



PROJECT REPORT

LONELINESS

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EXPERIENCE DESIGN

Interactions and Environments
Prof. Kaja Tooming Buchanan
Spring 2019

THEORIES



John Dewey, 1934.
Having An Experience

Erving Goffman, 1979.
Facial Engagement

Clark E. Moustakas, 1961.
Loneliness

Ben Lazare Mijuskovic, 2012.
Loneliness in Philosophy, Psychology, and literature

de Jong Gierveld J, 1987.
Developing and testing a model of loneliness

TEAM MEMBERS



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Design History and
Theory

M.A.



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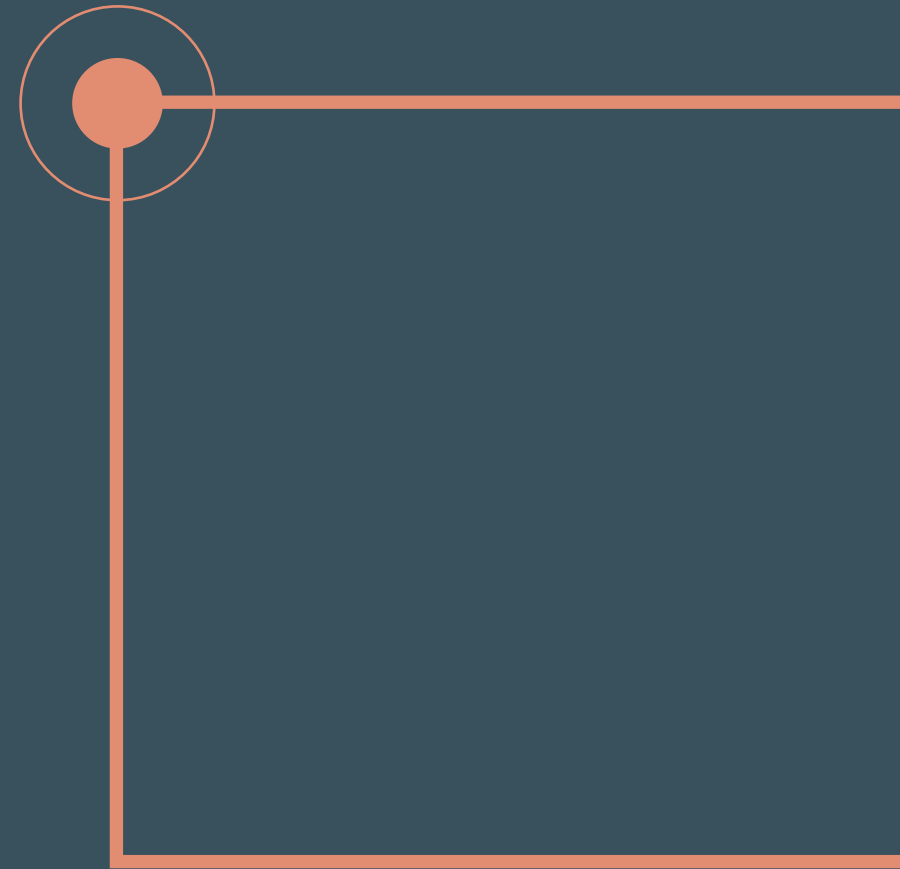
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Schwäbisch Gmünd



INTRODUCTION



The following research was carried out as part of the Experience Design course of Prof. Kaja Tooming Buchanan. The group started from the analysis of a poem on loneliness by Li Bai and through the application of the theory about the experience by John Dewey and the theory interactions by Ervin Goffman. From the analysis of the poem, it was possible to define the concept of Loneliness and its declinations. Through the Loneliness Concept Map, it was possible to determine the primary user profile: the elderly in unfamiliar situations and their influence on secondary and tertiary user profiles. Through interviews and direct observations we collected information, then translated through the Issue Map into interpretations, analyses, and conclusions that led to the formulation of a problem statement.

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EXECUTIVE RESEARCH SUMMARY

Nowadays, population migration changes the Chinese traditional family structure. A large number of young people move to big cities for further study or a better job, especially in Shanghai. Some young people invite their parents to live with them in the new city. Most of these immigrant elderly shoulder the responsibility to take care of their grandchildren. However, they are lonely in the new city somehow.

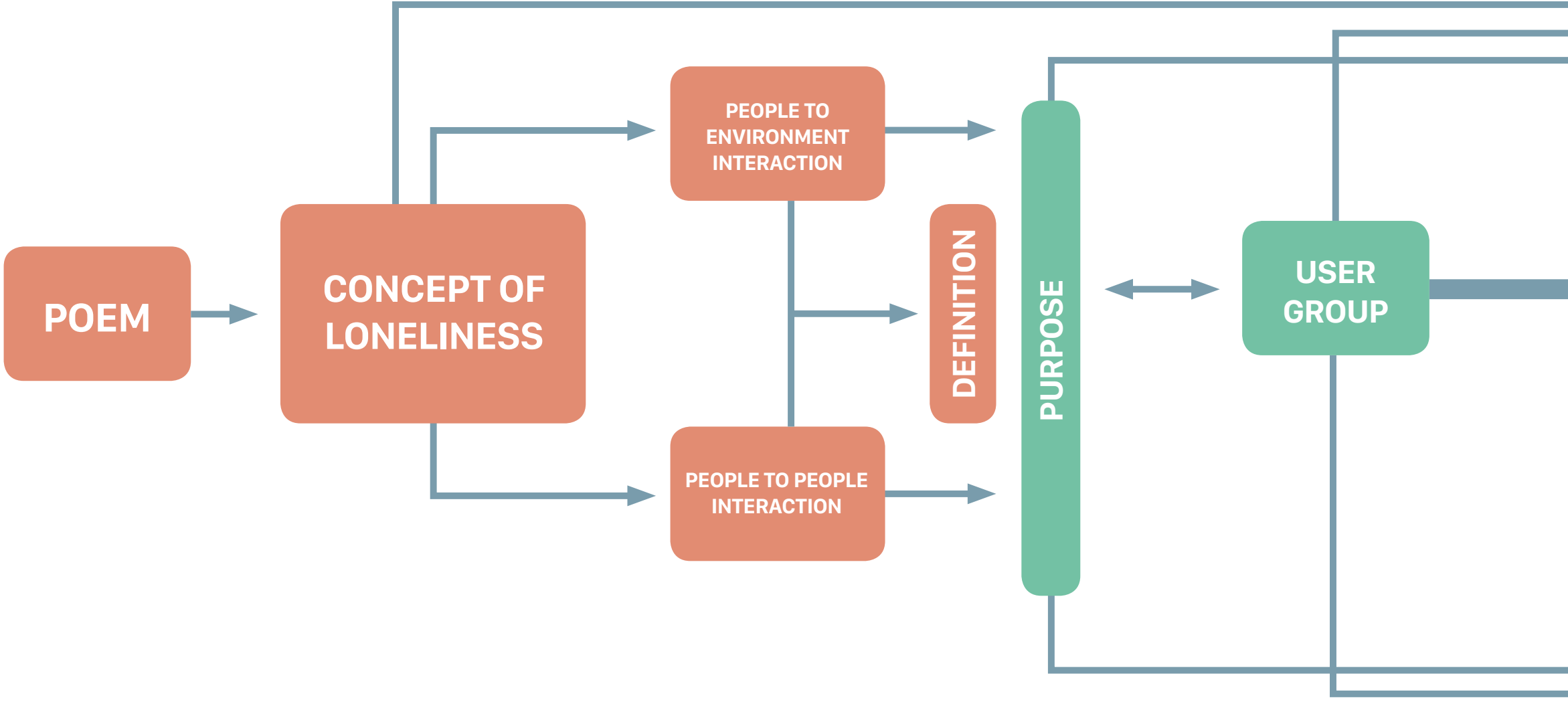
In this project, we focus on this group of the elderly. With the purpose to understand what triggers their loneliness in the unfamiliar environment, we research their interaction between different people and the environment. We get this information:

