

## How smart technologies brought e-learning to another level

Anita Thaler

Abstract

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Only fifteen years ago experts predicted the future of tele-working and tele-learning rather different to what they look now. Tele-learning had been connected mostly to formal education emphasizing the role of Computer Based Teaching -CBT- or Computer Assisted Learning -CAL-tools and supported by tutors (Vivet 1996). Since then information and communication technologies not only found their ways in our offices, schools and homes but they are ‚with us‘. The ultimate implementation of time- and space-independency of e-working and e-learning eventually became reality when smart phones and flat rates made mobile web applications affordable.

Now especially the acquisition of technological knowledge and skills is not restricted to formal settings any longer but for the most part takes place informally (cf. Mediappro 2006, Council of the European Union 2010). And informal learning – defined as dialogues between individuals or with analogue and digital media (Gruber 2008) – came into the focus of educational research.

Actually, most learning situations are taking place informally, because we spend around 90 % of our lives outside formal learning areas (cf. Bransford et al. 2005). This paper discusses the potential of mobile technologies for informal learning and democratisation of education and hence enabling people without access to formal education to acquire necessary knowledge and skills.

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