PROJECT 1 PART II
Trainspotting
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Interview Interpretation #1

**Tired Working Man**

**SAY**
- "I commute from SJ to SFO for work everyday."
- "I buy a roundtrip ticket everyday."
- "It's cheap, fast, & pretty convenient."
- "I wish the train had wifi."
- "All I need is my laptop bag."
- "I'm tired."

**THINK**
- "Saving is important."
- "I'm happy with my commute."
- "I'm tired & just want to relax."
- "I wish I could be productive on the train."
- "I like to stick to what I know works (no clipper card for ex)."
- "I wish I were just home already."
- "I wish I could sit down."

**DO**
- Kept belongings secure & close by.
- Kept shifting weight on his feet.
- wasn't very talkative.
  - gave short responses.
  - didn't ask questions/show interest.
- Bought roundtrip ticket.
- Kept looking at train status screen.

**FEEL**
- tired.
- bored.
- frustrated (at wifi).
- content w/ routine.

**Contradictions:**
- Is a daily user and wants to do whatever is most convenient for him but buys tickets everyday rather than purchasing a clipper card.
- Is tired and appears to be weary of standing and holding his laptop bag but doesn’t sit down on the benches to wait for the train.
- Is tired but does not put his laptop bag on the ground.

**Surprises:**
- Seems tired and bored but simultaneously very content with his commute.
- Seems like he is afraid of losing his belongings since he is securely holding them close to his body (we wonder if he once had an item stolen?).

**Interpretations:**
- Caltrain can easily be incorporated into one’s routine.
- The Caltrain ride home is a good place to relax after a long workday.
- The Caltrain experience may not be perfect, but it gets the job done well enough for most.
Interview Interpretation #2

Infrequent Commuter:

SAY

"I'm visiting Mountain View for a conference."  
"I don't ride the Caltrain too often."  
"I love Caltrain! Very convenient!"  
"I have a clipper card — it works for most transport in SF too."  
"I Ubered to make this train."  
"I take a bus back from the SF Caltrain station to get home.

THINK

- Public transit is convenient  
- I'm glad public transit worked out perfectly today.  
  - I'm bored/I want something to do  
  - I'm glad I have my clipper card!  
  - Today was a pretty good day

DO

- Stood close to the track/in the middle of all people waiting for train  
- Showed up early to make sure she made the train  
- Looking for the train (as opposed to just checking the status)  
- Clipper-carded in while listening to music  
- Headphones in listening to music  
- Holding her phone

FEEL

- Bored  
- Content  
- A need to appear busy  
- Peppy — like she'd had a good day  
- Comfortable/familiar w/ the environment

Surprises:

- Looked for the train as opposed to just checking the status  
- Despite having a long day still seemed to be peppy and in a good mood

Interpretations:

- Taking the Caltrain is not a strenuous activity - it is not a huge hassle after a long day at work even if you're not a regular  
- Clipper cards are very convenient for those who take multiple forms of transportation often in Silicon Valley  
- While waiting for the train many are looking for any sort of entertainment or amusement
Interview Interpretation #3

Surprises:
- Didn’t have any trouble figuring out how to buy a ticket! (Even though I did and I’ve bought Caltrain tickets many times before)
- Seemed comfortable on Caltrain even though it was his first time riding on it

Interpretations:
- First-time riders are generally curious about the new experience and feel less obligated to sit and appear to be busy
- To those familiar with other public transportation systems, Caltrain might be simpler to figure out than those with less experience
People who use Caltrain need to get somewhere

1. **Observation**: Caltrain → Bart, people with bikes, people with skateboards  
   **Interpretation**: Some people use Caltrain as part of a longer journey  
   **Interpretation**: Caltrain often can’t get passengers all the way to their final destinations  
   **How might we better cater to those who use Caltrain as an intermediate form of transit?**

2. **Observation**: Backup plans, running to make train, “does this make all stops?”  
   **Interpretation**: People know that unexpected scenarios come up while traveling, especially in new environments, so many create backup plans and double-check existing plans

3. **Observation**: Labeled station names, person announcing stops over speaker  
   **Interpretation**: Since passengers are responsible for making sure they reach their destinations, it is important to keep them informed about where they are  
   **Interpretation**: If passengers aren’t informed about where they are, they will miss their stop and have a bad experience on Caltrain  
   **How might we better communicate the current stop/the progress of the Caltrain ride?**