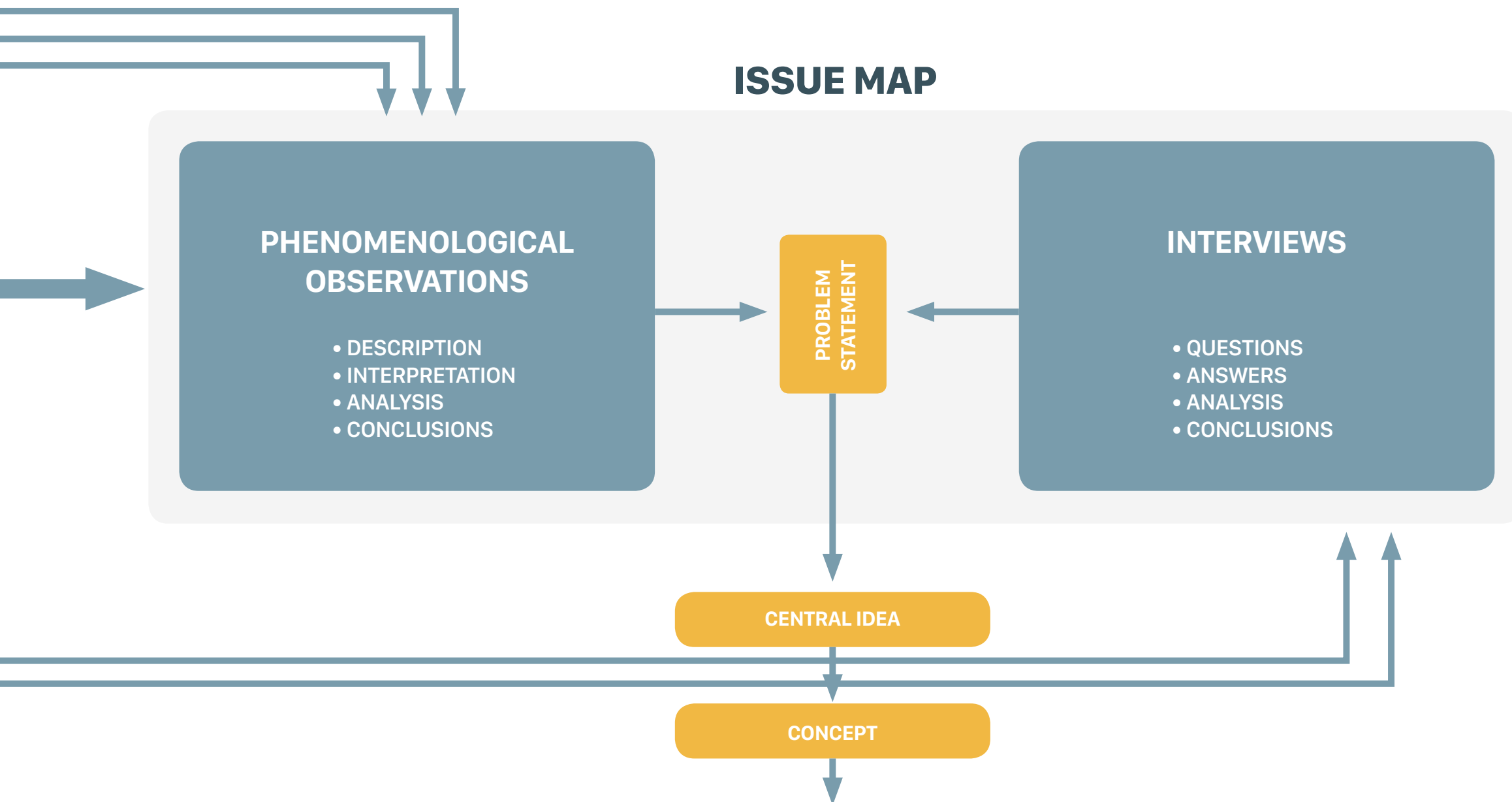
On the one hand, because these immigrant elderly may have different cultural background from local people. All of these cultural gaps become an obstacle for the elderly to social interaction with local residents.

On the other hand, looking after grandchildren needs patience and responsibility, which limit their freedom and lead to a monotonous life. They nearly have no time to take part in social activities and interact with people.

Thus, the reason why they are lonely is the lack of desirable interaction in an unfamiliar environment. We also develop some initial idea to help them get involved in the new community and build relationships with others, hoping to relieve their loneliness.

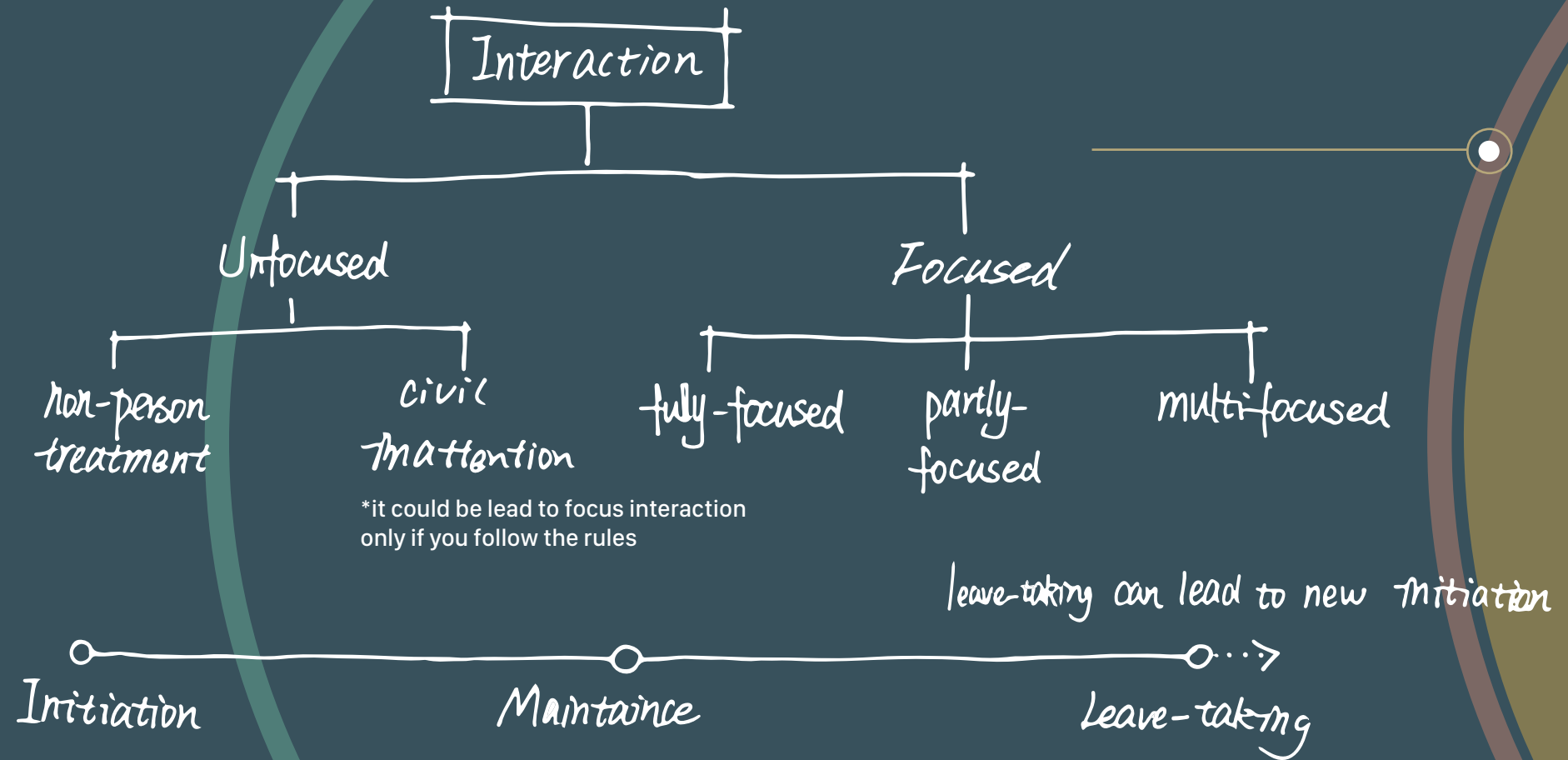
Theories of interaction by J. Dewey and E. Goffman





GOFFMAN

people to people interaction



live creature ↔ environment

interaction

Experience

"inchoate experience"

because of

- extraneous interruption
- inner lethargy

"an experience"

- Such an experience is a whole
- individual quality + self-sufficiency

Manner

Material

Form

Purpose

Material of Form

Unifying IDEA

emotional qualities

Aesthetic Experience

signs of symbols

Intellectual Experience

overt doing

Practical Experience

emotion is a glue to connect them together

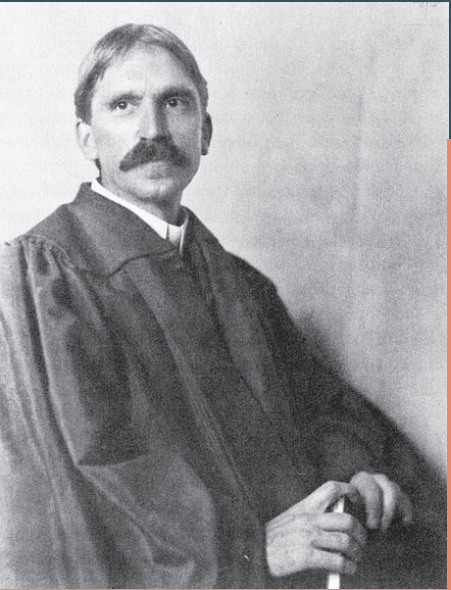
Inception

Development

Fulfillment

DEWEY

people to environment interaction



LONELINESS



PURPOSE



To understand what triggers loneliness in the elderly in unfamiliar situations.

THE POEM

DRINKING ALONE UNDER THE MOON

[Tang]Li Bai

In amongst flowers with a bottle of wine
I drink alone for there is no one close by.
I raise my chalice to invite the shining moon,
The moon casts me a shadow and we have a triad.

