

Designing for the First Interaction Between Syrian Refugees and Neighbors in the Netherlands: Formulating Design Requirements

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ABSTRACT

Refugee integration is an urgent and important area of research which is currently affecting 11 million Syrian refugees, along with the society they are trying to integrate into. This area of research has immediate real world application with the possibility of long lasting effects.

The goal of this design research project is to encourage the first point of contact between neighbors in the Netherlands, and how that applies to Syrian refugees while they integrate into Dutch neighborhoods. The design research was implemented and extrapolated based on a design by Buro Kato.

The outcomes of this research project are translated into design requirements such as: expectation management of both individuals, use of multiple languages for written elements of the design, and providing reassurance throughout the interaction, amongst others. The requirements can be used as a foundation for further research and integration design.

Author Keywords

Integration; Refugee; Dutch; Syrian; Design; Action Research; Culture; Society

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INTRODUCTION

Approximately 11 million Syrians have left their homes since the outbreak of the civil war in 2011. About 1 million of these refugees have requested asylum to Europe [14] where they face many challenges such as new languages, new laws, and a different culture.

Successful integration of refugees into a society is essential for both the refugee and the native culture. Research emphasizes the importance of neighborhood networks to promote the feeling of belonging, security, freedom, opportunity and empowerment. Refugee integration in neighborhoods is of the utmost importance for a country to achieve a general integration in its culture and systems [15].

Designs created for refugee integration usually consist of two parts: supporting the refugee and informing the local citizens. Yet due to different cultural backgrounds, habits and expectations, designing for refugee integration can be an underestimated challenge.

In this paper, the Syrian and the Dutch culture will be compared, neighborhood relationships analyzed, and experiences of refugees in the Netherlands discussed. This will be carried out by testing an existing design, created for refugee integration. The goal of this paper is to curate design requirements, which will help designers to create successful tools for the integration of Syrian refugees in Dutch neighborhoods.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In 2011, a complex civil war broke out in Syria, which was triggered by the Arab Spring. This conflict

involves regional and international powers, including the European Union [11].

The inhumane circumstances in Syria forced many citizens to leave their homes and flee to safer cities within Syria, bordering countries, and the Western World. For many European governments and societies, the “refugee crisis” was sudden and unexpected, which caused widespread debates, and divided the European Union and its citizens.[7]

Syrian Culture in Relation to Neighborhoods

For most refugees, the European culture is different from what they are used to. This paper will focus on Syrian refugees integrating into the Dutch culture.

Aside from basic cultural aspects of a society such as food or religion, there is an underlying cultural mindset which is ingrained into an individual starting at birth [5]. This cultural mindset can be difficult to change, and will always influence a person’s behavior and habits. People may adopt different cultural ways of thinking, yet will always retain bits of their former culture [7].

Per Geert Hofstede’s cultural study, Syrian and Dutch culture differ in four essential dimensions: power distance, individualism, masculinity, and long-term orientation. The difference in individualism describes the way members of a society view themselves. Syria can be defined as a collectivist culture, where people define themselves as “we” and care for greater good of an entire group. The Dutch culture, on the other hand, is one of the most individualist cultures in the World, where emphasis is placed on being self-reliant [8]. The following research will show that the difference between these two cultural outlooks was plausible to play a main role in defining neighborhood relationships.

Dr. Ellen Feghali, who did a PhD on Intercultural Communication, describes the importance of hospitality in Arab countries as the following:

“Arabs expect hospitality from others, and one’s personal status and reputation may be affected by the absence of such behavior.” (Page 353) [4]

Based on previous substantiation, it is easy to imagine that the integration of Syrian refugees in Dutch neighborhoods may cause uncomfortable situations for both the Dutch natives and Syrian refugees alike. The understanding and acceptance of cultural values and differences are of the utmost importance to successfully integrate refugees.

Importance of the First Interaction

The first interaction between two neighbors can determine their future relationship.

Newcombe, a social psychologist, professor, and author, described this phenomenon in his Principle of Interaction. In the Principle of Interaction, he states that people will associate with other people who share similar values and respond positively to the initiator, (Proximity Principle) [9, Page 105]. Based on Newcomb’s research, Huston and Levinger claim that the process of strangers becoming acquainted depends, coupled with the factor mentioned above, on the first impression.

A favorable first impression may stimulate curiosity about the new person. Additionally, it may influence the perceiver’s interpretation of information such as opinions and views, and most importantly, it may lead one to affiliate with the other. Only continued interaction can lead to a deeper relationship, but acquaintanceships can last indefinitely [12, Page 120].

Other research in the field of initial interactions suggests that the communication behaviors of strangers are determined by a set of communication rules and norms, which are partly influenced by one’s culture. Some of these rules are underlying, while others are explicit, and the individual may be able to verbalize them and their origin. This may lead to discomfort, since individuals new to a community or culture are often uncertain about the appropriate behavior [1].

When designing for successful refugee integration, it is therefore logical and important to focus the design on creating a favorable first impression.

Previous Studies done on Intercultural Communication

In 2008, Dr. Neil Spicer, lecturer in Health Policy and Global Health Initiatives at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, researched the experiences of place, social exclusion, and network for recently relocated refugees to the United Kingdom. In his paper, he emphasizes the importance of forming social neighborhood bonds and societal bridges for everyday life (school, health, etc.) and emotional support for refugees. Spicer distinguishes between inclusive and exclusive neighborhoods [11].

The refugee families who were interviewed stressed that their limited spoken English undermined their confidence, creating a cycle of feeling apprehensive when engaging with services such as doctor appointments, and other situations where English needed to be spoken. The vicious cycle is especially damaging in ‘exclusive neighborhoods’ (neighborhoods in which the refugees do not feel welcome). The refugees lack of confidence made them avoid the locals, resulting in limitations of further developing their English language skills. The paper also states that ‘inclusive neighborhoods’, friendships

between refugees and locals were easier formed than in exclusive ones.

Additionally, Spicer states that only through successful neighborhood integration that a general integration in a country can take place. Regarding the effects of language difficulties and the importance of neighborhood bonds, the results of this paper are valuable insights for determining the scope in which the assembled design requirements in this research can be effective. Since The Netherlands and the United Kingdom have a similar western culture and societal structure, [10] the outcomes of Spicer's research provide valuable insights for the foundation of this research?

“Arab Cultural Communication Patterns (1997)” by Ellen Feghali [4] critically reviews prior research about communication patterns of the Arabic culture. Syria is an Arab country, which makes the investigation of the Arab culture essential for our research. The article mentions the basic values of the Arabic culture, including collectivism, hospitality, and honor. The paper aims to explain the overall and shared values in the Arab region, while the research presented in this paper narrows down the key cultural values which are used in the interaction between neighbors. The findings from this research were of use to determine specific values, which could evoke certain expectations within a first interaction.

The findings of both Spicer and Feghali operate as a foundation of this research, and were considered when planning and conducting ethnographic studies and interviews.

