

Workshop Proceedings

Showcasing operator led mEducation innovation and Education/Mobile Industry collaboration

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Aims

- Showcased the mobile education work of mobile network operators
- Facilitated communication between the operator, educator and research communities
- Debated topics of mutual interest in mEducation

Overview

This workshop was designed with interactivity in mind for attendees to share experiences and hear from others on the use of mobiles in education.

The workshop provided an update on the work of mobile network operators and device manufacturers in education. It also provided opportunities for educators, researchers, operators and policymakers to meet, discuss issues related to introducing mEducation today and propose solutions.

We encouraged participation from members of the education community who wished to share their ideas and observations on effective use of handheld technologies and mobile networks for teaching, learning and management and administration of education.

The full day workshop included morning and afternoon sessions and delegates were able to choose to attend just one of the sessions or to take part in the full day of activities.

Agenda Overview

The full programme of activities for the day can be found on the GSMA website (see <http://www.gsma.com/connectedliving/event/mlearn/>) and links to the presentations made by GSMA member organisations will be uploaded, namely:

1. Françoise Tort, Senior Lecturer, Ecole Normale Supérieure de Cachan and External Evaluator for Orange, France
2. Mark McGinn, Head of O2 Learn, O2
3. Giovanna Chiozzi, TI Lab & Global Consulting, Telecom Italia
4. Paul Landers, Program Manager, Ericsson

Morning: A "Pecha Kucha" style introduction session that lead into mini-working groups identifying and discussing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of mEducation. The conclusions drawn from these discussions were used to create a graphic analysis of the mobile education landscape. There were also opportunities to learn from operators about their mEducation initiatives, with time available during breaks and lunch for workshop participants to discuss these with operator representatives.

Afternoon: Two short presentations were given providing operator and device manufacturer perspectives, followed by a facilitated stakeholder role-play activity in which participants were encouraged to take on a different role from their usual position. Participants were asked to engage and be imaginative with the task in order to highlight attitudes, perceptions and issues surrounding the use of mobiles in education. The implications of these and ways to address them in the future were subsequently brainstormed. Additional time was given at the end of the afternoon for attendees to speak further with the members of the mobile technology community about their initiatives.

Presentation Summaries

- 1 Francoise Tort gave a presentation entitled "The 'TEN' project: Use of tablets in French middle schools". She outlined the use of tablets by 160 11 year old students and 65 teachers in 6 classes in 6 schools. Orange was the French mobile network operator involved in the project, and a case study has been published by the GSMA (<http://www.gsma.com/connectedliving/introducing-always-connected-tablets-into-french-schools/>) which gives details of the services Orange provided to the project and their e-education strategy.
- 2 Mark McGinn gave a Prezi presentation about the O2 Learn free video sharing website which encourages teachers to upload short videos of lessons aimed at students aged 13-18 in different curriculum areas, with currently more than 3,000 available to view. He also highlighted the development of an iPhone app to enable easy recording and editing of videos on mobile devices. See <https://www.o2learn.co.uk/>
- 3 Giovanna Chiozzi gave a presentation entitled "educ@Tlon: A mobile learning experience". She outlined Telecom Italia's framework for mLearning, explained how the applications and tools fit together, and detailed the trials and findings that have taken place since 2010. Currently they have 600 users taking part in 10 schools using the system in different parts of Italy.
- 4 Paul Landers gave a presentation entitled "Connect to learn with Ericsson Technology". He outlined the current state of education with particular reference to developing countries, the journey of mobile learning over time, how it can now be simplified with cloud-based services, finishing with consideration of industry-based trends. Also noted was the importance of globally connecting schools to each other.

Outcomes

Participants in the workshop received two key "take-aways":

- a) A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of the mobile education sphere

a) The SWOT Analysis of the mobile education sphere

STRENGTHS

- Provides mobility – allows users to access information, data, calls and messages anytime and anywhere (connectivity assumed)
- Empowers teachers and students with information
- Can engage learners, particularly reluctant learners or those who may have found difficulty with traditional education methods
- Offers a reliable, easy-to-access service
- Is a motivational tool, not just for young learners, but for older learners too
- Acts as a catalyst to provide level of interactivity between parents/guardians and their children
- M2M* is viewed as an “enabler”

* M2M is an acronym for machine-to-machine, and broadly refers to machines exchanging information and performing actions without needing human action

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of consistent policy usage in schools – some schools ban devices, others promote them. More guidance is required, when best to use them, how to use them etc. This leads to the broader discussion about the skills which are needed by students in the 21st Century
- Difference between the perceptions of what is needed in education between technology developers and educationalists
- The base of ‘apps’ remains limited. There are competing platforms, networks, modes of access etc
- Importance of not excluding learners just because they do not possess the most up-to-date technology (to access the best learning opportunities)
- Compatibility issues are experienced with different devices – a good browser for developing countries is a “must”
- Target audience for mobile devices is not always considered – they are used by people of all backgrounds and ages

The technology is only as good as the person using it!

