

Towards a Tangible Philosophy through Design

Exploring the question of being-in-the-world in the digital age

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The combined philosophy and design approach called Philosophy-through-Design (PtD) is proposed using an exemplary project about being-in-the-world in the digital age. PtD is a practical way to do philosophy through designing interventions, and involves various people in the exploration of philosophical concepts. It stems from the overlapping questions found in philosophy and design regarding human-technology interaction. By intertwining both, they benefit from describing, understanding and proposing human-technology interactions to unfold new questions and perspectives. In the exemplary project, being-in-the-world refers to a way of being that is embodied, active, open-ended and situational, based on the phenomenological and embodied theories of Tim Ingold. This concept questions what it means to be human in the digital age and how our lives with technology are built. The first results show the process of weaving together observation, creation and reflection, which presents Philosophy-through-Design as a promising method for designers to practice a tangible philosophy.

Keywords: Philosophy through Design, Tim Ingold, Embodiment, Practical Turn, Interaction Design

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to elaborate the combined philosophy and design approach that we will call Philosophy-through-Design (PtD). Philosophy-through-Design, as developed in this project, is a practical way to do philosophy through the design of interventions, and aims at involving a range of different people in the process of exploring philosophical concepts that are of importance in their daily lives. The approach is a way of exploring a philosophical question from the everyday practice using the practice of design. It combines both qualities of philosophy and design in order to act as a tangible way of doing philosophy.

The development of PtD stems from the overlap in the kind of questions found in both philosophy (of technology) and design (Eggink & Dorrestijn, 2018; Hauser, Oogjes, Wakkary, & Verbeek, 2018). These questions are about how humans and technology relate to each other in the past, the present and the future. Designers might try to find solutions to the problems related to these questions and philosophers might try to understand why, but both can benefit from describing, understanding and proposing new ways in which technological solutions interact with the societies in which these solutions are used (Eggink & Dorrestijn, 2018; Findeli, 2010; Hauser et al., 2018; Ingold, 2011).

Starting from this overlap, in both philosophy and design a development can be found to make use of the knowledge and methods existing in the other field of inquiry (see figure 1). In philosophy, the empirical turn marked a shift to bring philosophy more into practice by taking part in and analysing real-world case studies (Achterhuis, 2001; Verbeek, 2005). In the design of interactive and use products, a trend can be found of



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applying philosophical insights and taking the human being and society into account in the design process (Dorrestijn & Eggink, 2014; Hummels & Lévy, 2013, Tromp, Hekkert, & Verbeek, 2011). However, PtD differentiates itself from these two approaches by intertwining both processes into one approach guided by a philosophical research question. At the start of the approach there is no predefined perspective regarding the research question in the form of neither philosophy nor design. The questions, creations and reflections found during the approach will interact with each other to develop and contribute both to the field of philosophy and design, not by finding answers, but by unfolding new questions and new perspectives.

In this paper, we will elaborate Philosophy-through-Design by an exemplary project in which the philosophy of Tim Ingold is used to investigate his concept of being-in-the-world. Ingold’s ideas pose interesting questions in a society in which digital products take up such a ubiquitous presence in everyday lives and experiences. As a starting point, we will focus on the iconic object that is omnipresent today: the smartphone. The aim of this project is, thus, to question what Ingold’s philosophy means in the context of the digital age, using a project revolving the smartphone as a design case to understand our being-in-the-world in the digital age. First, we will offer some background to PtD by relating it to other methodologies, such as empirical philosophy and Research-through-Design. We will then move on to the philosophical background by introducing the philosophy of Tim Ingold and his conception of being-in-the-world. After that, we will introduce the case study of the smartphone and the digital age and elaborate on the focus points, questions and steps we have chosen to guide PtD. Finally, we will provide an overview of the first results and elaborate on them in the discussion and conclusion in light of the validity of Philosophy-through-Design as a method for doing philosophy hands-on.

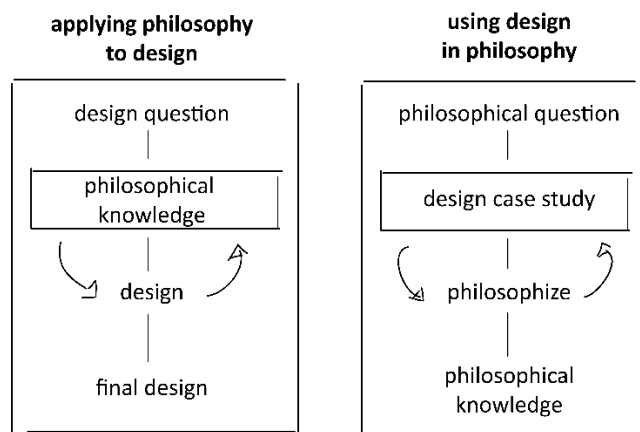


Figure 1: Schematic overview of applying philosophy to design and using design in philosophy

Philosophy-through-Design background

PtD could be considered as connected to the empirical turn and the developments in the field of Philosophy of Technology that came afterwards. PtD indeed acknowledges a similar beneficial relationship between philosophy and design, however, PtD differentiates itself from the empirical turn in a subtle, but substantial way. With the empirical turn, philosophy became more concrete by incorporating more case studies and collaborations with other disciplines (Achterhuis, 2001). This turn opened the way for philosophers to ‘come down from their ivory towers’ and create philosophical tools, methods and forms of assessment to use in practice and apply in other disciplines, such as design (Eggink & Dorrestijn, 2018). By making philosophy empirical, however, the new approaches are criticised for losing their critical and ethical qualities in the concreteness (Scharff, 2012; Winner, 1993).

