LAZY USER MODEL

LAZY USER MODEL:
SOLUTION SELECTION AND DISCUSSION ABOUT SWITCHING COSTS

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This presentation

- Lazy User Model
- Learning issues & Switching costs
- Conclusions & some implications to design

LAZY USER MODEL

Lazy User Model

- The model tries to explain *selection of solutions* ≈ technology adoption
- Focus on the *user need and user characteristics,* not only on the technology characteristics
- Focus on the *effort needed from the user* (in €, £, $; time; activity)
- Focus on putting *many* solutions on the same line (e.g., *competing technologies*)
- Usable in enhancing our understanding about the chances of market penetration of new products & in the design of new products (solutions)
- Focus on effect of learning to the effort needed

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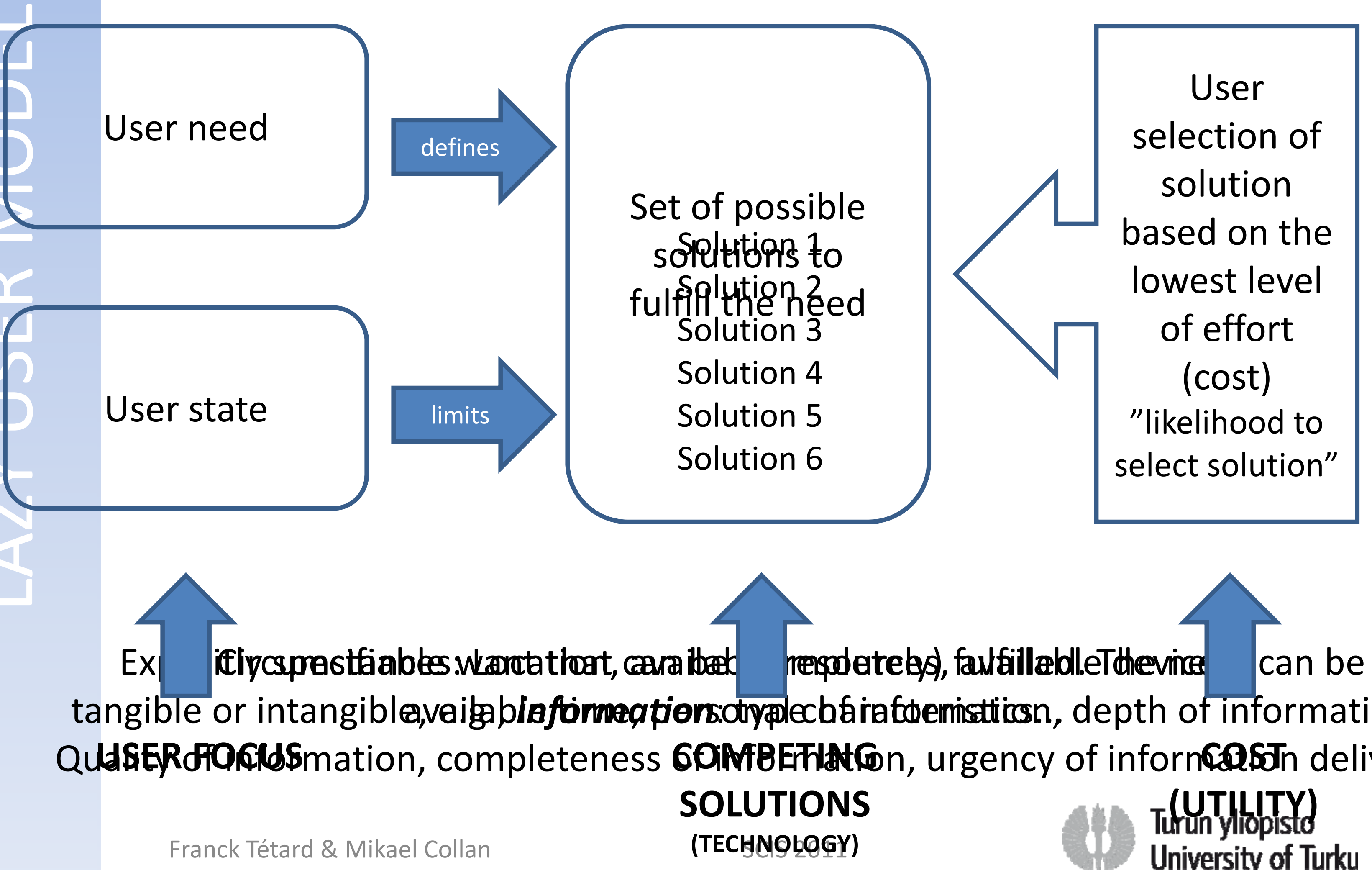
The Lazy User Model of Solution Selection



