Reflection - Baoky King Yang HUANG 5235014

Research Question and Research Goal
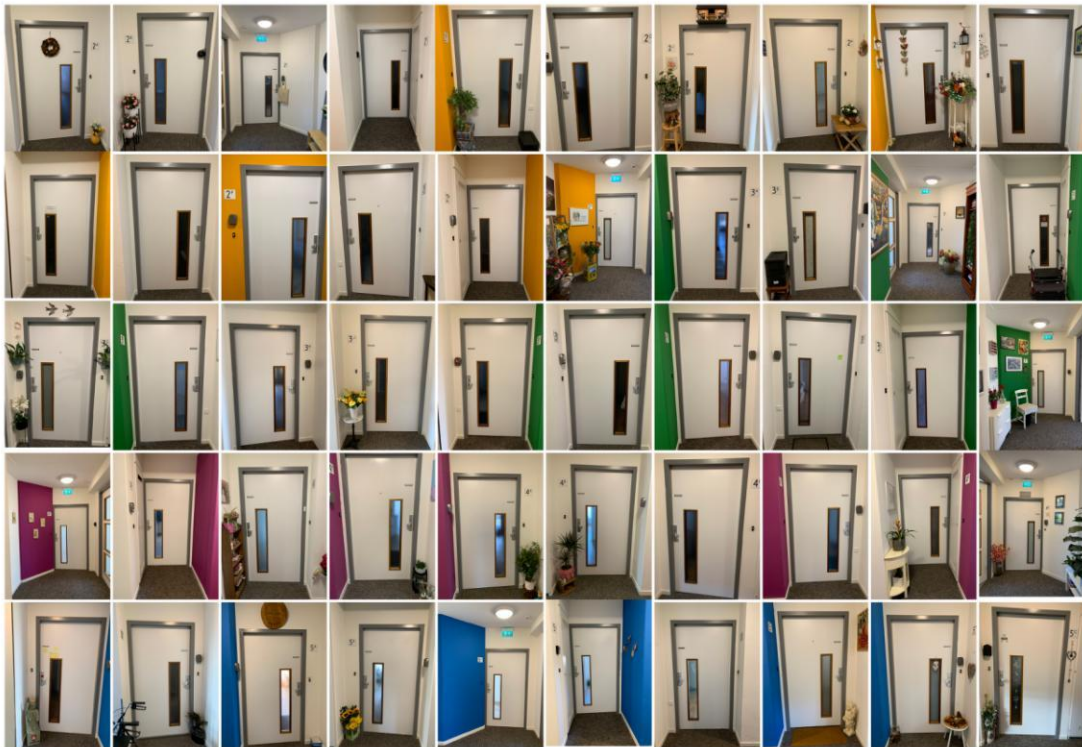What is my research about? What did I want to find out?

   The research that I conducted was about the personalization of secondary territory in elderly residence. Secondary territory is a concept put forward by Altman, meaning the territory that is shared by only a part of the group, and that is between public and primary territory. Personalization means taking certain actions to turn the non-private space more personal. Actions include, placing personal items, placing decorations, painting colors and so on.
   Abundant research have shown evidence that personalizing space help the elderly in physiological, psychological and social aspects. However, most of these researches focuses only in the primary territory, while secondary territory is where the elderly place personal items to enhance the sense of home and communication between neighbors who share the secondary territory. This was indicated by preliminary research in my excursion to an elderly home.

Research Purpose
Why did I want to research on this? What is the relation to the studio topic and master track?

   I was inspired to focus on this topic when I discovered that a lot of the elderly in the home chooses the put personal items in front of their door. Reasons vary. Some stated that they do this to make the space nicer, some say it is a representation of themselves, and some says that it offers opportunity to start conversations with neighbors.

   I started to do photo documentation about this topic and discovered that this phenomenon not only appears in front of their doors. Personal traces could be found in hallways, lounges, shared kitchen - spaces that I later through literature review discover belong to the genre of secondary territory. I did interviews and questionnaires to ask the residents about whether they believe personalization in such spaces is necessary, through which I discovered that there is a real need of the elderly to claim their individuality. However, it also came to my notice that currently the mainstream of design in elderly residence neglects this needs and do not offer enough opportunity for the elderly to do so. This is why I wanted to research on this topic, to help the residents and administrators to raise awareness on this issue and also help designers fulfill this need for the elderly residents.

The studio is designing for care: an inclusive environment. We have come a far way in elderly home design, from simply providing the elderly with food and shelter, to making the elderly feel comfortable, respected and a lot more. What we are now aiming at it to fulfill the top needs in the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, self-realization. Personalization is a crucial part in self-realization and has already shown traces of will in many elderly homes. Therefore, to figure out where and how personalization is achieved is an important part in designing for care in an inclusive environment.

