

S.T.M. PEEK, K.G. LUIJKX, S. AARTS, M.E. NIEBOER, C.S. VAN DER VOORT, J. VAN HOOF, M.D. RIJNAARD, H.J.M. VRIJHOEF, E.J.M. WOUTERS. **Use one, use all? Selective use of apps by seniors.** *Gerontechnology* 2016;15(suppl):54s; doi:10.4017/gt.2016.15.s.662.00 **Purpose** More and more seniors are using computers and smartphones on a regular basis¹. However, research shows that many seniors are only using a small number of the apps available to them, in contrast to younger adults². The current study aims to explore reasons for this selective use of apps by seniors.. **Method** A longitudinal qualitative field study (2012-2015) was carried out among 33 community-dwelling seniors (20 females, 13 males), aged 68-95 and living in the Netherlands. Semi-structured interviews were held on reasons for the level of use of various types of technology, including ICT-devices³. For this abstract, interviews of participants who stated that they use a limited number of apps were analyzed by employing thematic analysis. **Results** A total of 27 participants were using ICT-devices, and 11 participants limited the number of apps they were using to two or three, mostly to e-mail and Skype. Selective use was related to participants' tendency to avoid things that would take too much energy and a preference for more relaxing activities (e.g., gardening). Participants also had difficulty in using computers, and often had to rely on others for help. They felt no need to use more apps, perceived themselves as laggards, and did not want to become addicted to using a computer. **Discussion** Our findings are in line with Baltes and Baltes⁴ concept of 'Selection', which describes how seniors who are confronted with more options than their internal and external resources can handle, are forced to concentrate their energy on a subset of those options.

References

1. Smith A. Older adults and technology. Pew Research Center; 2014; www.pewinternet.org/2014/04/03/older-adults-and-technology-use/; retrieved May 3, 2016
2. Deursen AJAM van, Dijk JAGM van. The digital divide shifts to differences in usage. *New Media & Society* 2014;16(3):507–526; doi: 10.1177/1461444813487959
3. Peek STM, Luijkx KG, Rijnaard MD, Nieboer ME, Voort CS van der, Aarts S, Hoof J van, Vrijhoef HJM, Wouters EJM. Older Adults' Reasons for Using Technology while Aging in Place. *Gerontology* 2016;62(2):226-237; doi:10.1159/000430949
4. Baltes PB, Baltes MM. Psychological perspectives on successful aging: The model of selective optimization with compensation. Pp 1-34, in Baltes PB, Baltes MM, editors, *Successful aging: Perspectives from the behavioral sciences*. New York: Cambridge University Press; 1990

Keywords: ICT, smartphones, apps, acceptance, adoption, use, community dwelling

Address: Tilburg University, Department of Tranzo, Tilburg, Netherlands;

E: s.t.m.peek@tilburguniversity.edu