

Easy Reading

Handbook for joint research with
peer researchers



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1. Introduction



The Easy Reading project

In the **Easy Reading** project, people with learning difficulties research and develop together with developers and researchers.

This is also known as inclusive research and development.

Together they want to develop a program that makes the Internet easier for everyone.

The researchers with learning difficulties are also called peer researchers.

Peer researchers know best what help they need to better understand a website.

They are involved in the project right from the start and can share their wishes, problems and ideas.

The peer researchers help that the **Easy Reading program** is easy to use and that it really helps to understand websites more easily.



The peer researchers test the **Easy Reading program**.

Then they tell the developers

what is good and

what can be improved.

There are three peer researcher teams:

- Dart (Sweden)
- Proqualis (Austria)
- PIKSL (Germany)

2. Joint research



2.1 The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states in Article 32 (1a):

The aim is to ensure that "[...] international cooperation, including international development programmes, is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities".

This means people with disabilities should be able to participate in international projects.



2.2 What does research mean?

In research, researchers take a close look at one problem.

The Easy Reading project looks at the following problem, for example:

Some websites are difficult for people with learning difficulties to understand.

The researchers investigate

- What exactly is the problem?
- What can be changed?
- What can be done even better?

Sometimes something new is invented.
That is also research.

2.3 What does joint research mean?

Joint research means that:

people with learning difficulties work together with researchers and developers on one thing [3,4].

All together are one research team.

This is also called inclusive research.

People with learning difficulties know the problems people have on the Internet and know best what kind of help they need.

They are experts in their own field.

That is why they are also called co-researchers or peer researchers.

All opinions in the research team are important.

No one has more to say than the others.

People work together at eye level.

2.4 Who can do research?

Everyone can do research.

For example:

- Individuals of the target group
- People with learning difficulties
- People in an organisation or self-help group for people with learning difficulties
- Persons of the target group who already are trained as co-researcher or peer researcher

3. Peer- Researcher



3.1 What's a peer researcher?

Peer researchers are familiar with the problem that is being researched.

They are familiar with the problem because they have the same problem.

That's why they understand other people who have the same problem best.

For example, in the **Easy Reading** project:

- The peer researchers themselves have difficulties on the Internet.
They ask and observe on themselves:
What help do I need to understand or navigate something better?
- They also ask other people with learning difficulties:
What difficulties do you have on the Internet?
What help do you need on the Internet?
- They try out the solutions found and discuss together with the developers what other solutions there are.

3.2 When and why are peer researchers needed?

Peer researchers are needed

to better understand a problem.

Peer researchers tell researchers and developers

what they need.

They are important to find a good solution to existing

problems.

For example

Peer researchers in the **Easy Reading** project say

what kind of help people with learning disabilities

need on the Internet.

The researchers and developers then search for solutions

together with the peer researchers.

They are one research team

The research team tests and evaluates all solutions together.

3.3 What else do peer researchers do?

In the Easy Reading project, the peer researchers inform the developers and researchers when in the program:

- A function doesn't work so well.
- A function should be changed

They suggest possible solutions or improvements.

The developers listen and change the functions in the **Easy Reading program**.

Then the peer researchers test the program again.

Later, the peer researchers test the program together with other people with learning difficulties.

The peer researchers are also involved in writing the research report.

3.4 What are the tasks of research teams in the project?

All 3 teams help with the following tasks:

- Creation of a wish list (requirement analysis)
- Implementation and adaptation of research and analysis methods

But each team also has its own tasks.

Proqualis (Austria)

- Development and adaption of research and analysis methods
- Eye-tracking
- Easy language customization

PIKSL (Germany)

- Development and adaption of research and analysis methods
- Evaluation

Dart (Sweden)

- Recruitment adjustment
- Evaluation

4. Preparations



4.1 How can you find peer researcher?

There are many ways in which peer researchers can be selected.

For example, the researchers and developers can:

- Use a questionnaire
- Do an interview
- Or do a workshop to get to know each other.

The researchers and developers ask the peer researchers:

- Are you interested in participating in this project?
- What experiences have you made with the project topic yourself?
- What are you especially good at?