Furthermore, as an architect, one of the most important job is to discover the true needs that sometimes even the clients don't know exists or don't know how to express, and to realize it. This studio encourage us to explore and discover the needs of the elderly ourselves and do a design by research. This is a good exercise for us to learn how to fulfil the needs of a certain group of users through the tool of architecture.

Research Significance
What relationship does it have on the professional, social and scientific framework?

In professional terms, the research would be helpful in generating a design guide for secondary territory spaces in elderly homes, a space that celebrates each elderly person as an individual. Possible directions include customized space, movable space, or space to contain decorative elements.

In social terms, with this research on secondary territory space, awareness of the role of it will be raised. The elderly would be more encouraged to express their personality and claim their individuality, which was proven to be beneficial in terms of physiological needs, the social needs and the psychological needs. The organization will be more aware to treat the group as a sum of individuals instead of a collective group. The designers would be more conscious in creating spaces with more possibilities to adapts to the different needs of each individual.
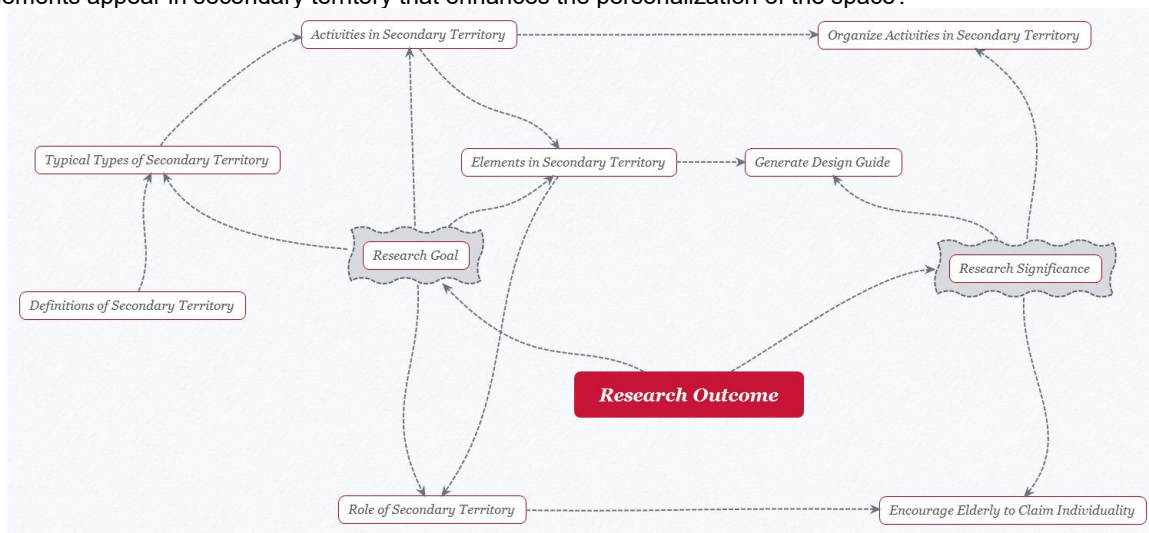
In scientific terms, this fills in a gap of personalization in secondary territory. Although abundant research have been carried out on the definition, characteristics and role of secondary territories space in elderly homes(Archea, J, 2016; Altman, 1975), few have systematically identified typical examples of secondary territories and their individual characteristics. Moreover, the influence of secondary territory space in the aspect of personalization is neglected and needs further research. On the other hand, while some of the researchers have investigated on the influence of design in physical environment in terms of personalization, most of the focus were that on public and primary territory, none on the secondary territory, where it has the most potential for the residents to claim their individuality.

Research Goal, Methods and Scientific Relevance
What is the research goal? How did I conduct the research? Why did I choose these approaches?

The final goal of the research is to figure out how to design secondary territory space that encourages the elderly residents to express themselves and offers opportunity for them to connect with the neighborhood.

To fulfill this research goal, there are three necessary steps, which are the sub-questions of my research: 1)What are the typical types of secondary territory space? What are their characteristics? 2)What are the behaviors in secondary territory? How is the space used? How is the space conceived? 3) What spatial elements appear in secondary territory that enhances the personalization of the space?

This research will be mainly carried out with qualitative research methods, and different methods will be applied in the attempt of answering each sub-questions. The image above shows the methodology and expected results from research.

