Have You Seen This Bus? Information Design Problems in Public Spaces in Istanbul and an Intervention on Public Transportation in Dikilitaş Neighborhood

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Abstract This project indicates the importance of accurate information to be transmitted to the public and the problems related to lack of information about public bus transportation in Dikilitaş neighbourhood, Istanbul via transmedia storytelling. IETT provides public transportation services in Istanbul. It uses several communication channels such as institution’s website, smart phone application, information screens on the bus stations, and information screens inside the buses to convey the essential information about public transportation to the passengers. However, none of these tools are working properly and they fail to give accurate information to passengers. Dikilitaş is located on a high hill in Beşiktaş and it is hard for residents - especially for the people with varying types of physical disabilities, elders, children and people with heavy belongings - to reach their desired destination in the area by walking. The purpose of this project is to evaluate the residents’ attention to these problems and to enforce IETT to propose solutions to them. In this process, firstly, the erroneous information provided by IETT is gathered and IETT is informed about that information via e-mail and their call-centre. Secondly, opinions of the residents about these problems are monitored via participant observation and interviews. All of these conversations, observations and interview records are gathered on a blog (http://buotobusugordunuzmu.tumblr.com). This information is transferred into a pop-up book with my personal storyline. A leaflet is designed and hanged on the bus stations around the neighbourhood to attract the attention of the residents to the blog. Furthermore, a promotional video of the book is recorded and published on the blog. In conclusion, the residents started to get in touch with IETT via e-mails and call-centre to complain about the problems in public transportation services in Dikilitaş. IETT declared that they accepted the problem and promised to provide a solution later in 2015.

Keywords Information Design, Public Transportation, Public Space, Transmedia, Storytelling

1. Introduction

Transportation is a substantive right by law. It is Metropolitan Municipality’s duty to organize, apply and coordinate the public transportation schedule and circulation in urban area [1]. The main public transportation system of a city consists of several transportation networks. Istanbul is a megalopolis with a population of approximately 14.5 million people and approximately 3.5 million average passengers per day use public transportation [2]. In Istanbul Public transportation system consists of three kinds of sub systems, which are road transportation, rail transportation and sea transportation. Road transportation holds 85% share, rail transportation holds 13% share and sea transportation holds 2% share in total [3].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Road Transportation Shares in Istanbul</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IETT</td>
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<tr>
<td>ÖHO</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAŞ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metrobus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minibus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shared Taxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Vehicles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 indicates the road transportation options and their shares in total road transportation Istanbul. IETT (Istanbul Electricity, Tramway and Tunnel General Management) ÖHO (Private Public Buses Incorporated Company), and OAŞ (Bus Incorporated Company) are subject to same travel fares, which are indicated in table 4 and 5. ÖHO and OAŞ are incorporated companies that depend on IETT’s regulations. IETT, ÖHO and OAŞ work under Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, which is a provincial authority. The buses that
belong to these organizations indicated with different colors in Istanbul. In Dikilitaş only IETT buses serve for the Neighborhood. Metrobus is also work under IETT’s regulations. However Metrobus system is designed for main arteries with separated lanes, tollgates and stations. Thus it cannot be used in the neighborhood. Minibuses hold the biggest share in the road transportation and it common that they operate in between neighborhoods and main arteries. However, Minibuses also do not serve in Dikilitaş. Shared Taxis carry a limited number of people mostly in short distances or for crossing two continents. They are also not used in Dikilitaş. Taxi’s and Service vehicles are available in Dikilitaş. However, these options are not considered as public transportation in this context. Minibuses and shared taxis serve under Public Transportation Management, which is also connected to Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality.

Table 2. Rail Transportation Shares in Istanbul

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% In Total</th>
<th>Subway</th>
<th>Light Subway</th>
<th>Tram</th>
<th>Tunnel/Funicular</th>
<th>Marmaray</th>
<th>Nostalgic Tram</th>
<th>Cable Lift</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 indicates the rail transportation options and their shares in total rail transportation in Istanbul. All of the Rail transportation options are under regulations of Istanbul Transportation Incorporated Company, Which is connected to Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. None of these options serve in Dikilitaş. However, a new subway line, which connects Kabataş, Beşiktaş, Dikilitaş and Mecidiyeköy announced to be opened in 2017. All of these options also are subject to same travel fares, which are indicated in table 4 and 5. As it is mentioned above Road Transportation and IETT is the only direct transportation option for Dikilitaş neighborhood residents to reach the other transportation options. IETT is a public institution connected to Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, serving urban public transportation within provincial boundaries of Istanbul [3]. In that case IETT is responsible for the organization, coordination and transmission of the information related to public transportation in Dikilitaş. In other words, IETT is also responsible for the design of public transportation related information in Dikilitaş.