A variety of initiatives to bring these qualities back after the empirical turn are proposed, together considered as an “ethical turn” (Brey, 2010; Verbeek, 2010). Eggink and Dorrestijn (2018), in line with Verbeek’s (2010) proposal of philosophical accompaniment in technology development, go even further by proposing the “practical turn” in which philosophers and designers collaborate by applying philosophical theories and methods in a design context after which the design project can lead to a better understanding of Philosophy of Technology. In other words, the designer profits from a more reflexive perspective on their designs, while the philosopher uses the design of actual things as a way to test philosophical frameworks in practice (Eggink &

Dorrestijn, 2018). The difference with both the empirical turn and the practical turn is that in Philosophy-through-Design, it is not a philosopher doing the philosophy while watching a designer design, but a designer practicing a form of tangible philosophy through the design of things. The outcome of a PtD project is thus not necessarily an abstract philosophical concept, idea or question, but a tangible artefact. PtD aims not to analyse material things in a philosophical way, but PtD explicitly intends to materialise philosophy.

Philosophy-through-Design might sound familiar to the well-known design research methodology Research-through-Design (RtD) (Faste & Faste, 2012; Findeli, 2010; Frayling, 1993) in which it is acknowledged that designed artefacts can embody an answer to a research question (Biggs, 2002; Faste & Faste, 2012). PtD can be seen as a specific way of executing the 'design' part of an RtD project. RtD, as shown in figure 2, can be described as design activity that operates as research (Faste & Faste, 2012): a general research question is answered with a design project, which in turn can form a partial answer that reflects back on the research question (Findeli, 2010). Philosophy-through-Design has a similar aim but specified for a philosophical question and offers an approach in which philosophy can inspire the design process not only as starting point but throughout the whole project. The design informs, thus, the philosophy as much as the philosophy informs the design *simultaneously*. As shown in figure 3, the philosophy and design perspectives are *interwoven* to develop further, not to a final design answer or philosophical answer, but to new questions and new perspectives.

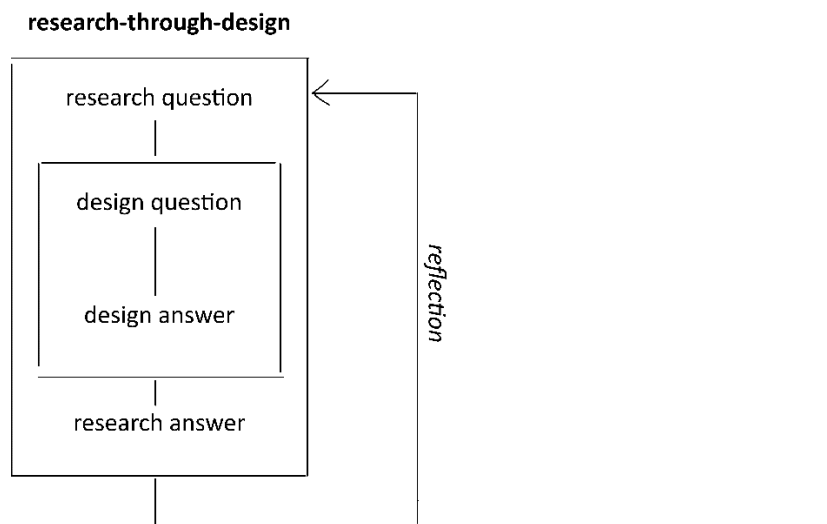


Figure 2: Schematic overview of Research-through-Design (adapted from Findeli, 2010)

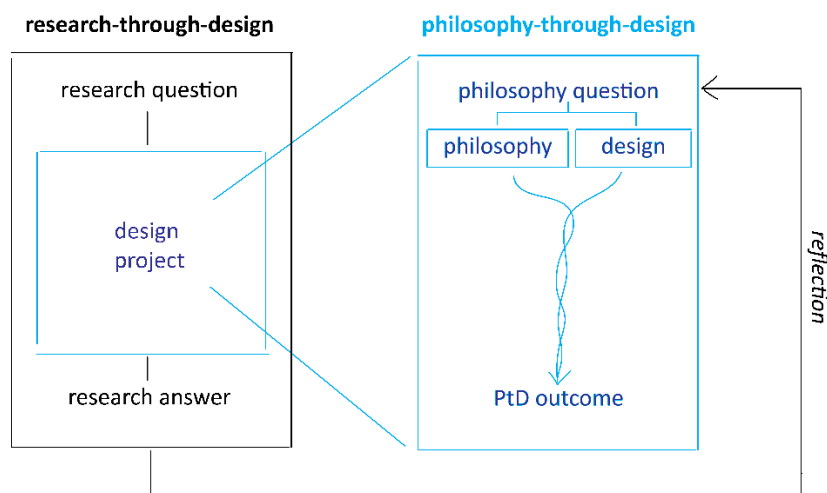


Figure 3: Schematic overview of Philosophy-through-Design in relation to RtD

Philosophical background

The design case, chosen for this PtD project, is about being-in-the-world in the digital age as inspired by the ideas of Tim Ingold (2011). Ingold is originally an anthropologist, but his thinking has transformed into a philosophy about art, architecture and anthropology, or rather a philosophy of what it means to be alive. He is influenced by many philosophers and thinkers that are associated with the idea of being-in-the-world. The term itself was introduced by the philosopher Martin Heidegger (1927), but has in different terms influenced others in the philosophical movement of phenomenology, such as Merleau-Ponty (1962), and other thinkers in the theories of embodiment (e.g. De Jaegher & Di Paolo, 2007; Suchman, 1987; Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1996). The ideas of phenomenology and embodiment have also spilled over to other disciplines such as human-computer interaction (e.g. Hollan, Hutchins, & Kirsh, 2000) and interaction design (e.g. van Dijk & Hummels, 2017; Van Dijk, van der Lugt, & Hummels, 2014). As a result, Ingold's theory about being, life and anthropology comes from concepts such as thinking through practice (Schön, 1983), the coupling of action and perception (Gibson, 1979), and skilled practice and situated actions (Suchman, 1987). Ingold then developed his own by using terms such as *wayfaring*, *weaving* and *the meshwork*.

