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ReCALL Journal

The forthcoming issue of ***ReCALL*** (Vol. 24, Part 1) will be distributed to EUROCALL members in May 2011. Please send articles, software reviews, details of relevant events or other items of interest for future issues to June Thompson, Editor *ReCALL* d.j.thompson @ hull.ac.uk.

The journal contents are listed HERE.

All articles are considered by an international panel of referees. Notes for contributors can be found HERE.

Conference review

Nottingham CALLing to the Faraway Towns: EUROCALL 2011 Conference Review

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It is now about one month since I came back from Nottingham and I am still thinking about the secret of the EUROCALL community and their conferences. The EUROCALL conferences have some really special, ever friendly, warm atmosphere, which, being absolutely unique and overwhelming is hardly comparable to other conferences and events. And this is not a singular phenomenon, because it was my third EUROCALL-conference participation and the atmosphere is still there. So Gothenburg, please keep this "eurocalling" spirit alive!

The theme of the conference this year in Nottingham was "*The Call Triangle: student, teacher and institution*". Whether it was reflected by the presenters is shown in the image below, which contains the frequently used words and phrases based on the titles of the presentations:

It was a surprise for me, and you can clearly see in the image above, that Moodle as a famous representative of a long-standing VLE is still alive and has very active fans and supporters all over the world, from Europe to Japan and USA. These engaged supporters and users, many of them from Japan, were also present at the conference.

It was also surprising for me to see that social media, especially Facebook and Twitter were underrepresented at the conference, at least according to my expectations. I had expected many more projects using these tools. I found, however, only a few of them, one of which was "*Using Facebook as a Platform in Foreign Language Teaching*" by Vera Leier in the poster session. It was also one of the very few projects that focused exclusively on German as a foreign language.

Skimming through the conference book the long-term impact of CALL-projects came to my mind. As we, CALL teachers, tend be easily enthusiastic by novel means, methods and tools in teaching, I generally miss their systematic, recurrent analyses over time. A lot of money is spent year after year on language learning and teaching projects, mostly funded by the EU, but little do we know about their evaluation and long-term use after these projects are closed. It would be highly informative to learn about the results of post-hoc measurements in order to be reassured by facts in our discussions with the CALL-sceptics.

Nevertheless the main question for me was how can my institution benefit from this year's conference. Let us visit some of the most easily adoptable practises.

The workshop I attended was an excellent example of that. The presented project, entitled "*English learning in international business: practice enterprise courses in a blended learning scenario, supported by Moodle and Google Apps*" used an OSS (Moodle), freely available apps (Google) and almost the same syllabus as that used by some of our courses at my institution. It was a brilliant example of how we could turn our most frequently used face-to-face practice with freely available open source tools into blended and/or e-learning. A proposal for the future could be that workshops should develop something, a site, a blog, a learning resource or a set of guidelines, to collect functioning outputs from the workshops that can be recalled and used afterwards.

I also liked the presentation "*Students as doers: Examples of successful e-learning activities*" from Maija Tammelin, Berit Peltonen, Pasi Puranen and Lis Auvinen. In their presentation they discussed excellent ideas describing how to practice business communication with students in a very creative way.

I was also thrilled by the best practice examples via mobile learning through smartphones, as this technology is no longer the technology of the future: these are technologies that a third of our own students use as a daily routine according a survey

conducted a half year ago. This should be considered when designing our learning resources and courses. The problem is that these tools are still searching for their places in our institution, because an IT-use policy for our institution is still to be determined. In this regard the keynote presentation by Garry Motteram, "*The changing role of technology in language education in the early 21st century*", was very insightful for me.

Currently two VLEs are in use on our campus, a commercial one, called Coospace (developed by Hungarians) and Moodle, available free of charge to anyone. These two VLEs are also the most popular ones in Hungary. Yet in order to participate in international projects, we shall put more emphasis on using Moodle.

I realized that this year less Central European member states were represented. This year there were visitors only from Russia, Poland and Hungary, whereas in the last two conferences, in 2009 and 2010, there were also participants from Croatia and the Czech Republic. What might be the reason for that? Is it the limited financial possibilities? Or is the use of technology in language teaching losing its appeal? If EUROCALL wants to become a real European network, this is an issue that surely needs to be addressed and tackled. As it was one of the items discussed during the national representatives' meeting, EUROCALL is aware of this.

Finally I would like to thank the Executive Committee for awarding me the János Kohn Scholarship, which made it possible for me to join this wonderful community once again. Thanks to this year's event, I gained valuable scientific, as well as real life experiences – like the "screwdriver trick" that enables us to turn the UK electrical power outlet plug into a European one.

I would also like to thank the local organizing committee for their excellent support and enthusiasm, Marisa Marmo and her special sight-seeing and ATM-hunting tour, the always patient Toni Patton because of our never-ending correspondence. And last but for sure not least, I would like to thank Robin Hood and his Sherwood crew. Thank you and I hope to see all of you next year in Gothenburg!

Project

ETALAGE. Pedagogical changes brought about by ICT integration

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In this paper, which is based on presentations delivered at the EuroCALL 2010 and EuroCALL 2011 conferences, I shall present the ETALAGE Comenius multilateral project. The acronym, ETALAGE, stands for European Task-based Activities for Language Learning; a good practice exchange (see http://www.etalageproject.eu).

As is clear from the acronym, the project is firmly founded in the tradition of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT; see Ellis, 2003) and it is European in the sense that it is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL; see Council of Europe, 2001); what is not clear from the title is that the project hopes to use ICT to further the implementation of both TBLT and the CEFRL.

It is a well-known fact that the introduction of ICT has not brought about all the pedagogical changes that many educators hoped for. In his introduction to his recent doctoral dissertation Jager gives a useful survey of authors who have come to this conclusion (Jager, 2009). In his study Jager mainly addresses the situation in higher education. I could have added several other authors, including myself, who have found that the situation in secondary and primary education presents no rosier picture.

