Green shoots of hope in mobile learning

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Connecting learning and living
for greater learning opportunities and a sharper focus on learners' lives, interests and needs
Exploring, predicting and shaping future ways of teaching, learning and assessing

- understand emerging trends, opportunities, threats
- address global challenges in education
- promote more equitable, diverse and caring edtech futures

http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/innovating
Overarching themes from the past 10 years of Innovating Pedagogy reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ten overarching THEMES</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Connecting with others</td>
<td>Telecollaboration, Crowd learning</td>
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<td>2. Emotions</td>
<td>Playful learning, Learning through wonder</td>
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<td>3. Justice</td>
<td>Engaging with data ethics, Decolonising learning</td>
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<td>4. Resourcing learning</td>
<td>Bring your own devices, Learning analytics</td>
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<td>5. New settings for learning</td>
<td>Place-based learning, Flipped classroom</td>
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<td>6. Frameworks to support thinking and learning</td>
<td>Computational thinking, Learning to learn</td>
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<td>7. Learning in an open world</td>
<td>Open textbooks, Badges to accredit learning</td>
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<td>8. Learning in daily life</td>
<td>Learning through social media, Esports</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Making learning personal</td>
<td>Dynamic assessment, Translanguaging</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Engaging learners</td>
<td>Immersive learning, Event-based learning</td>
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The past few years…
Offline learning

‘real’ social connection

wellbeing

engaging the senses

direct experience
Walk-and-talk (Innovating Pedagogy 2022)

The act of walking:
• facilitates thinking and discussion
• can lift spirits, clear the mind, spark new ideas, provide insights into life experiences
• may expand social networks

Combined with conversations on the phone, via text messages, or directly between people walking side by side
Walk-and-talk – connecting places and people

Community project run by Learning Unlimited in London

Through walking with local volunteer guides and others, socially isolated migrants can engage in informal learning to:

- develop their language skills if English is not their first language
- increase their knowledge of their local area
- find out about local services, support and recreational opportunities

https://www.learningunlimited.co/projects/walk-talk/
Learning outdoors


COUNTERPOINT

‘if a technologically mediated nature is all we come to know, we risk eroding direct, meaningful engagement with nature’

Language teacher training:
storytelling rehearsals to teach English across formal and informal settings

(Bertoluzzi, Bertoldi & Marenzi in: *Mobile Assisted Language Learning Across Educational Contexts*, 2021)

**An online environment for student teachers** – supported by teacher educators, librarians, volunteer narrators, parents, childminders

**Rehearsals for informal storytelling events in libraries** aimed at young English language learners (and in gardens during the pandemic emergency)

**Mobile interactions** enabled anytime planning, rehearsals, reading resource creation and sharing, feedback, continuous reflection on action

Image by Ben White on Unsplash
Post-pandemic education: More equitable, compassionate?

Awareness of (in)equality

Awareness of wellbeing

Image sources:
Mobile learning in 2023 and beyond...
What are we researching? Mobile Learning 2023 conference

A different way to learn
- Reimagining teaching and learning
- Cross-cultural education
- Education for sustainability
- Raising awareness about nature conservation

Relevant and participatory learning spaces
- Inclusive learning environment
- Inclusive digital democracy
- Creating productive experiences

Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Hands-on clinical skills
- Motion simulation
- Global employability skills
- Practice through play
What are we researching? Mobile Learning 2023 conference

**Opinions** of students
- Attitudes of students
- Attitudes of librarians
- Perceptions of teachers
- Perceptions of fact-checkers

**Evaluation** of linguistic aggression
- Evaluation of climate change impact
- Emotional evaluation of movie posters
- Usability evaluation of mobile interfaces
- Review of multi-project platforms

**Framework** of best practices
- Data acquisition framework
- Digital transformation framework
- Conceptual framework for participation
- Conceptual model for continuance usage intention
- Methodological model for using smartphones
- Reference architecture for energy services
- Multidimensional ontology

**Design** principles
- Intuitive querying
- User-adaptive navigation
- Cognitive criteria
- Citizen identification
Agendas for mobile learning


Three agendas for mobile learning:

- Transforming teaching and learning
- Developing 21st century skills
- Promoting social justice
Mobile learning agendas

- 2006: **Big issues in Mobile learning** (Sharples)
- 2007: **Mobile Learning: Towards a Research Agenda** (Pachler)
- 2009: **Future Directions in Researching Mobile Learning** (Kukulska-Hulme)
- 2010: **Leveraging mobile technology for sustainable seamless learning: A research agenda** (Looi et al.)
- 2012: **Turning on mobile learning: global themes** (UNESCO)
- 2012: **An agenda for mobile learning** (Rushby)
- 2014: **Agendas for Mobile Learning** (Pegrum)
- 2016: **The Future of Mobile Learning** (Traxler)
Reflecting on our agendas and research questions
- as individuals and as a mobile learning community

What are our current research agendas in mobile learning?

