# A MULTIMODAL INTERFACE FOR PERSONALISING SPATIAL DATA IN MOBILE GIS

Julie Doyle, Joe Weakliam, Michela Bertolotto

School of Computer Science and Informatics University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland

#### David Wilson

Department of Software and Information Systems University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 9201 University City Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28223, USA

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Abstract: Recently the availability and usage of more advanced mobile devices has significantly increased, with many users accessing information and applications while on the go. However, for users to truly accept and adopt such technologies it is necessary to address human-computer interaction challenges associated with such devices. We are interested in exploring these issues within the context of mobile GIS applications. Current mobile GIS interfaces suffer from two major problems: interface complexity and information overload. We have developed a novel system that addresses both of these issues. Firstly, our system allows GIS users to interact multimodally, providing them with the flexibility of choosing their preferred mode of interaction for specific tasks in specific contexts. Secondly, it records all such interactions, analyses them and uses them to build individual user profiles. Based on these, our system returns personalised spatial data to users, and hence eliminates superfluous information that might be otherwise presented to them. In this paper we describe the system we have developed that combines multimodal interaction with personalised services, and that can be used by mobile users, whether they are novices or professionals within the field of GIS. The advantages of our multimodal GIS interface approach are demonstrated through a user interaction study.

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

Comparatively little research has been conducted into designing interfaces that allow mobile Geographic Information Systems (GIS) users to interact effectively and efficiently with geospatial data. GIS applications were initially developed for expert users to perform complex calculations and queries. Therefore, many GIS interfaces are inherently complex and require domain specific knowledge for such tasks (Blaser et al., 2000). However GIS tools are being used in increasingly more diverse application domains. Hence interfaces for GIS need to be user-friendly and intuitive.

Research has shown that multimodal interfaces can significantly reduce the complexity of GIS interfaces (Fuhrmann et al., 2005), (Oviatt, 1996). The growing interest in multimodal interfaces is inspired by the goals of supporting more transparent, flexible, efficient and powerfully expressive means of human-computer interaction. Much research in the area of multimodal interfaces focuses on speech and pen/gesture recognition (Rauschert et al., 2002a), (Rugelbak and Hamnes, 2003). Indeed, speech input is a natural form of interaction for humans. There are many well-documented advantages to designing a multimodal interface to a GIS, particularly a mobile GIS. Providing multiple modes of input for human-computer interaction makes applications accessible to a wider variety of users. For example, nonexpert users can choose to interact using the technique they find most intuitive; users with a speech impediment or strong accent can interact using the pen; users with a broken arm can use speech input.

Multimodal interaction allows users to exercise selection and control over how they interact (Oviatt and Cohen, 2000). This is particularly beneficial in field GIS where a user's context is constantly changing. Users profit from the ability to switch between different interaction modes, depending on which best suits their current situation. For example, speech may often not be feasible or appropriate in certain situations such as a noisy environment or for a tourist in a museum. In such circumstances the pen might be a more suitable input mode. One of the most important advantages of multimodal systems is that they improve the performance and robustness of human-computer interaction with such systems (Oviatt, 1999). If both speech and pen provide parallel functionality, error

Doyle J., Weakliam J., Bertolotto M. and Wilson D. (2006). A MULTIMODAL INTERFACE FOR PERSONALISING SPATIAL DATA IN MOBILE GIS. In Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference on Enterprise Information Systems - HCl, pages 71-78 DOI: 10.5220/0002454200710078 Copyright © SciTePress correction is more efficient as one mode can be used to correct errors made by the other. If a particular word is mis-interpreted, for example, the pen can be used to undo the action associated with the voice command, and to perform the action again. Finally, multimodal interaction increases the overall efficiency and usability of mobile GIS applications, with many studies showing increased speeds and user preference whilst interacting multimodally, compared to unimodally. Some of these studies are presented in the related work section.