Before going more deeply into the project, I would like to address the question of what pedagogical changes we, as educators, tried to bring about. Basically the first change that we, like many other language educators, were trying to bring about was a move from a traditional language instruction approach (grammar and vocabulary teaching) to a task-based approach. The second change that we were trying to bring about was the implementation of the CEFRL. A third change that we hoped to bring about was particularly urgent in the Netherlands; we hoped that the use of ICT would encourage (Dutch and other) teachers to abstain from using the native language and use the target language more often. It is a well-known fact that in few countries in Europe –and probably the world– teachers are more reluctant to using the target language in foreign language classes than in the Netherlands (see Van Gool, 2003). Indeed, I have witnessed many classes in which the target language was never used except in quotations.

Naive as I was, I believed that the use of new technologies would be a tool that would help these three changes to come about. Many authors have found that it is still a challenge for many foreign and second language teachers, and I should add perhaps more so to them than to teachers of many other subjects.

The introduction of ICT was addressed in a number of projects [e.g. International Modules in ICT and Language Learning (LINGUA) and European Curricula in New Technologies and Language Teaching (Comenius)], in which modules and curricula were developed, which are now delivered in several countries and in several languages.

In the first project, which ran from 1998 to 2000, the consortium consisting of five teacher training institutes in Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Spain and the Netherlands produced no fewer than 60 modules for in-service teacher training. These modules were divided into groups such as Information and Communication Technology (10 modules), Computer-Assisted Language Learning (8 modules), Audio-Visual Media (2 modules), Teaching Methodology (4 modules), Course Design and Evaluation (4 modules), Research and Thesis, and covered such diverse subjects as advanced database management, phoneme discrimination, speech recognition, Visual Basic and the exploitation of corpora. Indeed, for the ICT modules the idea was that participants would reach the level 'experienced user' after one year and 'professional user' after two years as defined in the Microsoft Professional standards. Many of these modules were highly successful and were delivered to hundreds of students in pre-service and hundreds of teachers in in-service teacher training courses. In retrospect, one may well wonder if these modules were perhaps too technology-driven and more often than not reflected the interests of the developers rather than the needs of the prospective users, language teachers, not persons needing the European Computer Driving License. Also, it had been our intention to use these modules as a basis for a master's course in New Technologies and Language Teaching (this course was in fact delivered at the University of Amsterdam, but had to be discontinued, because the enrolment was too meagre for a successful attempt at accreditation).

To remedy these problems we decided that it was urgent to give coherence to the existing modules and collect selected modules in much more modest but coherent curricula, consisting of two or three modules. The resulting project European Curricula in New Technologies and Language Teaching (ECNTLT) was highly successful in that the partners, hailing from no fewer than 12 countries (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal, UK, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Lithuania, Hungary and the Netherlands), created curricula that were adapted to the local needs and were delivered in the national (very often less widely taught and spoken) languages (see http://eurolinguaict.net). Indeed the project was selected as a sample of good practice in the Comenius programme and the Greek curriculum was awarded a prize by the Greek government (European Commission, 2009).

In the following years the University of Amsterdam alone has delivered the resulting courses to no fewer than 361 teachers from literally all the countries of the European Union (without a single exception) as well as several other countries in the context of the Comenius/Grundtvig in-service training courses (http://www.amsu.edu/en/courses). Successful though these projects may have been, I wonder in how far they have come to bringing about the three changes that I described above.

My own experiences as a teacher trainer, who has very close contact with secondary schools and visits teachers –not only language teachers but also teachers in other subjects– in their classrooms several times a week, are not too positive. Where teachers of social sciences and science and mathematics teachers use presentation programmes and internet content to make their classes more attractive for the students, I hardly ever find modern language teachers using these; it is true, some teachers rely on portable cassette recorders to play recordings of native speakers (very seldom authentic) but for many even this piece of technology is too advanced. Far too many of the classes that I attended were examples of the grammar translation method (indeed, some teachers managed to turn textbooks that are based on a communicative approach into grammar translation exercises; bilingual glossaries were frequently used as sources for translation tests). In some schools work *has* started on the implementation of the CEFRL. I should add that many of the teachers I describe are persons that I tried to train myself, either in pre-service or in-service settings; all recent graduates of Dutch

teacher education courses were obliged to follow such courses as my own ADDICT course, which tries to teach trainees to add ICT to their classes (as an add-on c.f. Talaas, 2005). It looks as if the exhortations to use these add-ons (let alone add-ins) have had little effect.

From these experiences I had to conclude that offering ICT and CALL modules in pre- and in-service training is not enough. In some cases we were preaching to the converted, in other cases we were giving a remedial course in basic keyboard skills, which would be forgotten soon after the course (when the persons concerned had to work with non-QWERTY keyboards). What is needed is help in actually bringing the acquired skills into the classroom.

In the context of another Comenius project, Induction and Guidance of Newly Appointed Teachers in European Schools (IGNATIUS; http://www.ignatiusproject.eu; see also Kragten e. a., 2010), we learnt the value of the tandem principle; I am not referring to e-mail tandems, so well-known in language education, but to tandems of teacher educators employed by schools and teacher educators employed by universities. We decided to apply this principle that had proved so successful in IGNATIUS, in a new project.

We were fortunate in bringing together a consortium of partners that do not only hail from highly diverse countries in Northern and Southern as well as Eastern and Western Europe (Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, the UK, Turkey and the Netherlands) but also from higher and secondary and/or primary education. Each of the eight countries was represented by a tandem of a teacher training institute (usually a university) and a training school, where the trainees of the teacher education institute were doing their placements. In this way we believed that integration of theory and practice would be given a momentous stimulus.