The paper, ‘The impact of culture on interactions: five lessons learned from the European commission’ by Anne-Katrin Neyer and Anne-Wil Harzing [12], explains how cultural differences can influence interactions, and which cultural differences are important in respect to these influences. The paper strives to formulate ways to turn a ‘weak’ situation into a ‘strong’ situation, which could then be translated into Huston and Lvinger’s framing of favorable and unfavorable interactions. A strong situation is defined as a situation where everyone is interpreting circumstances similarly, such as having the same expectation. The perception of cultural characteristics is often influenced by stereotypes. Overruling the stereotypes can be done by becoming more familiar with the specific culture. Although this research was focused on a business environment, it is applicable for this research project since it focuses on cultural differences.

BUURTPRAATJES: RESEARCH TOOL

The research discussed in the following paper involves the existing project *Buurtpraatjes* (Dutch for “neighborhood talk”) by Buro Kato. *Buurtpraatjes* was

developed using expert resources and received high acclaim during Dutch Design Week, however, there were many aspects of the design which were untested as of February 8th, 2017.

Buurtpraatjes was designed to help refugees to settle into Dutch neighborhoods. It consists of a flat-pick box filled with cultural conversation materials, coffee, cookies, and a set of invitation cards designed for the refugee to place in the mailbox of their neighbors. The box was designed to be given to the refugee when moving into their first apartment after moving out of the Asylum Seeker Center (see Appendix [A]).

The first interaction between the refugees and their new neighbors would be initiated via the use of an invitation card (Figure 1.), which the refugees would give to their neighbors. This card was written in Dutch, and invites the neighbors into the refugee’s house for coffee and a conversation. A larger version, as well as different versions of the invitation cards can be found in Appendix [A].



Figure 1: *Buurtpraatjes* Invitation Cards (front and back side).

DESIGN PROCESS

Buro Kato’s design, *Buurtpraatjes*, was chosen to facilitate research regarding refugee integration in the Netherlands. A meeting was conducted with Buro Kato to discuss *Buurtpraatjes*, the company background, and Buro Kato’s expectations regarding this research project. An analysis was done on the pieces of *Buurtpraatjes*: invitation cards, coffee, stroopwafels, and cultural discussion material. Post analysis, the most important aspect of *Buurtpraatjes* was determined to be the invitation card, which was designed to facilitate the first interaction between a refugee and a neighbor. The first interaction is important for many reasons, which can be found in the theoretical background of this paper.

Syrian refugees were decided upon for several reasons. First, most refugees who have entered the Netherlands between the years 2014 - 2017 were from Albania or Syria. In 2016, roughly out 2 out of every 18 asylum seekers were Syrian [17]. Second, Syria is often featured in news articles and shows, yet misinformation regarding this group is often rampant and widespread.

Further literary research was done on Syrian culture, customs, religion(s), and the ongoing civil war to prepare for future studies with Syrian refugees living

in the Netherlands. Likewise, Dutch culture, customs, religion(s) and general attitude towards refugees in the Netherlands (laws, studies, etc.), were also examined.

Based on the literature findings, several user studies setups were developed, which can be found in the following section. The outcomes of these studies were then used to curate design requirements, and to redesign the invitation card of *Buurtpraatjes*, which is an evaluation of the design criteria.

USER STUDY SETUP

Ethnographic Studies

General information about intercultural neighborhoods was gathered by conducting an ethnographic study with people in Woensel, Eindhoven. Approximately twenty participants of different age groups, cultural, and educational backgrounds were interviewed. The goal was to gain insights into how Dutch natives, and people with a different nationality or culturally diverse backgrounds, interacted with their neighbors. This was done to identify needs and bottlenecks.

Interviews

Three formal interviews were conducted to learn more about the Syrian culture, language, and customs. A dinner with a group of approximately twenty Syrian refugees, organized by cultural association Tint Eindhoven, was attended. Two of the researchers were invited to a private dinner with two Syrian refugees. Each formal interview involved one Syrian refugee and two researchers. The interviews took between 1 and 1.5 hours, and were documented using video and audio recordings.

The dinner organized by Tint Eindhoven took approximately 4 hours and involved twenty Syrian refugees. In-depth interviews were conducted with eight of these refugees. The private dinner with two Syrian refugees took 3 hours, and was documented by taking notes.

Specific focus was given to the refugee's experiences with their neighbors in the Netherlands and in Syria. Subjects such as frequency of interaction with neighbours, and expectations of the interaction were discussed. The refugees mostly consisted of young, single men between the ages of 20-26, who were eager to share their stories, thoughts, and opinions on being a refugee in the Netherlands. Through these activities, the researchers made connections with refugees who would be willing to participate in upcoming studies.

Questionnaire

To gather both qualitative and quantitative data from Syrian refugees and Dutch citizens, an online questionnaire was sent out. Fifteen Syrian and twenty Dutch subjects were reached through the questionnaire. Through statistical analysis, the two subject groups were compared in order to find

statistical differences. A statistical difference was defined as a possible bottleneck during the first interaction, and therefore would need to be taken into consideration when curating design requirements.

The questionnaire was shared via different social platforms, such as Facebook groups for refugees in the Netherlands, sent to Syrian refugees who had previously agreed to participate in research, along with Dutch natives. Due to the Netherlands international population, Dutch participants could only contribute if they spoke Dutch fluently and have been living in the Netherlands for at least five years.

The main theme for the questionnaire was formulated as following: 'What are the bottlenecks at the first interaction between a Dutch and Syrian refugee neighbor?' To answer this question, six items were selected as the focus: initiative, choice of language, attitude, verbal interaction, physical interaction, and the follow-up. The questionnaire used a likert scale, ranging from 1-5 where 1 equals 'completely disagree' and 5 equals 'completely agree'. The questions were phrased around hypothetical scenarios and personal information, such as age, nationality and gender. The questionnaires were created in Dutch and English, both translations and findings can be found in Appendix B.

Acting Research Study

The goal of the acting research was to create scenarios in which four Dutch natives (two females aged mid 50's, one female aged 19 and one male aged 26), and two male Syrian refugees (one aged 26 and one aged 27) acted out the use of the invitation cards included in *Buurtpraatjes*. Acting research was beneficial in this scenario because the cards could be tested by refugees without the possibility of harming their relationships with their actual neighbors. The goal was to see whether the card could trigger a favorable first interaction, which was then validated by the post acting research interviews.

For the research, a structure was built out of large plastic "Lego" blocks, stacked in such a way to resemble two homes, with a window in a wall separating the "units" (Figure 2). Each "unit" contained a table and 3-4 chairs. The "Lego" structure of the form was abstract enough for the participants to imagine themselves in two separate apartments. The layout allowed for the researchers (located at a separate table) to maintain a reasonable distance while still being able to observe the entire interaction. The study was also filmed for later review. Coffee, water, orange juice, 'stroopwafels', and breakfast biscuits were available for the participants to give to each other during the study, and to snack on throughout the process. The researchers were located on a table to the left of the acting research area. The setup of the acting research can be found in Appendix [C].