According to Ingold, our being is a dynamic being that is always moving, learning and developing in the forcefields of its environment. The world is a *meshwork* of all the interwoven lines of life, growth and movement of all the beings and things occurring there (Ingold, 2011, pp. 63-94). It is not a platform on which beings live, rather beings emerge in a world-in-formation, along the lines of their relationships (ibid, pp. 63-75). Referring to phenomenology, consciousness is not confined in the head, but spills over into the environment along these pathways of sensory participation (ibid, pp. 51-62). In other words, Ingold talks about *weaving*: our being is woven together from all the different influences that occur in our lives (ibid, pp. 63-75). If every story would be a thread, being alive means weaving all the stories of your life together into one being. To know something, is to know its story. It is by this continuous process of following and creating stories that we acquire knowledge and live in the world. Ingold calls this trail-following *wayfaring*. *Wayfaring* requires an open attitude, improvisation, sensitivity to cues, and a capacity to respond with judgement and precision. The difference between an expert and a novice is not how much they know, but how well they are able to skilfully act in the meshwork of storied knowledge (ibid, pp. 141-175). From the concept of action-perception couplings, learning is accomplished by trying over and over again and following the stories of exemplars to copy their gestures (ibid, pp. 177-226). Therefore, the condition of being-in-the-world, to Ingold, calls for more than immersion and being involved: it calls for an openness to observe, to be active, and to be astonished by the world we inhabit (ibid, p. xii).

Based on these ideas, being-in-the-world, in this project, will refer to a way of being that is embodied, active, open-ended and situational. It is about the possession and mastery of skills to be able to react appropriately to all the influences within the flow of the process. Decisions are made unconsciously by following the traces without being paralyzed by possible consequences and having to make a decision. It means that the human is inseparable from the world in which it lives and is always moving in, reacting to and creating with the situations it is in. This conception raises an interesting question in the digital age, where new technologies shape an apparent division between online and offline practices and close off people's movements, reactions and creations from the bodily sphere. How can we understand this division? How do these two contexts relate to each other? Do they replace each other, do they augment each other or have they become so intertwined that we are alienated from and lost in understanding the world in which we live? What does the term being-in-the-world, our way of being human and our world, then mean?

Case study: being-in-the-world in the digital age

The digital age refers to a historical period in the 21st century characterized by a rapid shift to a society based on information and networks (Volti, 2014). Connection is a keyword, since anyone with any type of access to the digital world can potentially reach anyone who is similarly equipped almost instantaneously (Volti, 2014). As philosophers and designers, we may ask what the digital age actually means to the people who are living in it in their everyday lives and what an improvement or change of the digital age could, or perhaps even should, look like. In this context, the digital age points to the way people live and communicate with each other in a world that has been augmented by new digital technologies. With 'digital', we specifically refer to the invisible, complex and distributed processes that occur all around us, of which most of us can only perceive and understand small parts (Schiphorst, 2007). The hiddenness of much of the digital processes poses problems on our everyday lives such as a loss of privacy, misuse of data and jobs taken over by AI.

Nowadays, the digital world can be accessed through different interfaces, such as your smartphone, your laptop or tv. All of which have their own influence on how the world is experienced. The focus in this project will be specifically on such an interface, rather than focusing on a wide-ranging conceptual problem such as privacy or big data. The interface of the smartphone is chosen specifically, because the introduction of the smartphone marks the start of a new phase in the digital age. The smartphone is an interesting object as it is both a physical device that we carry around with us as well as an access point to what we call the digital world. In just a few years' time, it has become the dominant device with which we are digitally active (Deloitte, 2018; Kemp, 2017), changing how we go through our day to day lives, and changing the kind of digital content and digital activities that are available. In 2017, about 66% of the global population used a mobile phone and about 37% of people use social media at least once a month, of which more than 91% of them via mobile devices (Kemp, 2017). By being easy to use, small and portable, the smartphone is blurring the lines between our digital and physical practices. The average number of hours spend on the internet each day in the UK is 5h47 of which 1h48 on social media alone (Kemp, 2017). This makes the smartphone an interesting object to inspect more closely in relation to theories on embodied being-in-the-world, since it allows us to focus on the transition between the digital and non-digital and how the design influences in what manner this relation is experienced and understood.

There are many reasons why the smartphone could have become such a dominant device in society today. It carries all different kinds of tools; our clock, dictionary and more into one device. It makes it easier to stay in touch with friends and family from near and far and makes us more flexible in how we go through our daily lives. However, the extensive use of the smartphone is related to multiple negative effects regarding both mental health (e.g. Alhassan et al., 2018; Elhai, Dvorak, Levine, & Hall, 2017), and physical health (e.g. Jung, Lee, Kang, Kim, & Lee, 2016; Korpinen & Pääkkönen, 2009), affecting social skills and dependency (e.g. De-Sola Gutiérrez, Rodríguez de Fonseca, & Rubio, 2016), and influencing happiness, social connectedness and life satisfaction (e.g. Alter, 2017; Schnitzler, 2017). These problems pose an interesting problem for designers to look for solutions on how to improve the design of the smartphone to help people to be better equipped to move through a world that incorporates both digital as well as physical practices. This could be done for example by changing the physical design or adding new modes of interaction as done by Stienstra, Overbeeke and Wensveen (2011).