The present consortium therefore wished to build on the achievements of the previous two projects to address the first two challenges. We hoped to do this by collecting, re-designing, adapting and disseminating samples of good practice of ICT-based language learning tasks for the four levels of the CEFRL (A1: Breakthrough, A2: Waystage, B1: Threshold and B2: Vantage), which are most relevant for primary and secondary foreign language education and by producing in-service teacher training courses with a value of 1 European credit (ECTS) in which teachers are trained to adapt these samples to their own classroom situation.

Each partner has collected samples of good practice (learning tasks accompanied by their underlying rationale and learning materials, where possible ICT-based); the collection of samples of good practice is now made available through a multilingual website for teachers in all the languages which are represented in the project consortium (www.etalage.eu). We developed one international in-service course, to be delivered as a Comenius-Grundtvig summer course, as well as 8 courses in the national languages that have been adapted to the needs at national levels. The courses have been tried out during the project. The needs of language teachers who are speakers and/or teachers of less widely used and taught languages will also be served.

The collection of Language Learning Tasks and the development of the IS courses was conducted in close collaboration: each partner worked in a tandem of a teacher education institute and a school so that innovation (task-based approach, CEF and ICT) could have its impact on primary and secondary teachers in the schools. Moreover, the tasks were tried out in actual language learning classrooms before being delivered in the Etalage repository. Also, the tasks and the courses were reviewed by independent experts, who selected 4 tasks per tandem and made recommendations for improvement of tasks and courses. The English versions of the selected 8 x 4 = 32 tasks were then

scrutinized by a native speaker of English, an English language teaching expert, to check the appropriateness of the use of English. The 32 edited English versions of the tasks were then translated into the 8 languages of the projects, so that 256 versions of the tasks are now in the repository (or will be in it very soon). The 32 English versions of the tasks are presented in table 1.

Country	Ranking	Provisional title in English	Level CEFR
DE	1	Books and Modern Media	A2 - B2
	2	Character stories	A2-B2
	3	London Sights	A2-B1
	4	I can do - My hands	A1-A2
EL	1	Schools Here and There	B1
	2	Love Through Ages	B1-B2
	3	London Zoo	A2
	4	TV Commercials	B1-B2
IT	1	Dinner invitation	A2-B1
	2	On a desert island	B1
	3	Find the treasure	A1
	4	Tourist promotion website	B1
HU	1	Introducing a City	A2
	2	Without Sound	A2
	3	Stereotypes	A2-B1
	4	How would you finish the story?	B1
NL	1	What do you want to be?	A2
	2	Sell your stuff	A1
	3	Telling people about your hobbies	A1
	4	Introduce yourself to your host family	A2
PT	1	Mapping directions	A2
	2	Create a blog to promote your city/school	A2
	3	Whodunit	A2
	4	Making a Portuguese Gastronomy TV Show	B1
UK	1	Birthday Party Invite	A1
	2	Les régions françaises	B1

	3	Les vacances	A2
	4	Visit to Paris	A1-A2
TR	1	Logbook of a century	B1-B2
	2	Create a Tourist Brochure	B1-B2
	3	Describe your room	A2
	4	Your favourite friend	A1

Table 1. The 32 learning, their ranking by independent experts and their CEFR level.

From the names of the tasks it may be clear that nearly all of them invite the learners to take part in activities that will be useful for them in every-day life, although some tasks would not be accepted as samples of task-based learning in the most orthodox sense of the word. Also, the tasks are all categorized in accordance with the Common European Framework. The question if the pedagogical changes that these tasks will – as we are convinced – bring about can be ascribed to the ICT integration remains. In order to answer this question we scrutinized the tasks with a view to their use of ICT tools. In table 2 the ICT tools found in the 32 selected learning tasks are presented.

Country	Provisional title in English	ICT tool
DE	Books and Modern Media	OHP
	Character stories	example of CV, style sheet of a CV, photographs of people, (Internet), PC, blackboard or OHP
	London Sights	E-mail
	I can do - My hands	
EL	Schools Here and There	Internet sites, Skype, building (part of) website
	Love Through Ages	You tube, word processor, email
	London Zoo	Interactive Whiteboard or Computer with Video Projector, PowerPoint Presentations, Internet Connection
	TV Commercials	picture or video manager, photo story
IT	Dinner invitation	
	On a desert island	
	Find the treasure	
	Tourist promotion website	making website
HU	Introducing a City	websites of cities
	Without Sound	You Tube

	Stereotypes	Film, PowerPoint
	How would you finish the story?	You Tube
NL	What do you want to be?	websites on jobs
	Sell your stuff	recording, on-line pronunciation/vocabulary guide
	Telling people about your hobbies	recording; upload in language portfolio
	Introduce yourself to your host family	on line dictionary, on line style sheet
PT	Mapping directions	Google Earth; Google maps; Bing maps; email
	Create a blog to promote your city/school	Pupils write an original text, upload movie makers files to present their school, city, culture and sites of interest. They can use pictures and PowerPoint files. Pen friends comment on them and also produce their own blog
	Whodunit	Flickr; email
	Making a Portuguese Gastronomy TV Show	recording of gastronomy programme
UK	Birthday Party Invite	On-line French dictionary ; PowerPoint's
	Les régions françaises	websites; word; PowerPoint
	Les vacances	websites
	Visit to Paris	list of websites; PowerPoint
TR	Logbook of a century	PowerPoint presentation / on-line photo album with audio commentaries
	Create a Tourist Brochure	YouTube, Flickr, Wordpress
	Describe your room	Word, weblog
	Your favourite friend	Face book, YouTube

Table 2. ICT tools present in learning tasks.

From the above table it appears that most learning tasks involve the use of ICT tools, although the diversity of the tools is striking. Some tasks require the learners to use tools that are no longer found in some schools (OHP), whereas other tasks require the use of recent Web 2.0 applications. It would be an interesting exercise to see if the level of ICT applications found in the selected learning tasks shows a correlation with the state of the integration of ICT in language learning in the country concerned. At first sight the reader might be tempted to conclude that some (but certainly not all) Mediterranean countries have made the most impressive advances, where ICT integration is concerned. Further study would be needed before such a conclusion can be drawn.