Figure 2: Acting Research Setup

After each acting research study was conducted, the participants were asked several questions about the research setup and the first interaction between neighbors, with the focus placed on the invitation cards. The questions, as well as a run-through of the findings and observations made during the studies can be found in respectively Appendix [E], and Appendix [F]. The user consent form can be found in Appendix [D].

FINDINGS

Ethnographic Studies

The results from the ethnographic study led to two key discoveries. The first is that 19 out of 20 participants in the study wanted to know their neighbors, and over 75% of the participants specifically preferred to meet their neighbors on neutral ground (i.e. outside at a mailbox rather than a formal get-together in one's home). This indicated the need for the design to facilitate freedom and the personal choice of meeting location.

Interviews

Arabic societal habits may differ from the Western habits, and thus from Dutch habits [4]. However, many Syrian refugees stated in the interviews that they have "adjusted" to, or at least attempted to understand Dutch culture. All Syrian participants stated that they were willing to change their societal habits such as greetings, goodbyes, and rules of interaction with the opposite sex while living in the Netherlands. *"I live here now, so I should adapt to the Dutch culture and manners"* - interviewed Syrian refugee (28).

The Dutch organization for immigration matters (IND) decides, through several steps, whether a refugee will be granted asylum. [17] Receiving an apartment indicates a refugee being granted asylum status, but this process can be complicated and can take years. [3] The interviews with Syrian refugees indicate that they have experienced some Dutch culture at the point in which they are granted asylum status, even though prior to receiving this status (and often an apartment) they mainly live in closed communities which consist of other refugees (Syrian or other). It is imperative that

the design is mindful of a baseline level of Dutch cultural awareness that the Syrian refugee should possess. Finally, neighborhoods are one of the first steps of integration for the interviewed refugees who often consider them to be the first networking points. *"When I moved to The Netherlands, I went to my neighbors first to ask for some stuff. They help me with everything I need."* - Syrian refugee (25), spoken during the dinner organized by Tint. Therefore, the design should enhance this opportunity, but give refugees realistic expectations to prevent disappointment.

Acting Research Study

The acting with the invitation cards showed that all Syrian and Dutch subjects of the research study preferred to make the first contact with their neighbor in person.



Figure 3: First interaction and giving the card

Through these findings, it can be concluded that a design dedicated to the interaction between neighbors should focus mainly on face to face experiences, which provides support for both parties throughout the interaction. While using the card, it became apparent that the chosen language on the cards (Dutch) was an issue for refugees. Additionally it created a false expectation for the Dutch citizens regarding the language that the refugees spoke.

The action study post interview indicated that the point in which refugees make first contact with their neighbors is rarely the point that they have been present in the Netherlands long enough to be fluent in Dutch. This language barrier often creates uncertainty and intimidation for the refugee with their new neighbors. Additionally, the neighbors are unsure about the language skills that the refugee possess, therefore, the design must clearly communicate which language(s) both individuals speak. Furthermore the design must be multilingual and communicate in the languages Dutch and Arabic, and potentially English as well.

Through the analysis of the action research post interviews, it became clear that Dutch and Syrian participants have different expectations regarding neighborly relationships. Dutch neighbors appear to be more reserved in a neighbor to neighbor relationship, and may desire a less intensive relationship. *"The other*

people [neighbors] I see when they come outside. And then I say 'Hello, How are you? Everything okay?' And that's it.", stated by a female native Dutch participant (aged mid 50's). For a Syrian refugee, this neighbor to neighbor relationship can be seen as one of the only connections this refugee has with Dutch people; it is perceived as a start of integration. "I start to go to my neighbors, first to ask for some stuff when I moved new. [...] Some were nice and help me with everything I need. Some say "no, thank you". I would like to connect more with my neighbors, but it is not happening", as stated by a male Syrian refugee (aged 27) who participated in the study.

The different expectations towards the relationship can cause awkward interactions, meaning the design needs to manage and clarify the expectations that both parties have.

Additionally, the design must support the refugee in approaching his or her neighbor, such as providing conversation material or information about local customs. It is also important to prepare the refugee for a possible disappointment "My first neighbor, I invited him for coffee, and he said, sorry I don't have time. Then I said, okay, I will never invite him again." To prevent disappointment and manage expectations, the Dutch neighbor needs support in responding to, or approaching the refugee.

Finally, the acting research revealed that unknown behavior (such as greetings) lead to a more distant interaction. This discovery was also validated through the findings of the questionnaire. Therefore, the design needs to provide information and explanations regarding culturally influenced behavior for both parties to create an understanding between Dutch neighbors and Syrian refugees.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Through the statistical analysis in STATA, the following questions yielded statistical differences and thus key insights into Syrian refugee / native Dutch interactions.

First, Syrian subjects are more likely to tell something about their origin, in comparison to the Dutch subjects. The Syrians scored a mean of 3.2 and the Dutch a mean of 2.3 on the likert scale. Second, the Syrian subjects are less likely to approach their new neighbor in a public space, compared to the Dutch. The Syrians subjects scored a mean of 2.93 and the Dutch scored a mean of 3.60. Third, the Syrians subjects are less likely to introduce themselves with their own name, in comparison to the Dutch. The Syrian subjects scored a mean of 3.60 and the Dutch scored a mean of 4.40. Therefore it can be concluded that a design needs to stimulate conversation and interest of the Dutch, and support the first interaction by giving Syrians information about the Dutch customs. Overall, both have a very positive scores on this topic. The Syrian

subjects are less likely to ask questions about the new neighbor, in comparison to the Dutch subjects. Syrians scored a mean of 2.93, and the Dutch scored a mean of 3.60.

Non-statistical differences proved to be valuable for curating the design requirements. Most importantly, both Syrian and Dutch subjects are willing to meet their new neighbor, scoring respectively a mean of 3.70 and 3.95, which validates the findings of the ethnographic study. Furthermore, both Syrian and Dutch subjects preferred face to face contact when using the first contact cards Syrians scored a mean of 2.33 and the Dutch scored a mean of 2.5, which validates the findings of the acting research.

Enumeration of the design requirements

After conducting the ethnographic studies, the questionnaire and the acting research study, the following design requirements were formulated:

1. The design needs to facilitate freedom and the personal choice of a meeting location.
2. The design can be mindful of a baseline level of Dutch cultural awareness that the Syrian refugee should possess by the time of moving into their own apartment.
3. Neighborhoods are considered as first point of networking for refugees, therefore, the design should enhance this opportunity, but give refugees realistic expectations to prevent disappointment.
4. The design should focus mainly on face to face experiences.
5. The design should provide support, such as conversation topics or a language aid, for both parties before and throughout the interaction.
6. If language is used, the design must be multilingual and indicate (beforehand), which language everyone speaks.
7. The design needs to manage and clarify expectations towards the relationship of both parties.
8. The design needs to provide information and explanations regarding culturally influenced behavior for both parties.