Besides the complexity of querying and interacting, the sheer volume of data returned to users in current GISs is a major factor of interface complexity as users must sift through large amounts of spatial data that often bears no relation to their current task. Moreover, on mobile devices superfluous spatial data can significantly clutter the interface making navigation and interaction substantially more difficult. Personalisation is a concept common in both Web-based and mobile applications and is used when tailoring specific information to users based on their individual requirements. In the design of interfaces for desktop and wireless applications, employing personalisation assists the developer in addressing the issues of interface complexity and information overload. Personalisation in existing GIS, however, typically deals with the recommendation of non-spatial content within some sort of a tourist setting (Zipf, 2002). This includes, for example, presenting clients with information related to suitable restaurants, adequate hotels, or museum opening hours, where all recommendations are based on preference detail gathered either directly or indirectly from the user. There is a notable absence of GIS that present users with personalised map feature content. In many applications (both professional and non-professional) this would be very useful. An example might be where a structural engineer requires road infrastructure information so as to locate areas for building levees.

Personalising spatial map content allows the tailoring of maps containing specific feature information to enable users to realize personal tasks quicker and more efficiently. It also assists the development of interfaces whereby developers need not worry about interface complexity and information density due to the reduction in the amount of content delivered and the style with which it is presented.

We have developed a system that provides users with personalised spatial data, tailored to their current task in a specific environment. Our system combines multimodal interaction with personalised services, resulting in an easy to learn, easy to use GIS for mobile users. The system has been developed on a Tablet PC. A Tablet PC is similar to a PDA in that it is a portable, handheld device. However, Tablet PCs have a larger screen size and the same processing capabilities as a desktop PC, hence allowing for superior viewing and editing in the field. The advanced architecture of the Tablet PC may be of benefit especially to GIS professionals such as cartographers or surveyors.

The remainder of the paper is organised as follows. Section 2 discusses related work in the areas of multimodal interfaces and personalisation within GIS. Section 3 outlines our system architecture and describes each system component in detail. A user study and the results of this study are presented in section 4. Section 5 concludes and addresses some ideas for future work.

### 2 RELATED WORK

This section describes related research in the areas of multimodal interfaces and personalisation within GIS. One of the earliest systems providing a multimodal interface to a GIS was QuickSet (Cohen et al., 1997). QuickSet is a collaborative, multimodal (pen/voice) interface for map-based tasks with application to distributed systems. QuickSet provides a multimodal interface to a number of distributed applications including military simulation, virtual reality and medical informatics. In a later study (Cohen et al., 2000), QuickSet was compared with a unimodal GUI. Results indicated a strong user preference for multimodal over unimodal interaction, and a substantial efficiency increase when users interacted multimodally.

The research presented in (Rauschert et al., 2002b) addresses the problem of the complexity of current GIS user interfaces. The authors suggest that incorporating multimodal interaction into GIS interfaces as combining input modalities is more efficient and intuitive to users than using just one input modality. They describe a system, DAVEG (Dialogue-Assisted Visual Environment for Geoinformation) that uses a combination of speech and gesture to aid users in collaborative group work within GIS. The advantage of using gestures in addition to speech is that speech may not be completely accurate when spatial information such as location needs to be specified. Gestures are more useful for such queries. A user evaluation of the DAVEG system was carried out in (Fuhrmann et al., 2005), the results of which indicated that users felt the speech-based dialog allowed them to visualise and interact with the system more easily.

In (Jost et al., 2005) a user study is presented, the results of which aim to answer the questions: (1) What are the most suitable interaction techniques for navigational and informative tasks for mobile pedestrians and (2) Do social and situational context affect multimodal interaction? The study was carried out on the SmartKom system, a PDA-based application for

navigation and information for tourists. SmartKom aims to allow users to interact with the system intuitively by supporting several input modalities including speech and gesture. The results showed that users fundamentally prefer multimodal interaction in a mobile information system. The majority of users also reported increased convenience, speed and usability while interacting multimodally. Each of the above systems supports the idea that multimodal interaction allows for increased flexibility, convenience and efficiency when interacting with GISs. However, our system goes one step further by providing users with an intuitive, user-friendly interface by personalising the spatial data returned to them. The amount of data being returned is therefore reduced, hence reducing the complexity of the interface and improving usability.

