

J. LEIKAS, P. SAARILUOMA. 'Life' as a basis for holistic ICT design. *Gerontechnology* 2010;9(2):228; doi:10.4017/gt.2010.09.02.220.00

Purpose Technology should be harnessed to support and enhance the quality of people's everyday life. This is why the analysis of life should form the very beginning of ICT-design. Current trends in the design of ICT products and services seldom truly manage to support the goals that people have in their lives. This tendency is especially evident in technology driven design. Consequently, design processes lack the ability to holistically consider life and thus often fail in producing successful artefacts that support people's lives. The re-evaluation of design thinking is important now as technology development is focusing more and more on services. Design of service concepts, if any, has to be carried out with a much broader approach than the traditional approaches to human-technology design offers. A workable solution is to adopt 'Life-Based Design', with the premise of 'forms of life' as an analytical ground concept for ICT design. In order to gain an understanding of where to go and which aspects to stress in design from the user's point of view, it is crucial to understand how the users perceive their everyday life, what kinds of biological, psychological and socio-cultural restrictions and incentives they have in their daily activities, and how these would collide with the demands of the information society.

Method When designing for quality of life, we have to understand what is relevant for people. Relevance in respect to technology can be made visible through values and 'worths' that people have in their everyday life. These in turn become visible in different contexts. To understand these contexts and to be able to design worth into them we have to understand different regularities of forms of life. 'Form of life' means any system of rule-following actions carried out by people. Our everyday life is constructed by different forms of life which in turn significantly affect our goals in life. We participate in forms of life through sharing the rules and regularities that are included in them. Thus, studying the concepts relevant and analysing forms of life, namely, rule-following actions, facts and values of people, offers a possibility to comprehend the goals and needs of the users. The case of older adults provides us with a concrete conception of how forms of life can be investigated to direct the development of new technologies.

Results & Discussion Life-Based Design is a new, advanced way of thinking in technology design and a design approach which combines information, society and people's life. Thus, it is a more suitable design approach than the traditional ones, as it brings in a new way to perceive essential questions in the development of the information society. Life-Based Design offers the possibility to seriously consider technology for older adults, from the holistic point of view of coping in life, supporting human relationships, significant roles, the exercise of agency, and independent living, as well as gaining the feeling of self-efficacy, enabling privacy, autonomy, trust and control, and ethicality of technology adoption.

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Keywords: human-technology interaction, life-based design, gerontechnology

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