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Recommended website

EURODIS: a new searchable database and website for project dissemination

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Abstract

This paper describes the rationale for setting up and the outcomes derived from the EURODIS project carried out with support from the European Commission through its Lifelong Learning Programme from November 2009 to October 2010 (Ref.: 159773-2009-LLP-ES-KA2-KA2AM). The project's main aim was to provide efficient ways of disseminating CALL-related projects and their products to the larger language learning community at all levels of education. The major project outcome has been the implementation of a searchable large scale web-enabled database allowing both learners and language professionals to find specific information in a comprehensive manner.

Keywords: EURODIS; project dissemination; materials database; searchable website; CALL network.

1. Introduction

Initially, the EURODIS project aimed at providing additional ways of disseminating CALL-related projects that had been funded by the European Commission that had been presented at the EUROCALL 2009 and 2010 conferences in Gandía (ES) and Bordeaux (FR), respectively. A number of actions were envisaged in order to achieve this. Among them: a) acknowledging the EU-funded projects in the conference programme and identifying them in the session rooms; b) publishing leaflets with relevant information about the projects and their products; c) inviting the presenters of these sessions to participate in a CALL research and development network devoted to sharing experience, promoting examples of good practice and advice on particularly important issues such as dissemination opportunities, evaluation models, etc.; d) developing a comprehensive database with information on the EU-funded projects presented at EUROCALL conferences; e) setting up a searchable website to disseminate the EU-funded projects presented at EUROCALL conferences; and, f) inviting selected projects to publish an article in *The EUROCALL Review* (http://www.eurocall-languages.org/review/index.html) -EUROCALL's online journal which is published twice yearly, in March and September. This paper focuses on the development and implementation of the comprehensive database and searchable website.

2. Dissemination

2.1 Rationale

The rationale underlying the project was based on a firm belief that project dissemination is one of the most important stages in a project's life-cycle, and which is a factor that is very often left aside due to a number of circumstances that can be

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remedied with a bit of planning. One of these causes is often because project partners find it very hard to seek methods of sustaining their projects after the funding period is over and more often than not, dissemination is left to the last stages of the project or even after its completion. This was one of the driving forces that led us to create the searchable project website: in order to provide project partners with a tool where they can feed information from their projects right from the very starting point and, of course, throughout the entire project and after its completion. On the other hand, many years of experience in this area (1) has also led us to believe that, in many cases, even though the official finalization date may have been reached, project partners continue to work on their project outcomes and embark on upgrades, etc.

2.2 Effective dissemination

In terms of dissemination, two of the basic questions any project co-ordinator should ask him or herself are: a) How effectively did the project carry out its plan for dissemination? and b) What is the quality of the dissemination activities? With effective dissemination, the awareness, recognition, and possible use of a project's outcomes may be greater than expected. Sound planning can undoubtedly help achieve this result and we must not forget that the ultimate goal of dissemination is utilization. In carrying out a dissemination activity, information or knowledge should systematically be distributed through a variety of ways to potential users or beneficiaries and, as mentioned above, it should be conducted from the very start of the project.

The basic characteristics of dissemination systems have been very clearly laid out by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (2001) and can be thus summarised:

- They are oriented toward the needs of the user, incorporating the types and levels of information needed into the forms and language preferred by the user.
- They use varied dissemination methods, including written information, electronic media, and person-to-person contact.
- They include both proactive and reactive dissemination channels - that is, they include information that users have identified as important, and they include information that users may not know to request but that they are likely to need.
- They recognize and provide for the "natural flow" of the four levels of dissemination that have been identified as leading to utilization: spread, exchange, choice, and implementation.
- They draw upon existing resources, relationships, and networks to the maximum extent possible while building new resources as needed by users.
- They include effective quality control mechanisms to assure that information to be included in the system is accurate, relevant, and representative.
- They include sufficient information so that the user can determine the basic principles underlying specific practices and the settings in which these practices may be used most productively.
- They establish linkages to resources that may be needed to implement the information - usually referred to as technical assistance.

Also according to the guidelines on developing an effective dissemination plan, the same organization recommends taking into account the following ten elements:

i. **Goals:** Determine and document the goals of your dissemination effort for your proposed project.

ii. **Objectives:** Associate each goal with one or more objectives that clarifies what you are trying to accomplish through your dissemination activities.

iii. **Users:** Describe the scope and characteristics of the "potential users" that your dissemination activities are designed to reach for each of your objectives.

iv. **Content:** Identify, at least, the basic elements of the projected content you have to disseminate to each of the potential user groups identified.

v. **Source(s):** Identify the primary source or sources that each potential user group is already tied into or most respects as an information source. Consider ways to partner with these sources in your dissemination efforts.

vi. **Medium:** Describe the medium or media through which the content of your message can best be delivered to your potential users and describe the capabilities and resources that will be required of potential users to access the content for each medium to be used.

vii. **Success:** Describe how you will know if your dissemination activities have been successful. If data is to be gathered, describe how, when, and who will gather it.

viii. **Access:** Describe how you will promote access to your information and how you will archive information that may be requested at a later date. Consider that most people will use your project-related information when they perceive a need for it — not necessarily when you have completed your research project.

ix. **Availability:** Identify strategies for promoting awareness of the availability of your research-based information and the availability of alternate available formats.

x. **Barriers:** Identify potential barriers that may interfere with the targeted users' access or utilization of your information and develop actions to reduce these barriers.

Naturally, the dissemination planning process assists in answering questions relating to these ten elements of effective dissemination planning.