One major problem with both Web and mobile GIS is that systems apply a "one-fits-all" approach, which does not fulfill the requirements of heterogeneous users having different goals. For example, Google Maps (GoogleMaps, 2005) returns maps containing default map content. This highlights the need for personalised solutions, tailored to the specific requirements of the single user. STAR, a Web-based system that exploits configuration technology in order to support a tourist in organizing a personalised agenda for a tour in a city, is introduced in (Goy and Magro, 2004). STAR, however, requests explicit input from the user before suggesting an appropriate agenda. If the proposed agenda solution is partial, i.e. not all the time slots are filled, then the user can select new items in order to fill them in.

Many traditional wireless information and navigation tools available to city visitors suffer from limitations, e.g. they are constrained by the need to satisfy the interests of the majority rather than the specific interests of individuals. The Cyberguide project, in which prototypes of a mobile context-aware tour guide are built, is presented in (Abowd et al., 1997). Knowledge of the user's current location, as well as a history of past locations, is used to provide more of the kinds of services that are expected from real tour guides. Cyberguide monitors user interactions with maps to ascertain user history and users can also insert detail into a database describing their personal experiences. Some content personalisation is provided through the generation of tourist trails showing potential sites of interest. However, no personalisation of actual map feature content takes place. The Cyberguide application is geared completely towards city visitors whereas our application does not discriminate between clients, i.e. we can cater for any individual seeking spatial information in the form of area maps.

The contribution of our research is focused on designing a graphical user interface that supports multimodal interaction and presentation of personalised spatial map data for individual GIS users. None of the above systems provide explicit support for such functionality. The advantage of our approach is that it is flexible, and so can better serve a more diverse population, thus making our system more user friendly. Users are given the option of how they choose to interact, making any given session less complex. This coupled with the fact that user interactions are processed so as to provide personalised data for the user's next session means that the user does not have to sift through superfluous data that is of little relevance to them. This is particularly advantageous in mobile environments.

### **3 SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE**

This section describes the system architecture of our multimodal GIS prototype. The architecture, shown in Figure 1, comprises three tiers: the intelligent user interface layer (allowing users to view and manipulate spatial data), a services layer (providing speech and pen input processing and personalisation services) and a server layer (containing spatial data and user profiles). The functionality of each of the above layers is described in detail in the following subsections.

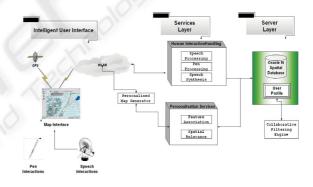


Figure 1: System Architecture.

#### **3.1** The Intelligent User Interface

The functionality of the interface layer is threefold: 1) allow users to visualise map content; 2) allow users to interact with map features and 3) capture all of the user's explicit and implicit interactions so as to create/update their user profile. Spatial data is stored as vector data in the server and converted to GML (Geography Markup Language) file format, before being transferred over a wireless network to the interface. GML is a standard, non-proprietary format developed by the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC, 2005), for the transport and storage of geographic information. It allows spatial data to be exchanged freely between users of different systems, regardless of the network,

application or platform they are using. Therefore, GML supports interoperability of spatial applications.

There are many benefits of using an interoperable GIS and this is the motivation behind using GML in our system. Collecting and editing data are labourintensive and time-consuming tasks. Most GISs use specific data models and databases for storing and processing large amounts of diverse data (Visser and Stuckenschmidt, 2002). This implies that to use this new data, it must be transferred into the system's specific format. This tedious process can be overcome through the use of GML, as GML provides a common schema framework for the expression of geospatial features. An application schema defines how data in a class of objects should be marked up. GML further supports interoperability by providing a set of geometry tags.