The moon never learns to drink,
My shadow absent-mindedly follows me.
Nevertheless I have them around me,
Moments should be enjoyed as they be.

I sing and the moon lingers,
I dance and my shadow whirled under.
In my sober moments we rejoiced together,
It is a company no longer once I am drunk.

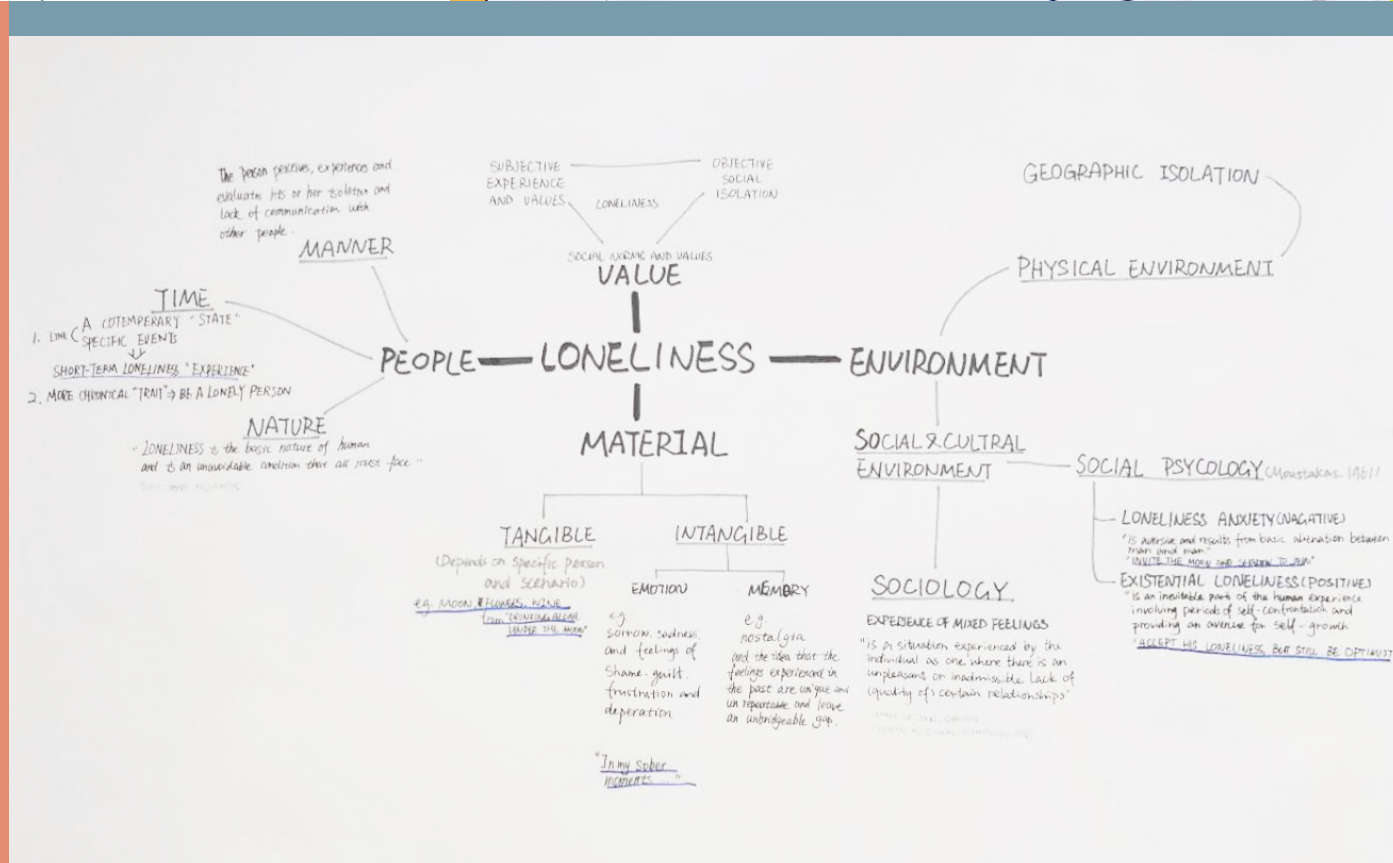
Such fellowship shall last despite our parted ways,
When we shall come together again is up to the remote heavens above.

月下独酌
---李白

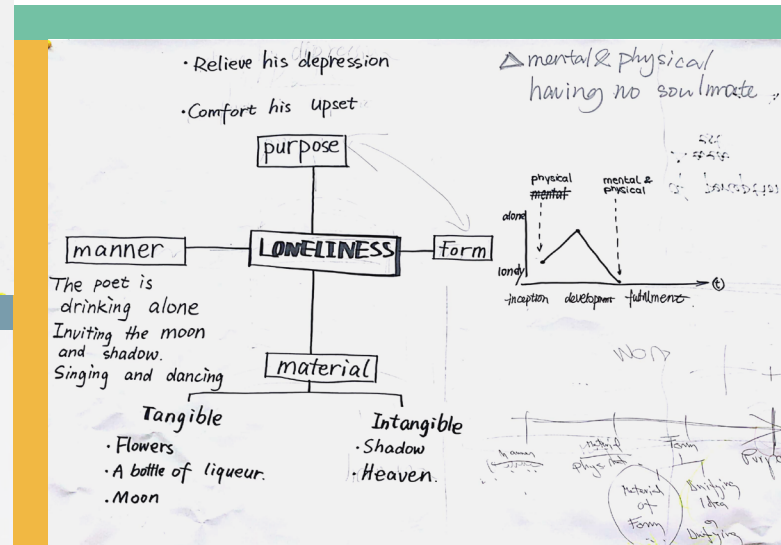
花间一壶酒，独酌无相亲。
举杯邀明月，对影成三人。
月既不解饮，影徒随我身。
暂伴月将影，行乐须及春。
我歌月徘徊，我舞影零乱。
醒时同交欢，醉后各分散。
永结无情游，相期邈云汉。



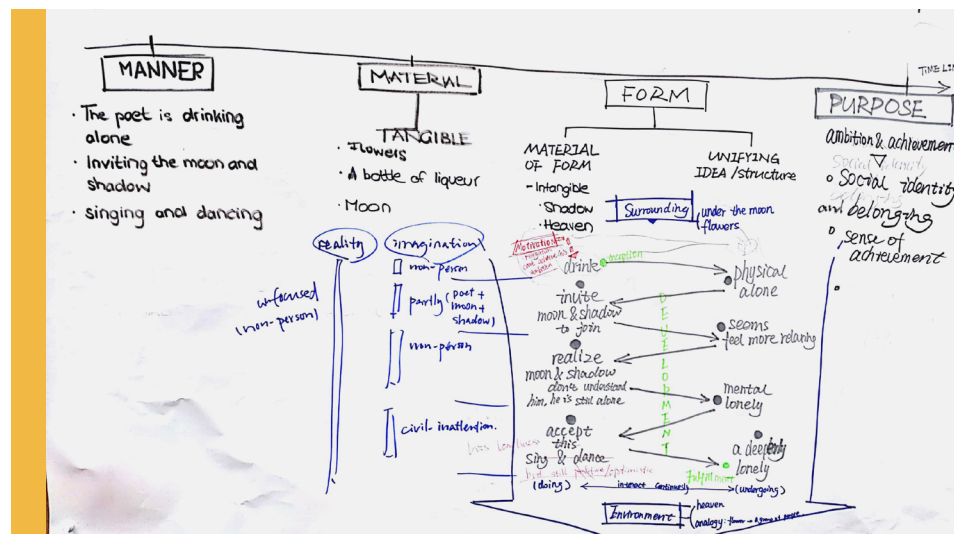
1. Final Concept map of Loneliness. This map helped us to define the concept of Loneliness



