

(Mostly) Qualitative research methods in HCI

CS-C3120, Lecture 4



**Aalto University
School of Science**

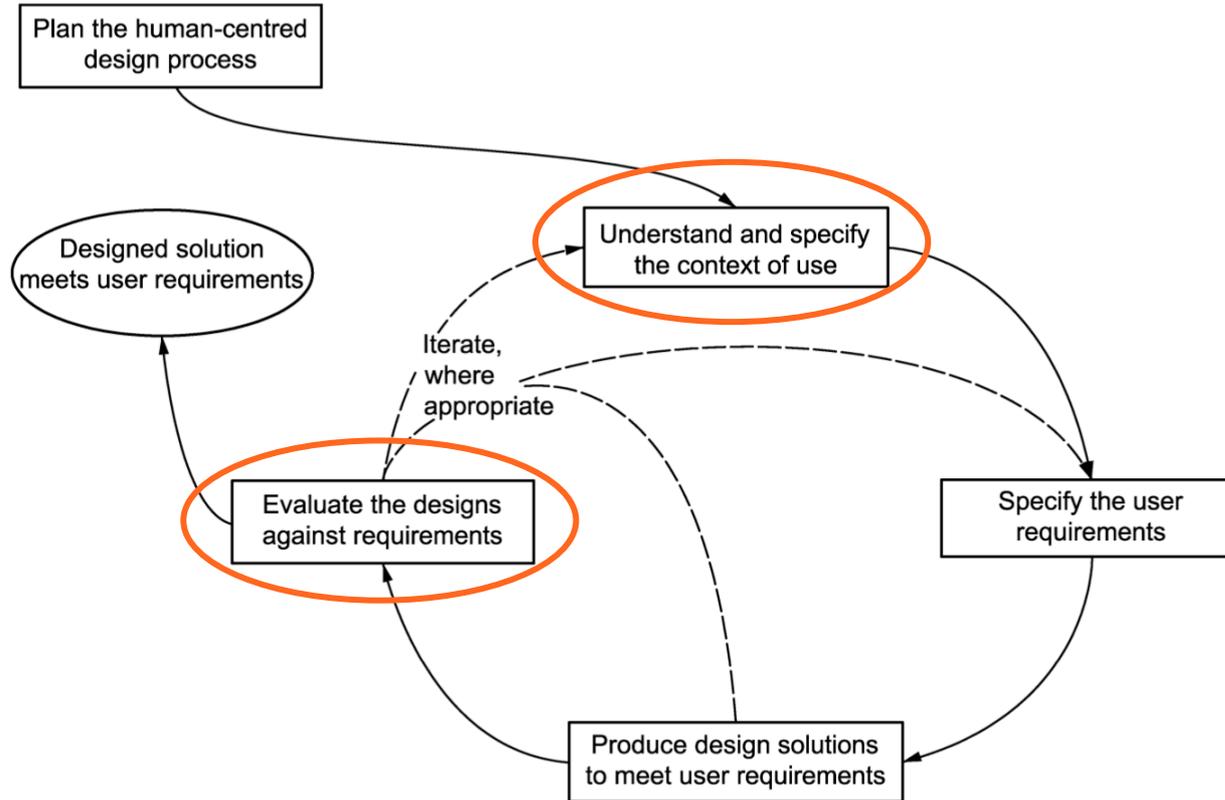
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Why to do user research?

Discuss with the person next to you for 5 minutes

When to do user research?



Qualitative vs quantitative?

Research is often divided to two types according to the research methods used.

Qualitative research methods gathers data, that is generally non-numerical and descriptive. Methods include observations, interviews etc.

Quantitative research methods gather numerical data. Methods include surveys etc.

How to use qualitative and quantitative research methods in HCI?

Discuss with the person next to you for 10 minutes

How is qualitative research used in HCI?

- Qualitative research methods provide deeper understanding from fewer number of people
- Good for providing complex, context specific understanding
- Qualitative research can be used to understand the context of the users, specify their needs, and to examine the limitations the users might experience

Qualitative research methods

- Interviews
- Observations
- Personas
- Ethnographies
- Contextual inquiries
- Case studies
- Workshops

etc...



Photo credit: Jori Samonen

Notes from the field





Assignment 4 – Interview Guide

Go to SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods, and read entries “Interviewing”, “Semi-structured Interview”, and “Interview Guide”.

Case: the maker of an application (a new one, or the one you used in previous assignments) hires you to interview their users in order of them fixing some usability issues.

Prepare an interview guide consisting of 10-15 questions that you would like to ask. Explain briefly why you included all the questions. Then, interview another user of the application (if you can't find anyone, ask someone to interview you with your questions). Then write a reflection of the interview. What questions could have been worded differently, did you find out what you were looking for etc.

Return the interview guide with explanations and the reflection as one pdf file to MyCourses.