GML represents geographic data in terms of properties and geometries of the objects that populate the world around us. It does so independently of any particular visualisation of the data. Therefore, a method is needed to represent GML data visually on a map. We have developed a GML to Java transformation that is generic, i.e. it will render any given GML dataset visually as a Java representation. These Java objects are then displayed within a mapping interface, OpenMap<sup>TM</sup>(OpenMap, 2005). OpenMap<sup>TM</sup>is a Java-based, open-source mapping tool that allows users to develop applications and applets in their own style.

Figure 2 shows a screenshot of our system interface. Users can interact with the map using a combination of speech and pen input. Interface functionality includes navigation (panning and zooming), feature manipulation (turning on/off feature layers, changing feature colours), spatial querying and feature annotation (creating and viewing annotations). Maps can be queried in a number of ways. Users can highlight features falling within a certain area on the map or within a certain distance from a point on the map. They can also highlight a specific number of features nearest to a certain point and find the distance between two points on the map. There is an information bar across the bottom of the interface. When the user moves the pen over a certain feature on the map, the spatial location in terms of both latitude and longitude, and the name of the feature the pen is over, are displayed in the information bar. This prevents the interface from being cluttered by text, which is particularly important on mobile devices. If a user wishes to interact via speech, they must press the 'Speech On' button. An icon then appears on the interface, indicating that the user can now issue voice commands. When interacting using speech, if the user's voice command is recognised correctly, the command will be printed on the information bar. Once the action has been carried out, it too is printed on the information bar, e.g. 'Local roads turned off'. This helps users when interacting via speech as they know whether or not their command has been recognised or whether they need to repeat it. Moreover, the information is displayed unobtrusively so it doesn't distract the user from their main task.

Users can choose which mode of interaction they wish to use, depending on their current task and context. Each user action executed can be associated with a particular feature or feature set, and is recorded and analysed so as to ascertain detailed information regarding a user's spatial preferences. More details on multimodal interaction handling, and personalisation services provided by our system are outlined in the following subsection.

#### **3.2** The Services Layer

The services layer provides two services: 1) Human Computer Interaction Handling, including pen and speech recognition and 2) Personalisation based on recorded speech and pen interactions. As pen-based recognition is relatively self-explanatory, being integrated into most mobile computers, we will focus here on the speech recognition component of the HCI handling service. To understand speech commands voiced by our system users, we have integrated a commercially available speech recognition software package, ViaVoice<sup>TM</sup>(IBM, 2005), into our mobile GIS interface. Speech input can take two forms: commands, consisting of one or two word phrases and dictation, which can consist of multiple words. Commands are associated with certain map actions and can be used within our system for navigating (e.g. 'zoom out', 'pan west'), querying (e.g. 'highlight lakes'), manipulating map features (e.g. 'lakes off', 'highways blue') and to view a list of all possible commands ('help'). When a user interacts with a map using a voice command, the spoken words are matched against a rule grammar file, which contains a list of all the possible words and phrases that can be spoken and defines the abstract structure these words and phrases can have. Using a rule grammar allows for more accurate and robust recognition and interaction, as a particular action will only be carried out on the map interface if the voice command associated with that action was recognised i.e. if it is in the rule grammar. Once the command has been verified against the rule grammar, the action is carried out and users can view the outcome of their action on the interface.