DISCUSSION

During the execution of this research, there were several limitations which may have influenced the findings and therefore the curated design requirements.

First, the Syrian participants mainly consisted of male adults above the age of 20. Results and opinions of

female participants, families, and teenagers are missing. It is assumed that the view on Syrian and Dutch culture, especially within the context of neighborhood relationships would deviate only slightly, the use of the cards in the acting research may have revealed different behavioral patterns if tested with a more diverse group of participants.

Second, all participants were relatively educated, since most participants spoke English and/or Dutch, and had previously attended, or were currently attending university. Additionally, all agreed to participate in an experiment regarding refugee integration, which indicates a general willingness to integrate themselves or to help refugees integrate.

Finally, language barriers influenced the research. Due to time constraints, certain areas of the research were not translated into Arabic (such as the questionnaire), which limited the user group for studies and testing to Syrians who understood English or Dutch.

After curating the design requirements, several experts in the field of refugee integration, such as Tove Elfferich from design studio Buro Kato, gave their thoughts and opinions on the results. While they widely agreed on the design requirements, certain doubts were mentioned for requirement 2 (“The design can be mindful of a baseline level of Dutch cultural awareness”). Elfferich believed that “Dutch cultural awareness” cannot be generalized, since culture involves too many varied aspects, and can be seen from different points of view. Instead, a design should never gloss over cultural differences and the context in which these differences are applied.

Tamara Koperda has over twenty years of volunteering experience with refugees in the United States of America, and is founder of the Global Village Project, a school for refugees [6]. She believed that the design should not only manage expectations and prepare for disappointment, but minimize disappointment by encouraging refugees to learn certain customs, such as the right pronunciation of the neighbors name or a native greeting. Additionally, Koperda suggested that a design needed to facilitate refugee families over a longer period of time, instead of only the first interaction.

The full expert validations of the requirements can be found in Appendix [I] and Appendix [J].

To overcome the mentioned limitations and validate the expert feedback, it is urgent to test the design requirements with a bigger and more diverse participant sample, in form of the newly designed introduction card in a real life application. This may provide new requirements, or validate the previously formulated ones.

CONCLUSION

The intent of this research is to emphasize the need of design in important political and societal issues, and to help motivate designers to tackle these problems.

Example Use of the Requirements - Redesign of the Invitation Cards (Figure 4 & 4.1)

The original invitation cards were in Dutch, and although the purpose of the design was to have the refugees assimilate into Dutch culture, it was determined that both Arabic and English would need to be integrated as well for translation purposes. The graphics of the original cards led to different expectations for both Dutch and Syrian people (i.e. the coffee cup was clear, but pictures featuring a full Syrian dinner didn't make sense to our participants). In addition, the general design of the cards often had the participants assuming it was a “business advertisement”, therefore the new cards focus on more personalization.

The main theme that was concluded from the study and questionnaire was the need to clarify expectations between Dutch natives and refugees. The new design indicates what the intentions of the refugee neighbor are, and what languages they can speak. To support and inform the Dutch neighbor, a website should be available with information about the Syrian culture, the design, and the research. Finally, the new card deals more as a support tool for a face to face introduction rather than an invitation to help facilitate the Syrian

refugee to make the first point of contact with their Dutch neighbors.

Hallo buurt

Ik ben nieuw in deze buurt en ik zou het leuk vinden om u te ontmoeten.

Mijn naam is

Ik kom uit en ik spreek (taal)

Ik wil u ontmoeten om:

- Nederlands te leren.
- de buurt te leren kennen.
- over de Nederlandse cultuur te leren.

Ik zou u graag willen uitnodigen voor:

- Koffie of thee.
- Avonds eten.
- Wandeling door de buurt.

U kunt me bereiken op (telefoon).

.of aanbellen tussen & uur.

Groetjes van (straat+huisnummer).

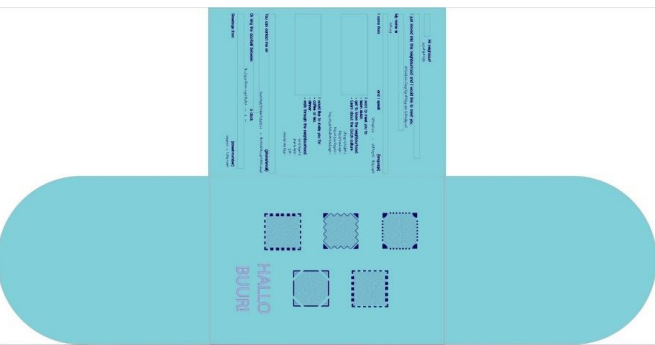


Figure 4: Invitation Card Redesign

Hi neighbour
راجل اللهيا اياك مرحبا

I just moved into this neighbourhood and I would like to meet you.
كذب يفتلنا نا دواو يجل الله يلا يوت ل تالقتنا انا

My name is
يمسا انا

I come from and I speak (language).
(ديبرعلل) شوجتانا اناو ... زم شيتا انا

I want to meet you to:

- learn dutch.
- get to know the neighbourhood.
- Learn about the Dutch culture.

ل كفالنا نا ديورا انا
- هيدنلوبلا ملختنا
- نازيجلا يلزج فرعتنا
- هيدنلوبلا بفاقتلا يلزج فرعتنا

I would like to invite you for:

- coffee or tea.
- dinner.
- walk through the neighbourhood.

ل كوودا نا دوا
- ماخط واوودق
- باوع
- يجللا يف يشمتن

You can contact me on (phone/email)
ايذورتكنا انا يوربلا انا (فون/ايميل) - ربيع يوج لمساوت لا عيطتنت

Or ring the doorbell between o'clock.
او وعاملنا نا يوب بابلا سرج نروا

Greetings from (street+number)
(بجز + عراش) - نام هيجت

Figure 4.1: Invitation Card Redesign – enlarged text

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Appendices

Appendix A

Buurtpraatjes Box



Invitation cards by *Buurtpraatjes*



Appendix B

Question	Statistical difference (WHEN P<0.05) YES OR NO	MEAN Syrian	MEAN Dutch
When I get a new neighbour, I want to meet him/her	NO	3.60	3.95
When I meet my new neighbour for the first time, I prefer to introduce myself with my name: 'I am...', or 'My name is...'	YES	3.60	4.40
I prefer shaking hands, when meeting my new neighbour for the first time	NO	3.85	4.20
I do not consider contact with my neighbours important	NO	2.00	2.58
When I meet my new neighbour for the first time, I tell something about my origin	YES	3.20	2.30
I greet men and woman the same way (physically)	NO	3.13	4.00
When I am moving somewhere, I want to meet my new neighbours	NO	3.67	4.00
When I meet my neighbours for the first time, I like to tell something about myself	NO	3.20	3.47
I prefer not to kiss, when meeting my new neighbour	NO	3.53	4.05
After the first meeting with my neighbour, I invite them for coffee	NO	3.73	3.75
I consider contact with my neighbours valuable	NO	3.93	3.70
When I meet my new neighbour for the first time, I don't like it when the conversation is about personal topics	NO	3.07	3.05

