



eLearning Forum Asia

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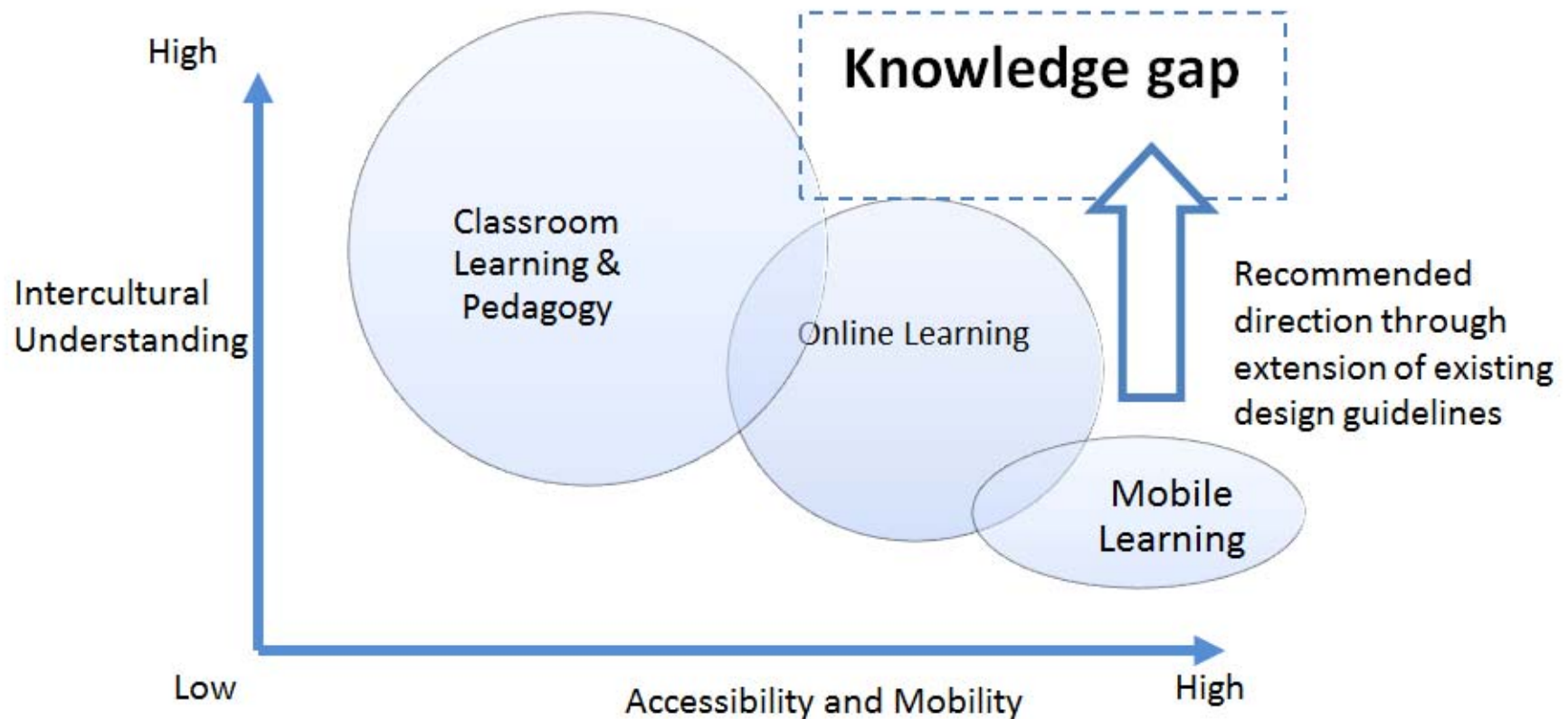
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Intercultural understanding in the new mobile learning environment

Keywords

Intercultural understanding, mobile learning, intercultural competence, transnational education, distance education, online learning

