

Evaluating Mobile Learning: Reflections on Current Practice

The field of mobile learning is at present characterised by a proliferation of pilots and trials that allow mobile technologies to be tested out in a variety of learning contexts. The sustained deployment of mobile learning will depend on the quality of these pilots and trials, which includes evaluation methodology and reporting. The paper examines current evaluation practice, based on evidence drawn from conference publications, published case studies, and other accounts from the literature. The authors also draw on their work in collecting case studies of mobile learning from a range of recent projects. Issues deserving examination include the apparent objectives of the pilots or trials, the nature of the evaluations, instruments and techniques used, and the analysis and presentation of findings. The paper reflects on the quality of evaluation in mobile learning pilots and trials, in the broader context of evolving practices in the evaluation of educational technologies.

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John Traxler is Learning and Teaching Research Fellow in the Centre for Learning and Teaching at the University of



Wolverhampton. He is currently responsible for several projects that explore and develop the potential of technology in further and higher education. One of these projects will produce and evaluate accessible low bandwidth virtual learning environments running on "smart-phones" whilst the other projects to develop and evaluate different strategies to embed mobile technologies within university and community settings. He is a regular presenter at computing, educational and learning technology conferences and organises national workshops for computing academics, mostly on mobile learning, including educational texting, educational podcasting. He has worked with Sony to develop an increased role for handheld computers in education, and with DfID to explore the potential for mobile learning in sub Saharan Africa. He was the Evaluator for the EU mLearning Project and has had several roles in the Quality Assurance and Evaluation of technology supported learning and web-based learning, including the EU-funded Broadnet Project delivering training to SMEs in the West Midlands. His recent research and publication interests include the ethics and techniques of evaluating technology supported learning, mobile learning and social inclusion, factors affecting the nature and extent of lecturer take up of virtual learning environments, the use of "contrived" techniques in evaluation and the diffusion of learning technology innovations within educational organisations.

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in linguistics and language learning, which influences her perspective on human interaction with computers. She has ten years' experience of evaluating how adult learners use technology. Lately she has been developing the concept of 'pedagogical usability'. She is co-editor of a recently published book on mobile learning which includes 12 international case study chapters.