

Co-Designing for Inclusion

Lived Experience Advisory Panel Engagement in Shaping Conversational Interfaces for Dementia Narratives

Tom Lodge, Briony Harden, Linda O'Raw, Praminda Caleb-Solly, Stefan Rennick Egglestone

Contact: tom.lodge1@nottingham.ac.uk School of Computer Science, University of Nottingham

LEND is a project exploring how lived-experience narratives from people with dementia and carers can provide support to others. A central challenge lies in helping users identify, from a large collection of narratives, those most relevant to their circumstances and needs.

Conversational interfaces enable users to interact with an AI chatbot through typed text.

We worked with our LEAP group to **help us shape early designs** of a web-based conversational interface. We asked participants to use it to find up to four relevant or useful narratives.

Capturing user intent.

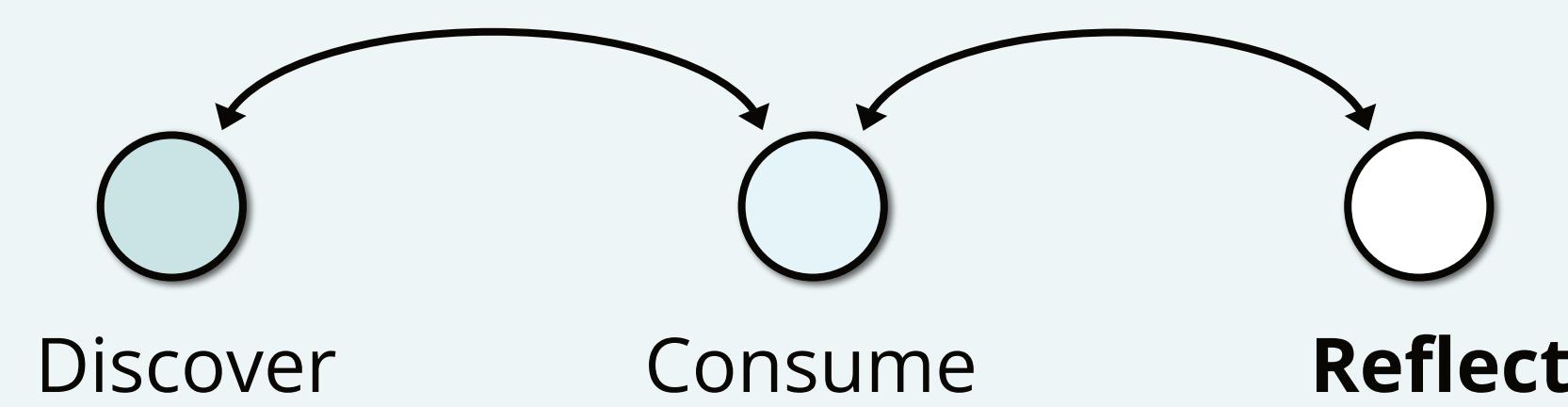
Participants sought narratives across rich criteria.

Short, back-and-forth discussions captured this richness.

Could this help users clarify what they need if initially uncertain?

Reflecting on narratives.

Several participants reflected on previously viewed narratives with the chatbot.



Might this enhance positive impact and yield insights to help users identify more relevant narratives?

Unmet expectations.

In seeking narratives, participants also expected the chatbot to offer emotional support. By focusing only on narrative suggestions, its replies were inadequate. As one participant noted, it could feel as if “even the computer doesn’t care.”

Designing AI prompts.

In some cases, our chatbot rules led it to probe too deeply into difficult memories:

RULE 1: Never give direct advice.

RULE 2: Answer open-ended questions that invite users to share more.

Conversationally mediated narrative discovery shows clear **potential** but must be designed with attention to personalisation, cultural sensitivity, and user safety, as well as transparency regarding AI's role and limitations.