Mobility in Collaboration
Introduction

• The requirements to support mobility within collaboration activities

• Communication and collaboration in three very different settings
  • Primary health consultations
  • Construction sites
  • London underground

• The ways in which mobility is critical to collaborative work
Micro-mobility: Medical Consultations

- Mobility of a simple paper
  - Synchronous and Asynchronous collaboration
  - Doctors – other professionals
  - Patient – doctors

- Micro-mobility: “the way in which an artifact can be mobilized and manipulated for various purposes around a relatively circumscribed, or ‘at hand’, domain”
Remote Mobility: A Construction Site

- Paper record of the work done by each gang
  - Activities
  - Time spent
  - Problems

- Asynchronous and remote communication between site and hut

- Introduced new mobile system
  - Neither used as mobile device or communication tool
  - Less mobile, less available
Remote and Local Mobility: London Underground

• The stations are dealing with over a hundred thousand passengers a day, and the staff have to deal with problems and emergencies when they arise.

• The ‘ops room’ provides radio contact, connection to line control rooms and the police, possibility to open and close gates and so on.

• Outside the ‘ops rooms’ you lose the access to important information.
Potential Technologies for Supporting Mobility on London Underground

• How new technologies can provide access to information and communication resources that are sensitive to both the location and circumstances of the users

• The system have to remain portable and become one of the tools the staff carries around

• A combination of fixed and mobile devices

• The mobile device would allow the supervisor to see the status of alarms, communicate with staff in the station and elsewhere and also make public announcements
Summary

• Each of these studies discussed have focused on different aspects of mobility within collaborative work
  • Medical Consultation: how mobility of an artifact supports collaboration and co-present interaction
  • Construction site: how different ways mobility may be relevant for participants in a setting
  • London Underground: how access to information may be relevant to mobile staff

• Within interactions, the ways in which a user needs to be mobile have largely been ignored within CSCW

• We need to explore in more detail how objects are used in interaction and forms of work where the mobility of participants is critical to that work