Table 3. Sea Transportation Shares in Istanbul

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% In Total</th>
<th>IDO</th>
<th>Private Ships/Boats</th>
<th>Şehir Hatlari</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 indicates the sea transportation options and their shares in total sea transportation in Istanbul. IDO (Istanbul Sea Buses Incorporated Company) and Şehir Hatlari (Istanbul City Lines Incorporated Company) are subject to same travel fares, which are indicated in table 4 and 5. These organizations work under Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. There are several companies serve as private boats/ships. These companies serve under Public Transportation Management, which is also connected to Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. Sea Transportation is irrelevant for Dikilitaş Neighborhood’s residents and it is not a direct transportation option. However, there is always a possibility that sea transportation is a secondary option if the residents manage to reach seashore via road transportation. Data indicated in table 1, 2 and 3 is gathered from IETT [4].

Table 4. Bus travel fares for different types of Istanbul Kart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Istanbul Kart</th>
<th>Card Fee (tl)</th>
<th>1st ride (tl)</th>
<th>1st transfer (tl)</th>
<th>2nd transfer (tl)</th>
<th>3rd transfer (tl)</th>
<th>4th transfer (tl)</th>
<th>5th transfer (tl)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous Card</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2,15</td>
<td>1,45</td>
<td>1,15</td>
<td>0,85</td>
<td>0,85</td>
<td>0,85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Card</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,50</td>
<td>0,45</td>
<td>0,40</td>
<td>0,40</td>
<td>0,40</td>
<td>0,40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Card</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,10</td>
<td>0,85</td>
<td>0,70</td>
<td>0,45</td>
<td>0,45</td>
<td>0,45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Bus travel fares for different types of Istanbul Kart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Istanbul Kart</th>
<th>Monthly Normal fare (ride/tl)</th>
<th>Monthly Student fare (ride/tl)</th>
<th>Monthly Social fare (ride/tl)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue Card</td>
<td>180/170</td>
<td>200/77</td>
<td>200/100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Ride Card</td>
<td>Unlimited/0</td>
<td>Unlimited/0</td>
<td>Unlimited/0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Information design is the defining, planning and shaping of the contents of a message and the environments in which it is presented, with the intention to satisfy the information needs of the intended recipients [4]. Information design systems in public spaces such as public transportation areas are considered important for accelerating heavy foot traffic, preventing people from getting lost in the built environment or facilitating accessibility. Information design systems constitute an information network for public transportation and efficient information networks play an important role in utilization of Public Spaces. As I mentioned above public transportation areas, which are a part of intermodal platform of transportation in Istanbul, are indicated as public spaces in this paper. The use of public transport with an efficient information network is expected to reduce the uncertainty levels of the users about the wayfinding process by providing a comprehensive guide for the system that they are trying to use. Thus, the use of public transport system increases.

It is important to organize, coordinate and transmit the information related to public transportation to the passengers to maintain the sustainability of the public transportation system. Dikilitaş neighborhood in Beşiktaş, Istanbul is also a part of the main public transportation system. The project “Have you seen this bus?” indicates the importance of accurate information to be transmitted to the public and the problems related to lack of information about public bus transportation in Istanbul, Dikilitaş neighborhood via transmedia storytelling.

2. Problem Statement

Passengers need to access several types of information to use public transportation. Public transportation for Dikilitaş is only provided via buses. In that case passengers need to access the essential information such as, transportation schedules of the buses, the information about the lines, which these buses use, the names of the bus stations, the line numbers of the buses and the general transportation network map of the city. There are two bus lines, 26 and 43, that arrive to and departure from Dikilitaş. IETT generally uses several information channels to convey the essential information about public transportation to the passengers. These channels are institution’s website, smartphone application, information screens on the bus stations, information screens inside the buses, and a general “you are here” map of the city. However, in Dikilitaş’s case, none of these tools are appeared to be working properly. Thus they fail to give accurate information to the passengers. For instance, in Dikilitaş, there are not any information screens on the bus stations. Instead there are plastic covered papers that indicate departure times of the buses from the initial bus station on the line. In that case passengers are obliged to calculate the time span that the bus will arrive to their station on the line. The time span is affected by several variables such as traffic, the distance between the bus stations and other numerous obstacles related to the driver, the passengers on the bus, the environment and the bus itself.