From the perspective of philosophy, the problems linked to smartphones pose different questions. Looking specifically from the ideas of Ingold (2011), the interface of the smartphone makes our experience of the world more ambiguous. Since the whole body is involved in our being (Ingold, 2011, pp. 15-62), how does that apply to the use of the smartphone which offers this immense non-bodily world to us? Ingold offers the example of using a saw to talk about (1) how tool use is not an operational sequence of small tasks, but of processional movements that inform the next move, (2) that using does not entail the attaching of an object to a body, but of joining a story to the appropriate gestures and (3) how the movement of tool use comes from feeling what you are doing by coupling perception and action with concentration (Ingold, 2011, pp.51-62). The question is, however, how the smartphone fits into this picture, when the design of the smartphone seems to have evolved into a more indistinguishable shape that leaves no variety in how we use and experience it. When the bodily gestures to talk to our friends, to follow the news and speak in public are all the same, and our concentration to feel the flows of movements around us, in both the physical and the digital world, is constantly challenged by notifications, sounds, vibrations, and moving images; how then, can we be in the world?

The philosophical question for this project is, thus, formulated as follows: *'What does being-in-the-world mean in a digital age dominated by smartphones?'* To translate this question into a design question, the question is reformulated so that it asks for a change in how users interact with their smartphones to understand their experience, and is posed the following: *'How to stimulate users to have more agency in being in a digital age dominated by smartphones?'* Agency in this case means, referring back to the conception of being-in-the-world by Ingold (2011): being able to make the right decision right away based on experience and skill. From these questions and the aim of PtD, the design goals in this project are to design three physical smartphone interventions that will:

- make clear the role of the smartphone in the daily lives of users
- stimulate agency in users to do what they really want to do and to be who they really want to be
- start a conversation about being, agency and the world in relation to the smartphone

The Philosophy-through-Design approach

In PtD, the design of interventions will function as both tools for thinking and traces of knowledge acquirement. Both the philosophical and design question will guide the exploration and work together through a few stages (see figure 4). The stages are (1) First Person Exploration, (2) Experience Conversations and (3) Design Conversations. In every stage, reflection plays a key role in guiding the next steps. The design researcher, to keep track of their ideas and reflections, will keep a notebook that will in the end serve as a visual trace of knowledge acquirement during the project.

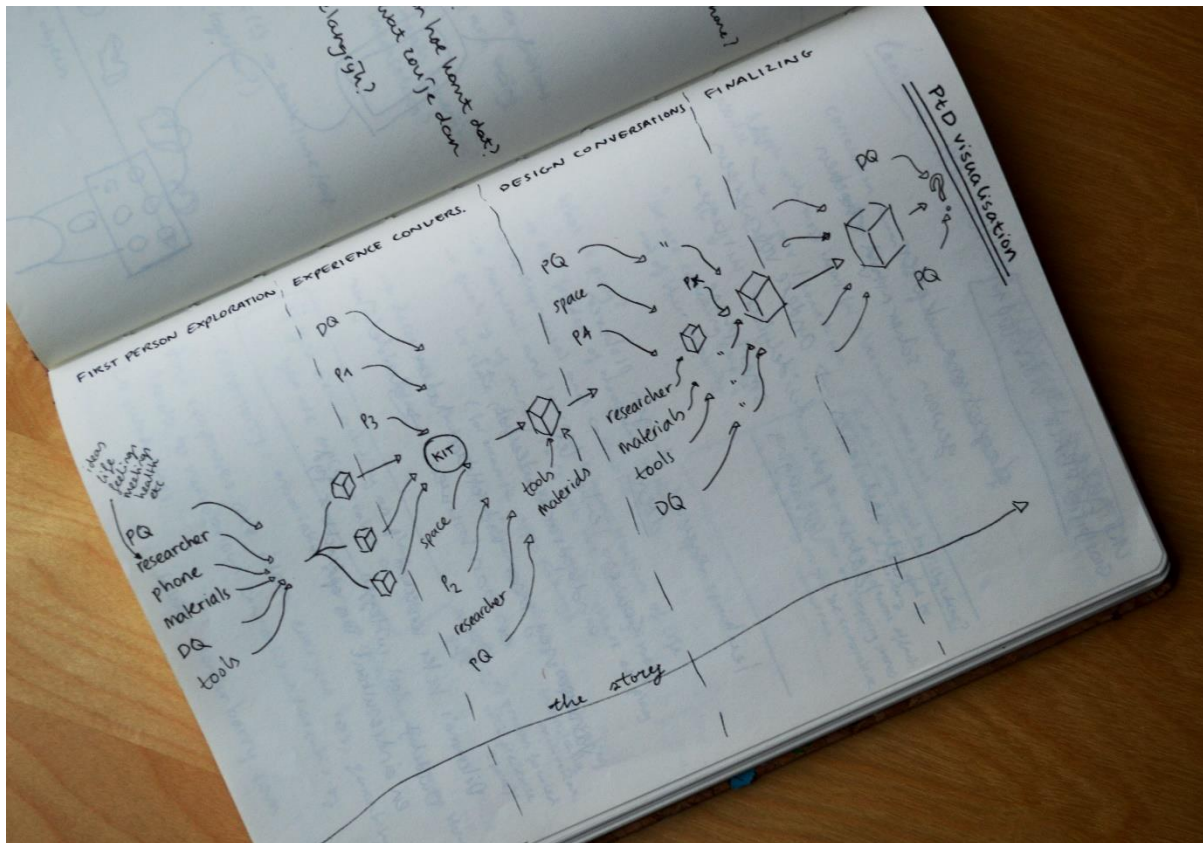


Figure 4: Schematic overview of the PtD process taken from the researchers' notebook

Stage 1: First Person Exploration

The process starts with the design researcher exploring and describing their personal felt-experiences about the philosophical question. This method is based on first person methodologies in embodied theory and somatics (Höök, 2010; Schiphorst, 2007). The method of these explorations consists of a few activities: (1) describing the personal experience, (2) designing and making interventions, (3) using the interventions, (4) describing and reflecting on the personal experience of using the interventions in regard to the design and philosophical question and (5) formulating a personal answer to the philosophical question.