2.3 Types of dissemination

There are two possible ways of spreading information about a project and its outcomes: a) academic dissemination and b) advertising and publicising. These naturally have two distinctly different goals: the former, targeting the scientific and academic community, and the latter, aiming at the public at large, target groups, stakeholders, decision-makers, etc. There are of course several means of disseminating via academic channels, among them: professional associations, conferences, journals, specialised magazines, dedicated websites, networks, etc. Professional associations customarily also provide members with a number of ways of sharing information such as special interest groups devoted to specific aspects of a broader common interest, a network of members sharing common interests, discussion lists, newsletters, social networking tools, blogs, wikis, annual assemblies and events, etc. Advertising and publicising a project outcome, however, seeks to awaken public awareness and enhance visibility of the "product" at hand by means of promotional strategies. As a consequence, we cannot increase the afore-mentioned aimed utilisation of the project outcome unless potential users are made aware of its existence and availability. This, of course, may be done in a number of ways, specific to the field of marketing.

Disseminating knowledge, however, involves not only sharing but also transfer. As Söderqvist (2006:499) very clearly explains:

By knowledge transfer, we intend the distribution of knowledge of an essentially explicit nature between individuals and groups (through, e.g., formal information channels, IT systems or more spontaneous communication), while (following Argote & Ingram) by knowledge sharing we mean the dynamic processes of inter-personal interaction (e.g., discussion, debate or joint problem solving) through which 'one unit (e.g., group, department, or division) is affected by the experience of another' (2000:151), which involves both explicit and tacit knowledge elements. Hence, knowledge transfer and sharing are closely interrelated and reciprocally supportive processes, and one cannot

exist without the other. They result in shared knowledge, i.e. 'facts, knowledge, and propositions which are understood simultaneously by multiple agents' (Hoopes, D.G. and S. Postrel, 1999:838).

If our project, therefore, seeks to disseminate knowledge of some sort, we should bear in mind appropriate ways of not only sharing that knowledge, but also of transferring it to other agents, situations, contexts and so forth.

3. The EURODIS website

The EURODIS website comprises a comprehensive database –created by registered users who submit the information– of ICT-based projects, most of which (but not solely) have been funded by the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme which is managed by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. The website offers the language learning and teaching community at large a place to locate potential project partners, newly developed language learning resources, events, the establishment of a community of practice, a network devoted to CALL where advice can be sought from colleagues, etc.

Figure 1. The EURODIS homepage.

In a multilingual graphical user interface (2), the project data is introduced by means of completing a number of forms allowing the system to organise the information into searchable items which can in turn be retrieved by the user. As illustrated in figure 2 below, project data can be sought by title, acronym, contact person, etc. Once the project is located an information page displaying all relevant information regarding that particular project is displayed (see figure 6 below).

Additionally, all of the display windows identifying the information being looked for include an option to open a printer-friendly PDF version of the information which can also be stored locally for further reference.

Figure 2. Sample project search screen.

Other possible search items include Outcomes, Partners and Events. Within Outcomes, information can be sought regarding the name of an outcome or resource, production date, type, target group, project and availability. Again, once the information sought is found, a display window opens up showing more specific details.

The items allowing us to find a particular Partner include the project name, the coordinator's name, and the name of the institution, amongst others. Events can be found by searching the name of the event or activity, its start or ending date, the type of event or its location. As with all the other elements, once the search item is located, a display window opens up with further information.

Figure 3. Sample outcome search screen.

Figure 4. Sample partner search screen.

Additionally, every project can upload any type of standard-format document (text, audio or graphic files) and set up its own particular Forum (3) (see figure 5 below), which is managed by that particular project co-ordinator. The News Feed facility, however, is common to the entire EURODIS platform and is managed by the system administrator.

Figure 5. Sample forum page.

The following is a partial sample screen capture taken from one of the projects in the EURODIS database. As we can see, both a summarised and a full version PDF file with the project information is available, as well as the HTML version. The right hand side of the screen offers a short version of the basic project information and the co-ordinator's details for a quick reference.

Figure 6. Sample project screen.

Lastly, any registered user or person interested in enquiring for further information can do so by filling in the appropriate form to contact the system administrator(s).

4. Conclusions

EURODIS is a website where the language learning and teaching community can find a unified and comprehensive database from which to retrieve reliable data on ICT-based language learning projects (partners, events, results, products, outcomes, etc.). In this sense, EURODIS aims to be an international reference point for the language learning community at large, as well as serving a number of more specific purposes. Among them:

- helping projects to disseminate all of the facets of their work
- helping potential project applicants to know what has been previously achieved in the field
- helping potential project applicants find suitable partners for their projects
- providing language teachers with a search facility to find resources for their particular needs
- providing language learners with a search facility to find resources for their particular needs
- providing CALL developers a tool to explore past and present developments in ICT-based learning materials
- providing researchers with a database and search tool to investigate how the CALL field is evolving
- establishing a comprehensive archive of ICT-based projects and materials for future reference
- etc.

To summarise, it can be said that, due to its features, EURODIS has achieved its main goal, i.e. allowing a project to enhance its dissemination potential.

5. Acknowledgements

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Appendix

Examples of well-established CALL and TELL-related annual conferences:

- EUROCALL (European Association for Computer Assisted Language Learning) holds an annual conference in a different European University - http://www.eurocall-languages.org
- European Language Council (ELC) / Conseil Européenne de les Langues (CEL) holds regular project/network dissemination conferences - http://www.celelc.org
- The International CALL Conference is held every 2 years in Antwerp organised by Linguapolis, University of Antwerp, Belgium - http://www.antwerpcall.be
- CALICO (Computer-Assisted Language Instruction Consortium) holds an annual conference in North America - http://www.calico.org
- IALLT (International Association for Language Learning Technology) hols an annual conference in the USA - http://www.iallt.org
- JALTCALL (Computer-assisted language learning section of the Japan Association for Language Teaching) holds an annual international conference in Japan - http://jaltcall.org
- WorldCALL (an umbrella association founded by international CALL associations which organises a world conference roughly every 5 years) - http://www.worldcall.org