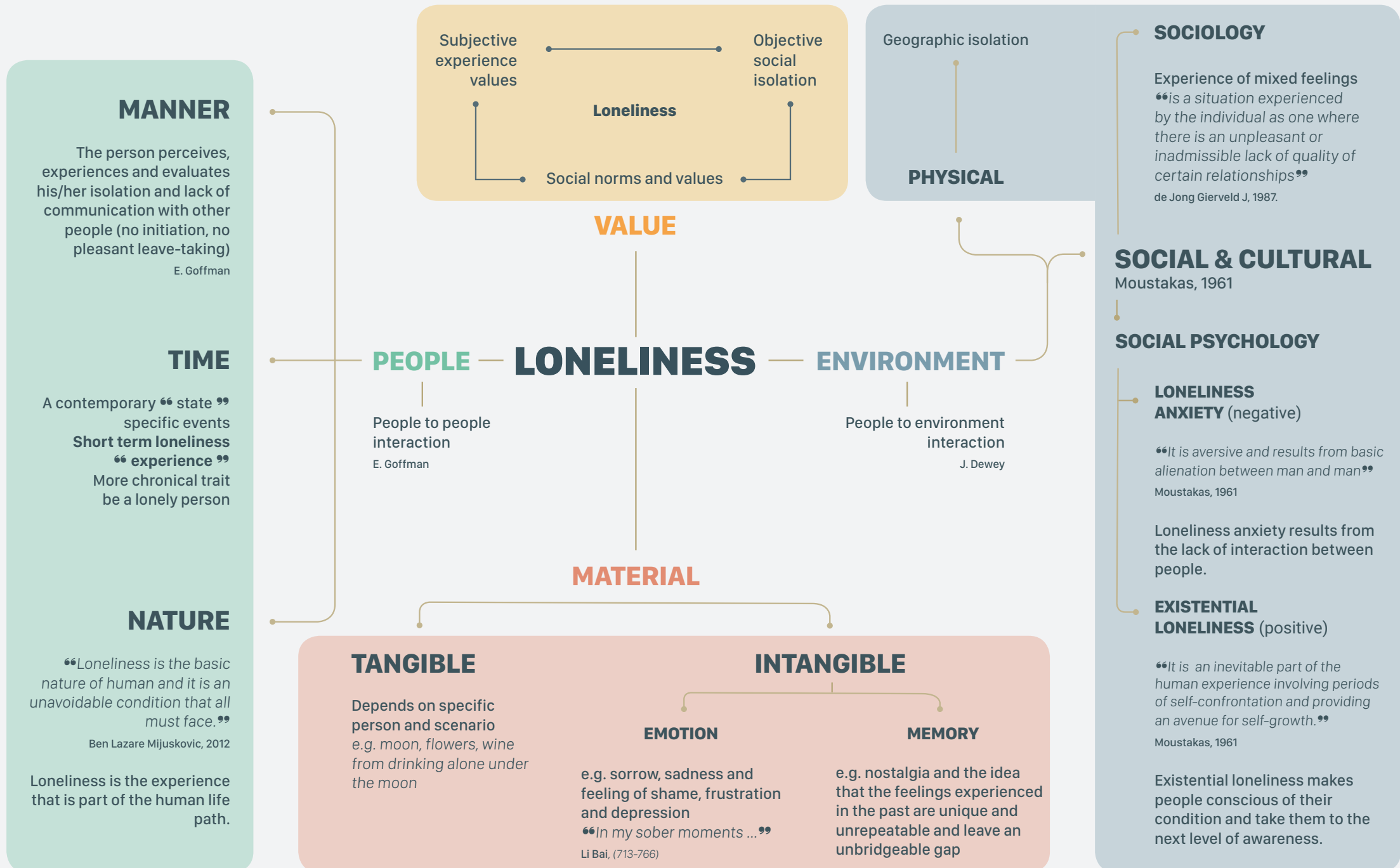
2. Second version of the Concept Map of the poem with the theory of J. Dewey



3. First draft of the Concept map combined with the poem by Li Bai „Drinking alone under the moon“.



CONCEPT MAP



LONELINESS



DEFINITION


Loneliness is an inchoate experience affected by negative emotions caused by lack of social interaction that a person or group desire.



LONELINESS



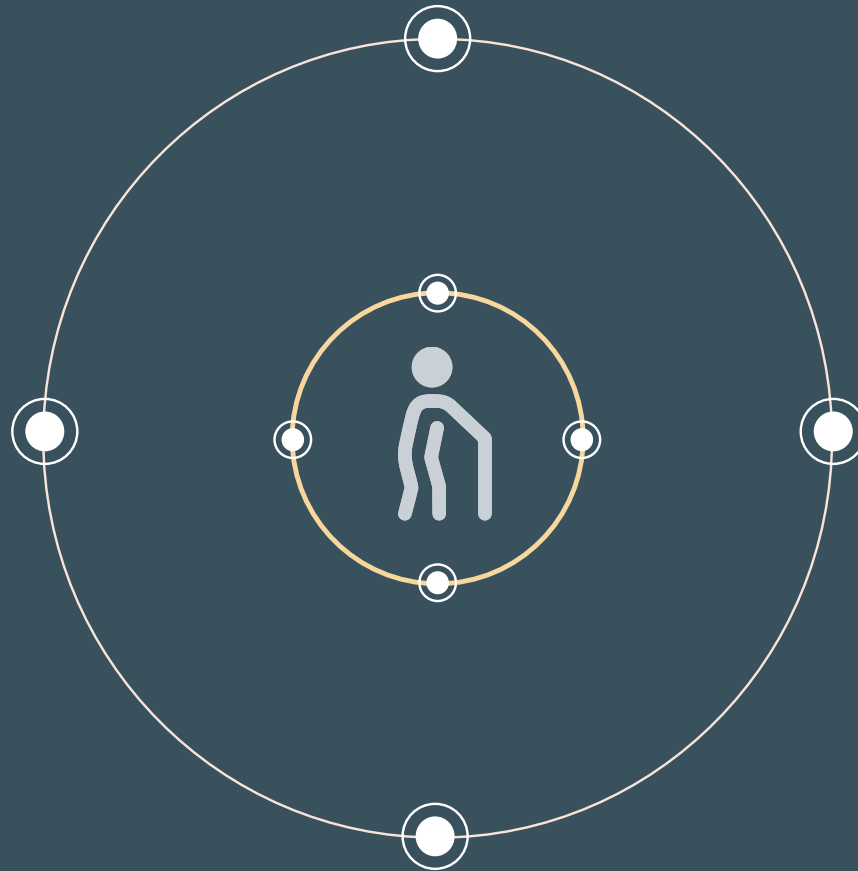
USER PROFILE



A detailed description of users' attributes that will help to understand who you are building your product for, and will help you when recruiting for future usability activities.

Catherine Courage, Kathy Baxter, 2005

USER PROFILE



PRIMARY

- Elderly in unfamiliar environment



SECONDARY

- Children
- Grandchildren
- Doctors



TERTIARY

- New community
- Neighbourhood
- Elderly in the same situation

DEFINITION

Loneliness is an inchoate experience affected by negative emotions caused by lack of social interaction that a person or a group desire.



USER PROFILE

- Language barrier**
Young generation - Elderly
City language - Countryside
- Different Mind-set**
 - Other experiences
 - Own comfort zone
- Depend from other people**
 - Family
 - Friends
- Decrease sense of identity and achievement**
- Different speed of learning**
- Disease, weaken body Living alone**

LONELINESS OF ELDERLY

PRIMARY - ELDERLY IN UNFAMILIAR ENVIRONMENT

They are living far away from hometown hard to to adapt to new environment and build new relationship with new people

- chinese tradition
- one-child policy
- taking care for children and grandchildren

- Gap of generation**
Overwhelmed by new technology
Want to keep up traditional life (conservative)
- High prices of houses:**
Selling out old houses to help children to buy their own one -> they have to live with them
- Disease:**
Moving to one-tier city for better medical care
- Job**
Finding new jobs after being retired
- Technology**
Difficult to learn the usage

SECONDARY

Doctors Grandchildren Children

People around that are affected by the behaviour of the primary person. They feel directly the consequences.

Relatives New colleagues

TERTIARY

New community Other elderly which are in the same situation

People who are affected by the system.

New boss New neighbours

PURPOSE

To understand what triggers loneliness in the elderly in unfamiliar situations.

USER PROFILE

PRIMARY

ELDERLY IN AN UNFAMILIAR CITY

The elderly who move to a new city and take care for their children/grandchildren.

Age: 50+
Gender: Both male and female
Location: Shanghai
Hometown: Everywhere in China except Shanghai
Family: living with family members
Education: No specific limitations
Income: 2000-8000RMB
System: operation of production shouldn't be complex for the elderly

SECONDARY

ELDERLY'S CHILDREN

Age: No specific limitations
Gender: Both male and female
Location: Shanghai
Job: No specific limitations
Family: living with family members
Education: No specific limitations
Income: No specific limitations
Experience: Adaption to modern society

