

You are kindly invited to the public defense to obtain the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

Mr. Gustavo Garcia Botero

Which will take place on

Wednesday the 18th of September at 2 PM

D.0.08 – Brussels Humanities, Sciences & Engineering Campus
Pleinlaan 2 – 1050 Brussel

TITLE

**The integration of mobile assisted language learning in out-of-class settings:
A study in the Colombian context**

JURY

INTERN:

Prof. dr. Dominique Verté (Chair)
Faculty of Psychology and Educational sciences
Prof. dr. Jill Surmont (VUB)
Faculty of Psychology and Educational sciences
Prof. dr. Koen Depryck (VUB)
Faculty of Psychology and Educational sciences
Dr. Bram Pynoo (VUB)
Faculty of Psychology and Educational sciences

EXTERN:

Prof. dr. Tammy Schellens
Universiteit Gent, Faculty of Psychology and Educational sciences

Prof. dr. Jozef Colpaert
Universiteit Antwerpen, Faculty of Social Sciences

PROMOTORS

Prof. dr. Chang Zhu
Faculty of Psychology and Educational sciences

Prof. dr. Frederik Questier
Faculty of Psychology and Educational sciences

You are also invited to the reception afterwards.

Please confirm your attendance before 12/09/2019 via gustavo.garcia.botero@vub.be

How to reach the VUB?

<http://www.vub.ac.be/campus/brussels-humanities-sciences-engineering-campus>

SUMMARY

Introduction

This study explores the extent to which mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) can successfully be integrated into voluntary, out-of-class learning in the context of Colombian higher education.

Method

To study MALL integration, this study makes use of the innovation change process model (Berman, 1981; Fullan, 2016; Fullan, 1989; Miles, 1986). This model postulates that innovation happens through three phases over time: initiation, implementation and institutionalization. MALL initiation was approached through the lens of pre-intervention studies on behavioral intentions via a technology acceptance model. In turn, to study MALL implementation and to examine what happens when students interact with MALL, self-direction and self-regulation frameworks were used. For the institutionalization phase, a governmental initiative was evaluated by implementing a monitor and evaluation perspective. The study elaborates on strategies to maximize the impact of private/public partnerships in MALL.

Results

The initiation phase studies show that Colombian higher education language students and teachers have a readiness to adopt MALL. This is reflected in their ease of use regarding device manipulation, positive attitudes, and the belief that MALL contributes to learning. Nevertheless, the implementation phase studies evidence that just inviting students to engage in voluntary out-of-class MALL does not result in higher test scores. After self-regulation training and temporary scaffolding, increased MALL participation was evidenced along with higher test scores in French writing. The institutionalization phase puts into question the effectiveness of an ongoing governmental partnership with a commercial MALL application. Lack of student self-regulation training and scaffolding, as well as a focus on language structure provided by the MALL solution are hurdles that hinder a beneficial learning experience for the projects' beneficiaries.

Conclusion

The current study confirms the potential of mobile technologies to maximize learning opportunities. Readiness reflected in teachers' and students' acceptance should be fostered by techniques towards the betterment of MALL integration. Whereas facilitating conditions need further improvements, support should take the form of adaptive guidance and guided practice. Likewise, training should be given priority. Even though MALL is not the ultimate solution to foreign language learning needs, it does represent a useful add-on to strengthen Colombia's strategy regarding foreign language teaching and learning.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Gustavo Garcia Botero completed a bachelor's degree in modern languages at the Universidad del Quindío and a master's degree in literary hermeneutics at the University EAFIT in Colombia. Furthermore, Gustavo completed a master's degree in arts, lettres, langues, mention cultures et sociétés étrangères at the University of Poitiers, France. Gustavo has a broad experience in teaching at the higher education level. He has been an English literature lecturer and a French language teacher in Colombia. He has also taught Spanish and Latin American culture at the University of Poitiers, in France.

For his PhD research at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, he focused on mobile assisted language learning and he has four first-author journal publications and one first-author conference publications in this field.

Since 2018 he is a research and policy officer at the European University Foundation. Gustavo currently works on projects focusing on digitalization of higher education at the European level. He also contributes to educational innovation initiatives taking place outside of Europe, notably in Colombia and Morocco.