The screens on the bus stations supposed to show the arrival times of the buses to that particular station according to those variables that I mentioned above. Moreover, the screens inside the buses supposed to indicate the bus stations on that line when the bus arrives on that particular station. These screens also provide audio assistance for the visually impaired passengers and they also indicate the link between the bus and the general control center via GPS. In other words, if the screen inside the bus is working properly the general control center is able to detect the location of the bus, calculate the time span in which it will arrive to next station and transmit that information to the screens on the bus stations and to smart phone application. However, most of the buses do not have the information screens inside and the scarce screens mostly show a blue or a static image with no audio assistance, meaning a malfunction.

The web site of the institution provides a route search and a route planner on the main page. It is possible to write the line number of a particular bus to search bar and chose to see the schedule or the details of that particular line. If a passenger chooses the schedule option for a particular line number the website gives the passenger the departure times of the buses from the first and last bus stations on that particular line. In Dikilitaş, the two bus lines are both ring lines. Ring line means that a bus departs from the first station completes its route and comes back to the first station. In that case the web site only gives the departure times from the first station. If a passenger chooses the detail option the website gives the passenger a list of the bus stations on that particular line. Passengers also have the opportunity to click on separate bus stations and see the predicted arrival times of the bus for that particular bus station. However, the predicted arrival times provided on the website is not accurate. It is stated in the timetables, which are published on the web site, that the time span between any two particular stations around Istanbul is two minutes.

It can be inferred that the variables that I mentioned above are not calculated to predict the arrival time of the buses to particular stations. On the web site, there is also a route planner. It is supposed to allow you to choose the arrival and departure stations and show you possible routes between those stations. However, when the passenger chooses the arrival and departure stations, the route planner directs the passenger to a different web site, which gives inadequate information about several bus lines and only works properly with a particular web browser. Furthermore, the schedules published on website are not coherent with the papers hanged on bus stations in Dikilitaş. Sometimes the buses arrive to the station according to the papers and sometimes they arrive to the station according to the schedule on the web site. The passengers could neither trust the web site nor the papers hanged on the bus station.

The smart phone application is supposed to show real time arrival and departure times of a bus to a particular bus station and supposed to cover for the non-existent screens on the bus
stations. The smart phone application also provides a diagram of a particular bus line, which is supposed to show real time locations of the buses. However, the real time results of the smart phone application are not accurate. The application mostly gives erroneous or false information. For instance, the application indicates that the bus, which the passenger is waiting for, will arrive to the bus station in 3 minutes. When the passenger refreshes the page the application indicates that the bus will arrive in 10 minutes and after the third refresh the application indicates that the bus has already pass that station. The application also provides schedules for bus lines. However, these schedules are not coherent with neither the papers hanged on bus stations, nor the schedule provided on the website.

In conclusion, IETT adjusts transportation schedules, information about bus lines and routes on a regular basis. They also claim that they are making those adjustments according to passengers’ demands. However, they fail to inform the passengers about those changes or worse, they reject the adjustments. IETT provides four different sources to passengers to get the essential information needed to use public transportation. One of these sources is barely working and the other three sources give false or erroneous information to the passengers. It can be inferred that without the necessary information, public transportation does not function properly. For instance, a bus station alone does not guarantee that there are buses, which stop or pass in front of that station. A passenger needs to know the name of that bus station, line numbers of the buses, which will pass in front of that station, schedules of those buses and a general transportation map of the city to decide where to end their journey or how to connect their journey to another line. At least they need to see a bus stopping or passing by that station. Otherwise, it is not possible to predict whether a bus station is involved with the general transportation network or a bus without a line number has a particular destination, without that essential information. There is no difference between waiting for a bus at such a bus station and “Waiting for Godot”. IETT surely defines the content of the message, which will satisfy the information needs of the intended recipients. However, IETT fails to plan and shape the contents of that message, and the environments in which it is presented.