Examples of well-established CALL/TELL scientific journals:

- *ReCALL* (CUP) / *The EUROCALL Review* - http://www.eurocall-languages.org
- *CALICO Journal* - https://www.calico.org/page.php?id=5
- *Language Learning and Technology* (LLT) - http://llt.msu.edu
- *Apprentissage des Langues et Systèmes d'Information et de Communication* (ALSIC) - http://alsic.revues.org/
- *CALL Journal* Taylor & Francis http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t716100697
- *JALT CALL Journal* - http://www.jaltcall.org/journal/jcjabout.html

Examples of well-established journals devoted to Education Technologies:

- *IALLT Journal.* The official publication of the International Association for Language Learning Technology - http://ialltjournal.org
- *System.* International journal devoted to the applications of educational technology and applied linguistics to problems of foreign language teaching and learning. (Elsevier) http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journaldescription.cws_home/335/description#description
- *Computers and Education* (Elsevier) http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journaldescription.cws_home/347/description
- *British Journal of Educational Technologies* (Blackwell publishing) http://www.wiley.com/bw/journal.asp?ref=0007-1013
- *Revista Latinoamericana de Tecnología Educativa* (RELATEC) - http://campusvirtual.unex.es/revistas/index.php?journal=relatec
- *Journal of Research on Technology in Education* - http://www.iste.org/learn/publications/journals/jrte-old.aspx
- *Australian Journal of Educational Technology* - http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet.html
- *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology* - http://www.cjlt.ca/index.php/cjlt

Notes

[1] Ana Gimeno has uninterruptedly been involved in EU-funded CALL-related I&D projects since 1992.

[2] The languages currently available are English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Catalan.

[3] Powered by phpBB (http://www.phpbb.com)

Article:

A Podcast Project in the German Programme of the University of Canterbury, New Zealand

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Abstract

This study aims to contribute to the research into the design of language podcasts. It describes the design of the podcasts used and analyses the results of a questionnaire and discusses podcast design for future language learning.

During one 12-week semester, podcasts were used in a German language intermediate class to improve student listening skills. New Zealand is a long way from a German-speaking country; besides being a good way to bring authentic L2 material into the classroom, we envisaged podcasts on student iPods would also be a good way to take language learning out of the classroom and integrate it into daily life. Podcasts might become part of a series of web tools, which support the teaching goal: improved learning outcomes by making the students part of a web community.

Keywords: Podcasts, L2 teaching, independent learners, MP3, CALL integration.

1. Introduction

Podcasts are a relatively new phenomenon. The word itself is a combination of iPod and broadcast. The downloadable multimedia files can be either in audio or video format. They are distinct from the traditional online multimedia because they are freely subscribable via an RSS feed (see glossary). Podcasting is an asynchronous mode of distributing multimedia files. Podcasts are often used in university education to simply broadcast lectures, but have great potential as a highly mobile learning tool.

The project was based on the hypothesis that there is value in creating audio and video podcasts that supplement in-class teaching, so that mobile learning can occur in a "hands-free" mobile situation to enable students to learn during activities such as gym sessions or commuting.

In order to evaluate the value of such hypothesis, podcasts were used in language classes to support learners of German to improve their listening and comprehension skills. In the end of the project the students were surveyed in order to find out about their preferences of the podcast design.

In the following section, the literature about podcasts is reviewed. It is followed by the description of the project and the survey and a discussion of its interpretation.

2. Literature review

2.1. Podcasts as a tool for teaching and learning

Podcasting was first introduced in July 2003 (Doyle 2005); the first RSS audio feeds produced for American radio appeared in July 2003 and by mid-2005 there were approximately 10,000 different podcasts available on a wide range of topics. In June 2005 Apple added podcasting to their free "iTunes" programme.

Early literature on podcasting in tertiary teaching reflects the fact that podcasts were simply recordings of lectures for students unable to attend classes or for revision work. Lim (2006) used podcasts in his Geography classes. He recorded lectures but also authorized the learners by making their own podcasts. He predicts that "the technology will draw enthusiasm among teachers and learners".

To evaluate the potential of podcasts to supplement lectures, the University of Canterbury Computing Department ran a podcasting experiment for two first-year Computer Science courses in 2006, (T. Bell, A. Cockburn, A. Wingkvist & R. Green 2007). Weekly podcasts were released that supplemented the lectures rather than recorded them in their entirety.

Fietke (2009) also used lecture podcasts in his economics classes but he identifies the need for more knowledge about the usage of recorded lectures in higher education.

2.2. Podcasts in language learning environments

Podcasting is a powerful tool to improve and enrich the understanding of the spoken target language in a language learning environment. The many advantages of iPods and podcasts are described in Morales and Moses (2006). Features like: "students learn at their own pace", "listen to the podcasts [...] as many times as they want, which gives advantages to a mixed ability group and encourages weaker learners to improve on the language skills". However, among the many advantages of podcasts there also lie disadvantages, such as the slight danger of addiction to digital technology, as mentioned in Windham (2007).

As early as 2005, wealthier institutions like Duke University distributed iPods to students in many different subject areas, including a German language beginner's class and a Turkish language class. The use of the iPods was evaluated in different categories: as a course content tool, a classroom recording tool, a field recording tool, a study support tool, and as a file transfer and storage tool (Belanger, 2005). The evaluation described by Belanger offered a general overview of the use of the iPods as a new technology, but did not evaluate improved learning of a foreign language.

Rossell-Aguilar (2009) saw podcasting as a tool to integrate learning in the personal life of the learners. Other researchers started to use and assess podcasts as a language teaching tool. Lord (2008) and Ducate and Lomicka (2009) used podcasts to improve pronunciation. The result of their project suggested "that podcasting and repeated recordings alone are not enough to improve pronunciation over one academic semester".

