II Open Workshop
A-C-M BCN
('Ageing-Communications-Media')

October 17th, 2012

IN3 – Open University of Catalonia

09:40 AM	Workshop check-in
10:00 AM	Opening and introduction to works of the international network

PART ONE: **Cell phones and older people**

10:10 AM	**Keynote presentation:** The elderly and the mobile phone *Rich Ling (IT University of Copenhagen)*
11:10 AM	What are mobile phones for? Comparing seniors in four cities *Mireia Fernández-Ardèvol (Open University of Catalonia)*
11:40 PM	**Coffee break**
12:00 AM	Elders and the use of mobile phones in Romania: First results of semi-structured interviews *Loredana Ivan (The National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest)*
12:30 PM	"I'm G-mom on the phone": Remote grandmothering, cell phones and inter-generational dis/connections *Barbara Crow (York University, Toronto)* *Kim Sawchuk (Concordia University, Montreal)*

PART TWO: **ICTs among the elderly people**

01:00 PM	Digital games for positive ageing and a cultural profile of older people's experiences with ICT *Josep Blat (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona)* *Sergio Sayago (Carlos III University, Madrid)*
01:30 PM	**Break**
03:00 PM	Can tablets support the creative collaboration among elderly? *Margarida Romero (Open University of Catalonia)* *Elena Barberà (Open University of Catalonia)*

PART THREE: Theory and practices of active ageing

03:30 PM	Active dreaming as active ageing in *Étoîle des aînés* *Line Grenier (University of Montreal)* *Kim Sawchuk (Concordia University, Montreal)*
04:00 PM	Mediation and mediatization: What media theory has to learn from participatory media research with older adults *Kim Sawchuk (Concordia University, Montreal)*
04:30 PM	Closure of the II Open Workshop A-C-M BCN
04:40 PM	**End**

Practical information

When: Wednesday, October 17th, 2012.

Where: William Mitchell Room, IN3 – Open University of Catalonia, Media-TIC Building, 7th Floor, Roc Boronat Street 117, E-08018 Barcelona.

Sessions will be held in English.

Limited capacity.

Please confirm assistance via e-mail to Daniel Blanche (dblanchet@uoc.edu) by October 11th.

Organized by: Mobile Communication, Economy & Society Research Program
IN3-Open University of Catalonia
As an activity of the Ageing-Communications-Media Network

Scientific committee: Mireia Fernández-Ardèvol
(IN3 – Open University of Catalonia)
Kim Sawchuk
(Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec)

Organizing committee: Mireia Fernández-Ardèvol
(IN3 – Open University of Catalonia)
Daniel Blanche
(IN3 – Open University of Catalonia)

Support: The workshop benefits from the support of IN3 – UOC and SSHRC.
Funding from AGAUR – Generalitat de Catalunya (ARCS-DGR 2012): pending.

The A-C-M International Network is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

Abstracts

The elderly and the mobile phone

Rich Ling (IT University of Copenhagen)

In this talk I will examine the use ownership and use of the mobile phone by elderly users. Analysis of data from Norway shows that elderly users only rarely use texting as well as other data base services. In addition mobile handsets designed for elderly users show a markedly different pattern than typical "smart phones". These issues will be examined in this talk.

What are mobile phones for? Comparing seniors in four cities

Mireia Fernández-Ardèvol (IN3, Open University of Catalonia)

I will discuss what are mobiles used (or not used) for among individuals 60 years old and over. The empirical analysis is based on four case studies that share a common methodological design. Case studies were developed in different moments between 2010 and 2012 in Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain), Los Angeles (California, USA), Toronto (Ontario, Canada) and Montevideo (Uruguay).

Information was gathered by means of semi-structured interviews that were recorded and transcribed for further analysis. A total of 110 interviews were conducted. While the fieldwork should be enlarged, this initial analysis constitutes the first step in the exploration of presence of common trends in the relationship that seniors have with mobile communication in different countries, whereby mobile dissemination contexts are diverse.

The use of mobile phones can be understood both in terms of services (voice communication, SMS …) and in terms of the specific needs they cover (safety and security, micro-coordination…). I will analyze both dimensions taking into account age differences among interviewees to acknowledge the heterogeneity of ageing. Other aspects that will be considered are the location of the members of the individual's personal network and the pricing system that determines the cost of every single mediated communication.

Elders and the use of mobile phones in Romania: First results of semi-structured interviews

Loredana Ivan (The National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest)

An explorative study using 15 semi-structured interviews investigates the use and the social representation of mobile phone in interpersonal communication for elderly in Romania. We explore both advantages and limits of using mobile phones in two age groups: 60 to 65 and over 65 showing both similarities in intensity, opportunities and difficulties to integrate mobile phone in the personal system of communication, but also distinctive patterns to approach technology use. Seniors over 65 seem to be more reluctant to admit the advantages of mobile phone and describe often described situations when they had to be "assisted". In addition, the results suggest that senior women are more willing than men to accept others "assistance" to use their personal phones and they even give up to any attempt to administrate their devices in favour of their partners (men) or younger fellows (family members, friends).

The results are interpreted in the light of similar research conducted on elderly and mobile phone (Fernández-Ardèvol, 2010, 2011) taking into account the national specificity of the two cohorts we refer here. The possible gender differences in the use of technology, particularly on mobile phone are routed not only in gender educational gap of the Romanian population over 60 but also in the stereotypically gender roles that men and women from these age groups have been assigned to play.

