



ing outcomes

- supported moves to more independent and collaborative study
- used with a wireless data projector, provided a better solution than a desktop or laptop and hardwired interactive whiteboard
- were seen as being more versatile than laptops, although the higher price of Tablet PCs relative to similarly specified laptops was prohibitive.” [33, p.5]

Many schools in England considered the ability of the Tablet PC to recognize handwriting and its portability as one crucial aspect. Children who had age-related difficulties with handwriting or impaired motor-skills were motivated to practice [29, p.2]. The handwritten notes could be turned into typed text. When handwriting was not recognized the additional keyboard was the option as in the tabkids project.

Benefits in creative writing, maths and for presentations either with a whole-school wireless network to other students’ tablets or via a projector (instead of an interactive whiteboard) were reported. Thanks to the audio and video facility of the devices comments could be added that led to more interaction between students and teachers. As other mobile devices such as netbooks and phones also Tablet PCs could be used outside school for instance on excursions which was seen as further advantage.

According to a survey of December 2014 almost 70% of primary and secondary schools in the UK have introduced Tablets meanwhile that are used for teaching and learning. But the study says there is no clear evidence of academic improvement for pupils using tablet devices. The study, commissioned by education technology charity Tablets for Schools, looked at a representative sample of 671 state and independent schools. Many pupils reported that they took an internet-connected device to bed to continue social media conversations as reported by the BBC⁴.

The British experiences and key findings corresponded with those in other coun-

tries. In general Tablet PCs as tools for mobile learning promote the curriculum and improve communication, collaboration and motivation. They are portable, nowadays affordable and like phones always on.

Kearny, Schuck and Burden. [20, p.7] describe three central features of any mobile learning, namely authenticity, collaboration and personalization. Personalization as corner stone of e-learning includes learner choice and self-regulation. Authenticity means that learners can generate their own reach contexts with their mobile devices. A high degree of collaboration takes place by making rich connections to other people through networking and in interactive environments.

5 Conclusion

Nowadays mobile learning with high-end tablets has become a new paradigm and is practiced in developed countries in nearly all school types and ages of the students. According to the research these devices bring innovation into schools both for teachers and students, higher engagement, independent learning, improvement of communication and collaboration. Teachers can adapt their teaching styles to individual students and customize or create content related new material. But these benefits for learning depend on a functioning infrastructure.

Compared to smartphones tablets have a greater functionality, larger screens, an increasing variety of interactive apps, more processing and battery power and the availability of audio and video recording software. The prices of tablets continue to come down. But despite of all the facilities tablets and other mobile devices offer, we should not overestimate them as new media tools in the classroom. A balanced variety of methods of using modern media for teaching and learning is recommended.

I close with Bjerede and Bondi who did a research project providing Samsung Galaxy Tablets to pupils in a primary school class in Oregon, USA for a year:

“With respect to the question of mobile devices vs. laptops or desktops, our experiences reinforce our preferences for the mobile devices:

- We feel that tablets are a significant improvement over pencil and paper for creating content, though clearly not as large an improvement as laptops.
- While we feel that personal mobile devices are catalysts for self-directed “just-intime” learning, laptops are a better choice for making the mechanics of writing and editing simple and efficient.
- We believe that 21st century students need personal devices AND ready access to high quality, responsive desktops or laptops, but that if we have to choose between them, always-on, always-connected personal mobile devices provide the greater advantage.” [6, p.5]

6 References

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Fig. 4. Clarke and Svanaes [8, p. 43] by referring to Johansson [18, p.37] offer a summarizing overview about the future adaptation of Tablet PCs for educational and didactic use

Fig. 3. Three key aspects of m-learning