Explicitly specifiable want that can be completely fulfilled. The need can be tangible or intangible, e.g., information: type of information, depth of information, Quality of information, completeness of information, urgency of information delivery

Circumstances: Location, available resources, available device, available information, personal characteristics.

Relationship with some models explaining IT adoption

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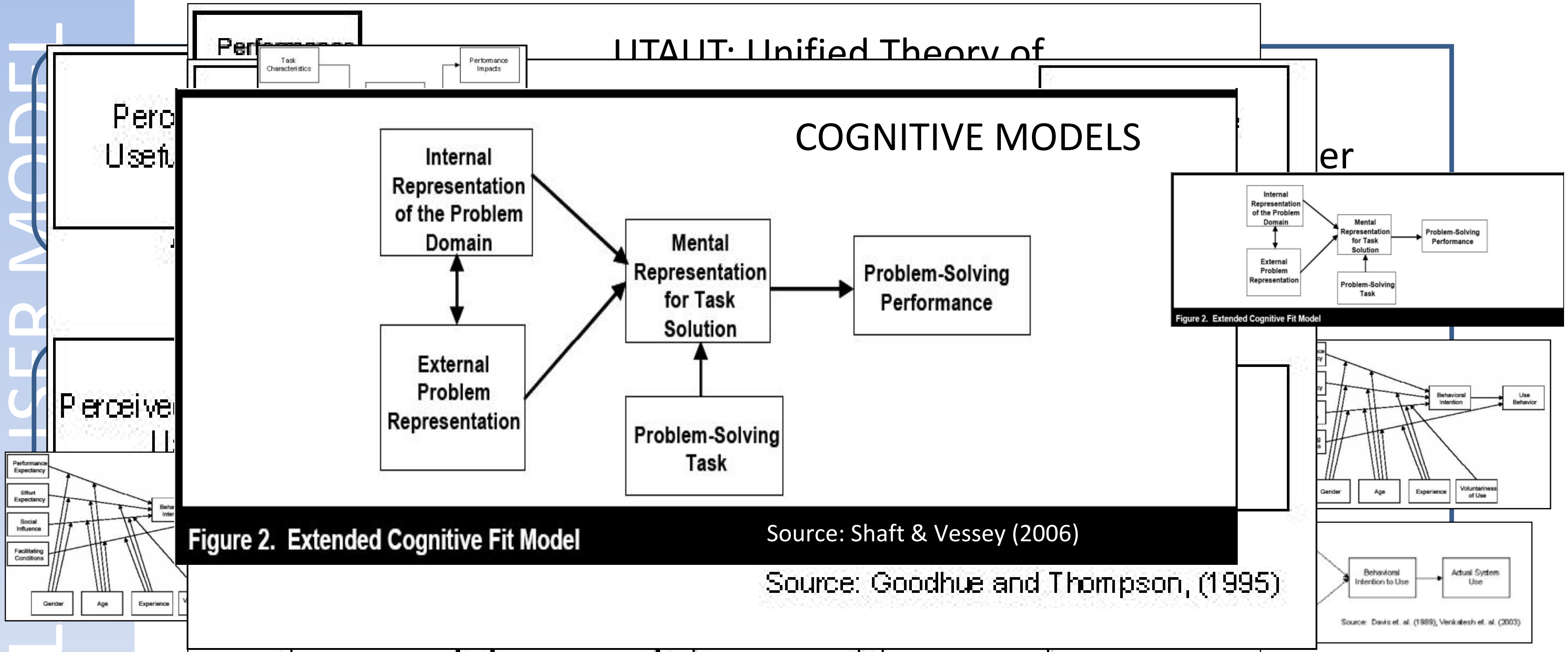

Figure 2. Extended Cognitive Fit Model

Main differences with other models include the inclusion of competing solutions and the acknowledgement that ... depends on the user characteristics ... strongly related

The Lazy User Theory of Solution Selection implication for IT adoption: The selection ... depends on the user need & characteristics that define the available (suitable) solutions, and that the user will select the least effort solution from the set of available solutions.