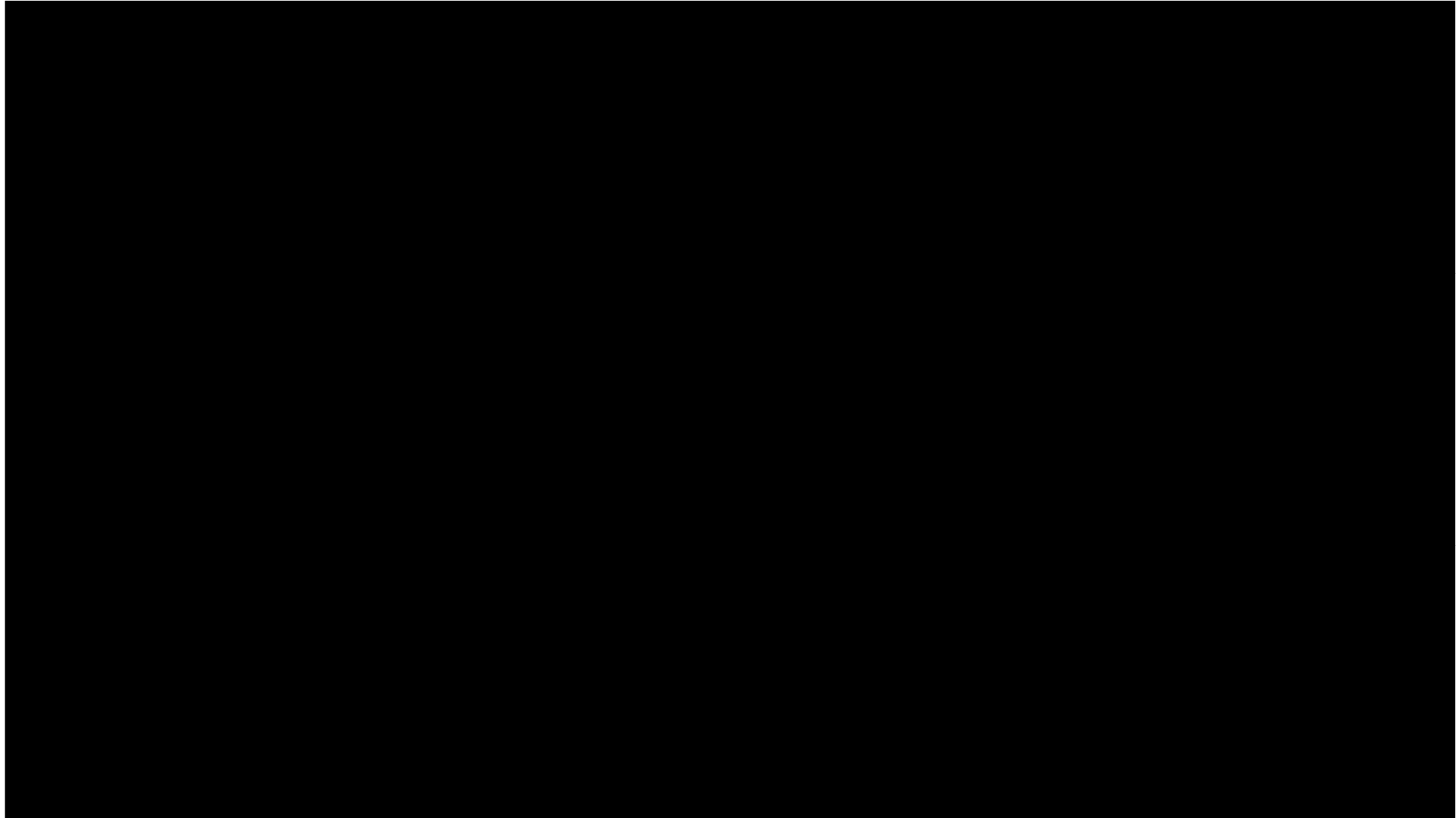
Mobile learning and intercultural understanding



Globalisation

- **Informatics Global Campus** - a HE Provider in Singapore and offering UK education via online / mobile learning.
- Think how your university will benefit from the extension of elearning with mobile technologies to increase 3(E) = enrolment , engagement , efficacy

“Transnational, Transborder, Distance Education”





http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_DnXwTfHr0&feature=youtu.be



Globalization in Education

- Since 1990s, western universities or higher educational institutes had been starting to develop these **exportable programs** and crossing the cultural barrier (Mason, 1998).
- **Internationalization** effort in higher education is not unique (Leask, 2004; Mercado et al, 2004) and is observed in many Asian countries. The terms used in this sector such as **offshore, transnational, trans-border, distance learning** are all very common.