Stanley (2006) suggests podcasts could be used as a supplement to textbook materials; a source for authentic listening materials; a way for students to gain information on specific aspects of the language, such as idiomatic expressions or grammatical constructions and; with student-produced podcasts, as a way for students to communicate with each other in other countries.

Manning (2005) pointed out that podcasts have the value of voice in a traditionally text-heavy instruction world and she emphasizes the positive effects podcasts would possibly

have on the more auditory-focused learner. She also commented on the different learner types and includes the visual learners.

Crispin et al. (2009) pointed out that "this type of learning enables the separation of tutor and student from the traditional place of learning", and they note that institutions need devices and infrastructure for that change. They also point out that vodcasting (podcasts including videos) and podcasting is a new way of creative and personalized learning. And Kuskulta-Hulme et al. (2009) note that mobile devices are an authentic follow-up tool for fixed devices and that mobile learning interweaves with the learners' personal life. Thorne and Payne (2005) suggest that podcasts can be used to provide learners with samples of real speech and other authentic materials.

My research accepts the hypothesis that learners will improve their listening skills by using podcasts. Facer et al. (2009) see listening skills as the hardest part of language acquisition. The focus of this paper is the design of effective podcasts and their use in language teaching.

The application of podcasts in a language course will be described. There is no doubt that podcast technology is of benefit for the language student, the question remains however to what extend this technology should be used in a language environment. This project wants to determine the best possible design of podcasts/vodcasts in language learning classes and it examines students' perception of the new technology. Developing an understanding of the effect on learning and teaching with podcasts will be a continuation of the project described in this article.

3. The podcast project at the German programme, UC Christchurch

Part of the motivation to use podcasts in my German language classes had been the geographical distance of New Zealand to the country of the spoken target language. Podcasts can bring the authentic L2 environment into the classroom and beyond.

3.1. Participants

Twenty six students of the German 251 intermediate class took part in a trial of three different types of podcasts. The intermediate level consists of different learner abilities. Some students had spent from a few months to up to a year in a German speaking country. Other students had 5 years of German in High School. And about a third of the learners had never been to Germany and had started to learn German at University for one year before they started in the intermediate stream. The students ranged in age between 18 and 21 years. The period of the investigation was one semester (12 weeks). All podcasts were part of the student assessment.

The results of 20 students were evaluated. The remaining students did not answer the survey.

3.2. Materials

Two different types of podcasts were used.

A) Audio Podcasts

Audio podcasts were produced by the instructor and uploaded to a University site and automatically transferred onto iTunes.

The audio podcasts are a "series of regularly updated media files that can be played on a number of devices (portable or static) and are distributed over the Internet via a subscription service" (iTunes), (Rosell-Aguilar, 2009). The finished podcasts were downloadable from iTunes or the university's UCTV service. The students were encouraged to subscribe via RSS feed (Stanley, 2006). The audio podcasts produced by the instructor were part of the fortnightly homework sheet. The learners were students

of the German intermediate class GRMN 251. McQuillan (2006) finds audio use of iPods was particularly powerful for intermediate learners.

Evaluation

The audio podcasts were part of five homework assignments, which counted 10% to the final mark. Five podcasts were produced over a period of two terms (12 weeks). The topics of each 3-5 minute episode complemented the topics in the textbook. The instructor's voice was present in each podcast; and the interviewees changed in each podcast. The regular exposure to the instructor's voice aimed to enable the students to better understand spoken German in the classroom. The second speakers came from different dialect areas of Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, thereby aiming to widen the listening understanding of the learner. Heidi Byrnes (2007) notes the advantage of the close relationship of culture and foreign language. A questionnaire was handed out in the end of the learning period and a primarily quantitative method was used for the evaluation. This is analysed in section 5.1 below. (1)

Figure 1. Sample podcast from GRMN 251/252. For access to the complete 15 podcasts, click HERE.

B) Video Podcasts

Video podcasts are also called vodcasts. Sutton-Brady (2009) defines them as video and podcasts combined and Rossell-Aguilar (2007) predicted that video podcasts were likely to be as accessible as audio podcasts. The later version iPods have a screen big enough to watch videos. For more technical advice about vodcasts, see Meng (2007). The video podcasts were downloaded from the iTunes library using RSS feeds.

Evaluation

As part of the overall assessment the students were asked to choose a German podcast episode from the iTunes podcast shop. The length of the exercise was one semester (12 weeks). Instructions were given about what type of podcast was adequate and a few suggestions of popular podcast series were given by the instructor (see appendix 2). The students were instructed to use the iTunes podcasts, which are free and don't disadvantage financially poorer students (Rossell-Aguilar, 2007). The introduction took 50 minutes in the university computer lab.

In order to gain 10 percent towards the final mark, the students had to set up the RSS feed for their chosen podcast. They had to write an introductory comment on an intranet blog forum, introducing themselves and explaining their choice of podcasts. The students were asked to comment on eight different episodes, using at least 50 words each time. The comments had to be posted to the blog forum. (2)

At the end of the semester and after the 8 comments the students had to write a 270-word report on different aspects of their podcast use (see appendix 3). (3) The report was graded and was used as the qualitative evaluation (Edrisingha et.al, 2007). This is analysed in section 5.2.

3.3. Design

The instructor-produced podcasts were made using Garageband on a Macbook computer. There was no need for a microphone, the quality of the internal microphone of the computer was sufficient.

4. Research Methods

The students were exposed to two different types of podcasts. Because of the different nature of those podcasts, different research methods were applied.

The audio podcasts produced by the instructor were surveyed by a questionnaire. The students had five homework assignments; each one included an audio podcast produced by the instructor. The students were asked to fill out a survey sheet after completing the last assignment. The seven survey questions were multiple choice except for number five which was open ended. The data analysis was mainly quantitative. Graphs were used to show the results of the students' preferences.