### 3. Purpose of the Study

On 12\textsuperscript{th} September 2015 IETT declared on their website that they switch transportation timetable from summer schedule to winter schedule. However, that switch was only announced on the website. One month after IETT switch to winter schedule, they reduced the number of the buses for lines 26 and 43, which serve for Dikilitaş. This important information change was not announced on the institution website, smart phone application or bus stations. After two weeks and several e-mails that I sent to IETT asking why they reduce the number of the buses, which serve for Dikilitaş, they wrote me that there were not any changes that might cause any reduction on the bus services for Dikilitaş and a change on the schedule can only be done according to huge amount of complaints from the passengers. As I mentioned above IETT provide information from four different sources and none of this information is compatible with each other. Therefore, the first objective is to follow and document the false and erroneous information of which IETT provided to avoid further rejections. In that case, IETT cannot claim that they have been giving reliable information.

Dikilitaş is located on a high hill in Beşiktaş and it is hard for residents – especially for the people with varying types of physical disabilities, elders, children and people with heavy belongings – to reach their desired destination in the area by walking. Except public transportation or walking, people can only use their private vehicles or taxis to reach their desired destination in the area. However, using taxis everyday is much more expensive than public transportation and there is also a possibility that people do not own private vehicles. It is assumed that the most reasonable and economic option for transportation, which Dikilitaş residents can choose is public transportation. Thus, the second objective is to raise awareness among Dikilitaş residents about the public transportation problem and to encourage them to file more complaints to IETT. If the amount of the complaints increases, IETT have to take them into consideration.

IETT ignores the public transportation related problems in Dikilitaş by using various excuses and they try to make these problems invisible. The third objective of this study is to make those problems visible to public. Once they become visible, it is possible to demand solutions such as improving communication channels or information sources and increasing the daily quantity of the buses that serve Dikilitaş. I assumed that awareness among residents can be raised by using transmedia storytelling that indicates a particular and expandable narrative, “The Lost Bus”, across multiple platforms such as a blog, supporting printed materials, a book, and a video. The Lost Bus narrative would also help making the public bus transportation related problems visible to public.

### 4. Methods

My approach for this project is autoethnography to describe and systematically analyze my personal experience about the public bus transportation issues in Dikilitaş, which took place between September 2014 and March 2015 in order to interpret the experience as a part of the neighborhood residents. I tried to retrospectively and selectively write about my epiphanies that stem from being a resident in Dikilitaş neighborhood and possessing that particular identity [5]. To accomplish this I used participant observation as a method, interviewed neighborhood residents and compared my personal experiences with theirs. I tried to produce aesthetic and evocative descriptions of my personal and interpersonal experience by first
comprehending the patterns of this experience evidenced by interviews, artifacts and participant observation and then defining these patterns by using transmedia storytelling to make the experience significant and engaging.

Henry Jenkins, who is an American media scholar, defines transmedia storytelling as a process where important elements of a fiction get distributed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a integrated and coordinated experience and ideally, each medium makes its own unique contribution to the unfolding of the narrative [6]. In this project The Lost Bus narrative, which is a fiction indicates the reduction of public bus transportation services in Dikilitaş, is distributed systematically across multiple mediums such as a blog, supporting printed material, a book and a video. Each of these mediums makes their own significant contribution to the narrative and the blog (http://buotobusugordunuzmu.tumblr.com) serves as a hub for the project.

The project is primarily concerned about the bus with route no.26 and its disappearance. The findings that are published on the blog included how many buses pass by Dikilitaş everyday and differences between weekdays and weekends, the time periods between two buses’ departures, durations of the journeys and differences between summer and winter schedules, the distance of my general route, how many kilometers I have to walk instead of taking a bus and how much money it costs to ride a bus every day, opinions, complaints and reactions of the residents, which are gathered via participant observation, the conversations between IETT and me, IETT’s declarations, the differences between the information provided by IETT and the real situation. These findings helped me to gain a deeper understanding of the residents’ behaviors and pave the way for creating a particular narrative to raise awareness about the issue among the residents.

5. Findings and Results

There are two bus lines (route no.26 and no.43), which operate between Dikilitaş and the main bus stations and I am using no.26, which operates between Dikilitaş and Yenikapi, for the transportation between work and home. There are fifty stations on no.26 route and it is a ring line. Before IETT switched the timetables from summer to winter schedule, on weekdays, there were fourteen buses departing from Dikilitaş, which is the initial station and fourteen buses departing from Yenikapi, which is the last station. The buses served between 06:30 and 20:40 from Dikilitaş and the time period between two buses were approximately one hour. The buses serve between 07:10 and 21:30 from Yenikapi and the time period between two buses were also approximately one hour. I was using 08:10, 08:50 or 10:45 buses departing from Dikilitaş and 16:40 or 17:45 departing from Yenikapi. My journey lasted for eleven stations as I took the bus from the 4th station (Emirhan Caddesi) and get off from the bus on the 14th station (Kabataş). The journey took approximately 15 minutes. Likewise, my return journey lasted for nine stations as I took the bus from 38th station (Kabataş) and get off from the bus on 46th station (Emirhan Caddesi). The journey took approximately 30 minutes depending on the traffic. The numbers of the buses were decreased to eleven on Saturdays and seven on Sundays.

