

Interview Protocol Community & Location: Remote Interview through Zoom and Teams

Date: 16th February 2021

No. of people attending:

Researchers conducting session: Ambika R Menon and Aayushi Bharadwaj

My name is Aayushi/Ambika and I will be facilitating this interview along with my colleague Aayushi/Ambika. The goal of this project is to understand user behavior and preferences in relation to voice assistants present in smartphones. As a Gen Z Google Assistant/Siri user, we value your opinions and insights. We want to know what works for you and what does not. Ultimately this study focuses on proposing insights to help enhance seamless voice-based interaction between users and their smartphones. The information gleaned from this effort will be analyzed to propose key points to facilitate the redesign for voice assistants to meet your expectations.

You were selected through a voluntary web survey where you were given a choice to participate in this interview and participatory design process, with you consenting to this meeting. The selection was done on the basis of your frequency of use of voice assistants on smartphones. This meeting will last for approximately 30-40 minutes. Prior to the interview, you were sent an introduction to our research study and one consent form which you were required to revert by stating your consent to participate in today's meeting. We would like you to also know that you can leave the interview at any time for any reason you choose to do so.

This meeting will follow a designed interview protocol. Do you have further questions before we begin?

If there are no further questions, let's get started with the first question.

[Note: the researcher will use phrases such as "Tell me more", "Could you give me an example?", "Could you explain that?" as prompts to solicit more detailed information when needed.]

Why/Why not - recurring probe

1. To get started, let's introduce ourselves. In your introduction please tell us who you are and your understanding of the terms voice user interface and graphical user interface. Could you provide examples?

[Note: Show them the list of tasks that Google Assistant and Siri can do and ask further questions based on that] - These are the possible ways in which a user can choose to engage with the voice assistant

2. What tasks from the given list do you usually use your smartphone for?

Probe: What interface do you use to perform these tasks? Why?

3. Have you tried performing the same tasks using Siri/Google Assistant? *OR* Have you tried performing the same task manually?

Probe: Could you explain that?

Probe: Why or why not?

4. How do you currently engage with your voice assistant?

What parts of the interaction with the assistant would you categorize as the most effective?

Probe: Why?

Probe: Are there any particular features or experiences that stand out?

Probe: You mentioned you like _____ feature. What is it that you like about this feature?

.....and the most challenging in terms of performing tasks?

Probe: You mentioned you dislike _____ feature. What is it that you dislike about this feature?

5. Do you think there is more potential for your current usage of Siri/Google Assistant? Do you think your engagement with the current features of the voice assistant is limited?

Probe: In what way? Could you elaborate?

Probe: Why aren't you already doing that? What's holding you back?

6. Do you usually have an end goal in mind while engaging Siri/google assistant?

Have you tried discovering new features?

Probe: Did you specifically look it up? Or did the interface lead to discovering its features?

Probe: Is it because you didn't know how to? Do you think it would help if your interface led you to it?

7. What would you say is the most important part about engaging with the voice assistant?

What do you think a good/intuitive voice assistant should be able to do?

Probe: Could you elaborate?

Okay, thank you for your time. We will now be moving into the next phase of our meeting which is where we have two activities planned to complement the questions that were put to you up until now.

PD Script

Today voice assistants are not limited to smart speakers but are also in cars, household devices, smartphones, and now in a lot of apps as well. Voice Assistant is a virtual assistant that uses speech recognition, natural language processing, and speech synthesis to take actions to help its users.

Google Assistant and Siri present on Android and iPhone devices respectively are great examples of General purpose Voice Assistants. These help you with tasks like setting the alarm, scheduling events, making calls, launching apps amongst other things.

One of the most important reasons for the high uptake of voice assistants is that it has a more intuitive, anthropomorphic interface (the ascription of human qualities to inanimate objects) and that does a great job at understanding human speech features and responding in a way that makes users feel like they're having a conversation with another human.

To get us started, we have two warm-up questions to help us ease into the activity.

Entry Questions:

1. What adjectives would you associate with voice assistants to describe their usage, function, the role they play..etc.?
2. In what future scenarios do you think VUIs would be most useful?
Probe: Things you'd want to see in the future given the way voice assistants are designed right now.

Activities for participatory design :

Frame for each person, depending on ios/android user - a ss of the tasks performed by Siri and google assistant, we mark the tasks that they use their smartphones to perform - basically mapping out user responses on each frame (develop framework)

For the first activity, we will be showing you two screens with conversations between a user and the voice assistant in a given context. While you're reading them, let us know what the difference between the two conversations are in your understanding, what does that difference indicate.

For the second and final activity, we are providing you with different situations and prompt questions to get you started with forming a conversation between an interaction yourself and the voice assistant which you envision to be seamless. As a quick tip on going about this, you could use the adjectives you mentioned earlier as guiding words to think about how you want your voice assistant to interact and see how you can incorporate "intuitive" interaction by looking at the differences that came up between the two frames we showed you earlier.

Q. What were your guiding principles or thoughts you had while designing the conversation?

Thank you for your time!