This way, developers and researchers can get to know the peer researchers.

But the peer researchers should also get to know the Researchers and developers.

4.2 How can you inform about the project?

Before people with learning difficulties can participate as peer researchers, they must be informed.

The information must be simple and easy to understand.

Information must be provided about:

- the planned project
- the topic of research
- the aims and conditions of the work as a peer researcher.

A conversation is particularly well suited to provide information.

It is important that the peer researchers receive all information in writing.

4.3 Who can work as a peer researcher?

A peer researcher should be interested in the project.

She or he is informed about the work in the project.

Afterwards he can sign the consent

that she or he wants to participate.

This is also called informed consent.

This is important:

- Participation is voluntary.

The peer researchers can say at any time

"I don't want to participate anymore."

That's all right.

- The peer researchers have the right to decide for themselves, which data are published, e.g. which pictures of them can be seen on the Internet. The privacy and security of all project participants must be respected.

4.4 What is my responsibility as a peer researcher?

In the research project, peer researchers take responsibility for themselves, the other project participants and the project

Taking responsibility means that everyone:

- can rely on each other
- does their tasks well
- adheres to deadlines and agreements
- participates in meetings.

4.5 Informed Consent for the Easy Reading Project

The informed consent

This is a declaration of consent
that all participants have to sign.

Before you sign
you have to know and understand the details
of the research project **Easy Reading**.

The informed consent is a prerequisite
for the participant
as a peer researcher within the project.

Please read this writing carefully before you sign!

What is the Project Easy Reading about?

Many people cannot understand
the information on the internet.

They find it difficult:

- Because they cannot read well
- Or they are slow in reading
- Or quickly lose overview
- Sometimes the words are also difficult to understand

In the Project **Easy Reading** peer researchers and developers research how to help people to a better understanding of the internet.

For example:

- We ask questions concerning problems on the internet.
- We look for new devices on the internet.
- We test these new devices.

Your cooperation

Participation in this project is voluntary.

Your personal data

People who want to take part in this project allow the use and collection of personal data.

For example personal information:

- Name, gender, age
- Or questions about using the computer
- Or footage of personal discussions, pictures and videos

Your name will not be used public.

But pictures of you can be shown.

Each participant can revoke this permission at any time.

You are allowed to get to know,

which of your data within the project are saved or being used.

You are allowed to delete or put them right,

In doing so you have no disadvantages.

The informed consent

Agreement:

I agree to participate
in the Research Project Easy Reading.

I provide my data,  ☐ YES ☐ NO

included pictures,  ☐ YES ☐ NO

included videos of me

(place, date)

(signature)

(if necessary, signature legal representative)

4.6 Which rules exist in research?

There are six rules for researching with other people.

The rules apply to everyone who participates in the project, peer researchers, researchers and developers.

The rules should be discussed again and again by the research team in different situations.

This way the rules can be better understood and remembered.

1. Discretion

Another word for discretion is confidentiality.

This means not everything that is done in the project can be told to other people.

For example:

Peer researcher Heinz talks about his problems on the Internet.

Then I am not allowed to tell my friends about Heinz problems at home
I behave discreetly.

2. Honesty

You're honest when you tell the truth.

For example:

I feel overwhelmed as a peer researcher because I have to do too many tasks.

Then I tell the others:

"I feel that's too many tasks."

I am honest.

3. Promptness

Promptness means to speak one's mind clearly.

For example:

One researcher says that user tests will start soon.

But I need more preparation time.

Then I tell the person directly:

"I need more preparation time."

4. Trust

Trust means that you can rely on others.

For example:

I trust that the other members of the team will do their job as well as possible.

5. Polite manners

For joint work it is important that everyone is friendly to each other.

For example:

When a lot of people work together, you sometimes don't like everybody or

you get angry about a person or

you are in a bad mood.

Polite manners mean to stay friendly

and not to insult anyone.

6. Helpfulness

Helpfulness means helping others,

when you see that they need help.

For example:

I know that a peer researcher cannot read.

I offer him my help,

to read the text to him.

I show helpfulness.

5. Literature

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