Istankukart is used as payment method for the buses. Table 1 and Table 2 indicate the travel fares for people using different types of Istanbulkart. Anonymous cards, teacher cards and student cards indicated on the Table 1 are customized travel cards, which people can buy and load credit anytime they want. Student and teacher cards have names and photographs of the owners and only the owners can use those cards. Blue Card is a monthly paid card. It provides limited ride on a monthly fare and it is cheaper if you are using public transportation excessively. Free ride cards are for the disabled, elders, veterans, press members; security services members e.g. policemen and martyrs’ relatives. Because I work as an academic at Istanbul Bilgi University, I can use the teacher card. For the teacher card owners first ride costs 1,50 TL, first transfer costs 0,85 TL, second transfer in a row costs 0,70 TL, third, fourth and fifth transfers in a row cost 0,45 TL. The most expensive travel fare is for the anonymous card users and the cheapest fare is for the student card users. On summer, I was riding one bus in the morning and one bus in the afternoon. Thus, my daily travel cost was 3,00 TL.

On September 13th 2014, IETT declared the winter schedules on their website. According to the winter schedule, on weekdays, there were seventeen buses departing from Dikilitaş, which served between 06:30 and 21:30 and the time period between two buses were approximately fifty minutes. Furthermore, on weekdays there were seventeen buses departing from Yenikapi, which served between 07:10 and 22:10 and the time period between two buses were approximately fifty minutes. The numbers of the buses were decreased to ten on Saturdays and seven on Sundays. However, this information was only announced on the website of the institution. There were not any announcements on bus stations or smart phone application (MOBIETT). As I observed people who did not have the opportunity to check the website everyday e.g. elders, fail to learn about the winter schedule and continued to wait for the buses according to the summer schedule. After one week I noticed that someone took responsibility for the false schedule on the bus stations and wrote “yanlış” meaning wrong in English on the papers hanged on bus stations with a pen. Then again, someone hanged a new printout of the accurate schedule on top of the wrong one on the bus station. After a few interviews on the bus station I have learned that the person who fixed the schedule was also a resident of the neighborhood.

On October 2014, approximately two weeks after the transmission from summer schedule to winter schedule, 08:10, 08:50 and 10:45 buses in the morning and the 16:40 bus in the afternoon disappeared physically. For three days I
checked the website and waited for the buses on the bus station. After three days I downloaded the MOBIETT app on my phone. MOBIETT was only showing the departure times from Dikilitaş and they were identical to the ones on the website. However, the app was not showing the departure times from Yenikapi. I sent an e-mail to IETT indicating my complaints about the disappearance of the buses. I started to use no.43 as an alternative for my morning journey. There was a 08:10 bus in the morning. However, other departure times of no.43 were not suitable for me. When I was not able to catch 08:10 bus I walked to the nearest station on the main road in the morning. That nearest station is 1.6 kilometers away from the bus station that I generally use. In the afternoon, for my return journey I had to use a different bus line to the bus station on the main road and I walked back that 1.6 kilometers because no.43 was not passing by anytime near my return journey. I continued to check the website, MOBIETT and the bus station everyday. On the 13th day IETT updated the website and MOBIETT. On the 14th day they sent an e-mail that there were not any changes that might cause any reduction on the bus services for Dikilitaş and a change on the schedule can only be done according to huge amount of complaints from the passengers. I was waiting for an apology and the link to the accurate schedule. However, IETT simply denied the changes and updated their website and MOBIETT, probably hoping that no one will notice the difference.