Need for HE to support local delivery of distance education

- Spronk (2004) called these countries (eg Canada, United States, United Kingdom , Australia, New Zealand) **exporting education as “settler countries”** - expanding and promoting their courses and programs in Asia - often as distance learning programs, or blended learning programs with the support of local tutors.
- Leask (2004) Intercultural contact - one of the key driver to increase intercultural learning opportunities and competence in transnational education and individual higher education (HE) institute’s desire to internationalize

Intercultural Understanding

- According to Leask (2004), these global educators will face many risk factors when comes to developing the understanding of intercultural practices like “how the language and cultures influence their thoughts, values, actions and feelings”.
- It is clear that when any learning takes place, it can differ significantly from one country to another - Spronk (2004) describes this as “differ profoundly from one culture to another” and attributes these digital learner’s culture into “hierarchy, style, orientation and language”.

Intercultural Competence in Online Learning

- One of the widely used research framework in studying cross-cultural communications is from the original work by Hofstede (1986) who developed the four dimensions of cultural differences –
 - Power Distance,
 - Individualism - Collectivism,
 - Uncertainty Avoidance and
 - Masculinity.
- Liu et al (2010) recent paper titled “Cultural Differences in Online Learning : International Student Perceptions” is one that adopts Hofstede’s model.

WHY SMARTPHONES WORK FOR STUDENTS

Smartphones and tablets combine many functions in one device. An ever-increasing number of apps allow users to perform multiple tasks anytime and anywhere.

Ownership continues to increase:



Adults ages 18 to 24 who had a smartphone



Adults who owned a tablet or e-reader

"There's an App for that"
More than 500,000 apps are available in the iTunes store alone; a similar number is available on Google's Android Market.



53

Average number of app downloads per user:



83

U.S. app downloads in millions (April 2012):



673.99	378.09	79.46	12.07
Android	iPhone	iPad	WP7

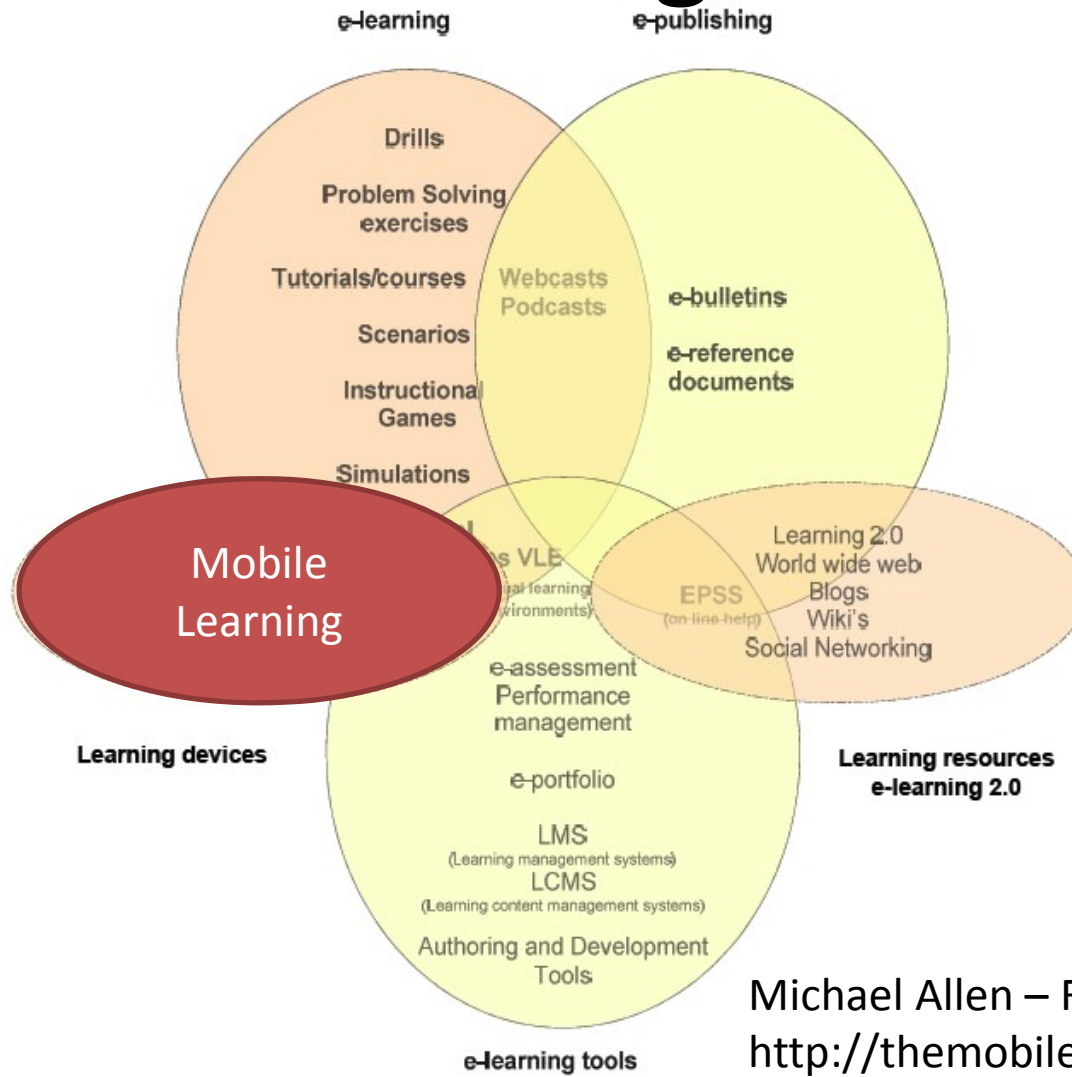
As of March 2012, more than **25 billion** apps had been downloaded from Apple's App Store. More than 1 billion apps are downloaded each month.