"I´m G-mom on the phone": Remote grandmothering, cell phones and inter-generational dis/connections

Kim Sawchuk (Concordia University, Montreal)
Barbara Crow (York University, Toronto)

We explore how a diverse group of grandparents, mostly grandmothers, use the cell phone to interact with their grandchildren. The data is collected from interview-fragments comprising with almost 240 interviews done over a two-year period in Canada with adults aged sixty-five years and older taking place across five provinces, in both rural and urban settings, and across social, cultural classes and different ethno-cultural groups. These Canadian seniors have developed a number of strategies such as handing up, transmitting values and overcoming fear that take into consideration the costs and changing communication relations of younger people, most specifically, their grandchildren. Through "remote" grandparenting seniors found ways into relationships with their grandchildren like many of them had experienced as grandchildren and simultaneously provided insightful commentary on changing communication relations.

Digital games for positive ageing and a cultural profile of older people's experiences with ICT

Josep Blat (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona)
Sergio Sayago (Carlos III University, Madrid)

Digital games which are worth playing by older people (60+), compensating for their limitations while reinforcing their strengths and, for instance, creating positive gameplay experiences, could be an interesting new research subject. We will present the results of a quick ethnographical study, which involved 170 older people with a mix of ICT and digital game play experience, conducted to understand their everyday digital game play (e.g. accessibility, playability, motivations, devices), and the lessons learned while conducting co-design techniques to define a concept of a worth playing game grounded in the findings of this ethnographical study.

In a second part, we will discuss initial results of a study looking at cultural differences and similarities in older people's experiences with ICT. Understanding culture in HCI is important, as ICT are being used around the world, and it has been receiving growing research attention. However, older people have been largely overlooked, despite an ageing population. This study draws from a 5-year traditional, face-to-face ethnographical study conducted with 420 older people in the north and south of Europe. We will also discuss ongoing research activities.

Can tablets support the creative collaboration among elderly?

Margarida Romero (Elearn Center, Open University of Catalonia)
Elena Barberà (Elearn Center, Open University of Catalonia)

The evolution of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has brought about deep changes in professional, social and educational fields. While the younger generation is considered to have adopted digital technologies, not all members of older generations have developed the digital competencies to take advantage of digital technologies and participate in digital society. In order to analyse the digital competences amongst elderly people and investigate the potential of digital technologies for promoting collaboration and creativity in the elderly, we developed a pilot study of elderly people in a rural town in northern Finland introduced to the use of tablets (iPad). The first objective was to bring older adults together to learn collaboratively to use meaningfully the tablet. The second goal was to keep older adults in touch with one another and promote their creative collaboration through the use of their tablets.

We observed the acceptance and usability of the tablet devices among elderly, which appreciated the ergonomics of the digital technologies. The drag and drop facilities of the tablet navigation was readily adopted by them. We can consider the use of tablets to be device that is more intuitive than the personal computers requiring them to use a keyword and a mouse. Creativity and collaboration in the use of the tablet was favoured by the informal exchanges within the group of elderly participating in the meetings. After the meetings the elderly people involved maintained contact with others participating in the meetings using the Skype meetings and other asynchronous technologies such email. Nevertheless, we highlight the importance of the collaborative face-to-face meetings for introducing elderly in the use of technology and developing the feeling of belonging of the group of participants.

Active dreaming as active ageing in *Étoîle des aînés*

Line Grenier (University of Montreal)
Kim Sawchuk (Concordia University, Montreal)

In 2006, Chartwell REIT, an international company that owns seniors' residencies across the globe, launched a "music talent" competition called Senior's Stars in English-Canada. Four years later Chartwell-Québec, a subsidiary, initiated "Étoiles des Aînés" the Québec version of the competition that has involved over 600 participants, all over the age of sixty-five. The regional competitions, all in Chartwell residences, typically have over 200 spectators at each event and are presided over by a panel of 3 judges, with Claudette Dion, professional singer and sister of pop star Céline Dion, acting as ambassador of the Québec tour. In our pilot project, we approach the competition as a rich site for an exploration of the intersections of ageing, popular music and marketing to seniors in the context a global demographic shift to "an ageing society" and governmental discourses and policies on "active ageing."

In this paper, we focus on "Étoile des aînés" as a contest that, as the poster of the ad campaign of the 2012 edition suggests, provides a platform for retirees to pursue or fulfill their dreams and to keep their desire to dream alive. We examine some of the ways that dreams are materialized both as expressions of interiority and shared public moments. As an actualization of the dreams, we argue, the contest makes ageing as a process matter.

Mediation and mediatization: What media theory has to learn from participatory media research with older adults

Kim Sawchuk (Concordia University, Montreal)

In Digital Storytelling, Mediatized Stories, Knut Lundby (2008) analyzes how amateur personal storytelling, focusing on the 'me´, has proliferated because of the presence of new media tools and the growth of social networking sites. As Lundby writes digital storytelling is indicative of the potential of the term "mediatization". Other researchers, particularly those whose work is part of the legacy of British cultural studies, much prefer the concept of mediation. For Sonja Livingstone, empirical subtlety and nuance are embedded in the ways that theorists who use "mediation" practice the study of media (2009) It is within this context of contemporary research and debates on mediation and mediatization that I reflect on a collaboration with Montreal-based seniors organization RECAA: Regroupment Ethnoculturelle Contra L´Abus des Aînées (An Ethnocultural Group Against Elder Abuse).

Comprised of approximately 12 older adults, between 70 and 92, what the members of RECAA share, besides their age, is a commitment to politics, human rights and social justice. RECAA practices what is known as Forum Theatre, developed by Brazilian director Augusto Boal. For the past year, my A-C-M team has been working with RECAA to integrate digital media into their evolving mandate. I provide background context on RECAA, discuss the debates on mediation and mediatization from a Canadian perspective, before analyzing the interplay of the terms mediatization and mediation drawing from observations, field notes and discussions with members of RECAA. In other words, to think through the concepts of mediatization and mediation, I ask the question: what does media theory have to learn from participatory media research with older adults?