For the first part of the research, to identify typical types of secondary territories, plan analysis were conducted. 25 cases of elderly residence from all over the world were chosen and studied. The secondary territory in all of the 25 cases will be identified based on a table of definition and characteristics of it, and then highlighted in plan, from which the basic characteristics of secondary territory as well as typical types of it can be observed. The method was chosen because plan drawings contain the most information concerning spatial usage. The significance of a space to different users and the extend of ownership could be read through plan drawings directly or indirectly(by looking at the distance of private rooms to the secondary territory, or by looking at the hierarchy or gradience of space).

In the second part of the research to identify behaviors and conception of the secondary territory of the users, Filed study is the main method. The most "personalized" cases (rated according to Sheffield Care Environment Assessment Matrix(see image below)) were selected and investigated in depth as stated above. For the behavioral study part, a behavioral mapping is drawn to reveal what people do and which people uses what space. Data are collected through observation. Another part of the research in this part is conception, where interviews on site are conducted. Interviewees were asked on how they makes sense of their own circumstances, decorations, behaviors, activities and emotions in the secondary territory. Field study was applied as the main method for the following reasons: information online do not show the actual usage of the space, and by field study I was able to observe the personalizational elements in the secondary territory space. Furthermore, the actual activity in the secondary territory and defense act against people outside of the territory can only be experiences during field work.

		Alzheimer residence for the " Foyer la Grange" / Mabire Reich	De Rokade / Arons en Gelauff Architecten	Home for Dependent Elderly People and Nursing Home / Dominique Coulon & associés	Health Centre and Houses for Elderly People/IPOSTUDIO Architects	Residential Care Home Andritz / Dietger Wissounig Architekten	Retirement and Nursing Home Wilder Kaiser / SRAP Sedlak Rissland + Dürschinger Architekten	The Nursing Home at Oleiros / TCU Arquitectos
Lounge	Does the wall space allow for personal items? is there an appearance of personal items on walls?	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
	Is there shelving for ornaments? Appearance of personal items on shelves?	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Is there an appearance of personalized furniture(variety of different chairs)?	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Bathroom	Is there storage space for personal toiletries? An appearance of personal toiletries?	0	1	0			1	1
PersonalRooms	Is there appearance of choice of decor?	0	1	1		1	1	1
	Is there appearance of choice of curtains?	1	1	0		1	0.5	1
	Is there appearance of choice of carpet?	0	1	0		0	0.5	1
	Is the call system available at various points in the room without trailing cord?	1	1	1		1	1	0
	Is there an appearance of personal furniture?	1	1	1		1	0	1
	Does the wall space/decor allow for personal items? Is there an appearance of personal items on walls?	0.5	1	1		1	1	1
	Is there space to stand ornaments, TV and/or radio? An appearance of these items?	0	1			1	1	1
	It there appearance of choice of bedcover?	1	1			1	1	1
	Is there adequate clothes storage space? (wardrobe min vol 1.12 m² and drawers min vol 0.30m²)	1	1		1	1	1	1
	Is there cupboard space other than wardrobe and chest of drawers?	0	1		0	0	1	0
Layout of the building	Is there space to personalize approaches to private rooms / appearance of personalized approaches to private rooms?	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Is there an appearance of personalized doors to private rooms? (fittings, colors, photos etc, name alone does not count)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Is there an appearance of resident choice of display in the circulation space?	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
	Is there storage space for spare furniture?	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Is there space for all residents to store their own wheelchairs near the dayroom?	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Garden	Is there the appearance of personalized areas?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plan	Are private rooms more than 2.7 m wide?	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
	Average	0.26	0.71	0.35	0.17	0.65	0.57	0.52
	Total Score	5.5	15	Unidentified	Unidentified	13	12	11
	Location	France	Groningen, The Netherlands	France	Italy	Austria	Austria	Spain

Selected Case ST type   Elevator Hall   Hallway+Lounge

For the third part of the research, the physical/ spatial elements that enhances personalization in secondary territory were further investigated. This part of the research is carried out by photo documentation, which further helps with spacial analysis and element counts. Photo documentation is a good way to record and convey first-hand information of what the residents do with the space.

These three parts of the research combine together to help generate a design guide for secondary territories in elderly residence that encourages personalization and fulfil the need for the elderly to celebrate their individuality.

