

## How PictureQuest participatory tool can support computer-mediated and face-to-face interviews?

### RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Sometimes it is difficult to manage user participation in IT product design. A challenge could be gathering all participants at one place and/or getting reliable information from them. No doubt that taking a part in design activities takes time and energy from people.

Meeting face-to-face could be undesirable by some persons, for instance if involved people are suffering from mental diseases like Social Anxiety Disorder [2]. Plausible situation could be also a lack of time for participants when meeting online is the best solution for them [4]. The same applies for cases when participants are distributed by space and/or time [3].

Computer-mediated participatory tools (CMPT) seems to bring some benefits on the table that face-to-face tools often can't. Depending on the level of synchrony in communication, CMPT can bring a flexibility in time for participants to think about the topic or reply from a place that's most convenient them at the appropriate time. However, participants online seems to bring different kind of responses than in the face-to-face meeting.

In this paper I would like to extend PictureQuest (PQ) participatory tool [1] by applying it online and compare how responses of participants differs in computer-mediated and face-to-face situations. PQ has proved to be easily understandable by participants, besides it is easy to produce such tool, which makes it a good choice for this paper. I think that conclusions made from my activities would be able to help for other designers/facilitators who are exploring possibilities of doing online user research.

Originally PQ is meant to be [played by two or three persons – probably also more (not tested)] [1, p.64.]. However, for some people it is easier to reflect alone, or with as few other people as possible [2]. Keeping that in mind, I would like to test, how PQ could be applied in interviews, with only one participant and one facilitator.

First step could be (was) applying PQ online by using it for user research in designing a board and exertion games. PQ was implemented in the online survey (<http://experiment.fifix.net/>) where participants were asked about their feelings and experiences with games. That resulted in 65 written stories, both long and short, detailed and general, strict and emotional.

Next step could be (was) doing interviews with participants that have written different kinds of stories. Aim of the interview is (was) to give a chance for participant to apply PQ in face-to-face situation and to use it as a support to explain their experiences in more detailed way. Another aim of the interview would be (was) to ask participant about his/her experiences when using PQ both with and without computer as a mediator, alone and together with the facilitator (me).

There (were) 13 interviews in total, six using a skype video (due to the practical reasons of participants being in other country) and seven face-to-face interviews. All interviews were recorded in video for analysing later.

Final step is analysing responses of participants in various situations they were in, and make conclusions from PQ application in synchronous/asynchronous, computer-mediated/face-to-face situations. *Patterns of user responses will be analysed by applying specified methodology, maybe applying Hillman's approach by taking sentences as a unit of analysis (still thinking about that...).*

*Now I see that many people mention the time and ability to reflect when they used PQ online, being alone. However, face-to-face (synchronous) communication seems to bring more fun for people, even though some mention limited time to reflect, urge to answer as fast as possible. With synchronous communication people seem to be more specific as well. etc. etc.....*

## Literature

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