The focus on individual experience is taken up specifically in first-person methodologies and somatics. In these methodologies, knowledge is accessed and constructed through the body and requires that experience be directed through awareness (Schiphorst, 2007). The body-in-motion and its felt-experience are the source for exploration and it can include an autoethnography in which the author provides a detailed description of their experience (Höök, 2010; Schiphorst, 2007). The idea is that we can learn from our own specific practices and use the qualities to transfer them into more general knowledge (Höök, 2010). In this specific project, the main design researcher will start with an autoethnography of their smartphone behaviour. The autoethnography will be supplemented with the making and using of interventions to make certain uses and aspects of the smartphone more obvious and conscious. From this autoethnography certain qualities about smartphone use can be distracted.

The *making* of artefacts, which intervene in our own habits, serves to engage the design researcher to explore their habits more in-depth. Making for exploration is a common method in the design process which is characterized by ambiguity and a lack of planning, but functions to engage the designer in a reflective dialogue to catalyse the decision process. It brings together the stories and materials to perform as incentive for understanding (Frens & Hengeveld, 2013). Hummels and Lévy (2013) reveal design not as a process of problem solving or organisation, but as a process of opening up, exploring new horizons and engaging in new situations. Through the embodied acts of making, building and experiencing prototypes, makers can exploratively facilitate access to and express meaning of the everyday to guide new directions to take. They share with Ingold (2011) that the act of making enables designers to explore the unknown, guided by their practiced intuition and sensory capabilities in a dialogue with the materials and the world around them. Thus, through describing, making and using the design researcher creates a personal answer to the questions to make certain qualities of the smartphone explicit.

Stage 2: Experience Conversations

In the second stage, the design researcher will take the third-person perspective by involving other participants by inviting them to use one intervention for a set amount of time. The interventions are handed over to the participants in a kit containing the intervention, small assignments and means to make notes. Inspiration is taken from Gaver, Dunne and Pacenti (1999), who used cultural probes to research the lives of elderly communities without dominating the conversation. They found that through the informal style of communicating and research, they were able to familiarize and connect with the communities in an appropriate manner that lead to both inspiration and grounded knowledge to base design decisions on (Gaver et al., 1999). Similarly, in Philosophy-through-Design the design researcher aims to engage with the participants to start a discussion about their smartphone use and the impact on their daily lives.

After using the kit, the design researcher will have a one-on-one conversation with the participant about the experience of using the intervention and their insights regarding their being-in-the-world in the digital age. The interventions serve in this conversation as a tool for thinking (Kirsh, 2013; van Dijk & van der Lugt, 2013) and joint sense-making (De Jaegher & Di Paolo, 2007). As recognized in the theory of distributed cognition, the body and its surroundings can be incorporated in the process of thinking (Hollan et al., 2000; Kirsh, 2013). The handling of the intervention as a 'cognitive scaffold' can lead in conversation to shared insights between participant and design researcher (Van Dijk & Van der Lugt, 2013). The interventions in the PtD process will in this way serve as objects to think, to build an understanding of their experience and start a discussion in which an answer to the philosophical question can be formed.

The reflection and analysis of the data is inspired by the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). IPA is a qualitative research approach that examines how people make sense of their personal life experiences. Offering a systematic way of analysing them makes this approach phenomenological and hermeneutic. The IPA approach is specifically interested in major life experiences that make people more aware and reflective of the significance and meaning of what is happening (Smith et al., 2009). In Philosophy-through-Design it is not a major life experience that will bring people out of their daily flow of (unconscious) experience, instead it will be an intervention that will disrupt their smartphone use leading to awareness and reflection, with which the design researcher can engage.

Stage 3: Design Conversations

In the third stage, the design researcher will iterate further on one intervention and improve it according to the results of the previous stages. Again, participants are invited to use the new intervention to fuel conversations about the design question and the philosophical ideas behind it. The discussion will guide the next step in the design process where the participants are also invited to help to improve the design together with the design researcher. In this stage, the first two stages will be brought together to create meaning through conversations, joint designing with regard to the question of being-in-the-world in the digital age.

Taken from participatory design (PD), PtD aims to use design as a method for mutual learning between participants and design researcher through reflection-in-action (Garde, 2013; Robertson & Simonsen, 2013). Important values in PD that are also applicable to PtD are (1) cooperative design, (2) equal and democratic (power)relations, (3) situation-based actions & design and (4) the use of tools and techniques to help participants (Garde, 2013). In one sentence these qualities ensure that in PtD human activity is examined in its context productively and ethically in cooperative and equal partnerships (Garde, 2013; Spinuzzi, 2005). The

difference between PD and PtD lies in the outcomes of the process, where participatory design desires to learn the aims, context and design ideas of the participants to design a solution, instead the PtD process desires to use the unfolded aims, context and design ideas to start a conversation and explore a philosophical concept.

