"And don't forget to bring your mobile" - Informing educational target groups about mobile learning opportunities

People Involved
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With members of the
London M-Learning Network.

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mobile learning; new learning opportunities; sustainability in learning; formal and informal learning; everyday life; 'at-risk learners'; information policy.

Description
This project focuses on the dissemination of concepts and projects for mobile learning conducted inside and outside school, with the aim to provide support for educational professionals and stakeholders through website, online-databases and publications, and thus to support 'at-risk learners' in successful and sustainable learning.

The emerging issue of mobile learning offers opportunities for learners in formal (e.g. school) and informal contexts (everyday life). Even if research is emerging in this field, and projects on mobile learning are just sporadically realised inside and outside school, learning with mobile devices has not arrived yet as an approach and opportunity to combine competencies and knowledge which were gained by learners in informal contexts, such as leisure time, with the affordances of school learning and self-directed and lifelong learning. At this point, this project aims to establish distribution and dissemination mechanisms to provide resources, information and guidelines and for educational professionals, multipliers and stakeholders active in the educational sector, by using mainly online-databases and websites. The enhancement of such a project which covers school and extramural learning is seen as indispensable in terms of participation in learning and education, the integration of 'at-risk learners' and strengthening lifelong learning.

The project is based on an interdisciplinary and international project of the London M-Learning Network which brings together different theoretical and analytical approaches (cultural studies, sociology, semiotics, pedagogy and educational technology). Agency, meaning making in everyday life and extramural (learning) contexts are considered to be central to identifying structures which can harness mobile learning for school and to support 'at-risk learners'/underprivileged learners in their school learning as well as lifelong learning. The focus is on a theoretical and conceptual framework for mobile learning around the notion of cultural ecology and learning as agentive and meaningful activity. The analytical engagement with mobile learning of the group takes the shape of a conceptual model in which educational uses of mobile technologies are viewed in ecological terms as part of a cultural and pedagogical context in transformation (further information is available on www.london-mlearning.net).

The proposed project is based on this theoretical and conceptual approach.

The project consists of 4 stages:

Pre-stage: Theory building and review of m-learning projects:

The theoretical framework is currently being developed by the London M-Learning Network within a book project with Springer which will be finished by the end of 2008. The book will include a review of core literature in the m-learning field as well as description and analysis of relevant m-learning projects.

Stage 1: leaflets and website with information, guidelines and project data:
Stage 1 is the development and production of information and guidelines for educational professionals, practitioners and stakeholders. They will be avail-

able as printed leaflets and on a bilingual website (English and German) which will be installed for the purposes of this project.

Stage 2: website with literature, project databases and weblog:
An online-database for m-learning literature, projects and concepts as the core of this project is considered to be a tool for people interested in mobile learning to share their experiences and projects with others, and to discuss different aspects with reference to mobile learning – inside and outside school.

Providing public databases and a weblog with the option for users to either learn from the available resources for projects or to contribute by project submission aims to keep the discussion on mobile learning vivid and up to date.

A literature database will complement the website providing a vast resource of references with wider relevance to (mobile) learning and general media use in everyday life as well as references to the various interdisciplinary theoretical fields.

Stage 3: International conference:
The international conference for stakeholders and practitioners in the educational sector as well as for researchers from different contexts is another stage of the project with the aim to provide a forum for people from different areas. The aim is also to bring together academia and professional, economy, school and extracurricular institutions, teachers and pupils, with interdisciplinary approaches and a clear focus on the learners' activities and agencies, inside and outside school.

Stage 4: Final report:
A final report will outline the results of this one year project.

Networking and partnerships:
Stage (2) and (3) are related to networking and building international partnerships with the intermediate-term aim to enable co-operation, and to provide a discussion and knowledge basis for practitioners as well as sustainability and promotion of the new field of m-learning.

Outcomes and dissemination

I. a database with relevant literature on mobile learning

II. a database systematically listing projects relevant for mobile learning

III. a website including papers, presentations, podcasts, booklets and leaflets

IV. a weblog with participatory options for people interested and engaged in mobile learning

V. booklets and leaflets as information and guidelines for educational professionals, multipliers and stakeholders in the educational sector

VI. organisation of an international conference

VII. participation in international conferences with project presentation and proceedings

VIII. articles in relevant English and German language journals

The envisaged audiences are education professionals, practitioners, multipliers and stakeholders in the educational sector.

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