When I introduce myself, I greet someone of the opposite gender in a different way than someone of the same gender	NO	2.33	2.25
I prefer not to shake hands, when meeting my new neighbour for the first time	NO	1.53	1.65
When I meet my new neighbour for the first time, I want to know something about them	YES	3.05	3.90
I prefer kissing on the cheek, when meeting my new neighbour	NO	2.13	1.85
I dare to take the first step to get to know the new neighbours	NO	3.20	3.75
I don't ring the doorbell of someone I don't know	NO	3.46	2.70
I wait until the new neighbours come to meet me	NO	2.60	3.20
I drop a card in the mailbox, as an invitation to drink coffee	NO	2.40	2.35
I ring the doorbell of the new neighbours to meet them for the first time	NO	2.67	3.20
If my new neighbour and I coincidentally meet for the first time at a public space, I approach them to introduce myself	YES	2.93	3.60

Appendix C

Hypothesis for Action Research

Set Up	Our Definition
Construct	The first interaction cards included in the Buurtpraatjes box will trigger interaction and communication between a new and an old neighbor. Measured at individual, group, and organizational level.
Variables	<p>Satisfaction of both individuals after the interaction</p> <p>Location of the study</p> <p>Dutch with Dutch, Dutch with different nationality</p> <p>Dutch with Syrian</p>
Prepositions	<p>If the initial contact cards are given from the researchers to one of the participants, the participants will (immediately) understand what to do with these postcards.</p> <p>If the initial contact cards are given from one participant to another, an interaction will occur.</p> <p>If a basic, quality interaction occurs, better interactions will follow.</p> <p>If a quality interaction occurs, this will lead to formation of a bond between neighbors which will open up pathways of communication and help dispel false information and fear.</p>
Hypothesis	The initial use of the first contact card will trigger a “quality interaction” defined as “an interaction which leads up to another interaction where the refugee utilizes the box”, which in turn will open pathways of communication between Dutch and Syrian neighbors, which will provide a better environment to dispel false information and fear, which ultimately will help asylum seekers integrate into the Netherlands.
Logic	<p>[1] Research suggests that neighbourhood ties are getting weaker. Furthermore, socializing on the neighbourhood level is becoming more selective [2] Neighbourhood integration is essential for a successful general integration of asylum seekers in a foreign country.</p> <p>It is assumed that Dutch citizens appreciate having friendly relationships with their neighbors (rather than hostile ones), and are therefore willing to help help integrate their new neighbors within their neighborhood.</p> <p>Dutch natives have a baseline cultural standard of hospitality, which differs from Syrian standards, therefore, the Dutch neighbors and Syrian refugees can lead to awkward interactions which could negate the willingness to integrate and help facilitate integration.</p>

Assumptions	<p>20 minutes to test each interaction.</p> <p>Location of test site (semi private observation area of international student housing).</p> <p>Presence of researchers and research set up may influence the interaction.</p>
Boundary conditions	<p>People will be friendly and open to communicating with one another in a new environment.</p> <p>The asylum seekers will want to integrate.</p> <p>There is a baseline standard of friendliness between neighbors.</p> <p>Initial insecurity of the participants may lead to an involvement of the researches in the acting.</p> <p>Tested people may be 'nervous', which may lead to different behavior than in a real neighborhood situation.</p>
Research population	<p>Pilot test: 2 pairs (Dutch + Dutch, Dutch + International) acting in different locations</p> <p>Test: 5 pairs of Dutch citizens and Syrian refugees</p>
Date	<p>Pilot test: Friday, 28th of April</p> <p>Testing 1st of May until 5th of May</p>
Nationalities	<p>Dutch + Syrian Dutch + Dutch Dutch + International</p>
Location	<p>Semi private observation area of international student housing</p>
Materials	<p>Coffee / Tea / Water Stroopwafels / Snacks Tripod for camera Printed consent forms First contact card Acting equipment: "lego block" rooms, tables, and chairs Separate space for individual questioning</p>

Hypothesis	The initial interaction postcard will trigger a quality interaction, which in turn will open pathways of communication between Dutch and Syrian neighbors, which will provide a better environment to dispel false information and fear, which ultimately will help asylum seekers integrate into the Netherlands.
Follow up iterations	Based on this research, combined with the outcomes of a parallel executed online survey, the first contact cards will be redesigned in order to work optimally.

Appendix D

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title: Invitation cards of *Buurtpraatjes*

Experimenter: A. Auer, F. Kaskens, R. Gross (a.m.auer@student.tue.nl)

Description

You are invited to participate in an experiment assessing the value of invitation cards provided by Buurtpraatjes. During the research you and another participant are asked to act out the use of the cards. Afterwards several questions will be asked to assess your perception of the invitation cards and the interaction.

Method

The experiment will consist of acting and questioning. The entire session will be video recorded.

Confidentiality

The data obtained from the questionnaires will be used for analysis. All data will be processed anonymously. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

The video recordings will be used for private purposes only. If material will be published, faces will be made unrecognizable.

Duration

The experiment will last approximately 40 minutes.

Voluntary participation

Your participation in this experiment is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions.

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix E

Questions action research

(Used for both the pilot studies and the main studies)

Question set for individual discussion after the acting:

- What did you think of the setup of this research session?
- How did you experience using the interaction cards?
- Based on your experience and given the opportunity, would you use these interaction cards in your everyday life?
- If so, how long would you wait to give your neighbor the first interaction card?
- Based on your experience, how would you improve the first interaction cards?
- Are there options you would like better than using a first interaction card?
- At any point during the acting research, were there situations that made you feel uncomfortable?

Question set for joint discussion after the acting:

- Based on your experience, how would you improve the first interaction cards?
- Are there options you would like better than using a first interaction card?
- How could we explain our study better?

Appendix F

Observations/findings action research

Action session 1 (conducted on 01-05-2017)

(including observations and participants' opinions of both main study 1 and main study 2)

Ammar (Syrian refugee, age 26)

- Ammar wrote 'invitation cards' himself, when moving into his new house in the Netherlands.
- After moving in Ammar made dessert for all his neighbors, brought this to them and asked if they would have coffee with him;
 - Most / all said no
 - He was sad: "I will never try this again"
- If he moved in Syria, he would already know his neighbors (through friends?) before he moved
- Liked the idea of the interaction cards, however, he could not read the content. (the green part of the card). He could read it (the size of the text) but not understand it.
- However, Ammar could not completely understand the cards, he would prefer the cards to be in Dutch, because he likes to speak Dutch with Dutch people. This is because Dutch people really seem to appreciate it when foreign people speak Dutch, because of the effort, even when the grammar is incorrect.
- Photos on the card were confusing, thought that they were indicating that he was supposed to have lunch or dinner with them
- The design of the card is attractive, likes the card with the most colours the best.
- Ammar would use the cards ASAP: "like tomorrow"

Lilian + Melianne (Dutch natives, aged 50's)

(Both women work with refugees voluntarily, within the field of refugee integration.)