4. **Observation**: People visiting from out of town, reunite with friends  
   **Interpretation**: Public transit is a good way of getting around a city one is unfamiliar with, especially if they do not have a personal form of transportation
Some people use Caltrain to save money on travel

1. **Observation:** Backup plans, delays, sitting in aisles  
   **Interpretation:** People are willing risk putting up with some amount of inconvenience in order to save money

2. **Observation:** Lots of locals, middle class  
   **Interpretation:** Other forms of transportations in Silicon Valley are expensive and over time can be costly for locals
People on Caltrain need to pass the time/to entertain themselves/to appear occupied

1. **Observation:** Phones, laptops, headphones  
   **Interpretation:** Many people feel social pressure to appear busy and will often interact with their phones/other technology mindlessly to comply with this social norm.  
   **Interpretation:** Many people are bored and hope their phones/other technology will supply them with entertainment.  
   **How might we provide better resources to allow passengers to entertain themselves?**

2. **Observation:** Talking on phone, sitting with friends  
   **Interpretation:** People like to pass the time socializing with friends (not strangers)

3. **Observation:** People sleeping  
   **Interpretation:** With limited options, people will sleep to pass the time even though Caltrain isn’t a comfortable or optimal place to do so
Some people on Caltrain need to do work

1. Observation: Phones, laptops, headphones, talking on phone
   Interpretation: People like to be productive during periods of free time where other activity options are limited
   Interpretation: People who commute to/from work on Caltrain like to work on Caltrain so they can leave the office sooner
   How might we better cater to those who ride the Caltrain to commute to and from work?

2. Observation: Talking on phone
   Interpretation: Some people continue work conversations even after they have left the office

3. Observation: Headphones + laptop
   Interpretation: People doing work don’t want to be interrupted with conversation
Some people prefer Caltrain as an opportunity to relax during their commute.

1. *Observation:* Books, generally quiet on train, headphones, sleeping, giving people on phones dirty looks  
   *Interpretation:* Many people prefer Caltrain over other methods of transportation, as it provides a more relaxing environment and the ability to do other tasks (read, sleep, etc.)

2. *Observation:* Little stranger communication, putting bags on seat next to you, people with music, avoiding eye contact, sitting in single seats on top row, generally quiet on train  
   *Interpretation:* People would rather be left alone than socialize with strangers  
   *Interpretation:* People are aware that the social norm is relax and keep to oneself, so they try not to bother others by coming prepared with quiet activities
People feel **the need to get their “optimal” seat**

1. **Observation:** Swarming around doors, waiting for train, guessing where train will stop  
   **Interpretation:** Many people like to get on the train as soon as possible to maximize the chance of getting their “optimal” seat  
   **Interpretation:** On a busy day, the “optimal” seat is *any* seat, because the only other options are to sit in the aisle, stand in the aisle, or to miss the train altogether  
   **Interpretation:** Larger parties swarm to try to get seats together or all nearby one another so they can be together during the ride

2. **Observation:** Sitting alone, putting bags on seat next to you, single seats  
   **Interpretation:** The “best” seats tend to be seats where people can sit alone, have more space, or spread out more

3. **Observation:** Putting bags on seat next to you  
   **Interpretation:** Many people do not want to prevent others from sitting down next to them, so they do this in order to discourage a joining passenger from sitting except as a last resort
People need to feel safe

1. Observation: Sitting with friends, sitting alone
   Interpretation: People tend to feel most comfortable when with a group of friends, fairly comfortable when sitting alone, and potentially least comfortable when sitting with a stranger.

2. Observation: Women sitting next to other women when all other seats are taken, men sitting next to other men when all other seats are taken
   Interpretation: Women find sitting next to other women to be less intimidating than sitting near a male.
   Interpretation: Women don’t want a male passenger to think she is flirting or making advances on him by sitting next to him (and vice versa).
   Interpretation: Male passengers don’t want women passengers to think he is being “creepy” by sitting next to a female when there is an open seat near a male available.

3. Observation: Often-filled single seats
   Interpretation: People feel most comfortable if, when alone, they are seated in single seats. This removes any pressure to sit next to others or converse with them or worry about other potential social issues.