TERTIARY

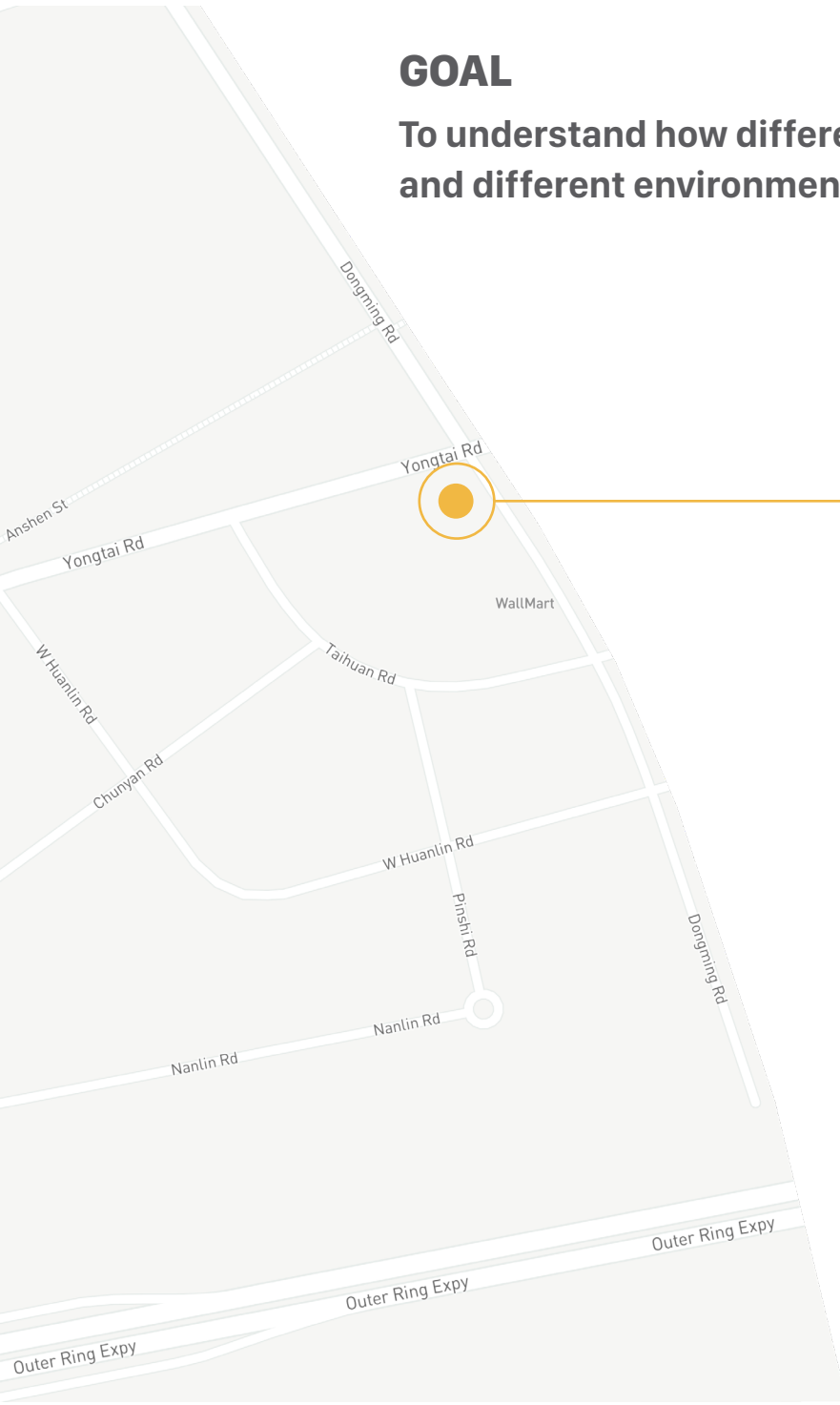
NEIGHBORHOOD

Age: No specific limitations
Gender: Both male and female
Location: Shanghai
Family: living with family members or not
Education: No specific limitations
Job: No specific limitations
Income: No specific limitations

PHENOMENOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

GOAL

To understand how different people interact with each other and different environments.



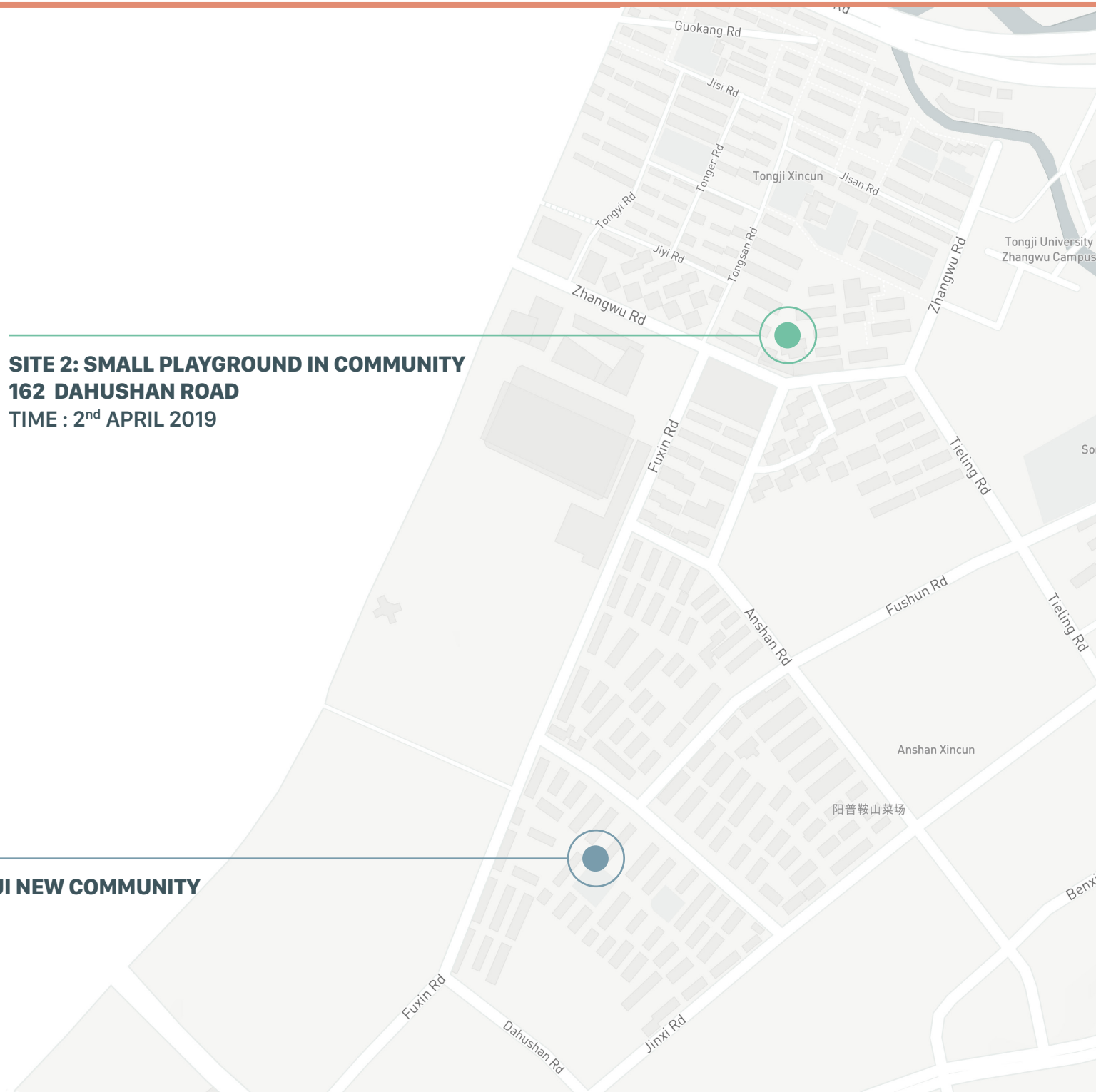
SITE 1: GYMBOREE CHILDREN EDUCATION CENTER AT PUDONG NEW DISTRICT
TIME : 31ST MARCH 2019



SITE 2: SMALL PLAYGROUND IN COMMUNITY
162 DAHUSHAN ROAD
TIME : 2nd APRIL 2019



SITE 3: SMALL GARDEN AT TONGJI NEW COMMUNITY
TIME : 2nd APRIL 2019





INTERVIEWS

GOAL

To understand how the elderly interact with their family members and others during their daily life.



Name: Bao
Gender: Female
Age: 65
Birthplace: Shanghai

Q: "If there are the elderly who move from their hometown to Shanghai to take care of their grandchildren in this community?"

A: "Yes, I met them a while ago. I took my grandchild to Hailun Park to play children's slide and saw they were playing there too. And we chatted with each other. They told me that some residents would despise them and wouldn't like to talk with them. But I think local people in Shanghai are changing. The mutual relationship between people depends on each other. We need to understand them because they made their contribution to their children like us."

"有的，我刚才还看见了。我之前带我们家孩子去海伦公园玩也碰到很多带孩子的外地老人。他们说很多本地人都不愿意和他们说话。但我认为上海本地人也是在变的。现在大家的距离没有那么远了。大家都是为带孩子，没有什么区别。"



Name: Xu
Gender: Male
Age: 72
Birthplace: Shanghai

Q: "Do you contact with these immigrant elderly?"

A: "No. I didn't play with them."

"我不和他们玩。"

Q: "Do the immigrant elderly have the similar lifestyle like you?"

A: "No, they live with their children and need to take care of their grandchildren the whole week."

"不，他们大部分和他们的子女住在一起，他们没有房子。"



Name: Li
Gender: Female
Age: 68
Birthplace: Shanghai

Q: "We wonder if they cannot adapt to this new community?"

A: **"No, they also sing and plant flowers with us in community activities. They take part in community activities like us because they live here. And after lunch, they usually enjoy the sunshine around the big tree. There are lots of nursing workers who move from other areas to here to take care of kids and the elderly. I think the elderly integrate into Shanghai well."**

“没有，他们也和我们一起在社区唱歌、种花的。都住在附近，都认识了，他们也很积极的。下午他们也和我们一起到大松树那边晒太阳的。那里还有很多照顾老人的外地保姆。我觉得外地老人在上海融入的挺好的”



Name: Zheng
Gender: Male
Age: 73
Birthplace: Shanghai

Q: "Do you come into contact with some old people from other places?"