UTAUT: Tries to explain what determines the acceptance and use of technology with four key constructs that are affected by four characteristics

Performance (better fit leads to better performance)

Focus on single technology at a time

Mechanics of solution selection

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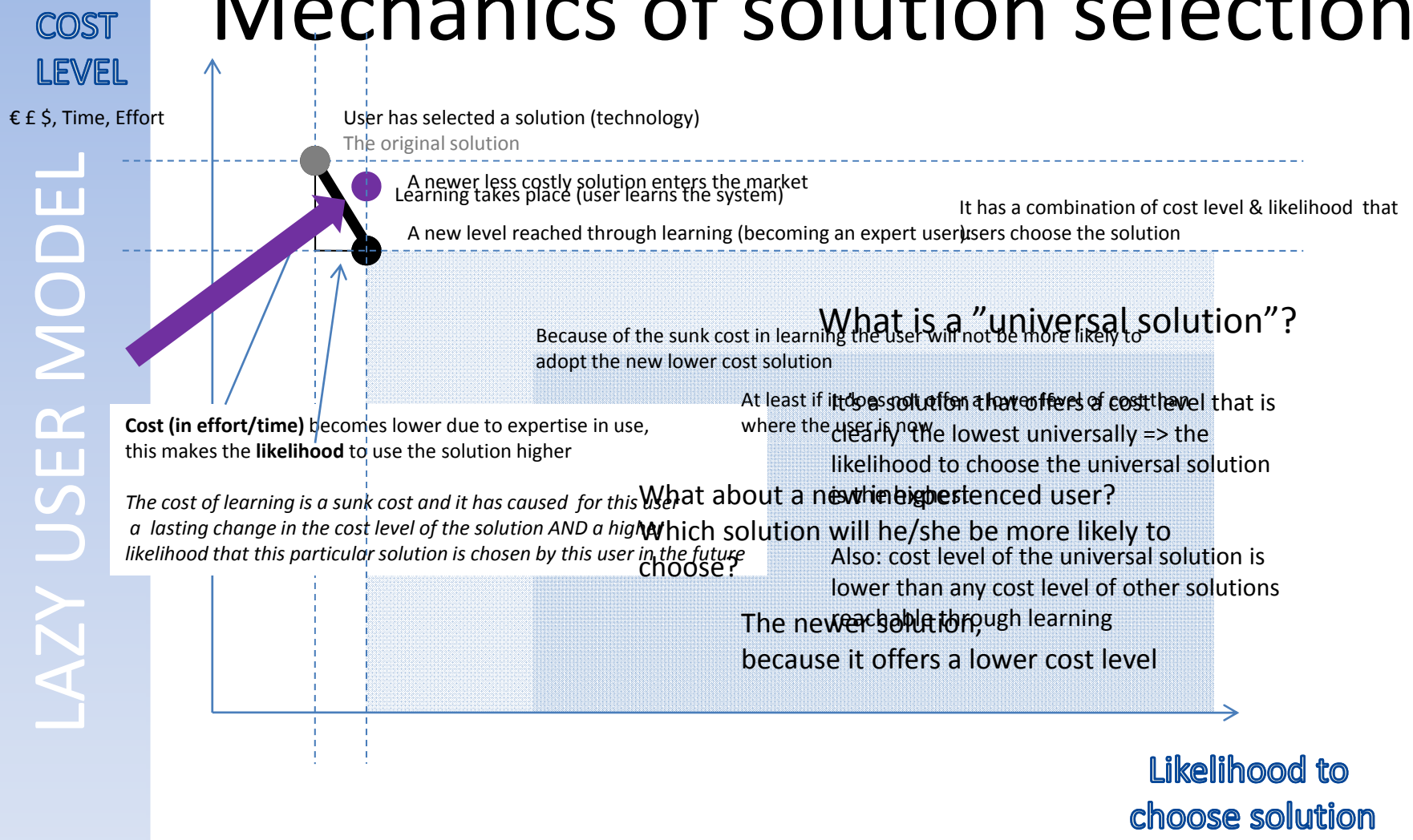
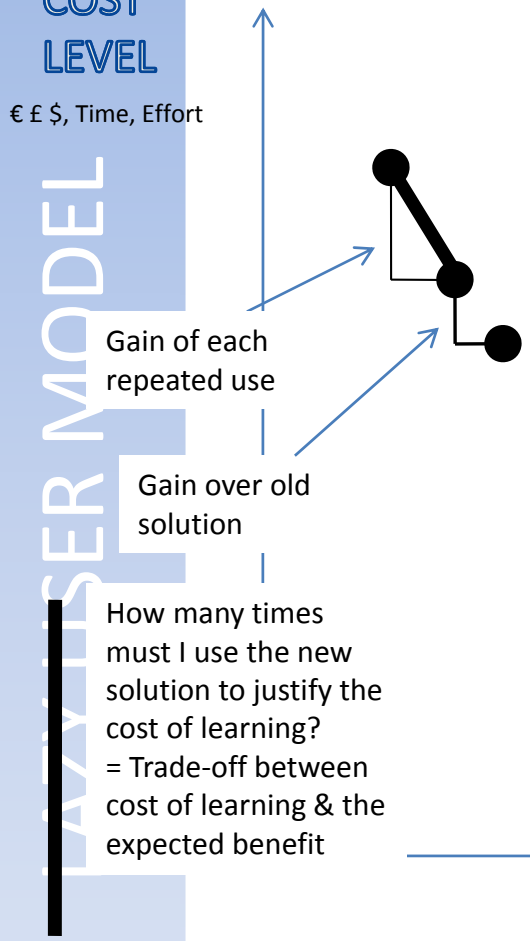