OPPORTUNITIES

- There are many stakeholders who can become involved in mobile learning, eg the government and their ministries, national and regional authorities, IT industries (mobile network operators, service providers), universities, colleges, schools, teachers, learners, parents and publishers
- Now devices can be used 'in situ', whereas previously learning was fixed in terms of place and time (even e-learning via desktop computers)
- Increased flexibility for students in terms of what they can learn, when, and the extension to the traditional school environment
- Offers opportunities for new ways of learning (eg collaborative learning), and teaching (teachers can share materials and collaborate too)
- Learners can create their own content, empowering individuals
- Increased access to learning content and open resources
- Teachers are central to helping to making the best use of these new opportunities
- Teachers need opportunities for support from their school systems, and ministries of education. Thought and assistance must be given as to how best to integrate their use in a broad way, but also to integrate them into curriculum areas where there is a large teaching load
- Different aspects can be used to engage learners, eg gaming, which can make learning more fun
- Educational tools are increasingly being used outside of the traditional educational environment, eg the rise of personal tutoring
- BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) may provide an opportunity for an institution to save money, in terms of not having to provide fixed computers, or laptop infrastructure support
- Digital books cost 30% less than paper-based books, and so could represent a cost saving (assuming parents/schools purchase them and the required books are available)
- Broadly people are becoming more dependent on mobile services (NB this also means they are increasing their demands on the quality provided)

THREATS

- Teachers may fear the use of mobile devices may disturb the lesson/change their way of teaching/mean they lose control
- Integration and innovation may be difficult when the curriculum is already extensive
- Students tend to be measured using traditional means, which may not take into account the learning/understanding promoted using mobile devices
- Teachers are (rightly) concerned with the protection of children in their care
- Broadband capacity needs to be increased – possibly through partnerships
- Mobile network operators are often unsure what their role is in education – there is a need for work on business models which could be adopted
- Educationalists often like to create open resources with the emphasis on sharing these with the educational community – this does not necessarily always meet publishers' requirements
- Educational publishers can fear loss of control of content/copyright issues
- The majority of the teaching material on the internet is in the English language
- There is no inspection body regulating e-tutoring

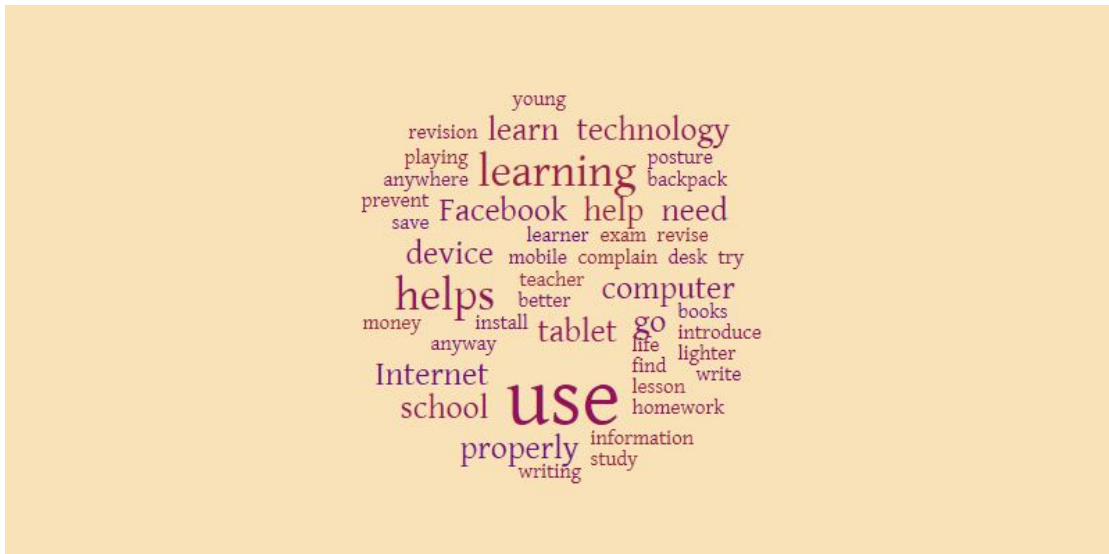


Figure 3: Learner arguing for the use of mobile devices in his/her education

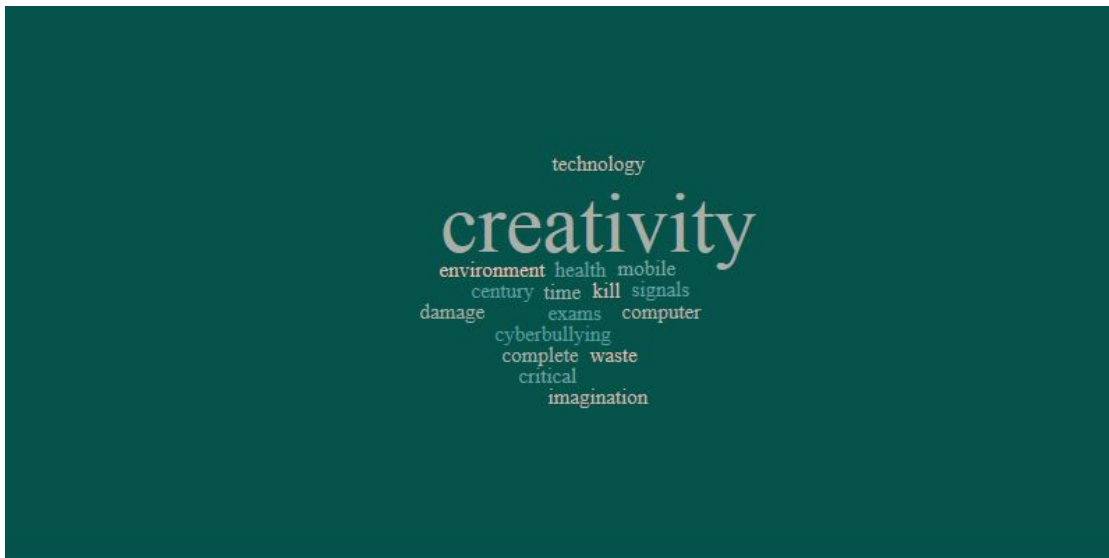


Figure 4: Parent/guardian concerned at the potential use of mobile devices by their children in education

