

Measuring the Usability of a Smartphone Delivered Museum Guide

Mohd Kamal Othmana*, Helen Petrieb, Christopher Powerb

aDepartment of Cognitive Science, FCSHD, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, 94300, Malaysia

bDepartment of Computer Science, The University of York, Deramore Lane, Heslington, York, YO10 5GH, UK.

Abstract

Smartphones are increasingly being deployed by museums and other cultural spaces to provide guides for visitors, replacing dedicated audioguides or docents. This paper describes a study investigating a scale to measure the usability of a multimedia smartphone guide for a museum, the Multimedia Guide Scale (MMGS). Two different types of museum guide were compared: a free choice tour (FC-tour) and guided tour (G-tour). Result shows that there was a significant difference in scores on the MMGS between the two tours, between the three components of the MMGS (Quality of Interaction; Learnability and Control; General Usability) and a significant interaction between the two variables (factors and the guides). The mean scores were higher for the G-tour on the General Usability component and particularly on the Quality of Interaction component, whereas for the Learnability and Control component, scores were higher for the FC-tour Guide. The implications of these findings and the use of the MMGS are discussed.

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