A: **"Most of the apartment buildings I live in are local old people, and only one family of them come from other city. but I don't have any contact with them. And all my relatives and friends are local."**

“住在我们楼里的基本都是本地人，只有一户是外地的。但是我不和他们交流的。我的亲戚朋友也都是上海人”



Name: Chen
Gender: Female
Age: 61
Birthplace: Changsha

Q: "Do you miss your friends and relatives in hometown?"

A: **"Yes, how could I don't miss them? And I have not adapted to Shanghai in these three years. I'm afraid that local people walk to me and want to start a conversation. I nod and smile, and they know that I can't understand the dialect. And some local Shanghai people look down on us; I wouldn't like to give them a look either. Some female elderly would want to talk with you, but the dialect confuses me much. "**

“想啊，怎么会不想啊？我到上海三年了都还没适应。我很怕那些本地人来和我说话的，就有点点头笑笑，然后她们就会知道我听不懂。还有些本地人看不起我们，我也不想看他们。有很多老太太来和我说话，但是我听不懂。”

INTERVIEWS



Name: Cheng
Gender: Female
Age: 67
Birthplace: Xuzhou

Q: "Are there any aspects you can't adapt to in Shanghai?"

A: **"Vegetables in Shanghai are all grown in greenhouses, and I can't get used to them. I miss the herbs I grow in my hometown. They are very fresh and healthy. There are too few food stores nearby, and I can't buy all kinds of bread that I often eat in my hometown. You can only buy steamed buns here. Prices in Shanghai are also very high. I don't understand Shanghai dialect either. Living conditions in my hometown are much better than in Shanghai."**

“上海的蔬菜都是大棚的，我吃不惯。我们老家都自己种，很新鲜。这附近买吃的地方也很少，我买不到煎饼、大饼之类的，只能买到馍。上海的东西还很贵。我也听不懂上海话。这里的生活条件不好，老家我们的房子很大很舒服的。”



Name: Wu
Gender: Female
Age: 63
Birthplace: Xingjiang

Q: "Do you have friends in this community?"

A: **"No. I don't have close friends in this community. "**

“没有什么特别亲近的朋友，就遇到了会打个招呼这样。”

Q: "What are your plans for the future?"

A: **"I will go back to Xinjiang with my husband when my grandchildren grow up."**

“等小孩长大一点就回新疆老家。”



Name: Chen
Gender: Female
Age: 64
Birthplace: Fujian

Q: "Is there any merit for you of life in Shanghai than in your hometown?"

A: **"Well, merit. The only one is that now I'm getting aged, it's good to live together with my children. But it's a different kind of happiness compared to life in my hometown. In my hometown, I chat with my old friends. We drink some tea, have meals together, and playing majiang sometimes. Here in Shanghai, there is no activity like this."**

“好吧，优点。唯一的优点是现在我老了，能和孩子们住在一起很幸福。但是和我在家乡的生活相比，这是不一样的幸福。在我的家乡，我和我的老朋友聊天、喝茶，一起吃饭，有时也打麻将。在上海，没有这样的活动。”



Name: Chen
Gender: Male
Age: 45
Birthplace: Shanghai



Name: Lin
Gender: Female
Age: 38
Birthplace: Fujian

Q: "What's the relationship between the elderly and adult children like you?"

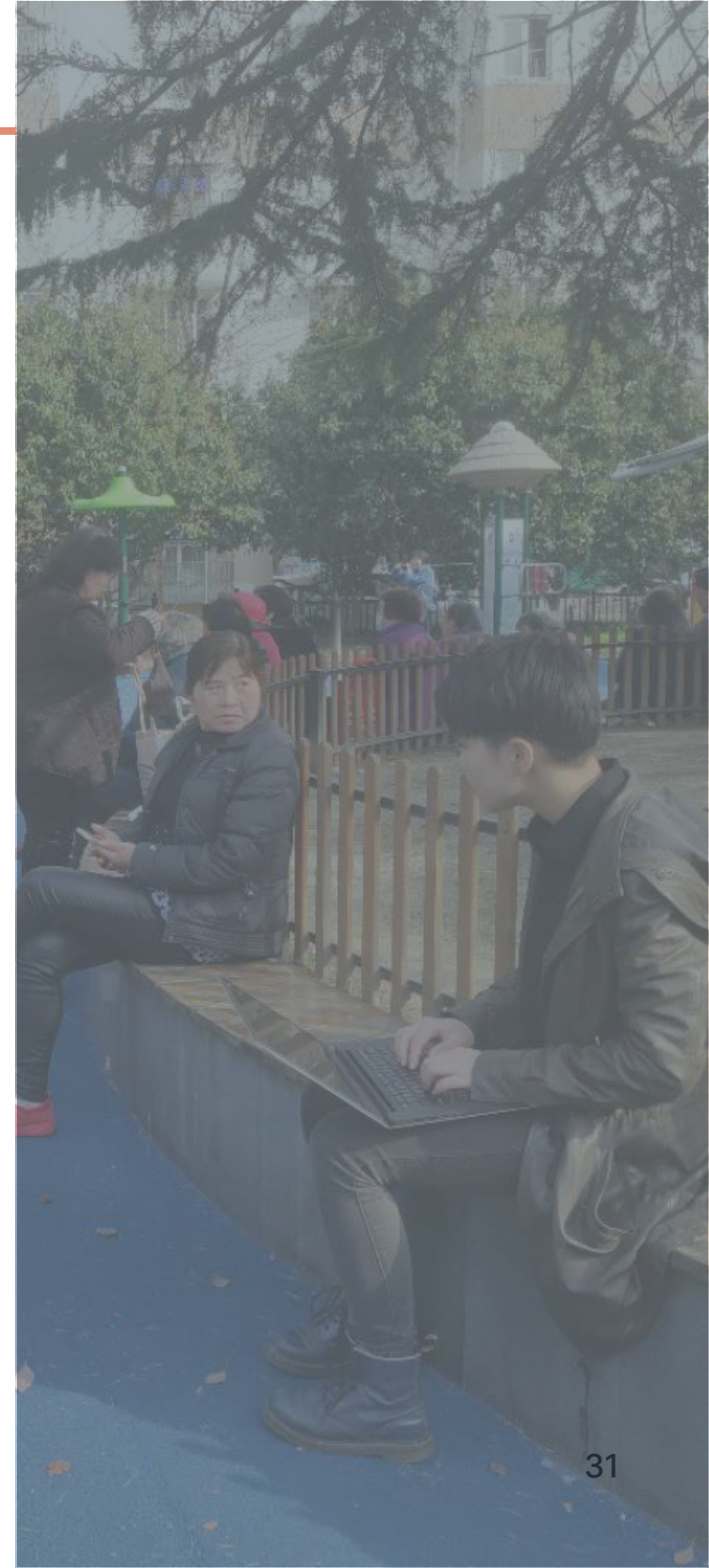
A: **"The case is that after parents had brought up our generation, they would continue to help bring up the next generation. It's a prevailing problem for many families in big cities. Now adults have no time and energy to care about the education of their children when they have their own work to do. They will count on the elderly. That's it. It's a social phenomenon, even different from when we were kids."**

“现在的情况是父母把我们抚养成人以后继续帮我们辅导下一代。这是大城市许多家庭普遍存在的问题。现在的年轻人有工作很忙没时间和精力去照顾他们的孩子，只能依靠老人。这是一种社会现象，和我们小时候不一样了。”

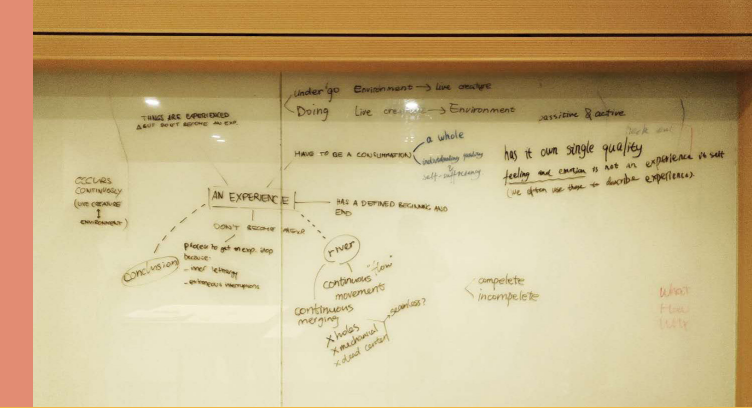
Q: "How do they feel about their new life here as you see?"