- The language on the cards is a problem; Syrian refugees who just have moved in often don't speak Dutch, or don't speak English. Therefore it would be necessary to inform them about the cards in Arabic, maybe with a brochure explaining the card for example. Then the card can be in Dutch, to invite the neighbor, but the refugee does not understand what it says. *note: there seems to be a lot of emphasis on an explanation in Arabic rather than the entire card in Arabic
- Pictographs to explain coffee and conversation rather than words
- The pictos only make sense if you understand the text, otherwise the pictos are disturbing.
- Lilian: "It's nice to do, but what happens after the card? It's what we've (points at Melianne) talked about. People in the Netherlands are very busy. They have their own family, friends... in Syria, they're all friends. *points at Ammar* How old are you? *26*. It's harder to make friends. It's nice to have a cup of coffee with your neighbors, but they need more. [Although,] it's a start, when something is close, when you have a problem."
- Lilian thinks that it's old fashioned to drink coffee together
- Lilian: "My freedom is really important to me. I [already] have my friends and my family."
- Suggested a coordinated effort with the *neighborhood association? Such as a BBQ so they can facilitate a neighborly experience without the worries of being awkward or a language barrier

- Lilian: “Sometimes it’s difficult to mobilize... for Syrian people, you can tell them about activities, but we cannot get them out of the house. Sometimes we have to take them by the hand. Because it’s very exciting for them to go somewhere... you can compare it maybe with autism. You want to know where you are going, which people are there, what time does it begin, when do you leave, what are they doing, what their part in the scene. If you don’t know anything... the environment, even the air... it’s difficult to go there. You don’t speak the language or the scene, how people behave in these situations.”
- Prefer the card with the most colours on it. However, the picture with the coffee and the pasty shows the purpose of the cards the best. So a picture with that content, with nicer colours.
- Lilian would probably not use the invitation cards in real life, because she would prefer ringing the bell and introducing herself to the new neighbors. However, this would apply if you already know the Netherlands and the Dutch culture a bit. For Syrians who just moved in, everything is new, the culture, the atmosphere, everything.
- Melianne emphasized while it’s nice to know their neighbors, refugees fundamentally need more support for networking and integration
- Melianne believes that expectations should be upfront regarding the initial point of contact i.e. clearly stating that the refugee neighbor is just saying hi and being neighborly, and doesn’t expect anything else
- Worried that the Dutch are too busy and don’t want the obligation of taking care of a refugee neighbor
- Meliane made the point that refugees don’t often have a lot of money, and get placed in not-so-great, lower class neighborhoods that inherently are not welcoming to outsiders
 - Basic socio-economic problem
- Give the contact cards to both the Dutch and the Syrian refugee so they have the choice of whether or not to reach out
- Refugees that move to the Netherlands are often put in neighborhoods with a lot of low educated people. These people are not always that ‘open minded’ and welcoming to refugees.
- Face to face contact is preferred over contact via the mailbox (so rather introducing yourself to your neighbors face to face than by putting a card in the mailbox).
- Having a meetup between Dutch and refugee neighbor may be a problem because of language barriers. If the refugee does not speak Dutch or English, how will the neighbors be able to communicate? This will probably be an awkward situation, so people may avoid this.
- Organize a bbq (or something else with the neighborhood) → this way you’re not 1 on 1, but in a group session. This may be more easygoing.

Action session 2 (conducted on 03-05-2017)
(main study 3)

Mohammed (Syrian refugee, age 27)

- Liked that students were getting involved with refugees
- Expectations from neighbors differ per person. Some people really want to become friends with their neighbors, others don’t want any contact. That may make things difficult.
- He’s looking for a close friend who can help him network and get established here and doesn’t think that his neighbors can / would do that
- Worried that his neighbors would take the invitation cards the wrong way, and think that’s trying to use them for something

- Make the cards more formal → ask the municipality to send the invitation to every refugee, set up an event for all people from a certain neighborhood to organize a collective event. This could help integrate everyone together quickly.
- English or Arabic would be the best language for the cards, not Dutch, because Syrians who just moved here do often not speak Dutch.
- Believes that a lot of Syrians are just really lost in their new community.
- Would wait 2 or 3 days max to give the neighbors the card after moving in.

Daniel (Dutch native, age 26)

- Liked the idea of the card but thought that it was useless to just ring the doorbell and hand the card rather than place it in the mailbox. However, the cards may be a good conversation starter.
- Liked either Dutch or English on the card.
- “I would rather ring the door and introduce myself, and plan an appointment for coffee. That way you know who you are inviting (the neighbor), because you haven’t seen them before. This would feel better to me than using a card. However, if the neighbors would not be home the cards would be useful. Furthermore, I like the initiative to come from the new neighbors moving in, so that they initiate the first interaction, and that they come over to introduce themselves or that they put an invitation card in the mail box.”
- Would wait to initiate contact until he’s settled into his new apartment (very different than the refugee responses).
- The initiative should come from the new people moving into the neighborhood, so the refugees in this case.

“Based on your experience, how would you improve the first interaction cards?”

- Daniel: “I think that some dutch people would like to have the card, and to just go over there.”
- Mohammed: “I would prefer that the neighbors come to me, because maybe I would see it in my post box, or when I see the man or the woman they come to me and they introduce themselves, and the tell me what they want and that could take more of my intention”

“Are there options you would like better than using a first interaction card?”

- Daniel: “To meet the neighbors you mean? It’s easy to say that it’s better to go there in person.”
- Mohammed: “It could be by the municipality but they could support a “hop”, and the municipality asks hop to send an invitation for mohommod and my neighbors around, and if you feel okay with it, then to accept the invitation. Our reason for doing that is we want to help the people be in communication with each other and help each other.”

Pilot study setup

Pilot study 1 included a Dutch man aged 54, and a Dutch woman aged 19. (two Dutch natives)

Pilot study 2 included the same Dutch woman as pilot study 1, and a Spanish woman aged 25. (one Dutch native and one international)

The choice to conduct pilot study 1 with two Dutch natives and pilot study 2 with one Dutch native and one international, was done to verify that the outcomes from the main study cannot be linked to general culture differences with respect to Dutch natives, but exclusively to the cultural and habitual beliefs of Dutch natives interacting with people having Syrian cultural background.

1. Separate the residential Dutch native and “new neighbor”
 - a. Explain to the Dutch neighbor that they’re getting a new neighbor
 - b. Explain to “new neighbor” the concept of the invitation
2. Allow the “new neighbor” to “move in”
3. The “new neighbor” gives residential Dutch native the invitation card
4. Watch response and interaction
5. Separate users and ask follow up questions
6. Ask questions together

Main study setup

Main study 1 included one Dutch woman aged 20, and a Syrian male refugee aged 26. Main study 1 included an exact physical replica of the pilot study.

Main study 2 included two Dutch women aged 50’s, and the same Syrian male refugee from main study 1. Main study 2 included an exact physical replica of the pilot study.