4. Observation: Avoiding eye contact, little stranger communication
   Interpretation: People do not feel very comfortable engaging random strangers and do not want to incite any social interaction by making eye contact with others.
People need to transport their belongings

1. Observation: Laptop bag, suitcases, backpacks
   Interpretation: People may choose to take the train (over ride a bike, skateboard, walk, etc.) because they have bulky or heavy belongings

2. Observation: Suitcases and backpacks on seats and in aisleways
   Interpretation: Caltrain does not have any dedicated storage areas, so people are often forced to keep their belongings next to them on adjacent seats or in the aisleways
   How might we provide a better way to store belongings?
While on the Caltrain, people **need to perform basic human functions**

1. **Observation:** Line for bathroom  
   *Interpretation:* People need to go to the bathroom so badly that they are willing to wait in line for the cramped, dingy bathroom stall

2. **Observation:** People eating food/carrying food onto the train  
   *Interpretation:* People who take the train for longer distances might need a snack or meal during their commute  
   *Interpretation:* Many people take the train whenever they can or need to, even if it happens to coincide with a typical meal time  
   *Interpretation:* Commuters know they need to eat anyway, so they might intentionally plan to eat their meal while on the train in order to pass time
People **need to pay money to take the train**

1. **Observation:** Tickets - credit card not working, zone system  
   **Interpretation:** Many people have difficulty using the Caltrain ticket payment system  
   **Interpretation:** The Caltrain ticket system provides vague errors that make it difficult to use

2. **Observation:** Person misplaced ticket  
   **Interpretation:** It is difficult for some to keep track of a their ticket while simultaneously worrying about the current stop, watching their luggage, etc.  
   **Interpretation:** Having the conductor check for tickets is not always an effective system for ensuring riders have paid for tickets

3. **Observation:** Separate parking pay process, pay for parking  
   **Interpretation:** For some destinations, it is cheaper (or simpler) for passengers to buy both a Caltrain ticket and pay for parking than it is to drive long distances or sit in traffic

4. **Observation:** Conductor checking tickets  
   **Interpretation:** Not all passengers pay for tickets
Caltrain needs to make money (or minimize money lost) to continue to run

1. **Observation:** Person misplaced ticket, conductor checking for tickets  
   **Interpretation:** Caltrain doesn’t want to lose money off of passengers who ride without paying  
   **Interpretation:** Caltrain wants to make money on fees collected when passengers are found without tickets  
   **How might we more effectively ensure everyone pays for a ticket?**

2. **Observation:** Crowded aisles, crowded bike car, limited bathrooms, lack of handicap accessible areas, limited seating at station  
   **Interpretation:** Making changes and updates to Caltrain is too expensive and time intensive to be cost effective for Caltrain

3. **Observation:** Tickets/zone system, credit card system failure, separate parking pay process  
   **Interpretation:** Making changes to the Caltrain ticket machines is perhaps too expensive to be cost effective, the technology is too obsolete to easily replace, or is not a priority given the number of riders who can figure out how to use the system correctly  
   **Interpretation:** While the processes may not be perfect, they may be good enough to “get the job done” and allow business to continue sufficiently  
   **How might we make changes to the ticketing system more cost effective?**

4. **Observation:** Train seats alternate directions in different train cars  
   **Interpretation:** The more functions a feature of Caltrain can have for the same cost, the better (i.e. alternating seat directions in different cars ensures a Caltrain can go north or south)

5. **Observation:** Clipper cards  
   **Interpretation:** Caltrain is open to inexpensive third parties who can ease the experience of their consumers  
   **Interpretation:** Caltrain must support Clipper cards in order to receive funding from a source
Caltrain needs to retain customers to continue to run

1. **Observation:** Clipper cards
   
   **Interpretation:** Caltrain knows many of its customers are ‘regulars’ and it knows the added convenience of Clipper cards may encourage customers to stay
   
   **Interpretation:** Caltrain knows that if a rider becomes used to using a Clipper card, there may be a higher switching cost to change to another party’s system

2. **Observation:** Labeled station names, stops announced over the speaker, Caltrain attendants in various parts of the train
   
   **Interpretation:** Caltrain wants to make sure its passengers successfully reach their destination
   
   **Interpretation:** Caltrain wants to minimize any confusion passengers may have about their current location
   
   **Interpretations:** Caltrain supports both audio and visual systems so as to cater to blind or deaf passengers (or passengers who have headphones in or are taking short naps)
   
   **How might we better support handicapped passengers?**

3. **Observation:** Single seats in top row
   
   **Interpretation:** Caltrain recognizes that many of its passengers don’t want to sit near others and would rather sit alone

4. **Observation:** Lockers/bike racks at stations
   
   **Interpretation:** Caltrain acknowledges that the train ride may only be a part of their customer’s longer journey and they may need a temporary space to store their belongings