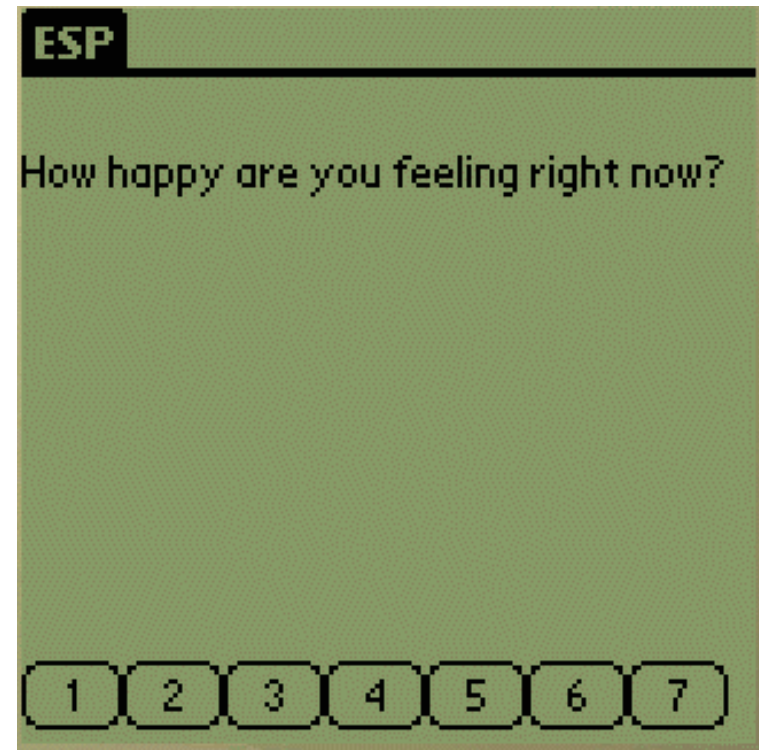# IS214 Experience Sampling

September 16, 2008

What is experience sampling?

The identification of activities and attitudes *in situ* by having participants perform actions in response to stimuli from researchers

Also known as "beeper studies," "time sampling," and "ecological momentary assessment"

ESP

How happy are you feeling right now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Current examples

Play testing Halo 3

Leveling the Playing Field
In April, Bungie found a nagging problem with Valhalla, one of *Halo 3*'s multiplayer levels: Player deaths (represented in dark red on this "heat map" of the level) were skewing toward the base on the left, indicating that forces invading from the right had a slight advantage. After reviewing this image, designers tweaked the terrain to give both armies an even chance.

http://www.wired.com/gaming/virtualworlds/magazine/15-09/ff_halo

Activity monitoring

http://myexperience.sourceforge.net/docs.html

Why do experience sampling?

Pragmatics of study design

Discreetly address **mood and attitude**

Ecological validity and **"natural" experiences** for participants

Support **mix** of quantitative and qualitative data

Reduction in **memory bias**

Experience Sampling: Promises and Pitfalls, Strengths and Weaknesses
CN Scollon, C Kim-Prieto, E Diener - Journal of Happiness Studies, 2003
personal.tcu.edu/~cscollon/Scollon_ESM_2003.pdf

UC Berkeley School of Information

Needs and Usability Assessment 09.16.08

Pitfalls

Participants

    Self-selection and attrition

    Usability issues

Situation

    Decline of participation over time

    Potential for systematic bias in event sampling

    Inadvertent introduction of memory bias

Reactivity

    Priming certain reactions

    Generating irritation

Pitfalls pt 2

Data analysis

    Dealing with huge quantities of data

    Identifying correct time frames

Ethical issues

    Potential violation of privacy expectations

    Power and politics issues in framing of study

ESM considerations

Alerting

How often?

For how long?

By what delivery mechanism?

Stimulus design

Written or audible?

How should the questions be ordered and even determined?

Data capturing

How to record responses: written, spoken, or visual?
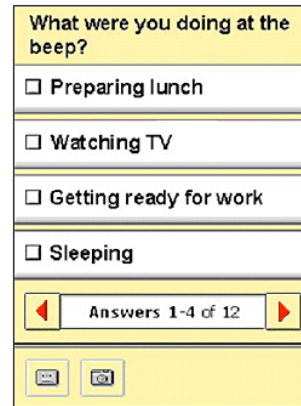
How to handle delayed responses?

Tools

SMS reminder

Beeper

Handheld
experience-sampling.org

Smartphone application
myexperience.sourceforge.net

Overhead

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