LOOK, LISTEN AND LEARN

Using aural and visual data to understand the learning spaces of online students

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What do we *really* know about the study space of online learners?

The campus is reconfigured to meet the changing needs and habits of learners.
What does it mean to be a student *at* Edinburgh, but not *in* Edinburgh?

Bayne et al. (2013), Ross et al. (2013)
Visit: edinspace.weebly.com. Project funded by Principal’s Teaching Awards Scheme.
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The study spaces of participants on the MSc in Digital Education at The University of Edinburgh by James Lamb and Michael Sean Gallagher. Visit [http://edinspace.weebly.com](http://edinspace.weebly.com)

View the maps at: edinspace.weebly.com/postcards.html
Transcription and analysis

• Avoided the tendency to amongst Internet scholars to privilege image over sound (Sterne 2006)

• Visual methodologies with particular attention to image sites and audiencing (Rose 2012)

• Sonic methodologies with a particular ear to personal sound space and sonic territory (Fluegge 2011)

• A multimodal approach that allowed for the construction of meaning through the interplay of different semiotic material (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001, Jewitt 2009)

• We looked for coherence and information linking between different modes (Monaco 2009, van Leeuwen 2004)
Transcription and analysis

- Personal sound space (Fluegge)
- Territorialism and contested space (Fluegge 2011)
- Spatial acoustic self-determination (Fluegge 2011)
- Sites of image and audiencing (Rose 2012)
- Coherence (Monaco 2009, van Leeuwen 2004)
Josie’s learning space(s)
Josie’s learning space(s)
Aggie’s learning space
Emergent themes

1. The prevalence of informal, homely and domestic spaces – a body of ‘comfort learners’

2. Attempts to mark out a material and/or aural territory - a corner or haven for personal study

3. Creation of learning space within a shared space (rather than carving out a distinct personal territory)

4. Sonic trespass, where the learning space was penetrated by the intrusion of sound and its material agents

5. A contrast between manufactured silence and sound (including music in attempts at spatial acoustic self-determination)
Some concluding thoughts

• We need to question preconceptions we might have about the highly technologised and mobile nature of online learning.

• Conventional academic resources and tools continue to feature prominently in the learning spaces of what we might see as even the most digital students.

• Students configure the aural and material components of their learning spaces in different ways.

• As distance educators we need to understand how territoriality is enacted across aural and material planes, and how this in turn influences a student’s engagement with her programme and institution.
References

We also have a project that is exploring how music accompanies, influences and inspires learning. Visit www.elernenmuzik.net.