The results of the design conversations will be discussed and reflected upon to come to an answer to the design question with a final intervention. The created interventions during the whole process together with the researchers' notebook serve as data to show the story of how the research has developed to new insights about being-in-the-world in the digital age. This story of things and insights will serve as the tangible philosophy with which philosophical ideas, questions and perspectives will be constructed for further research.

First results

At the point of writing this paper, the first stage 'First Person Exploration' has been completed by the main author. In the present and the subsequent section, the pronoun 'I' will be used to describe the subjective experiences of activities executed during PtD. During the first stage, the design researcher has analysed their own smartphone behaviour, designed three interventions (see figure 5a-c), used them and reflected on them. In figure 6, an overview of the process can be found including pictures of their researchers' notebook, an autoethnography booklet, the creation of the interventions and their use.

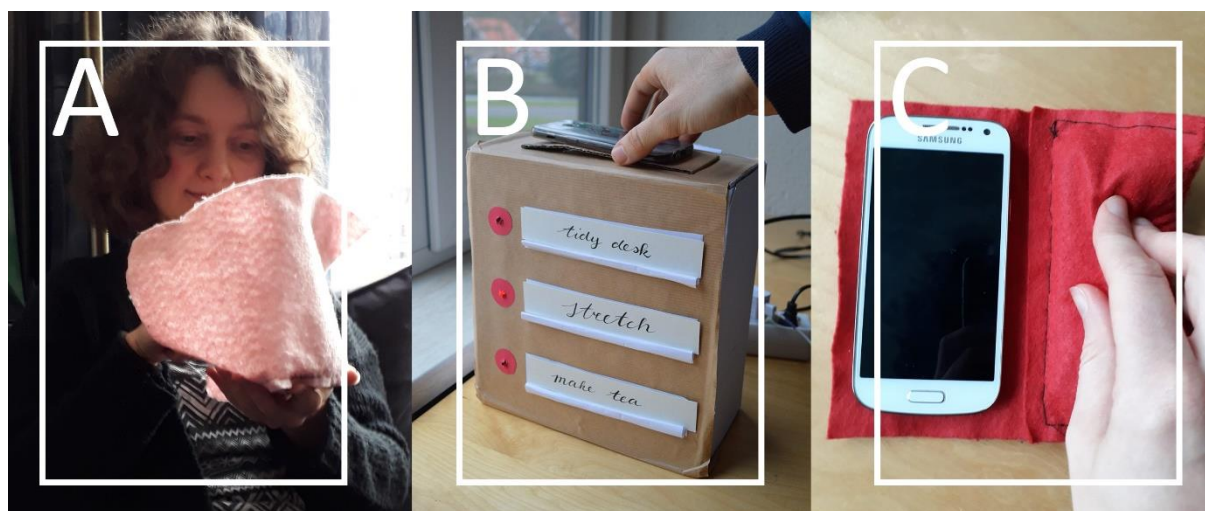


Figure 5a-c: The interventions, (a) Pink Screen, (b) De-distractionizer, (c) In-touch

The first intervention is the 'pink screen' (see figure 5a). This is a phone case made from pink felt that can be folded around the smartphone. When opening, the felt forms a screen that makes a clear division between the smartphone user and the situation they are in. It is designed to amplify the 'I am not here, but in my phone'-effect when using the smartphone, but turned out to be a message to bystanders to not disturb. The second intervention is the 'de-distractionizer' (see figure 5b). This is a machine that protects from unfiltered and distracting stimuli of the smartphone by simplifying the options of what to do without a smartphone. It uses the same casino effect as many applications to keep you interested by blinking and randomly picking a task when you put your smartphone on top of it. In the beginning it was new and funny and helped me to check my smartphone less, but I quickly found a way to hack the system, making me uncomfortably aware of my lack of agency in my smartphone use. The third and last intervention is the 'in-touch' (see figure 5c). This is a multisensory phone case that feels soft to the hands, makes sounds when you shake it and you can dig your fingers in it. It challenges the boring smartphone design by making your smartphone fun to play with in a bodily sense, and invites you to not only stay digitally in touch with others, but also to keep in touch with your different senses to build a more positive relationship to the smartphone itself. During the use of this intervention, I found, not to my dislike, a playful side of myself not only in how I played with the intervention, but also in how I engaged with my friends face-to-face.