Dictation can be used within our system to create voice annotations about particular map features. In contrast to processing voice commands, when a user inputs a spoken annotation into the system the words spoken are not matched against a rule grammar, but rather a dictation grammar. Dictation grammars impose fewer restrictions on what a user can say and so

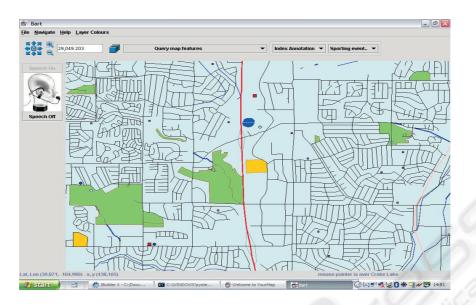


Figure 2: Multimodal Interface.

can ideally provide free-form speech input. However, this comes at a cost, as dictation grammars require higher quality audio input, more computing resources and they tend to be more error-prone. Once a user issues the command 'Create Annotation' to our interface, the speech synthesis engine of the HCI Handling service outputs a spoken message to the user, telling them to enter their voice annotation and use the pen to pick the point/feature on the map they wish to assign this annotation to. This combined use of speech and pen gesture is also used for querying the system. For example, to highlight lakes a user would issue the command 'highlight lakes'. The system then responds by telling the user to 'pick a point on the map or draw a rectangle', using the pen. Any lakes lying within the area drawn by the user are highlighted. Results of our user evaluation show that all users found querying and annotating using combined speech and pen more efficient and more intuitive than solely using pen input. Hence multimodal interactions allow for simpler interfaces to be built.

All of the user's executed actions, whether entered via speech or pen, are recorded and analysed in our Personalisation service. When personalising map feature content, our system categorizes map features into two groups: long-term features and short-term features. Long-term features are those persistent map features that users tend to view in all map sessions and allow them to navigate the map successfully, e.g. roads, rivers, rail lines. Short-term features are features that tend to be at the centre of user mapping tasks and hence form the focus of a map session, i.e. point (buildings) and area (lakes) landmarks. The question is how do we personalise map feature content, albeit long-term features or short-term features. For any two features to be classified as long-term interest features for a user, they must satisfy the following criteria: (1) they must *both* appear in at least a specified percentage of total session map frames, and (2) they must be sufficiently "similar", i.e. they must *both* be present *together* in a predetermined percentage of total session map frames. Ascertaining long-term interest features in this manner allows us to group map features, that individual users show preference for, together. Similar users can now be grouped together based on long-term feature interests.

Personalising short-term features is realized using a different approach. Landmark interests are established from interest map frames. Interest map frames are extracted from user-session recordings and are determined based on the following two conditions: (1) the time lapse between successive frames exceeds some value, and (2) the action that resulted in the first of the two frames being generated is significant, e.g. toggling a layer on or highlighting a layer. Clustering interest map frames, based on attributes like frame boundary, frame area, and the number of associated map features, from one or more users allows us to determine those landmark features that users show most interest in. Once we have performed the clustering, we can then analyze the various clusters to check for trends in short-term feature presence. This allows us to recommend landmark features and hence provide personalised maps to users.

#### 3.3 The Server

The server layer stores (1) spatial data and (2) user profile information. User profiles store the history of users' interactions with maps provided by our system. All interactions between the users and maps are recorded in log files. The log files are then analyzed and relevant detail is propagated to the various user profiles. Each user profile comprises a collection of distinct user sessions involving that user. Information in the user profiles is used to recommend map feature content to new and existing users.

Users can be grouped together based on information stored in their personal profiles. The following information is recorded in the user model: (1) Session frames: every single frame generated is recorded in log files along with all the features present in the frame. This detail is then extracted from the log files and inserted into the user profile. Recording all session frames allows us to establish long-term feature interests for individuals and groups of users. (2) Session actions: all actions executed by the user are recorded in the log files. Once the session has been terminated, all detail related to the sequence of session actions is propagated into the user profile. This enables trends in how different users manipulate maps, to be established. (3) Session interest frames: interest frames are extracted from the log files based on time and action criteria and inserted into the user model. Session interest frames provide the basis for establishing short-term or landmark feature interests. Clustering interest frames allows us to spot trends in how one or more users interact with landmark features. (4) Session tags: each user session is tagged with a session definition that describes what that session is about. Session tags are primarily based on interest frame detail and thus on what landmark features are at the centre of each task.