Main study 3 included a Dutch man aged 26, and a Syrian male refugee aged 27 Main study 3 included an exact physical replica of the pilot study.

Setup of Main Study 1, 2 and 3:

- A. Separate residential Dutch native and new neighbor, namely, a Syrian refugee
 - a. Explain to the Dutch neighbor that they’re getting a new neighbor
 - b. Explain to “new neighbor” the concept of the invitation
- B. Allow the “new neighbor” to “move in”
- C. “new neighbor” gives residential Dutch native the invitation card
- D. Watch response and interaction
- E. Separate users and ask follow up questions
- F. Ask questions together

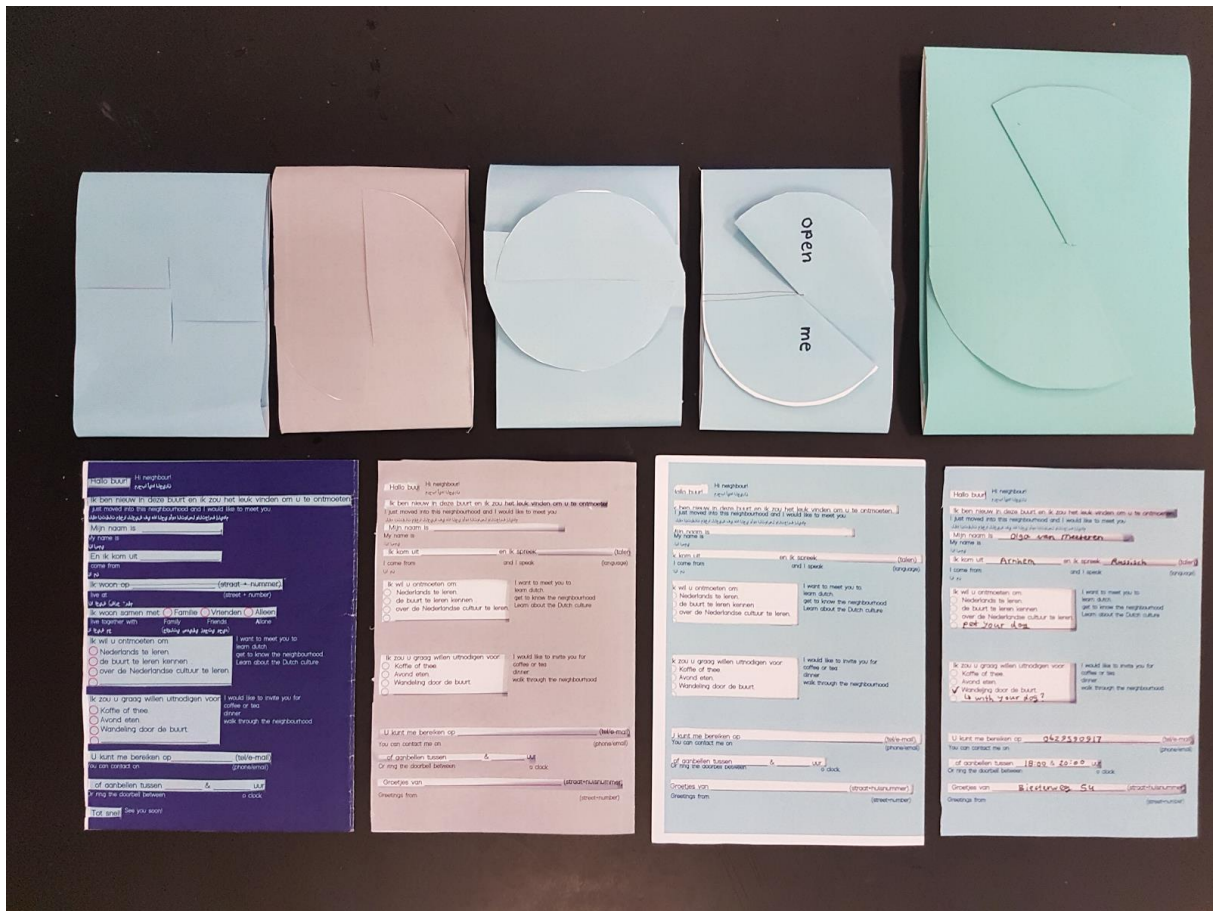
Overview main study setup:

Time	Participant	Researcher
0-10 min		Hand out consent form. Introduce <i>Buurtpraatjes</i> and following task. Provide drinks and snacks.
10-25 min	Acting the given roles	Filming & observing
25- 35 min	Split up the participants and question them with Question Set 1	Splitting up participants questioning, filming
35-40 min	Joining participants back together. Explaining and discussing their feelings, thoughts and opinions about the card with Question Set 2.	Questioning, filming

40-50		break, set up next pair
Repeat		

Appendix G

Redesigned Contact Card and explorations



Hallo Buuri
Isan maa on 1991 Suurin ja 2011, 2012 ja 2013 maa, jonka pinta-ala on 1 180 000 km².

Määrittäminen
Maa on _____ km² (1991)
Maa on _____ km² (2011)
Maa on _____ km² (2012)
Maa on _____ km² (2013)

Maa on _____ km² (2014)
Maa on _____ km² (2015)
Maa on _____ km² (2016)
Maa on _____ km² (2017)
Maa on _____ km² (2018)
Maa on _____ km² (2019)
Maa on _____ km² (2020)
Maa on _____ km² (2021)

Uusi maahan liittyminen on _____ (2021)
Uusi maahan liittyminen on _____ (2022)
Uusi maahan liittyminen on _____ (2023)
Uusi maahan liittyminen on _____ (2024)
Uusi maahan liittyminen on _____ (2025)

Hallo Buuri
Isan maa on 1991 Suurin ja 2011, 2012 ja 2013 maa, jonka pinta-ala on 1 180 000 km².

Määrittäminen
Maa on _____ km² (1991)
Maa on _____ km² (2011)
Maa on _____ km² (2012)
Maa on _____ km² (2013)

Maa on _____ km² (2014)
Maa on _____ km² (2015)
Maa on _____ km² (2016)
Maa on _____ km² (2017)
Maa on _____ km² (2018)
Maa on _____ km² (2019)
Maa on _____ km² (2020)
Maa on _____ km² (2021)

Uusi maahan liittyminen on _____ (2021)
Uusi maahan liittyminen on _____ (2022)
Uusi maahan liittyminen on _____ (2023)
Uusi maahan liittyminen on _____ (2024)
Uusi maahan liittyminen on _____ (2025)

HALLON BUURI



Appendix H

Contribution to the Project

Alex	Group Leader Action Research Refugee Dinners Ethnographic Research Video Editor
Eva	Behavioural research methods Questionnaire Interviews refugees Ethnographic Research Photography
Femke	Action research Interview Syrian Refugee Documentation Process Business cards
Josefine	Questionnaire Ethnographic Research Interview Website
Olga	Ethnographic Research Questionnaire Interview New Card Design & Exploration Poster/Layout of the Demo Day
Ronnie	Chief Editor + Research Paper Action Research Ethnographic Research Video Storyboard Sticker Designer

Review design requirements by Tove Elfferich (Buro Kato)

You have conducted a research project on 'Design for the first interaction between Syrian refugees and neighbours in the Netherlands'. Based on your research through design process you state eight requirements that can be used as a foundation to create successful tools to design for the topic of your research. In the following text I will discuss every requirements on its own.