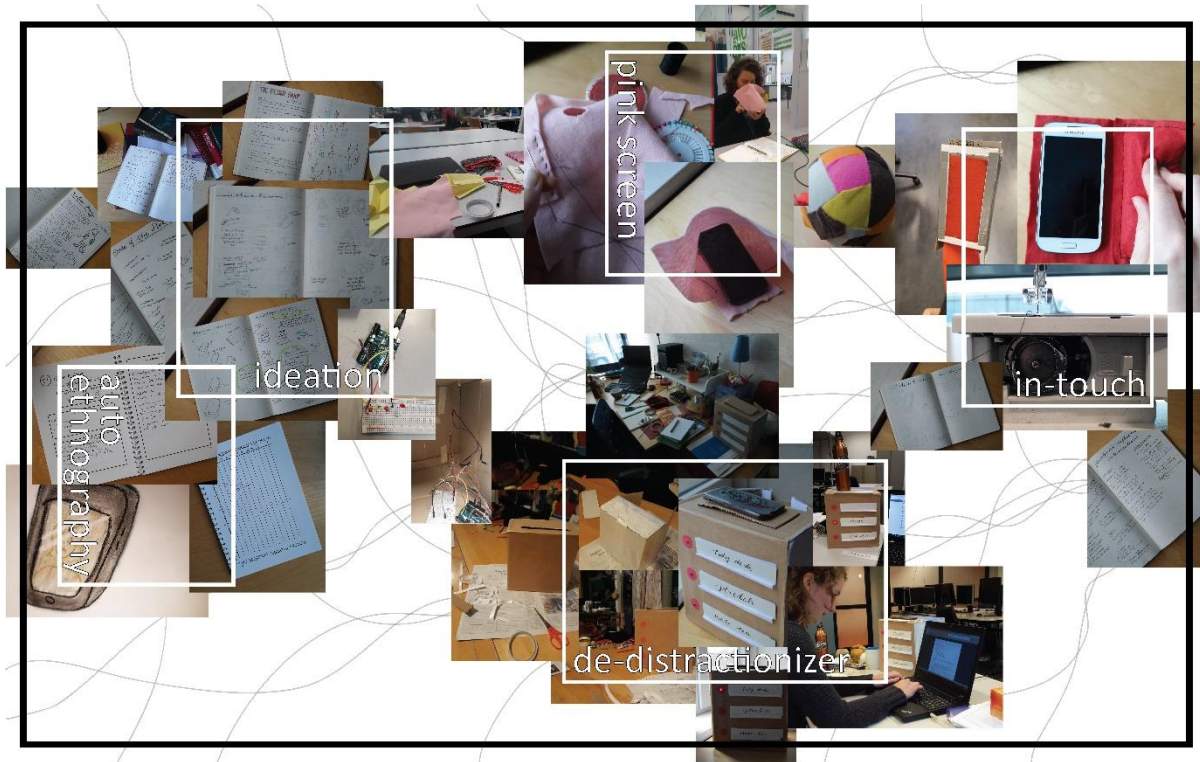


Figure 6: Overview of the process of stage 1, First Person Exploration

The personal experiences and reflections regarding the use of the interventions have been tracked in an autoethnography booklet. From this data, I found that, (1) regarding the design question, on the long term, an intervention that requires me to have self-discipline in using it, such as the de-distractionizer, will not help me to have more agency in my smartphone use. Old habits seem to take over quickly and hacking the system was a common occurrence. The intervention that actually made me feel to have more agency was the pink screen, because it helped me to focus better on the situation I was in, be it physical or digital. In light of Ingold's theory (2011), I was more tuned in to the current situation to be able to react appropriately to subtle cues to follow what is going on. Regarding the philosophical question (2), I realised that my being-in-the-world is a constant paradox. I am attentive of everything at the same time, but as a result do not have any real attention for the present moment. The digital seems to be embodied in me, while my being in the digital is disembodied. As a result, my online identity is filtered to what can be digitized and does not feel like me, but is at the same time shaped by the unfiltered stimuli and practices from the digital world. Overall, it seems that my world and my role in it are overwhelmingly vague, and making sense of it has become a full time job that distracts me from actually being attuned to the moment. My being-in-the-world, in opposition to what Ingold describes (2011), is in the digital age, thus, closed by an abundance of unfiltered cues and scattered attention, so I am less open to be astonished by the world.

Discussion

The first stage of Philosophy-through-Design showed how philosophy and design were interwoven to both inform the process simultaneously. By actually using and reflecting on the designs as first user, I found new problems, ideas and questions that made me return to philosophy. When I was using the pink screen, for example, with which I had intended to make a clear division between the online and the offline world, it turned out that many people asked me if it was designed to protect my privacy. These comments did not only make me realise that the design did indeed seem to make smartphone use secretive (a *design reflection*), but it also stimulated me to dive again into the *philosophical background* to see if a connection between privacy and being-in-the-world could be found to base further exploration on in the following design stages.

By designing and making the interventions, I came to understand the theory in another light. I noticed how the different ideas, materials and people were acting as different threads that weave together into this project. During the process, I started to create a meshwork of my project (see figure 7) to understand how my

development had travelled, or to use Ingoldian terms: *wayfared*. Ingold (2011, p. 240) would claim that a researcher is at any time following traces from the past and projects themselves into the future along lifelines, forming their own self along the way. An example is that the creations of the interventions were for a great part influenced by the available materials, tools and skills I had to learn. At some point, the sewing machine broke and I had to find another way to create an intervention, which changed the design and therefore also how I approached the question of being-in-the-world. In many design projects, however, the final design is often presented as the perfect embodiment of a function or idea, when in fact it came into being as a weaving pattern of different ideas, available materials, tools, experience, etc. Philosophy-through-Design makes this weaving of different influences more explicit, to be philosophized about, and is in that way also inspired by Ingold's ideas of being-in-the-world and knowledge acquisition based on exemplars, experience and mastery of skills.

