

Reflection - M1.1 DPM115 Project 1: Design - Niek van den Berk - 1234269

I chose this squad to focus my development on the use of AI within a design project. In order to understand the use of AI better, communicate its use and implement it in a product, service or system. I developed myself within these aspects, however, the use of AI also brought some caveats. Which I will explain within this reflection.

First, I recognized that the structure of the project differed a lot from previous projects and my internship. Instead of starting from a specific problem that is defined together with a stakeholder or user, we started to work from AI as a requirement for design. This resulted in a much more explorative process which relied less on existing methodologies. I learned that it is valuable to sometimes 'go with your intuition and flow', however, it did mean that some decisions were discussion based and felt less substantiated than for instance within my FBP. For next projects, I would try and gravitate more towards decisions based on both methodologies/overviews and discussion, like we did within this project during the 'Needs & requirements' and 'Design challenges' part.

Although I learned from the explorative part, I disliked the fact that we didn't tackle a problem initiated by a stakeholder. I specifically chose to not do a project with a stakeholder this time. I, however, recognized that my interest lies with tackling a larger societal problem initiated by or discussed with a stakeholder. Resulting in a lower development within the expertise area business & entrepreneurship as well. I felt what we are designing in this project is not solving an urgent problem within society. As a result, I become less excited about designing for the subject. My PIV will therefore explicitly state this and next project(s) will ideally focus on larger societal issues.

Following the previous statement, I also learned that using AI as a requirement for design at the start is not my preferred way of working (when doing a design project). Throughout the process, I sometimes felt including AI felt like a force-fit. Eventually resulting in a system that includes AI features rather than a product that is built around AI. The project therefore focusing less on the identity of AI and aesthetics of intelligence than I imagined at first. Maybe this is a good indication of how AI (features) should be implemented within real project, and therefore still useful to experience. Additionally, I did learn about the realisation of AI within a system based project based on discussion with my team mates which are more technical than I am. Learning that AI should 'predict the unpredictable' and how to turn input data into valuable output using AI. For next projects, I want to take this knowledge and use it to propose and conceptualise AI solutions once I see an opportunity for them within a project.

The valuable output within this project was created in the form of a UX design. Within the process I tried to focus less on creating the UX design. However, my team mates were much less interested in doing UX design than me. So I took over the UX role from Zhanhong later in the project. I recognized that designing UX (and UI) still fits my Professional Identity. Especially designing UX using AI, XAI and data (visualisations). However, during this project (and past projects) I recognized I stay a bit on the surface when designing complex systems/services designing UX, XAI and data visualisations. This is because the user and the (holistic) experience needs to be designed as well. Asking for a balance of focus between C&A, U&S and T&R. To optimise my (individual) design work for next projects I

want to critically assess the balance between user focused work and realisation work. Especially when working on a complex system/service/design space.

Near the end of the project, however, I did feel like my role within the team was to create a bridge between the technical part of the project (AI feature, AI feature selection & data) and designing a user-friendly system. Using the AI inputs to create a clear UX output (Figure). A valuable role which I am willing to take on in future work as well. I learned the value of punctually communicating my UX designs to the rest of the group to create a design understood by the entire group. I did, however miss an evaluation part in the process where my UX designs were thoroughly evaluated by users. A missed opportunity and something which I would plan earlier on in next projects.

In terms of other project work I felt like my strengths came forward when again working on a (holistic) service. Tying together several parts of a system to create a logical, well

thought out and visually coherent experience. I learned to optimise these skills and use them to ask critical questions within group discussions. I recognised I sometimes found some key faults within the experience or process. Ultimately improving the final design. My PIV has again been confirmed and I am eager to work on more service based projects in the future that focus on a holistic experience/system. Furthermore, I was pleased to conduct a user study with many users and learned that this project entailed a large and diverse user group. Asking for a solution that embraces tension (Dialogic) rather than providing one encompassing solution (Dialectic) (Wegerif, 2011). This came in the form of modular system which I again learned to visualise and map to clarify the system.

Lastly, the overall group work within the project went well. I recognized communication went smooth every if things were unclear. This especially happened near the end of the project and therefore asked for more time and focus. In the end, I believe the group work created a better end result. The discussions were valuable to solve complex problems and the skills within our group complemented each other well to create a holistic and realised concept.

References:

- Wegerif, R. (2011). From Dialectic to Dialogic. Theories of Learning and Studies of Instructional Practice, 201–221. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-7582-9_12