Method Reflection
What worked and what didn't? What ethical issues did I encounter?
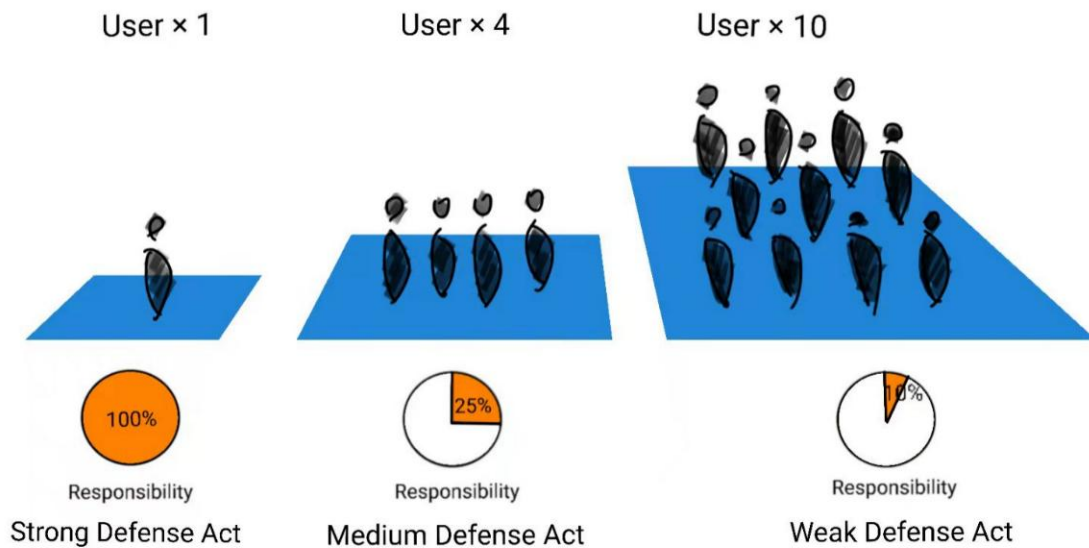
Most of the methods worked out, but there were some issues that came up during the field study.

The first problem is the number of samples are not enough. I spent around a day on each of the three cases, but the sample number is not ample because I over-estimated the number of people appearing in a certain space. I needed to spend more time to collect more date in field study.

The second problem is that, secondary territory, by definition, is a territory where defense act will occur if non-neighbors offend. When I was doing the study and taking photos of people's front yard and window towards the street, some residents felt offended and asked me to leave. I realized that this was almost inevitable because investigating in people's half-private space was a sensitive move and could be considered offensive.

Adjustments were quickly made in two ways: 1) I asked for the permission of the owner every time I took a picture of their house or elements around their house; 2) I made appointments with the authority or administrator and asked for an accompanied visit.

This experience inspired me in two ways. On the one hand, I learned to be respectful and thoughtful when conducting a research, especially when it comes to sensitive subjects; on the other hand, I discovered that different levels of defense act occurs in different secondary territory based on the different number of users, which lead to my discovery that secondary territory itself is gradient.

Feedback and Adjustments
What feedback did I get? How did I adjust my way of work?

I received well feedback that helped my improve my research from my tutors, and here is the list of how I adjusted the work:

1) Think in three dimension rather than two dimension when doing plan analysis and site study. Adjustment: this inspired me to add drawings and photos of the settings.

2) Do not neglect how the residents use the space and how they feel in the space. I received this feedback when I was just planning to do spatial analysis and physical element analysis of the secondary territory. Adjustment, I arranged field studies to record and to participate in the usage of the space.

3) To think in reverse to structure my paper better. Adjustment: I restructured my research content by thinking: What do I want to achieve(Goal)? How do I achieve it(Sub-questions)? What do I need to do(Results)? How can I do it(Method)?Why do I do it(Background)? This way of thinking helped me formulated a research paper that is logically consistent.

Reflection
The relationship between research and design.
What I learned from my own work?

In my graduate year of my bachelor's degree, I started with half year of research and then did half year of design based on the research. I like that design decisions have foundation instead of falling out of nowhere. However, I discovered that, unlike other subjects, research in architecture can not be done purely

theoretically. Practice in design will inspire research on design, and research on design will reflect on the design choices. This is why I admire the fact that this course was structured in the way that research starts first and then design follows and gradually takes up more of the proportion. It is important for us to remember that none of the both can be isolated from each other, whether it is research by design or design by research.

I learned a lot from the building technology part of the studio. This part is not the focus of my bachelor's architecture education, so I always felt a part missing- projects felt unreal and concepts do not come to the ground. I was used to putting forward big concepts but very often it is not very tangible and apparent in my design work. I now realize that this is because I have been missing a scale of how the materials, space and form come together, so the concept doesn't follow through in the whole process of design. I am glad that in this project we could have enough educational resources and time for us to dig into the detailed part of the project.

This leads to my main takeaway from this graduation project: being architect is not easy. As graduation is getting closer, I keep getting reminded that I am going no longer going to be an architecture student but a real architect. I am glad that all my tutors kept up the standard and treated our work like a real project. No questions should be left unanswered, and we were asked to constantly think about how the project will be built, how it will be used and how it will be conceived.