1. *'The design needs to facilitate freedom and the personal choice of a meeting location'*
I totally agree with this statement, as the meeting location is very determining for the entire meeting. It is important that both parties feel comfortable in this location, which makes it hard for one of the parties to decide the location. In my opinion it would be of added value if the design would emphasise the aspect of deciding on a meeting location and gives the opportunity for the permit-holder and his neighbour to discuss this topic openly. This way, coming to an agreement on where to meet can be seen as the start of the pre-interaction.
2. *'The design can be mindful of a baseline level of Dutch cultural awareness that the Syrian refugee should possess by the time of moving into their own apartment'*
It cannot be denied that there are differences between the Dutch and Syrian culture and peoples habits. It is also our experience that these differences can affect the interaction between Dutch people (people living in the Netherlands) and Syrian people being new to the Netherlands. *For example a Dutch family we met during our research thought that their Syrian neighbours did not want to be in contact with them, because their curtains were always closed. When asking, it seemed that the curtains were closed so that the woman of the family could be indoors without wearing a Hijab.* Questionable though is what is 'a baseline level of Dutch cultural awareness', what is Dutch culture and how do we experience that in daily life? When talking about Dutch culture there can be big differences in how Dutch-people act and deal with that. This means that people and their specific context cannot be denied in this case and that this should always be taken into account when designing.
3. *'Neighborhoods are considered as first point of networking for refugees, therefore, the design should enhance this opportunity, but give refugees realistic expectations to prevent disappointment.'*
Expectation management is a very important aspect when designing for interaction between permit-holders and their new network. When we discussed your research insights, it was very nice to hear that most of your findings were overlapping with findings of our earlier research. Especially the fact that Dutch people are often willing to help out their new neighbours, but do not want to feel responsible. So when talking about expectation management, it should not be the design that gives a realistic expectation, but the design should enable a conversation

between people in the neighbourhood and the newcomer about what to expect from each other. Like I described at point 2, it should not be the design that 'tells how it is', but the design should enable/support the conversation about these topics.

4. *'The design should focus mainly on face to face experiences.'* In our experience the face-to-face contact is very valuable, even when you don't speak each others language at that moment, body language is also a form of communication. So showing that someone is welcome, that you are open for interaction works best when being in the same room.
5. *'The design should provide support, such as conversation topics or a language aid, for both parties before and throughout the interaction.'*
I completely agree with this statement. This is what I gave as feedback in point 2 + 3. The design should not communicate fixed topics to stress inequalities, but the design should provide triggers to start conversations so people can talk to find common grounds.
6. *'If language is used, the design must be multilingual and indicate (beforehand), which language everyone speaks.'* Yes, we see at this moment that speaking different languages is a threshold when it comes to a first interaction moment. This requirement should make the understanding of the design easier and brings all people involved on a equal level of understanding.
7. *'The design needs to manage and clarify expectations towards the relationship of both parties'*
See feedback point 3.
8. *'The design needs to provide information and explanations regarding culturally influenced behavior for both parties'* See feedback point 2.

social design
for neighbourhood matters & integration issues

buro kato

Appendix J

Expert feedback by Tamara Koperda

Summary of Volunteer Work for Refugee Resettlement and Education

My refugee resettlement experience began in the 1990's as part of a team of people assigned to help a set group of refugee families entering the USA to get their households setup and learn how to perform necessary tasks (register children for school, go grocery shopping, utilize coupons, access to employment resources, help with translators for government/doctor other important appointments). Another important part of this volunteer work was to be a friendly, dependable resource and answer lots of questions! Providing transportation was a critical part of this as Atlanta and Clarkston are rather limited in public transportation options.

A few years later I became the guardian for a Croatian teenager who was living in an undesirable situation in Atlanta. She lived with my family (husband and two daughters) until she graduated from high school. Her English speaking and written skills were excellent and she was very bright. Unlike many refugees she had been able to keep up with her school work during time in a refugee camp. We did have our own in home "assimilation" experiences as we combined cultures and habits.

A decade later I was part of a core group that founded a school for teenage refugees with interrupted education. Our public education system is generally not working for pre-teens and teens with huge gaps in education. The grant we received was for girls so it became an all girl's school. We started with a \$100k grant and free space in a church and eight years later are operating a very successful school for girls, The Global Village Project. (<http://globalvillageproject.org/>)

More recently I have participated in GVP's summer reading program that operates out of the Clarkston, GA library. In a small group setting the goal is to keep the students reading to maintain or possibly raise their reading level over summer. Friends and siblings of students are welcome. Small groups are setup with consideration for both age and reading skill level.

Comments on Paper

Designing the first interactions between neighbors was an interesting read for me based on the many visits I've made to homes of recent refugees. I have had numerous cups of very strong, very sweet coffee! From my perspective, the expectation and extending of hospitality is not uncommon both as a cultural component and an extension of appreciation for the visit and the friendship. In the early months, there is not a lot of reciprocation a refugee family can offer. The human connection is so important especially for those who have experienced unspeakable trauma and lost so much. If that component is even stronger for those from an Arab country that underscores the importance of this effort. Having a tool available that helps to educate and promote interaction between neighbors that so much thought and research has gone into is a fabulous idea. I think that it promotes and to a small extent sets up an expectation for the refugee moving in to be proactive in attempts to integrate into the community. To the extent this tool can be easily and widely deployed it can help better deploy volunteer resources to other tasks. (I don't know if that occurs in the same way in the Netherlands.)

I think it would be important to minimize disappointment if a poor response is received. I would encourage the refugees to record the names of their neighbors and which home they live in. Being able to greet your neighbor by name and make the effort in their language should always be appreciated.

Challenges continue for refugee families so perhaps a series of tools provided over time could be developed. Education about holidays, resources available, etc. might be helpful. There is a large amount

of information provided early on and it is difficult for all of it to be absorbed. As personal experiences and language skills improve the material might be more meaningful. I see further opportunity for this type of tool.

My critique on the readability of the paper and resource material centers around the presentation of the survey questions and the responses. It was quite difficult to absorb the responses with the questions being on earlier pages, and, there was no summary of responses by question. I strongly encourage you to make a change in this area as it is such a critical part of your research. I would format the results so that the questions in both languages and the responses appear together. I would also summarize the responses before providing the individual responses. You could even move the individual responses to a different section. It was difficult to match your conclusions based on your survey research without summarizing the responses to each question.

I did find the first 5 pages well organized, thorough and clear!

Tamara Koperda (tamarakoperda@gmail.com)