

## SFB/TR 8 Spatial Cognition / IQN Video Conference

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### **Wayfinding Situations**

Why do people drive the wrong way down one way roads or turn onto train level crossings when their satnav 'tells' them to? This presentation will investigate the role of mobile technologies on wayfinding; or more literally the way that our interaction with technology affects how we orientate and make decisions in space. The results of two field studies will be discussed which explore empirically the changes in the nature of spatial knowledge acquisition and perception and action in environmental settings. The first study highlights how mobile spatial applications tend to work on a model where the individual is not encouraged to plan a spatial task and then act on it but instead to make decisions on the fly based on the immediate information available to them. The second study highlights changes in the way that the visual saliency of environmental features and configurations is acted upon by the wayfinder when they are supported by mobile technologies. These results are discussed in the context of an approach to the concept of wayfinding situations; a term which seeks to address the way in which the wayfinding process cannot be seen as a purely isolated cognitive activity, but is instead a highly situated series of actions taking place in changeful real-world conditions.

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