After that last update that I mentioned above it turns up that IETT reduced bus services for Dikilitaş. According to new schedule on the website for route no.26, there were ten buses departing from Dikilitaş. They served between 06:30 and 21:30 on weekdays, between 06:40 and 21:30 on Saturdays and between 07:45 and 21:30 on Sundays. The time period between two buses was approximately one and a half hour. Furthermore, there were only two buses departing from Yenikapi, which were on 15:10 and 22:10. The numbers of the buses were ten on Saturdays and seven on Sundays. Apart from the website, according to the schedule on MOBIETT, for route no.26 there were seven buses departing from Dikilitaş on weekdays and on weekends. They served between 06:30 and 16:25 on weekdays, between 06:40 and 16:35 on Saturdays and between 07:45 and 21:30 on Sundays. Furthermore, there were also seven buses departing from Yenikapi. They served between 07:10 and 17:45 on weekdays, between 07:42 and 17:45 on Saturdays, and between 08:30 and 22:10 on Sundays. The printed schedules on the bus stations were also changed after that last update. However, the printout was different than the old ones and the content was identical to the content on the website. Again, after a few interviews on the bus station it turned out that this time the headman of the neighborhood have changed the schedules on the bus station.

5.1. The Blog

IETT proclaim that informing passengers is certainly the most important element of public transportation as the first item in passenger right proclamation. They also declare that they are using primary and secondary sources for providing information. Primary sources are the institution’s website and MOBIETT. Secondary sources are information screens on the bus stations and inside the buses. In Dikilitaş’s case, it turns out that primary and secondary information sources are not working properly. Thus, alternative information sources for public transportation emerged. These alternative information sources are neighborhood residents, the Headman of the neighborhood, and me. We are collecting the information provided by IETT and fixing it as alternative information sources. However, there have been problems disseminating that load of information. To solve this problem, on December 2014 I designed a logo for the project, set up a blog and I have started to publish all of the information that I gathered, interpreted and fixed as an alternative source.

Blog’s address is http://buotobusugordunuzmu.tumblr.co m. It means, “Have you seen this bus” in English. It serves as a hub for the storytelling. All of the information is gathered and disseminated from the blog. Apart from the information provided above, the blog contains an explanation of the project, comparisons of information provided by IETT’s sources, quotes and interview details of the residents, the alternative bus routes and walking maps that I have to use because of the reduction in public bus transportation service for Dikilitaş, e-mail conversations between IETT and me, photographs that I take at the bus station to document the participation and communication between the residents, links to IETT’s declarations e.g. Passengers Rights Proclamation and Policy for Handling Customer Complaints, and several other items related to the storytelling and the project.

5.2. The Leaflet

The first objective of the project was to document, gather and publish the information provided by IETT to prevent them from rejecting the problems about public bus transportation in Dikilitaş. The blog served very well for this purpose as the hub of the narrative. The second objective is to increase the amount of the complaints. If so IETT have to take those complaints into consideration. Besides the resident who wrote messages on to the schedules hanged on the bus stations with a pen, another significant incident showed that residents tend to use the bus station as a meeting point and a message board, where they can share these messages with each other. Because of the reduction in public bus transportation in Dikilitaş the Headman started a petition drive to increase public bus transportation in Dikilitaş. She hanged an announcement on the bus station indicating the residents can go to the Headman’s office to sign the petition.

The following two days residents wrote messages on that announcement to file their complaints stating that they cannot sign the petition because the headman’s office was closed when they came back from work. Another resident wrote a message on the announcement that the petition could
be also found in a nearby restaurant and people who wanted to sign the petition could consult to the restaurant. To maintain the lost bus narrative and attract the attention of the residents, I designed a leaflet, which indicates the lost buses of Dikilitaş and hanged it on the bus station. On the leaflet there was the logo of the project on the top and under the logo there was a message saying, “Have you seen this bus? If you haven’t please contact IETT via the e-mail and the phone number provided below”. The e-mail and phone numbers could be detached from the leaflet. The following week residents took all of the leaves with the e-mail and phone numbers. As the leaves are all gone I replaced the leaflet with a new one.