Learning issues



- An investment in learning a solution makes the cost of repeated use lower (*economies of scale*)

-Learning is a *sunk investment* that is also a *barrier of entry*; new competing solutions must be so much better that they justify ex-ante a new investment in learning, i.e., the faster the investment is ”paid back”, in the form of the lower effort of use, the better

- The size of the learning investment comes from the *learnability* of the solution (how easy is it to learn [to use]) and from the portability of the knowledge needed (*transferrability*)

-The barrier of entry is affected by *memorability* (how easy is it to remember how to use), if low memorability => low barrier of entry

Likelihood to choose solution

Transferrability implication:
Design new solutions so that users can use their previous knowledge

Some design implications

- Design in a way that:
  - users can use existing (previous) knowledge to use, or to learn to use, a new artifact (knowledge portability - transferability)
    - eg. 1. New car: “the user doesn’t need to learn how to use a new car, even though steering controls might look different”
    - eg. 2. Mobile phone: “key mapping - and related functionality - is fairly standard and doesn’t need to be learned, although keys might look and feel different”.

Some design implications

- Design in a way that:
  - users can use the product WITHOUT any actual learning effort (learnability very high, memorability issues do not come into play)

    eg. 1 Simplistic design philosophy: include only the minimal number of functions (buttons etc.)

    eg. 2 "Icons" – icon depicts the action so well that it is easy to understand what the action does just by looking at the icon (eg. using thumbnail photos of people in a phone directory)

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iPad: ”no-learning cost revolution”: a two-year old using the iPad with his dad

Final thoughts / Takeaway message

- There is a clear relationship between learning effects and switching costs
- Switching from one solution to another is ”the same” as selecting a new solution
- The Lazy User Model can be used to understand (and perhaps even quantify) some of the elements that contribute to switching
- It is possible to illustrate the effect of learning in a visual and intuitive way that is compatible with the previous research connecting learning with switching costs
- Learning as a sunk cost has implications on how solutions should be designed

Thank You!

Questions? Comments?

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