They're ultra portable:
Smartphones weigh a fraction of other devices,

BENEFITS

Study tool:
Students can download apps to study whenever

Learning Flower



Michael Allen – Flower Model
<http://themobilelearner.com/blog/?p=19>

Research Questions

(1) Would adopting mobile learning help educational institutes to be more interculturally competent?

(2) Why is intercultural understanding an important issue in the new mobile learning environment ?

Definitions of Mobile Learning

- Mobile Learning was identified early on as an extension to e-learning that can be realized by the use of mobile computing devices (Quinn, 2000).
- Traxler (2009) refers mobile learning as “mobile e-learning” and is not adjoining of the two buzz words “mobile” and “learning”.

Current literature

- Need for HE to expand overseas recruitment
 - Global Campus = Middlesex University had led a research effort back in 2004, which by coincidence is also called the Global Campus project - had received funding from the European Commission to study the use of m-learning in higher education in Southeast Asian nations (Murphy, 2004).
- MLEARN seems a perfect product- market fit
 - All of these enterprises are tapping the use of latest mobile technologies, learning management system and its applications to support its organizational goals in growing the student enrolments (Clothey, 2010)
 - adoption of its degree-awarding curriculum programs whether these are local classroom and tutor supported , distance learning (Spronk, 2004)

- While many authors have written about intercultural issues, cultural diversity, cultural understanding in distance learning and e-learning programs, and a limited few actually have extended beyond online learning to mobile learning and explore extra dimension related to socio-cultural conditions (Pachler et al, 2010).

Analysing the MLEARN projects

- The two studies by Frohberg et al (2009) and Wu et al (2012) provide an holistic view of type of mobile learning projects that researchers and practitioners had been focusing on thus far - effectiveness, system design, language learning initiatives - covering education initiatives from primary education to higher education and informal learning.

Mobile Learning projects – a critical analysis of the state of the art **(Frohberg et al, 2009)**

- covers 102 Mobile learning projects that were published before the end of 2007 out of the initial screening of 1468 publications.
- In this report, the selection is focused on six criteria – context, tools, control, communication, subject and objective.
- Although not directly related to cultural implications, the report recognizes that learning is not an exclusively individual process and the increased use of mobile technologies amongst learners can lead to more contact.
- There is no reported studies on the intercultural and social-cultural implications in this report.

