



Core Research Area: Informal Learning

Informal learning refers to the acquisition of skills outside formal educational settings like schools or universities. Informal learning increasingly takes place in technology-enhanced settings, for example, when people communicate with others in an online forum, interact with technology-enhanced artefacts in a museum, use their mobile phone to navigate a map, or search for information on the Internet.

There is a large body of evidence for factors promoting or impeding successful formal learning. In comparison, our scientific expertise on informal learning is marginal and has to be enlarged substantially to effectively promote this type of learning without reducing the motivational features of informal settings. A significant challenge in this area is to examine how learning can be supported without “learning material” and without having to make the learning content explicit beforehand. A meta-topic in this context is the need for the development of evaluation methods, which will enable us to evaluate a learner’s progress within real world environments.

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