### 4 EVALUATION

We undertook a user study of our system, the main focus of which was to determine the usability and intuitiveness of our multimodal mobile GIS for nonexpert users. The evaluation focused on interaction using combined speech and pen input as opposed to just pen input. We were also interested in the effectiveness of our system when recommending personalised, context-aware spatial information to individual users. Eight subjects participated in our user study. Each subject was of a computer science background, but none had any previous experience using a GIS. All users were mobile (i.e. walking) during the evaluation which was carried out in noisy or relatively noisy environment (a canteen or an outdoor area). Individual participants were assigned specific tasks that would determine what features they would be interested in for each of their sessions. A total of 15 sessions were completed by each subject. During the first 5 sessions it was requested that subjects would use solely pen input for interaction. Multimodal (i.e. combined pen and speech) interaction was to be used for sessions 6-10 and for the remaining 5 sessions users were advised that they could interact using either solely pen input or combined speech and pen. As each subject was unfamiliar with the system, a brief 10 minute demonstration was given, highlighting the functionalities of the system that would be important for completing tasks. This included demonstrations of how actions were performed using both speech and pen.

Each individual subject was assigned a set of tasks, each of which determined what feature(s) were the focus of each session. An example of a task might be: "You work for the local water authority. You need to take water samples from all major lakes and rivers. Where are they located and what is the best route between them?" All subsequent tasks for this user would focus on water features and the road network between them. Each task was then broken down into a series of subtasks: 1) Zoom and pan as required to navigate to features of interest. 2) Ensure all features of interest are turned on. 3) Turn off 2 non-relevant features. 4) Query the feature(s) of interest (highlight, find distance between features etc.) 5) Create an annotation and assign it to a feature on the map.

These subtasks were carried out using the pen (tasks 1-5), pen and speech (tasks 6-10) and the user's preferred mode (tasks 11-15). Each of the tasks required the user to carry out a set number of subtasks. On average, the subjects performed 11 subtasks regardless of whether they were interacting uni or multimodally. This allowed us to quantify interaction modes more accurately. Irrespective of which mode of interaction was used, all of the users actions were recorded and stored in log files. User profiles were created from this data after a user's first session and modified based on their subsequent session interests. Hence, the more the user interacted, the more personalised the maps returned to them became.

#### 4.1 Results

As each subject was interacting, not only were their actions implicitly recorded and logged for user profiling, but the evaluators also monitored their actions, the results of these actions and user's responses to these actions. We noted and recorded, for example, the number of times it was necessary to repeat voice commands (tasks 6-10) and the number of errors associated with pen input and combined pen and speech input. We also recorded the time taken to complete all tasks so as to ascertain if uni or multimodal inter-

action was more efficient for such tasks. When each participant had completed all their sessions, they were asked to fill out a questionnaire covering various aspects of their interaction with the system. We were interested in the user's subjective experience of system usability, intuitiveness of the multimodal interaction, their preference for one mode over the other and in particular, in discovering if they felt interacting multimodally enhanced their experience of using the system in any way. This depended on a number of factors including recognition rates and error rates when using speech input. The necessity to keep repeating voice commands due to non-recognition can be frustrating for users, as can the need to correct actions due to mis-recognitions. For this reason, subjects were advised to issue a voice command no more than 3 times, and if their command had still not been recognised they were to perform the action using alternative means.

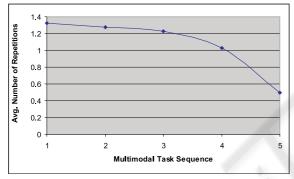


Figure 3: Average Number of Repetitions for Tasks 6-10. Note that the task at position 1 in the multimodal task sequence on the graph corresponds to the 1st multimodal task i.e. task 6.