A: **"Mom and dad are somehow traditional elderly so they will accept to help take care of their grandchild. Those non-traditional, just relatively, I mean, or somehow selfish, or with broken family relationship won't do this. Now that mom and dad made their choice; I think they are happy in this process. But there are some conditions they can hardly change; they have to make some negotiation. But as far as I know them, generally we are going well and happy. Though sometimes I would quarrel with mom, in general, they are happy spiritually. And that includes as well that our communication with them is pretty good."**

“爸爸妈妈都是很传统的老人，他们很乐意带孙子。那些不那么传统的、自私的或者家庭破裂的老人不会这么做。现在爸爸妈妈自己选择来带孙子，我认为他们在这个过程中是快乐的。但有些方面他们很难改变，我们需要商量。总的来说，我们相处的很好，虽然有时候会吵架。总体上他们是快乐的，我们之间的沟通也很好。”



RESEARCH PROCESS



First discussion about the concept map



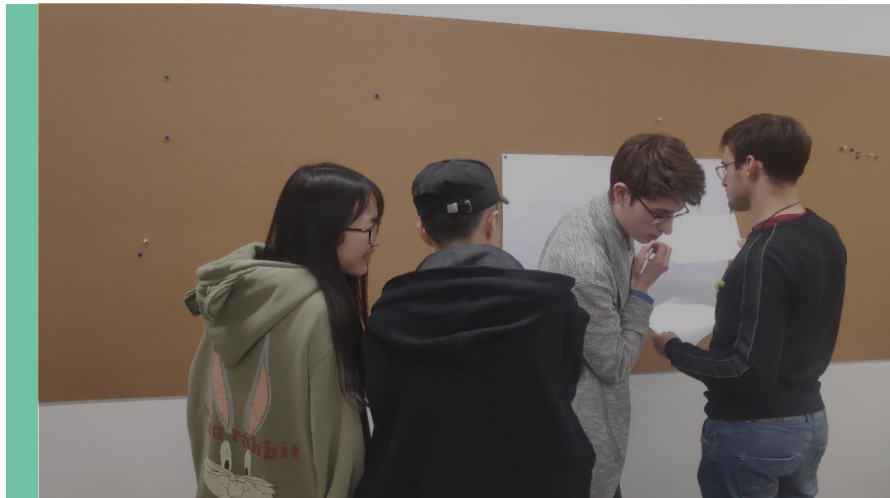
Discussing the concept map



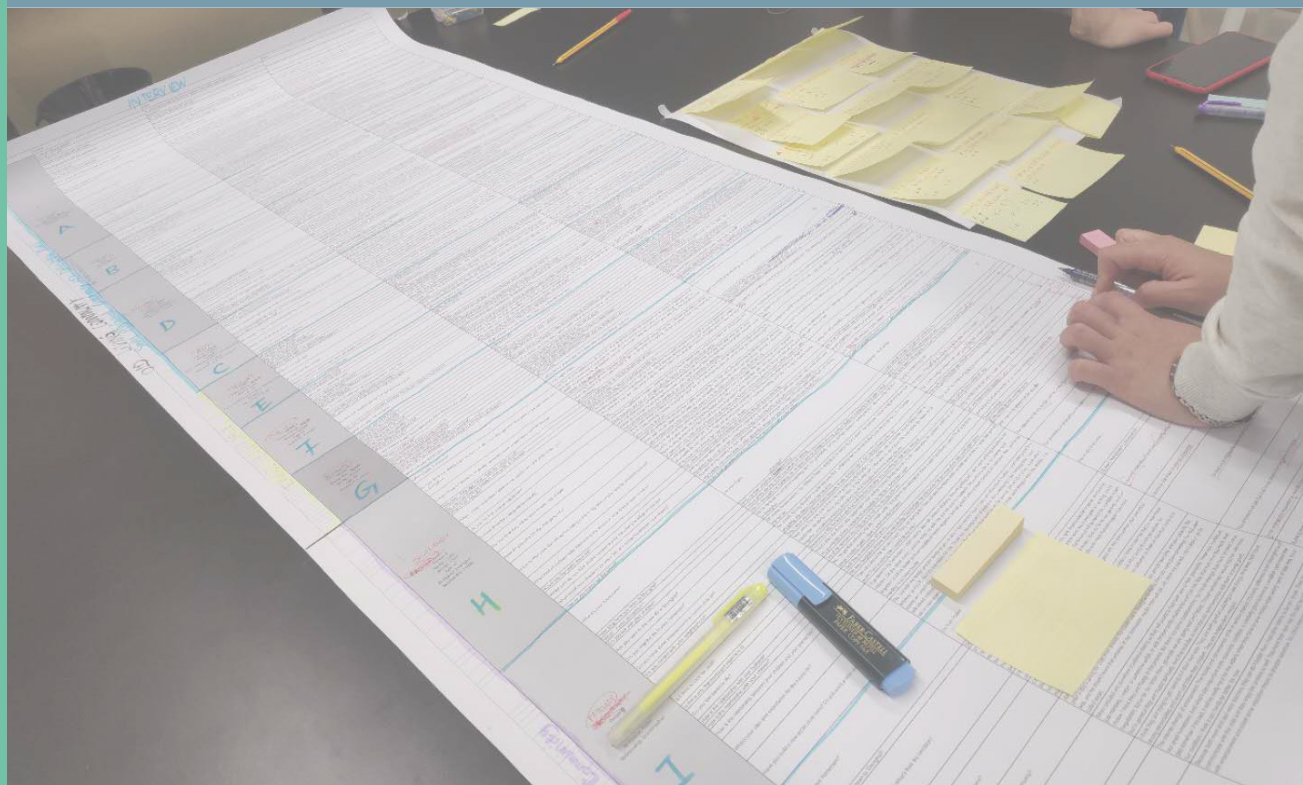
Discussing the concept map



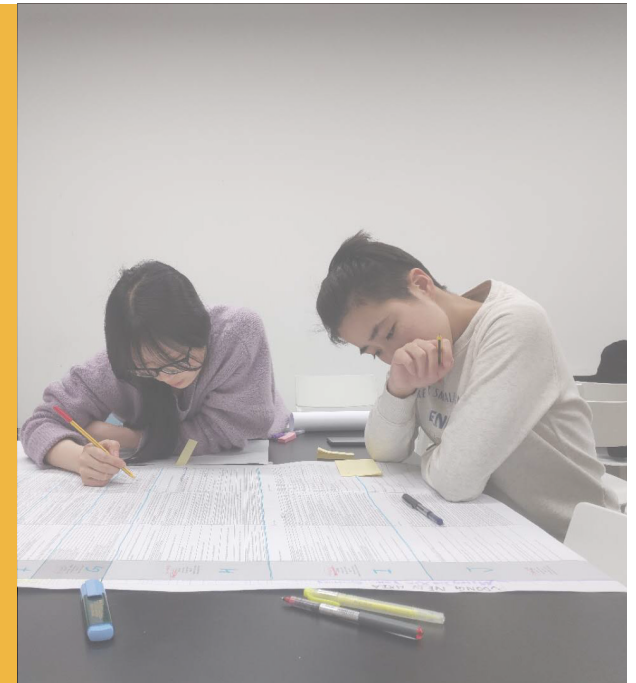
Brainstorming on user profile



Discussing the user profile



Analyzing interview information



ISSUE MAP



DEFINITION



Issue Mapping is a strategy for an unfolding discovery process for the purpose of discovering problematic situations and places for issues that finally discloses the central problem based on evidence.

Kaja Tooming Buchanan

ISSUE MAP

GOAL OF P.O.: TO UNDERSTAND HOW DIFFERENT PEOPLE INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER AND DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS.