5.3. The Book

As I mentioned above, the blog served as a hub for the narrative. However, the narrative needed to be assembled in a particular medium. The posts were in a chronological order but they were also scattered. I assumed that to sustain the lost bus narrative as a scenario, which gathers all of the elements on the blog would help attracting the attentions of the residents to the blog. To illustrate that scenario I choose the book as a medium. To start with, the book is a pop-up book. It indicates the important aspects of the projects in 3d. The book consists of 7 double pages and 1 single page. It starts with the explanation of the project and continues with 3d illustrations of the aspects that I mentioned above. On every page there are QR codes directing the reader to the related blog post. On the second page there is a small explanation about IETT’s declarations about informing passengers and the QR code directs the reader to the blog post with a link to the passenger rights proclamation. On the third page the alternative sources are indicated and the QR code directs the reader to the blog post, which contains a photograph showing the scattered timetables hanged on the bus station. On the fourth page there is a map that shows the usual routes of no.26 and no.43 bus lines. There is an additional card underneath the map that can be pulled-off, which mentions the switch between the summer and winter schedules and the QR code directs the reader to the blog post including a link to the IETT’s declaration about the transmission. On the fifth page there is a 3d illustration of Dikilitaş’s physical location. As I mentioned above the neighborhood is located on a high hill in Beşiktaş. This page indicates the difficulties related with the physical condition of the neighborhood and the reduction in public transportation services. The QR codes direct the reader to the blog posts, which include the e-mail conversations between IETT and me. Those conversations contain my complaints about the physical condition of the neighborhood and the importance of the public transportation. On the sixth page there is another map, which indicates the alternative bus and walking routes that I have been using because of the reduction in public transportation. Each route is indicated with a different color on the map. There are also two cards underneath the map that can be pulled-off. On the first card first QR code directs the reader to the blog post, which contains a photograph showing how the residents use the bus station as a messaging board. The second QR code directs the users to the blog post, which contains my personal thoughts about spending excessive amount of time on bus stations waiting for the bus that never comes. The second card contains five different QR code in five different colors. Each of them directs the reader to a blog post, which contains a link the alternative route’s map. The seventh page indicates a 3D diagram that connects IETT to all the way up to the President of the Republic. As I interviewed the residents, most of them specified that the reduction in public transportation in Dikilitaş is a political problem. They stated that IETT is affiliated with the metropolitan municipality, which supports the government party. However, the district municipality supports the oppositional party. Following these comments I reached the Electronic Public Information Administration System (KAYSIS), which contains different types of government organization schemas. The QR code on this page directs the user to the blog post contains an organization schema from KAYSIS. On the eighth and the last page there is an equation showing my pictogram plus a computer equals to a QR code. That QR code directs the readers again to the video of the book posted on the blog.

5.4. The Video

The last part of the narrative is the video of the book. After gathering the scattered narrative of the project in a pop-up book, I assumed that I have to find a supporting element to convey the narrative to as many as people I could. The video was firstly published on Vimeo and than on the blog. It also allowed blog’s readers to share the assembled storyline on different social media websites. In the video the audiences mainly see the book from above, two hands turning pages of the book and zoom-ins and outs to the pages. The video is supported with the sound of a bus touring around the city loading and dropping of passenger. The transition from one page to another is also supported with the Istanbulkart reader’s sound. Those supporting sounds are complementary for the lost bus narrative. The audience never sees a bus image in the book or the video. The sounds indicate the presence of the bus. However, it is somehow lost. The video is three minutes and twenty-six seconds long.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

On January 2015 I received a reply to my fourth e-mail to IETT. However this time the reply came from a different department, which is Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Department of Press and Public Relations, Directorship of Public Relations. As I mentioned earlier Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality is Superior to IETT and the Directorship that sent me the last reply is affiliated with the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. They stated that they
will make adjustments for the public transportation services in Dikilitaş, and I will be informed about these changes. Two months after receiving that e-mail I noticed an update on the website that they added two more buses to route no.26 departing from Dikilitaş. However, they did not inform me about the adjustment. I found it myself. Even though, they increased the public transportation services for Dikilitaş, which was an objective for the project, the information sources are still not working properly. Furthermore, there are also cancellations on bus schedules depending on bus drivers. Thus, I continue to gather information and update the blog.

There may be some further additions to the project and its narrative. In the beginning of the project, because I do not want people to just repost or retweet the content in my blog, I decided not to use social media sites such as Facebook or Twitter as the main distribution channels for the narrative. I want people to examine, interpret and relate their own stories with the content and narrative that I provide. However, I decided to produce a hashtag such as #buotobusugordunuzmu meaning, “Have you seen this bus” in English to encourage people to take photographs of the bus no.26 and inform other people about the location of the bus. I believe that it will help the audience to engage with this project.

In conclusion, I believe that using bus stations, as a messaging board is an interesting behavior of the residents for further investigation about the problem. I mentioned that the information sources are still not working properly. This behavior of the residents can be implemented in the information design systems for public transportation for enhancement.

REFERENCES


