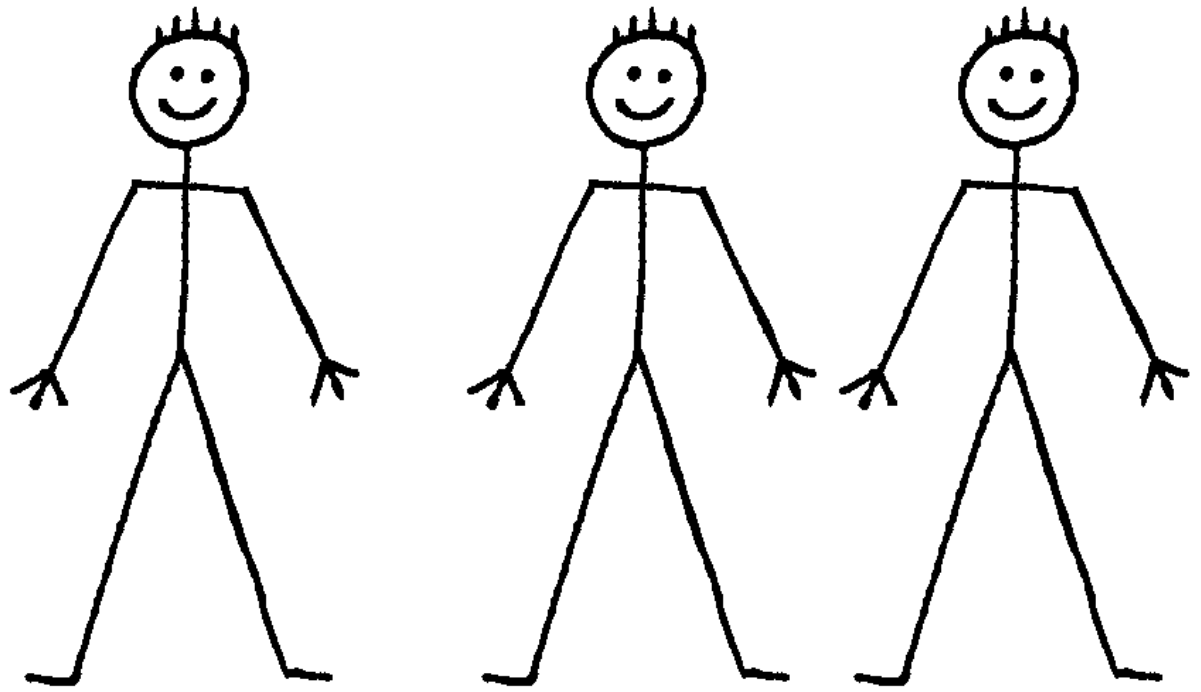
Software Prototypes (Hutchison et al., 2003)

Interviews



or

Focus groups



Advantages of Focus groups

Access more participants

- 8-12 (Robson, 2002) 5-7 (Krueger, 1994)
- Get up to 60 participants in a few hours

Should hold more than 1 focus group

- Lessen chances of unrepresentative or unresponsive group

Advantages of Focus groups

More access to ideas

- Less chance of awkward silent moments

Small doses of disagreement / discussion
can be really insightful

Participants can encourage other people
to speak

- Implicitly or explicitly

Disadvantages of Focus groups

Less questions (conversations take time)

Conflicts between participants

Less opportunity for private topics

Giving equal time to participants

- Group dynamics are important
- Selection of focus groups is an art!