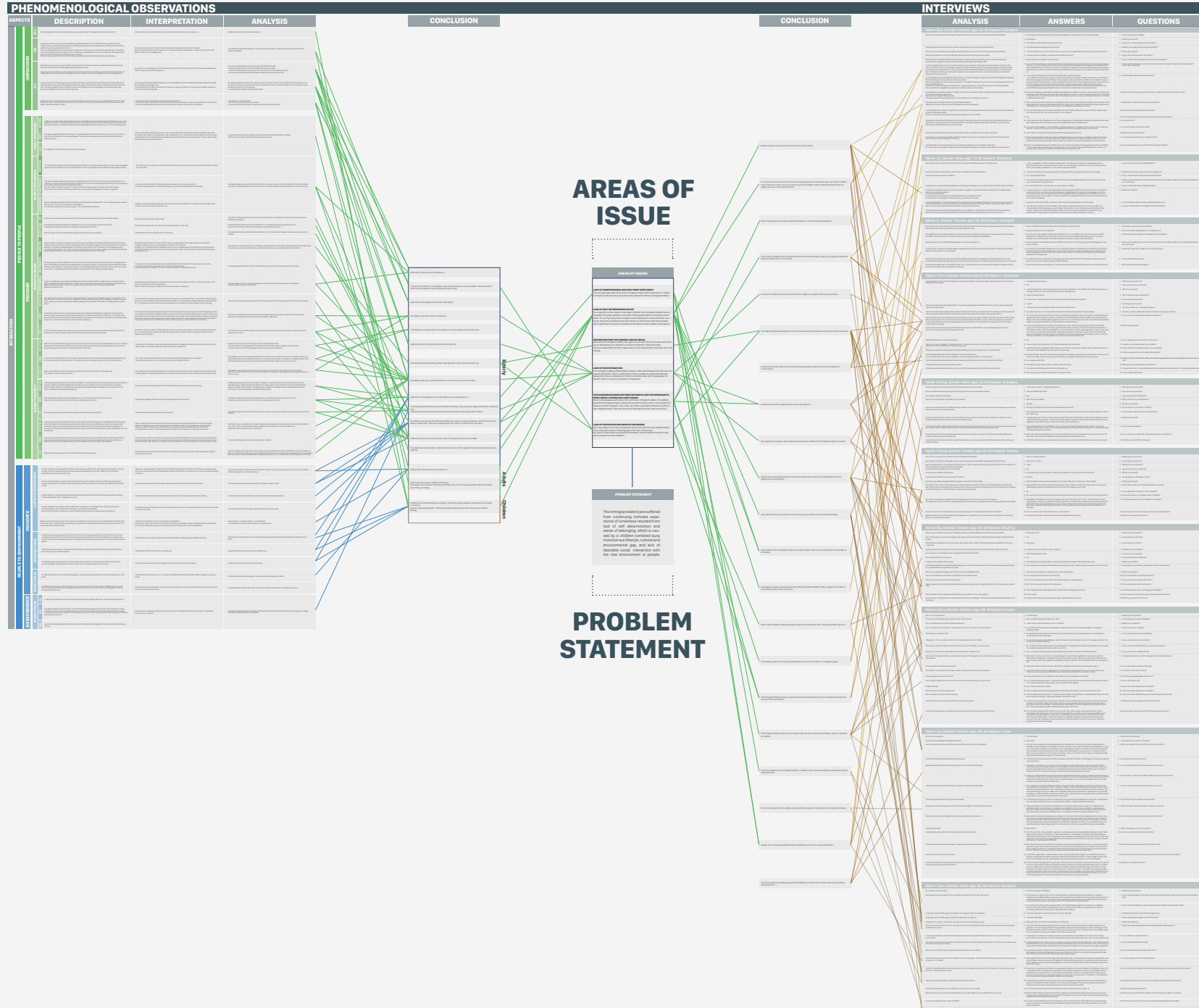
PURPOSE: TO UNDERSTAND WHAT TRIGGERS LONELINESS OF THE ELDERLY IN UNFAMILIAR SITUATIONS.

GOAL OF INTERVIEWS: TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE ELDERLY INTERACT WITH THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHERS DURING THEIR DAILY LIFE.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

GOFFMAN

DEWEY



INTERVIEWS

AREAS OF ISSUES

LACK OF UNDERSTANDING AND HELP FROM THEIR FAMILY

The young people take what these immigrant elderly did for granted. It's easier for them to overlook the social interaction demand of these immigrant elderly.

LACK OF SELF-DETERMINATION IN LIFE

As a response to the request from adult children, the immigrant elderly have to shoulder the responsibility to look after their grandchildren and taking care of them. Thus, they nearly have no spare time to take part in social activities.

As a result, they have a limited social life and lack of interaction with other people, which lead them to a busy monotonous life with less self-freedom and options.

SEPARATION FROM THE ORIGINAL SOCIAL CIRCLE

Because the immigrant elderly can't get in touch with their old friends and relatives as frequently as in the past in a new environment, they feel lonely.

They are separated from the original social circle, lacking the interaction with old friends.

LACK OF NEW INTERACTION

The immigrant elderly differentiate in dialect, diet, and lifestyle from the new cultural environment. Thus it is difficult for them to adapt to a new environment.

Dialect becomes an obstacle for them to communicate with local people. It's hard for them to start the initiation of interaction.

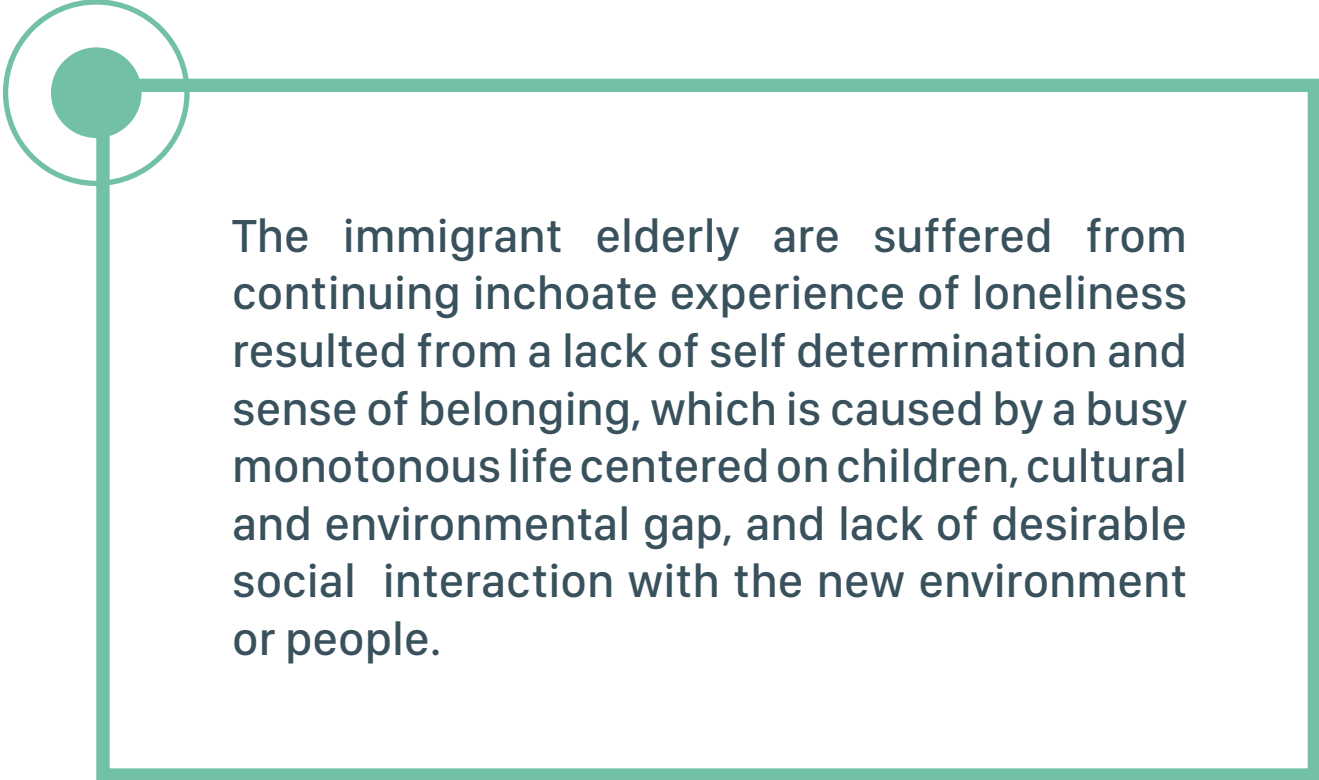
THE MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND THE IMMIGRANT ELDERLY RESULT IN NEGATIVE LEAVE-TAKING

Some local people avoid interaction with these immigrant elderly. The elderly experienced negative leave-taking and would not like to start a new initiation of interaction with residents. Also, they can't have a desirable interaction with the new neighbourhood. They lack a sense of belonging to their new community.

LACK OF MOTIVATION AND SENSE OF BELONGING

Also, the elderly can't have a desirable interaction with the new neighbourhood. Thus, they lack a sense of belonging to their new community.

So, most of them plan to go back to hometown, which makes them don't care about interaction with residents.



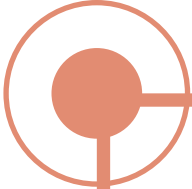
The immigrant elderly are suffered from continuing inchoate experience of loneliness resulted from a lack of self determination and sense of belonging, which is caused by a busy monotonous life centered on children, cultural and environmental gap, and lack of desirable social interaction with the new environment or people.

CENTRAL IDEA

We aim to improve the interaction between the immigrant elderly and new social context to enhance their sense of belonging and relieve their loneliness.

Our starting point is to treat children activities in communities as a bridge to link immigrant elderly and locals together, which can provide opportunities for them to interact with each other. Spending valuable time together would give them more common topics to start initiation for further interaction.

We plan to optimise community activities' organisational process and service system to improve social participation of the immigrant elderly, such as educational programs and family activities. We also plan to provide more entertainment facilities and sports equipment for both the elderly and children. Thus, not only the immigrant elderly but also the locals and children could benefit a lot from this project.



The feeling of loneliness widely exists in the group of the elderly in this society, especially the elderly away from their familiar environment. However, their benefits are continuously being neglected by both their family and the public. It is critically important to raise awareness of this thematic and build a bridge for the elderly's desirable social interaction. Since Shanghai is one of the most typical modern city in China, these issues are even more intense.

Clarity of specific problematic situation and its causes and influences can light the road ahead for the approach to turn the inchoate experience of the loneliness of the immigrant elderly to fulfilment, which can contribute both in social and cultural values.