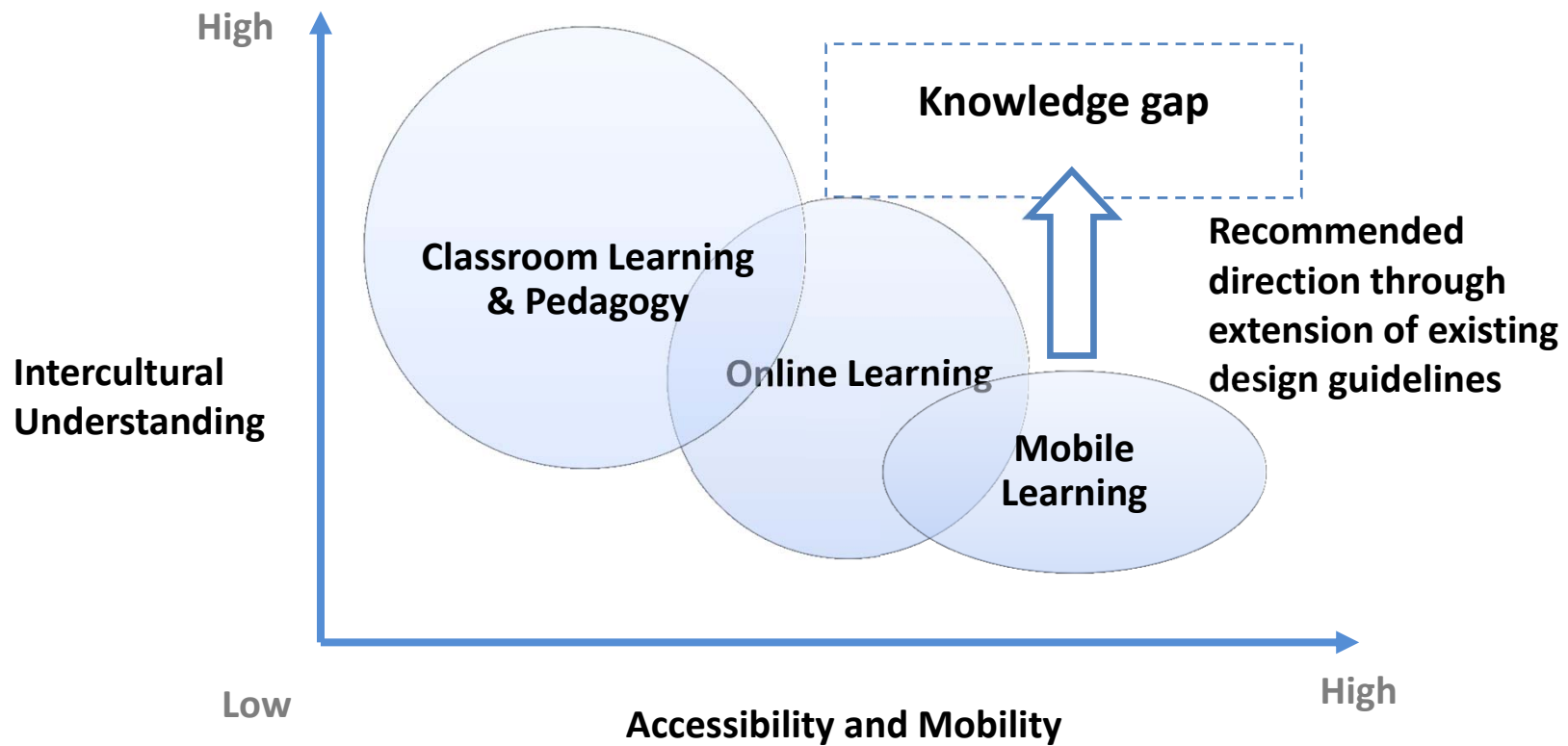
Review of trends from mobile learning studies: A meta-analysis (Wu et al, 2012)

- provides a good synthesis of 164 studies between 2003-2010.
- In this report, the authors had been able to categorize the type of research by methodology, educational context by mobile device, academic disciplines, level of mobile learners.
- the report shows 92 studies in the higher education sector representing 52%. 58% of the studies evaluate effectiveness as the primary research aim and 32% focus on the mobile learning system design, with 86% of the studies showing positive outcome.
- There are no reported studies on the subject of intercultural and social-cultural implications in this report.

Future Direction

- Intercultural competence and understanding is important just like face-to-face, traditional distance learning, e-learning ;
- Extending to mobile devices will be equally important but not much empirical studies have been carried out to study intercultural issues and social cultural implications
- Recommendations

Intercultural Understanding Landscape



Intercultural Understanding, Accessibility and Mobility Model

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- Thank you
- Questions and Answers
- Comments
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