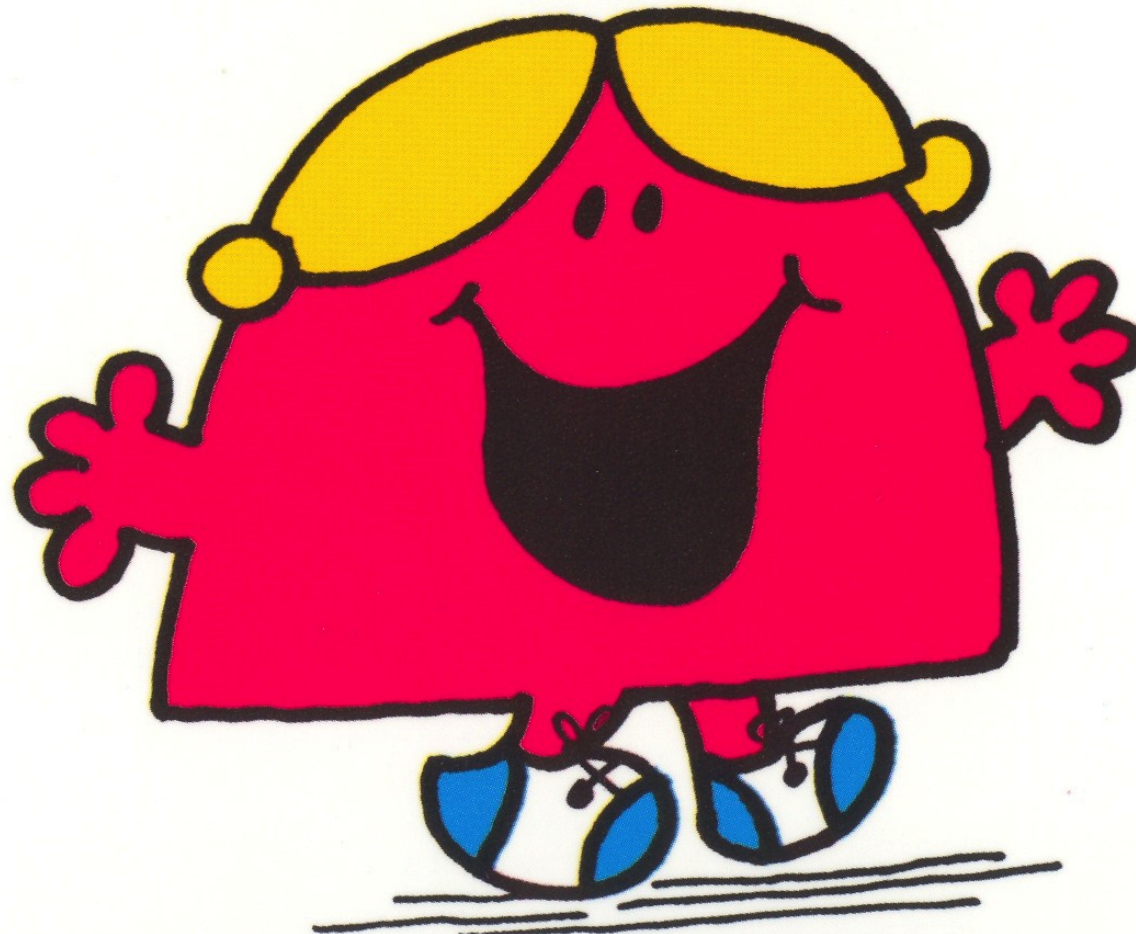


Types of Interviewee

<http://www.uxmatters.com/mt/archives/2011/04/when-interviews-go-wrong.php>

LITTLE MISS CHATTERBOX

by Roger Hargreaves



The chatterbox

Give lengthy responses to every question

Won't stop talking—either because they're uncomfortable with silence or unaware they're rambling

Go off on irrelevant tangents

Answer every question with a story, because they enjoy chatting and revealing their whole life story

Tips for chatterboxes

Initially it is good to have someone willing to talk, but to save precious time you need to get them to focus.

“Earlier you mentioned...”

“I’d like to go back to...”

“Hold that thought and tell me more about...”

“Okay, I understand your thoughts on that now. What can you tell me about...?”

LITTLE MISS SHY

by Roger Hargreaves



The clam (shy and quiet)

Give monosyllabic answers

Speak only when you ask them a direct question

Nervous, which may make them inarticulate or cagey about what they reveal

Can you get enough information?

Will you have enough time to go through all of your questions?

Tips for the clams

Try to relax them

- they are not being tested, explain your goals
- check your body language
- nice, friendly questions

Use open questions

- so it isn't possible to give short answers

Make sure you are neutral i.e. they don't associate you as the designer of a system being discussed

Scripts for the clams

“Don’t hold back. I didn’t design this, so you won’t hurt my feelings if you have negative feedback.”

“This is not a test. There really are no right or wrong answers here. Tell me how this design could perform better for you.”

Scripts for the clams

“It’s very important to get lots of different perspectives on this design. Lee, your contribution is going to make this product easier for people to use in the future.”

“I really need a quotation, summing up your feelings on this issue.”

THE MR.MEN SHOW



~~Mr. Happy~~

Mr Too Happy to Be True

Mr too happy to be true

Seem overly optimistic or positive about a product or design

Excessively sympathetic and gentle, so not completely candid

Refuse to acknowledge or comment on design or process flaws

Opinions don't match the results of their tasks

Dealing with Mr too happy

“So, you don’t have any issues with this design, but what about your mother? What problems might she encounter with it?”

“There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. I’m looking for your honest thoughts, so we’ll know what would be good and bad for other users in the future.”

Dealing with Mr too happy

“I didn’t design this, so please don’t hold back. I need to report how we could improve this design. We’ll keep your comments confidential.”

“It’s interesting that you say you like it, because it seemed to give you a lot of difficulty.”

Preparing the interview

Pilot testing

- Find the right questions
- Get a feel for the length
- Can be done with focus groups too (colleagues, first group)

Guides

- Don't want to miss something out

Contingency Plans

Summary

Direct conversation with end user

Different purposes

Different strategies

- Structure
- Focus / context
- How many people (focus groups?)

Relation to other methods

Practical exercise

You want to design a tool to help people manage their weekly food shop. You suspect that current tools / methods (lists, fridge checks etc.) could be bettered to improve quality of life and save time.

Prepare a 10 minute interview

- What type? What questions might you ask? What might be important? How much structure?
- Think about why?

Practical exercise

How similar were the questions asked?

How similar in terms of interview personality were you and your partner?

If you were to perform the interview again would you do anything differently?

What did you learn from the answers?

To think about

How do relate to other kinds of research methods, such as ethnography, surveys, diary studies, lab studies?

What are the similarities, differences
Where are the boundaries? Do these methods complement each other when combined?

To think about

How do you think you might evaluate data collected from interviews?

We are going to deal with this next week!

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