

Where is the 'I' in iPad?

J. BEH, S. PEDELL, W. DOUBE. *Where is the 'I' in iPad?* *Gerontechnology* 2016;15(suppl):30s; doi:10.4017/gt.2016.15.s.614.00 **Purpose** Older adults are living longer and many are leading active lives, despite the decline in their physical well-being as they approach the fourth age. There are many misconceptions however, about the abilities of older adults. One of these is that they are not interested and/or motivated to learn the use of new technologies¹. As a result of these perceptions, older adults are often not considered in technology design and hence excluded from the digital world. More needs to be known about the attitudes, behaviours and individual preferences of this diverse group towards technology to ensure long-term uptake. **Method** This paper reports on research into adoption of mobile touch screen technologies. It focuses on the promising theory of interest development, based on the Four-Phase Model proposed by Hidi and Renninger², as well as the Self-Determination Theory of Deci and Ryan³. The research also draws on existing interest literature related to early learning (pedagogy) and seeks to apply this to adult learning (andragogy) and older adult learning (geragogy). A proposed Interest-Bridge Model (*Figure 1*) was used to investigate the development of interest in technology by older adults through engaging them via their individual interests and hobbies. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods has been employed with 60 participants (average age 72 years, 85% female, 15% male) in total using a participatory action research approach. **Results & Discussion** Findings show that there is a close relationship between individual interest and the uptake of mobile touch screen technologies. Older adults do not tend to develop an interest in technology per se but when technology supported their domain interests, older adults developed an interest to use technology. Hence we should not assume what older adults ought to learn but instead ask them what they would need, like and/or want to learn to support their everyday interests. According to the interest development model by Hidi and Renninger², older adults should take up touch screen technology easily when the activities around technology use are closely tied to their existing interests. The key findings show that older adults established technology use between workshop sessions and their homes. This way they increased their level of self-confidence, life-satisfaction and autonomy through use of technology. Results will inform future research on the use of technology by older adults, assisting organisations through flexible curriculum development of lifelong learning programs.

References

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Keywords: information technology, interest, education, learning, communications, leisure
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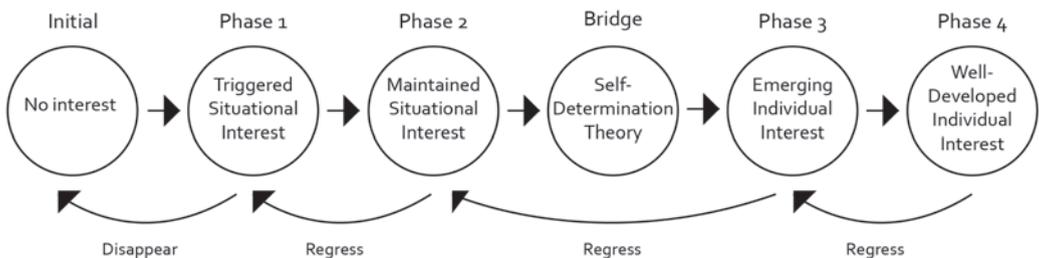


Figure 1. Interest-Bridge Model developed by Beh et al.⁴