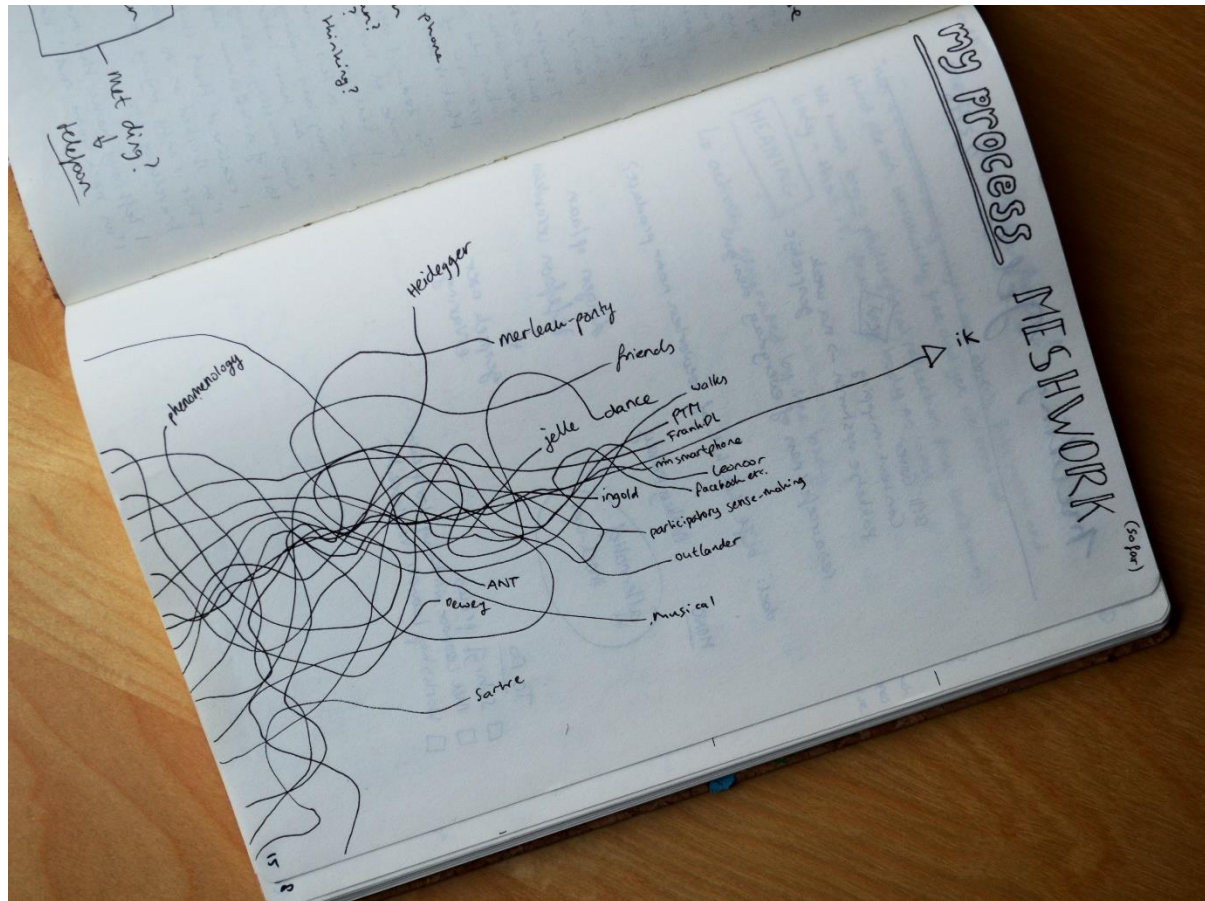


Figure 7: 'My process meshwork (so far)' taken from the researchers' notebook

Limitations

A limitation one could offer to PtD is how the design of the interventions, and with that the personal opinions and abilities of the designer, could determine the course of the philosophical exploration, alongside their already existing explicit influence and experience as a first user of the interventions. However, the idea that academic endeavours and science as a whole could be objective, is exactly the point that PtD, in accordance with Ingold's thesis (2011), tries to overcome. Science and knowledge building are more akin to a form of craftsmanship, where the researcher joins the flows of materials, people and circumstances to compare, understand, describe and move with the different ways of being (Ingold, 2011, pp. 226-240). The specific design will always influence the course of the project, but that does not have to be a problem. The involvement of other people in PtD is, therefore, a way for the design researcher to engage with other opinions. It is, thus, of importance that the design researcher, independent of their own beliefs, opens themselves to the world they study.

Related to this point is the question if PtD can actually be called to be a form of philosophy. Philosophy is in this project, similarly, not seen as an objective academic endeavour, but as a personal philosophy, or in other words: a way of life that could be practiced by anyone. This view on philosophy refers back to the Hellenistic and Roman eras where philosophy meant a mode of existing-in-the-world (Hadot, 1995). An associated view can also be found in the ideas of Dewey (1917), the father of the philosophical school of pragmatism. Dewey acknowledged that one would never be able to realize complete wisdom as a definitive state or to find the real truth, and so philosophy should abandon the project of finding certainty and create theories, but instead to practice philosophy from the everyday so it can guide actions and ways of life at every moment with participation of the layman (Dewey, 1917). Philosophy as a way of life, in accordance with the ideas of Ingold (2011), is not about studying philosophy, but it is about living it (Hadot, 1995).

Looking back, however, at Ingold's presentations of what a study from within the world (Ingold, 2011, p. xi) would look like, it seems to remain limited to a number of examples (such as sawing through a plank (ibid, pp. 51-53)) and various drawings in between the lines of text. Philosophy-through-Design aims to be the first step into the direction where Ingold's ideas will be put to the test by working them out in a more considerable design project. Further research could look into the possibilities of philosophers using PtD, in their own way, to practice a tangible philosophy in the world. This project about being-in-the-world in the digital age is, however, an example of what such a project could look like from the perspective of a designer, by using the ideas of wayfaring, stories, weaving and embodied situational practices to *do* philosophy.

Conclusion

The Philosophy-through-Design approach, as developed during the case study about being-in-the-world in the digital age, proposes a relevant method in which design can function as a way to materialise philosophy. Or in other words, to bring abstract philosophical inquiries back into the everyday where an actual change can be made. By combining both philosophy and design into one approach, both can benefit from describing, understanding and proposing the ways in which technological solutions interact with the societies in which these are used. The results of the first stage of PtD show a promising process that weaves together observation, creation and reflection in the design and use of smartphone interventions. In the following stages, the approach will be taken into practice even more by involving various smartphone users to further explore the question of being-in-the-world in the digital age. In conclusion, Philosophy-through-Design seems promising as a method for designers to practice a tangible philosophy by design.

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