» Who sets the agenda for our research?

» What research questions are we pursuing?

See:
Available at: [http://oro.open.ac.uk/78924/](http://oro.open.ac.uk/78924/)
Artificial intelligence in education

What will AI do?

What will people do?

Image: Lighthouse Research and Advisory
https://lhra.io/blog/future-work-requires-essential-human-skills/
Smart jewellery

Voice translator

Audio glasses
Increasing opportunities for **informal and home-based learning and content creation**

- **An addition to, or a substitute for,** formal learning

- **Emerging practices**, such as influencer-led education

- **Personal interests and group affiliations** shape choices and practices
By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially...
Learning in challenging settings

Widening participation in low-resource contexts in a mobile age
Our research on children’s use of technology and the English language

Literature review (2020-21) showed a lack of research relating to:

- low-income/ under-resourced countries
- marginalised communities
- children’s opinions and experiences, both in school and outside of school
- teachers’ and parents’ perspectives
Project 2021-22

Reaching out to marginalised young people aged 13-15 in under-resourced countries in Africa and Asia

Partners:
- Universities
- Schools
- Field researchers

Participants:
- Children
- Teachers
- Parents

Focus on:
- mobile technologies & English language learning and use
- lived experience, inside and outside of school
- barriers and opportunities, including role of gender

Supported by

The Open University
The Research Team

- **The Open University** Agnes Kukulska-Hulme (Lead), Saraswati Dawadi, Mark Gaved
- **Tribhuvan University, Nepal**: Kamal Raj Devkota
- **University of Dhaka, Bangladesh**: Rubina Khan
- **Ahfad University for Women, Sudan**: Amna Bedri
- **Regional Centre of Teacher Training, Diourbel, Senegal**: Abdou Niane
- **Monash College, Australia**: Ram Ashish Giri

Each national partner in the 4 fieldwork countries also had their own research team.
Research Questions

ACCESS AND ATTITUDES

- **RQ1**: What access do marginalised students, teachers and parents have to technology that may be used for educational purposes?
- **RQ2**: What are marginalised students’, teachers’ and parents’ attitudes towards the role of technology and the English language?

EXPERIENCES

- **RQ3**: What are the experiences of students, teachers, and parents in using technology for student learning?
- **RQ4**: What are the experiences of students, teachers, and parents in using English for student learning? What factors affect girls’ experiences of technology in support of their education?
- **RQ4**: What factors affect girls’ opportunity and motivation to learn English in the target countries? Is there gender equity and equality in English language learning?
School settings in marginalised communities

**Bangladesh**- slum children (urban area) and Bandearban- remote part of the country where the literacy rate is 34.0%.

**Senegal**- Taïba Moutoupha and Ndindy, where the GER for girls is the lowest, and the dropout rate for both girls and boys the highest.

**Sudan**- Suburbs of Omdurman (inhabited mostly by war-displaced people) and white Nile (tribes such as nomads and Hausa)

**Nepal**- Squatter Community (urban setting), and Tharu community- marginalized ethnic community (rural location).
Experiences of using technology at home

**Students:**

**Home assignments:** He [brother] allows me to use mobile phone for preparing assignments (BD).

**Learning improvement:** I use google search. To improve the English language I search for ‘how to learn the English language’ on YouTube. For solving maths I downloaded apps (NP).

**Group work:** They work together. Students, for example, have WhatsApp groups through which they carry out work together. I noticed that (Parent-SN).

**Online classes from home:** I use it in an online class (NP).

**Other uses:** listening to English songs/music, social media (Facebook, TikTok, YouTube)

**Challenges:** sharing technology, connectivity
**Teacher:**

*I use it but to prepare my lessons, I use it to make the lesson plan, but I don’t use it inside the classroom* (SD).

