



Integration of ICT into educational institutions at the brink of convergence. Ubiquitous learning as operational framework of Management, Teaching and Learning (MTL)

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Abstract

Drawing from a quantitative and qualitative research on European 2020 flagship objectives on investments and policies for digitalization and ICT integration for language teaching, learning and management purposes in European educational institutions, this paper argues that ubiquitous computing will shortly bring national educational institutions to re-evaluate the adequacy of the “e-” prefix (as in “e-learning” and eEducation) at the time when ICT is becoming a silent pervasive enhancing infrastructure, available anywhere, anytime. Although the degree of ICT integration into education amongst European countries is not homogenous and abandoning paper is still controversial, policies and investments have been strongly outlined, giving birth to thousands of top-down, bottom-up and horizontal projects for platforms, products and contents developed by a wide variety of actors ranging from countries to top private companies, to SMEs and public schools, to universities, to individual teachers as well as simple students.

Such complexity cannot be managed by micro-defining areas of operations linked to very specific areas of interaction such as e-learning, video-learning, pad-learning, mobile learning, digital Tele-learning, pod, pad, playstation, car-computer, Skype, VLE, MIS, LMS and LCMS.

Taken singularly, there is a strong risk of assessing short-lived processes which are constantly expanding, evolving and converging toward a common framework of cross interoperable multi-device interaction, available to school administrators, teachers and students anywhere anytime.

If different types or forms of e-learning can be considered as a continuum, from no e-learning to full symbiotic integration of ICT into schools and universities, such continuum embraces and expand e-learning to become a ubiquitous infrastructure able to provide a common dimension for synchronous/ asynchronous interaction of teachers, learners and objects wherever they are.

As a result, “e-learning” and “e-system” are not more able to represent the variety of dimensions, devices and channels of communications available to all actors for the planning, management, supervision, interaction, personalization, support and evaluation of learning processes.

Accordingly, the change of prefix from “e-” to “u-” of ubiquitous seems increasingly necessary to put the ubiquitous relation of actors at the centre of converging educational projects.