REFLECTION ANNE JENSTER M1.2

At the demo day, Rob asked me what I was most proud of on the project. I had to think about it, and then realized that, for the first time in my studies, something didn't feel like studying anymore but more like working on a passion project. Starting this semester, I was very excited about this research. At the end of my FBP, I wrote in my future of my portfolio: *"I am seeing many possibilities for design in politics. This would be something I would love to explore in my master's."* Last semester I got familiar with TP and got the **theoretical background** and connection to actually explore this semester.

People often ask me how I am able to do so many things at once. I believe this is because I have found an **umbrella** under which all of the things I do fall. I am currently doing research in **design and government** and actually **designing for government**. With all of the extracurricular activities I do, I am able to reflect on what my role as designer is and how I could use design to improve the situation. That is why I will write this reflection not only on my research project, but all of my activities.

This semester I most developed in the areas of **user and society** and **business and entrepreneurship**. Within **user and society**, I learned new ways of researching **people and behavior**, next to that I developed an understanding of **societies development** and what design can mean within this. One of the points in Cindy's research and in the book designing within public organizations, was that designers must **understand the system** in order to play it. I conducted my research within the industry, I did a research **internship at ZET** and acted as a designer in the government with a project I did with municipality. I have built on my **network** quite a lot and learned on how to operate in an industry I probably will work in the future, **I learned how to play the system**. I also developed in technology and realization with actually making and coding my probes, I learned two new **programming languages**.

My **research skills** were developed quite a lot this semester. I learned new theories such as the **grounded theory** and **ethnography**. I was able to use them and make them my own, I did this for example with the physical ethnography booklet I made (fig. 1). However, I also struggled with **structure**; this is something I tend to struggle with in general. I don't like rules and research has a lot of rules. If I had structured my research a little bit earlier, I would have had a little bit more time to write my paper. I do like doing research because you are less limited by **expectations**, and you can be led by your **interests**. I love **connecting** dots and seeing similarities and finding **interesting conclusions**. However, for next time I will already structure the basis of a research such as formulation the background earlier in the process.
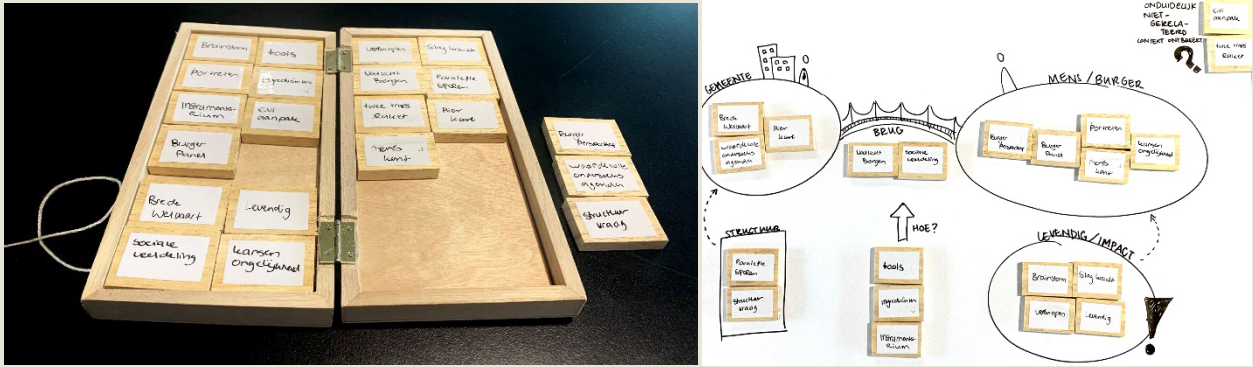
Fig.1 ethnography tool

From my research, I learned much about how we use our language, especially in the field of **design and government**. I also reflected on my own use of language and my **relationship** with it. Because I am **dyslectic**, I perceive language differently. I deal with complexity by making and embodiment. An example of this is the project I did with the **municipality and Europe**, where the idea is that young people, called **future mentors**, are mentoring the leaders of the city to give them a perspective of a future city. We mentored the **mayor of Eindhoven** and used design to assist the discussion. For the first conversation, we created a game to embody all the **bubbles of young people** in Eindhoven the mayor had to connect these bubbles (fig 2). For the second meeting, we wanted to create a plan some sort of **time line**, this was made physical with a house. Every floor represented a step in time and the roof asked concrete questions (fig 3). But it also made me think of last semester's project where we were forced to communicate in an other way than using words because we did not speak each other's' language. We did that through **making** and it worked surprisingly well.

fig.2 session one mayor

fig.3 session one mayor

From my research I have learned about the role of language within **complexity**, and how we now use **buzzwords, jargon, and container content** to deal with it but it results in us staying too **abstract**. I got particularly interested in Wittgenstein's theory where he states **meaning is use**, this **situatedness** of words seems to have great importance. I see potential in focusing more on this **situatedness of our communication** and use, **making** and **embodiment** to do so.

My future plan is to build on the project I did with the municipality and move to a higher level within the **European union,** I want to explore the role of designer within the government further and introduce **embodiment** to assist us with communication.

But first, for next semester I will go to **Australia** to do an exchange. The last 5 years where a speed train for me filled with extracurricular activities, studying and internships. I have a lot of side responsibility's next to my study and going to Australia will be a clean slate for me to reflect what I still find important and to get **new perspectives**.