

Yiannis Laouris, Cyprus Neuroscience & Technology Institute, Cyprus

Nikleia Eteokleous

**Dr. Yiannis Laouris** is a medical doctor specialized in neurophysiology (East and West Germany, and Arizona, US) and a systems engineer (US). He is the President of the Cyprus Neuroscience and Technology Institute ([www.cnti.org](http://www.cnti.org)), a non-profit institute that focuses its research on issues of learning through computers, profiling of mental abilities and treatment of learning disabilities using computer technologies and engineering problems related to the planning and execution of movement. His recent research interests relate to the definition of socially responsible integration of modern technologies in the lives of growing children and the development of learning environments that take advantage of such development while keeping the mentor-learner relationship. He also founded an international chain of franchised computer learning centres known as CYBER Kids ([www.cyber-kids.com](http://www.cyber-kids.com)). During the past 10 years he became actively involved in the citizens' peace movement in Cyprus. Together with Dr. Harry Anastasiou he founded the Technology For Peace portal that pioneered in offering a comprehensive virtual infrastructure and communication services to peace builders across the border.



## We need an Educationally Relevant Definition of Mobile Learning

In this paper we challenge current definitions of mobile learning and suggest that the direction of progress, both in theoretical/applied research as well as in its role as a tool for social transformation and development, will be determined and even dictated by the availability of an adequate definition. Despite the accompanying euphoria, mobile learning is currently still at a stage of small-scale projects that aim to investigate issues related to technical feasibility and to demonstrate and evaluate the relevant educational advantage. Some view eLearning as the immediate ancestor of mobile learning. Milrad (2003) defines eLearning as 'learning supported by digital "electronic" tools and media', and by analogy, mobile learning as 'eLearning that uses mobile devices and wireless transmission'. Quinn (2000) defines it simply as learning that takes place with the help of mobile devices. Others (e.g., Turunen et al. 2003) view mobile devices as a pervasive medium that may assist us in combining work, studying and leisure time in meaningful ways. Polsani (2003) considers these definitions "restrictive" and proposes instead the term 'network learning' (or 'nlearning'). He defines mobile learning as 'a form of education whose site of production, circulation, and consumption is the network'.

All above definitions do not meet our standards. All of them suffer because they can equally be applied to machine learning or to any educationally irrelevant and/or socially irresponsible learning framework. In an epoch where humanistic values are decrementing and vision towards social progress is disintegrating, our need to promote responsible education and learning is more crucial than ever. Within this context we suggest that sensitive definitions as those related to learning must take into account the role that learning (and education in general) must have within the framework of socially responsible education (Laouris 2003).

A new definition schema will be proposed in the full-length paper. The new definition will be based on a combination of parameters that cover technical- and educational aspects as well as expected requirements.