CMSI 370-01
INTERACTION DESIGN
Fall 2013

Assignment 1105 Feedback

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1a — Your paper shows an introductory but well-founded understanding of how interaction design relates to mental models. Your consideration of developer and user perspectives, plus the focus on context in mobile computing, all speak to an understanding of the kinds of forces and influences behind mobile operating system interaction design.

The understanding remains introductory because (not surprisingly given your brief exposure to the subject) you miss some deeper aspects seen in prior work; in particular, the tension between interface customization and consistency plus user control. As your exposure to interaction design issues increases, you will find that unilateral statements leaning toward one or the other will draw skepticism among experts. Finally, I think there is some "drift" on exactly what is meant by "customization" in different parts of the paper, particularly the customization provided by Aviate and Google Now as opposed to what is called "customization in the operating system." I don't think they're the same.

Still, nice beginning, and your trajectory is certainly pointed in the right direction. (|)

1b — Your handling of the usability metrics and how you hold the Pfeiffer report against what the field has established is very clear and direct. This part of your paper is very solidly done. (**+**)

1c — You focus on a specific principle, customization-based-on-context, in your paper. Normally, this would be viewed as too narrow, but in your particular approach, it works well as an anchor. The discussion and issues emerging from it lend breadth and provide, like *1a*, a well-founded but introductory understanding. In the interest of "equal time" a discussion of the advantages of consistency would have been good here. One can, in fact, argue that although mobile devices do shift context *of situation*, they retain consistency *of user* (i.e., most mobile devices are dedicated to a single user). To what degree might that come into play, the fact that a particular device is *Ed's* phone vs. *Dondi's* phone? Customization should tread this carefully so that what gets contextualized is based on what the individual user would find valuable.

Anyway, this is a rich place for further discussion, and you need acknowledgment of that depth to show that your understanding of this area has gone to the next level. (|)

2a — This topic is sort of a "second order" study, in that you are studying someone else's study. In this respect you have done a good job of putting the Pfeiffer report under a critical light. Your criticisms are well-founded and based in literature, and your conclusions, at least as to the quality of the report, is expressed strongly and solidly. (**+**)

2b — Your paper is a tale of two trains of thought: one is an exploration of the proper framework for evaluating mobile operating systems. You have some good scaffolding there, juxtaposing developer needs, user needs, and context-of-use as an anchor point, but as mentioned earlier this needs a little more depth and exposure. The critique of the report, especially in light of the established usability metrics, is much more solid and forceful. This is sort of a (|/**+**), but because we can only choose one, I'll go with **+** to acknowledge that the shortcomings of the earlier discussion can be attributed to your beginner's exposure to the subject, and that your thinking and writing show evidence that, given further exposure, you will end up doing well when considering these issues further. (**+**)

4d — You find some good sources to support your claims and preferences, although they tend to be "one reference per assertion." Ideally you would want to broaden that support. (|)

4e — Your commit count and messages are appropriate for work of this scale, with the one caveat that they all took place within less than 48 hours. This is not the timetable that is envisioned for an assignment like this. Try to spread the work out a little better. (|)

4f — Submitted sufficiently on time. (**+**)