The iPad as a shopping aid, tool and topic for AAC users

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Background:
Media promote inclusion
UN CRPD: media play a key role in promoting full and effective inclusion and participation
Indispensable skills for employment and everyday life
ICTs: important instruments for social inclusion
People grow up with multi-media technology, they have learned many ways of accessing and using the media world and would like to do so independently for their own goals and purposes

[Editor & Rath 2014]

Aim of the project
Case study: Collect the experiences of an AAC user with severe disabilities employing a communication folder and using this research as a basis on which to develop an iPad application

Research questions
What did we learn about the strengths and weaknesses of a traditional communication folder used by a student with severe disabilities?
How can we use these experiences to develop an iPad application for everyday life situations such as shopping?

Target group:
Persons with severe disabilities

The iPad as a shopping aid,

> The iPad has a number of great accessibility features
> The iPad supports SEN students’ learning
> It enhances motivation, control, independence
> It fosters fun, independent & inclusive classroom-based literacy activities (Hawett et al. 2014)

Results
> Students with severe disabilities
> “Apple’s iPad, iPhone and iPod touch can deliver an AAC solution that provides… significant improvements in key areas such as independence, interaction with others and general well-being”
> touchscreen-based technologies come with many advantages compared to traditional picture-based systems

Cases
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State of the art:

Experiences & case study:

The iPad as a device for communicating
Conscious and unconscious communication is an essential part of our lives
Persons with severe disabilities are often confronted with social barriers hindering or preventing communication.

From a communication folder to the iPad as a shopping aid
A student with severe disabilities can go shopping and communicate independently with few restrictions using a communication folder created by Simon Koch.

Case study methodology
Video analysis of the use of the communication folder in real life situations
SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) of iPad use development of wireframes and screens design

Strengths of the iPad
The price of the iPad is much lower compared to other digital communication systems.
Large market with a wide range of accessibility which can be used by persons with (severe) disabilities
Countless applications on one single device
Apple provides warranty and extensive support with fast turnaround times (damage/replace).

Development
From communication folder to iPad application

Results & Conclusions:

Communication folder
Video analysis: useful for everyday situations, boosts independence and participation and structures communication
Weaknesses (few words, no choice of symbols, etc.) can be reduced by developing an iPad app

Next steps in application
Include core vocabulary
Extend target group (e.g. to persons with autism spectrum disorder, aphasia)
Expand number of everyday situations (shopping, leisure time, school, etc.)

iPad as a tool to promote inclusion
The full potential of tablets as communication devices for persons with severe disabilities has yet to be explored.

IPA as a tool to promote inclusion
The iPad: "many important accessibility features and a wide selection of applications for students with severe disabilities
Being able to handle digital media devices like the iPad competently can boost the self-identification and self-confidence of persons with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities are given a better chance of being included in communication processes.

References:
[2014]

[Editor & Rath 2014]