

# The Four Phase Model of Interest Development

Interest describes participation,  
an individual's

- psychological state during engagement, *and*
- their motivation to reengage particular content over time.
  
- physiologically based
- \* exists and develops through interactions with others and the design of the environment

New interests may develop at any age, and by individuals regardless of their gender and/or race and ethnicity.

Characteristics of interest assessed at the level of the individual, apply at least generally, to the level of the group.

# When interested, people will...

Search for relevant information

Seek deeper understanding

Persevere, even when faced with difficulty

Engage in meaningful learning

(e.g., more attentive, willing to extend effort,  
able to pursue and realize goals,  
effectively use strategies)

# Indicators of interest development

Positive feelings, in addition to:



Frequency of engagement

Depth of engagement

*and, given the opportunity,*



Voluntary and/or



Independent engagement

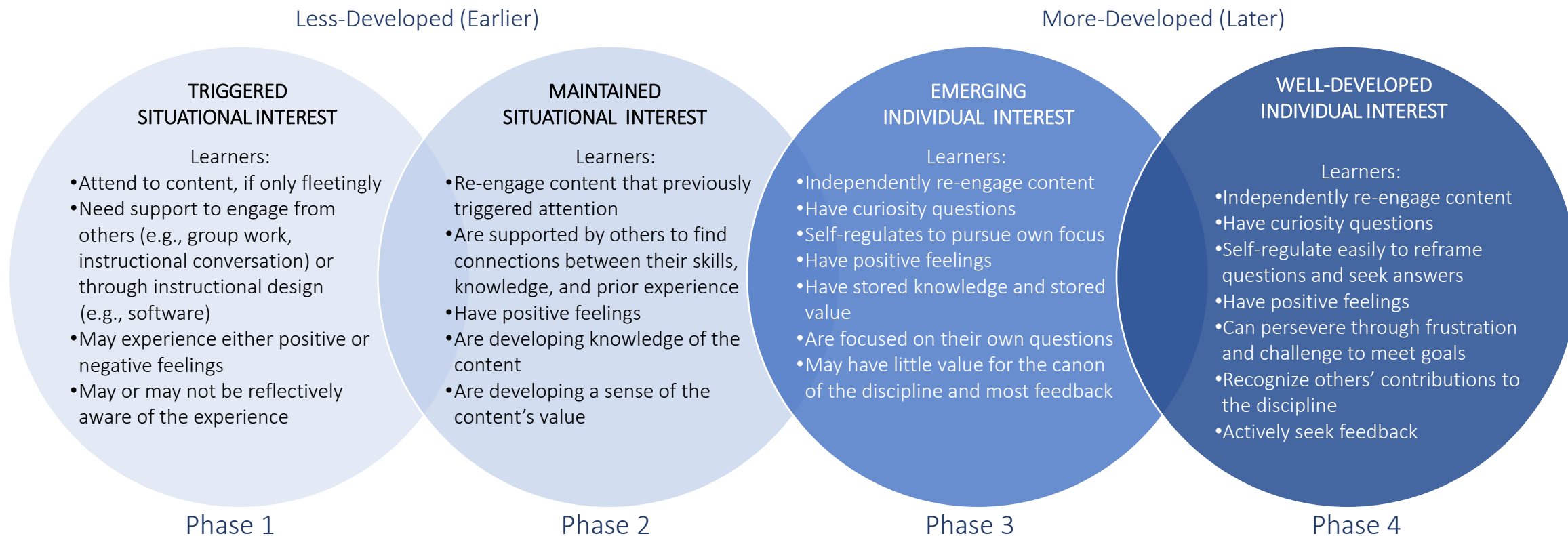


Figure 1: The Four-Phase Model of Interest Development (Hidi & Renninger, 2006), Revised; Renninger & Hidi (2022).

# Feedback needs

Learners need:

- To feel genuinely appreciated for the efforts they have made
- A limited number of concrete suggestions

Learners need:

- To feel genuinely appreciated for the efforts they have made
- Support to explore their own ideas

Learners need:

- To feel that their ideas and goals are understood
- To feel genuinely appreciated for their efforts
- Feedback that enables them to see how their goals can be more effectively met

Learners need:

- To feel that their ideas have been understood
- Constructive feedback
- Challenge

Less-Developed (Earlier)

More-Developed (Later)

## TRIGGERED SITUATIONAL INTEREST

Learners:

- Attend to content, if only fleetingly
- Need support to engage from others (e.g., group work, instructional conversation) or through instructional design (e.g., software)
- May experience either positive or negative feelings
- May or may not be reflectively aware of the experience

Phase 1

## MAINTAINED SITUATIONAL INTEREST

Learners:

- Re-engage content that previously triggered attention
- Are supported by others to find connections between their skills, knowledge, and prior experience
- Have positive feelings
- Are developing knowledge of the content
- Are developing a sense of the content's value

Phase 2

## EMERGING INDIVIDUAL INTEREST

Learners:

- Independently re-engage content
- Have curiosity questions
- Self-regulates to pursue own focus
- Have positive feelings
- Have stored knowledge and stored value
- Are focused on their own questions
- May have little value for the canon of the discipline and most feedback

Phase 3

## WELL-DEVELOPED INDIVIDUAL INTEREST

Learners:

- Independently re-engage content
- Have curiosity questions
- Self-regulate easily to reframe questions and seek answers
- Have positive feelings
- Can persevere through frustration and challenge to meet goals
- Recognize others' contributions to the discipline
- Actively seek feedback

Phase 4

## Feedback needs

Learners need:

- To feel genuinely appreciated for the efforts they have made
- A limited number of concrete suggestions

Learners need:

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Phase 4

## Feedback wants

Learners want:

- To have their ideas respected
- Others to understand the difficulty of working with this content
- Concrete suggestions
- To be told what to do

Learners want:

- To have their ideas respected
- Concrete suggestions
- To be told what to do

Learners want:

- To have their ideas respected
- To express their ideas
- NOT to be told to revise present efforts

Learners want:

- To have their ideas respected
- Information and feedback
- To balance their personal standards with more widely accepted disciplinary standards

# Selected References

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