Our results showed that the average number of times, across all eight subjects, that it was necessary to repeat voice commands during task 6 was 1.375. However, by task 10 this number had decreased to 0.5 (Figure 3). The reason for this can be attributed to many factors including (1) Even after only 5 sessions using voice commands, the system had begun to learn the users voice; (2) As the user interacted via speech more, they became more accustomed to speaking in a clear tone of voice so as to be understood by the system; (3) Some subjects initially felt self-conscious using voice commands in public and so spoke more quietly. However, as they interacted, they became more comfortable with the system and so spoke more clearly and openly. The number of mis-recognitions also decreased. Mis-recognitions occurred mostly when the subject was unsure of the voice command needed to execute a certain action and so paused too long before saying the second word of the command. For example, if a user pauses during the command 'highways red', the system will only hear the command 'highways' which will switch highways on/off. This is also considered an error which the user must correct using either speech or pen input. We noted however, that as subjects became more familiar with the voice commands the number of mis-recognitions decreased. The above results highlight the fact that it is feasible to incorporate off the shelf, untrained VR techniques as part of a multimodal interface for these types of tasks.

With regard to the efficiency of uni versus multimodal interaction for tasks, our results showed that multimodal interaction using speech and pen was faster, and therefore more efficient, than using the pen as a single modality. Overall, there was an increase of 12.21% when subjects used a combination of speech and pen input. This increase in efficiency whilst interacting multimodally is made even more significant by that fact that none of the subjects had previous experience using the multimodal interface of our system. Therefore, they were not familiar with the voice commands required to perform certain actions. We can consequently expect that as users become more familiar with the system efficiency rates will increase.

When filling out the questionnaire subjects were asked if they felt the system was easy to learn and use overall. All 8 subjects said that with minimal training, they felt confident that they could interact effectively with the system. Each of the subjects also stated they recognised an improvement in performance for tasks 6 to 10. Initially, 5 of the 8 subjects stated they found using solely pen input easier than combined speech and pen. The reasons provided for this were that subjects were not familiar with the voice commands and felt slightly uncomfortable issuing voice commands in public. However, again, as these subjects became familiar with the system they agreed that multimodal interaction was indeed intuitive and efficient. Moreover, all 8 indicated a preference for interacting multimodally and chose to interact multimodally during their final 5 sessions. Some of the reasons for this included the fact that the pen could be awkward to use for pointing precisely to small GUI components, voice commands were both more intuitive to users and also more efficient as the commands were brief and it was easier to correct errors multimodally. All subjects also stated that whilst mobile, it was easier to use speech input to interact as it was easier to walk and speak at the same time than walk and point/select precisely with the pen. These results indicate that our graphical interface, providing multimodal interaction, is both easy to learn and intuitive.

With regard to the personalisation of spatial data for individual users, as users interacted with the system more, the system was able to learn their interests. Therefore, their user profile became more detailed. Less irrelevant data was returned to the user and hence less interactions were required of the user to perform their specific tasks. More detailed results of the personalisation component of our system can be found in other publications (Weakliam et al., 2005a), (Weakliam et al., 2005b). As expected, this reduced amount of spatial content combined with multimodal interaction resulted in an overall feeling of increased efficiency and ease of use of the system for all subjects.

## 5 CONCLUSION

Multimodal interfaces are an exciting research paradigm within the field of Human Computer Interaction. Mobile GISs that process speech and pen input have been shown to be more flexible, efficient, robust and user-friendly. We have developed a multimodal mobile GIS that can be used by both expert and nonexpert users in the field. Our system provides users with the flexibility to choose their preferred mode of interaction depending on their current task and environment. Our evaluation showed a complete preference for multimodal over unimodal interaction and also that within a mobile environment it is easier to walk and speak than walk and point. Moreover, we have combined our multimodal interface with personalisation services, further improving the usability and efficiency of our system. Providing users with personalised spatial data allows us to significantly reduce the amount of information being sent to their mobile client and reduces the complexity of the interface.

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