**Student:**

*We have a computer lab but we did not use it during the time of pandemic. Before the pandemic, our teacher would take us to the lab. He used to demonstrate us different things* (NP).
Attitudes towards technology

- Facilitates learning & teaching
- Better job opportunities
- Better life opportunities

Students:

*Because many of us cannot use technology such as computers, and students must know how to use those because at a certain level you will need them* (SN)

*Crucially, technology does create a better opportunity in life for everyone* (SN)

Teachers:

*Technology creates better life opportunities for me and for others* (SD)

- Students recognised that gaining the skills to effectively use devices is important.
- Some teachers, parents and students expressed some negative attitudes towards technology and its possible misuses.
Gender equality in using technology and learning English

- Some female students have fewer opportunities to use mobile phones at home than male students: girls have certain duties at home and may not be allowed to go to internet cafes.

“Girls should not use a smartphone. It’s only for my son.” (Parent in Bangladesh)

“I do not think girls and boys have the same opportunity to use technology at home” (Parent in Sudan)

- Parents are more concerned about how their daughters use technology than their sons.

“Boys and girls are the same, but you have to be cautious about at what the girl is studying” (Parent in Bangladesh).
**Impact related work**

First research partner in each country is working with 2-4 other organisations

**Other partners (representatives):** British Council, Ministry of Education and Education Training Centre

- Policy briefs
- Policy briefs dissemination and workshops for Key stakeholders
- Training of Trainers/ Teacher training/ Awareness raising among parents
- Press release
- Blog post/boosting in SNS sites
- Radio programs/interviews
Our new project with a focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

**Digital/mobile learning and the future of English in Higher Education in South East Asia (2022-24)**

- **Focus on emerging ‘trends’** - such as digital/mobile English learning and informal learning
- **Collecting perceptions and experiences** from students, teachers, policy makers, I/NGO leaders, IT companies, educationists
- **Drawing out implications** for pedagogy, policy and research

Supported by modish

English for the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) generation

Bangladesh  Indonesia  China  India
What research shall we do next? How can we work together? What problems shall we try to solve?
### Global or local educational challenges in 2023 and beyond

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Education provision</strong></th>
<th><strong>Environments</strong></th>
<th><strong>People</strong></th>
<th><strong>Technologies</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Limited or inequitable access to education</td>
<td>• Under-resourced learning environments</td>
<td>• Teacher shortages</td>
<td>• Challenges of online, mobile, hybrid, virtual learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Poor quality education</td>
<td>• Disruptions due to natural disasters and wars/political unrest</td>
<td>• Skills shortages</td>
<td>• Rise of artificial intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Outdated curricula not developing vital competencies</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Greater learner mobility, forced or by choice</td>
<td>• Unsafe or unethical online spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ineffective pedagogies that do not engage or achieve results</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Greater diversity in classes, requiring specialist support</td>
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</table>
Mobile perspectives on educational challenges

• Inequitable access – access enabled by mobile devices
• Outdated curricula – up-to-date mobile resources
• Ineffective pedagogies – flexible, personal mobile learning

• Under-resourced environments – mentoring or resources on mobiles
• Disruptions – continuity through mobile devices

• Teacher shortages – mobile resources and smart assistants filling in
• Greater learner mobility – mobile support for translation
• Greater diversity in classes – mobile support for translanguaging
• Mental health and wellbeing – mobile health integrated with learning

• Lack of skills for online – mobile literacy outpacing online
• Rise of artificial intelligence – chatting with chatbots
• Unsafe or unethical online spaces – learner-centric mobile platforms
Mobile learning is still “in its infancy” in many parts of the world

- “mobile learning in Malaysia is still in its infancy” (Ismail, Azizan & Gunasegaran, 2016)

- “Within the Greek formal educational context, mobile learning is in its infancy” (Nikolopoulou, 2018)

- “learning through mobile devices is still in its infancy in Pakistan” (Uppal, Ali, Zahid, & Basir, 2020)

- “the field of mobile learning in Tanzania is still in its infancy” (Ndume, Songoro, & Kisanga, 2020)

- “research into mobile learning is still in its infancy stage in developing countries like Trinidad” (Samuel, 2021)
Concluding questions

Which broad trends, challenges or agendas is your research or teaching currently aligned to, if any?

Which ones do you consider important?

What can we offer to those who are only now starting out in mobile learning?

ReMaLIC project publication:
https://oro.open.ac.uk/87586/

Learning Futures Programme in IET
https://iet.open.ac.uk/research/programmes/learning-futures