The video podcast assignment was analysed using the qualitative method. The students had to write a report after completing the task. The researcher is aware of the relatively small number of students. The data from the reports was analysed and then summarised.
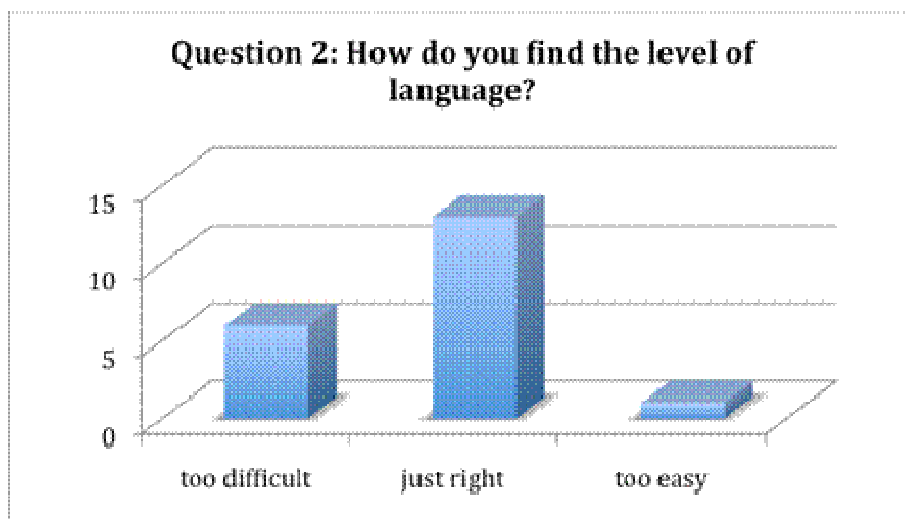
5. Results

*5.1. Audio podcasts by the instructor*

The majority of answers were in favour of the podcasts.
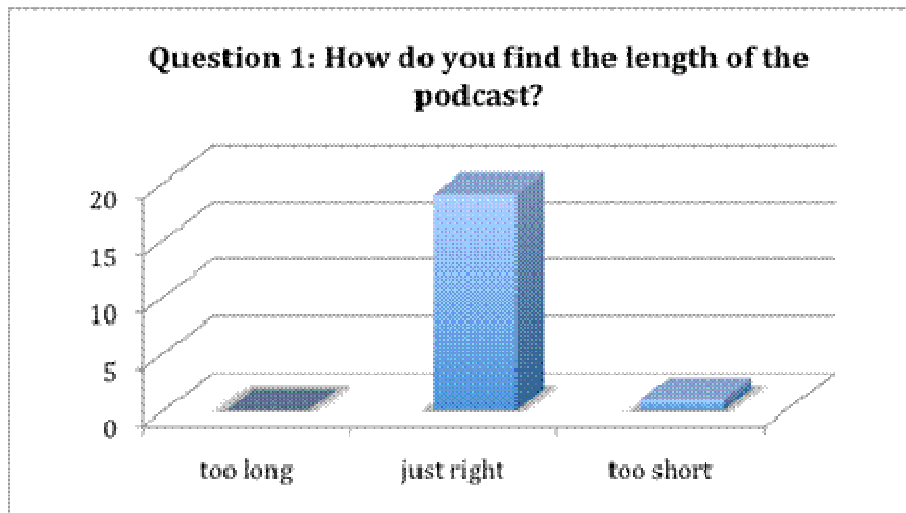
Q1: 4-6 minutes length seems to be ideal for this language level. Sutton-Brady (2009) mentions that short podcasts are the most successful.

**Question 2: How do you find the level of language?**

Q2: The intermediate students found it difficult to listen to the podcasts from the iTunes shop. The instructor podcasts were spoken in a slower pace and with vocabulary carefully chosen. The idea behind this was to put students at ease particularly if they had not had much exposure to spoken German. One third of the students still found the level of language too difficult. This was a positive response because the level has to be slightly difficult in order to motivate and give the student the positive feeling when he/she achieved the task.

Question 3: How do you find the questions/ answers for the podcasts?
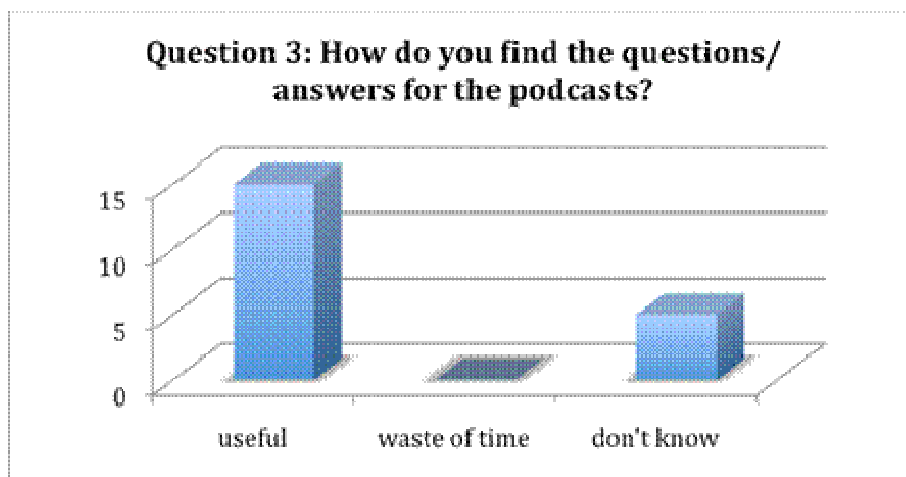
Q3: The homework task was to answer questions after listening to the instructor's podcast episode. The answers were meant to improve listening comprehension and not to confuse him/her by making it too difficult. The balance between questions and podcasts was assessed. Most of the students answered in favour of having questions about the podcasts.

Students commented: The questions are good as they help me be more specific in understanding what I am hearing instead of just getting the main idea like I usually do. It makes the students more focused on the contents.

**Question 4: Would you prefer to have the script for each podcast?**
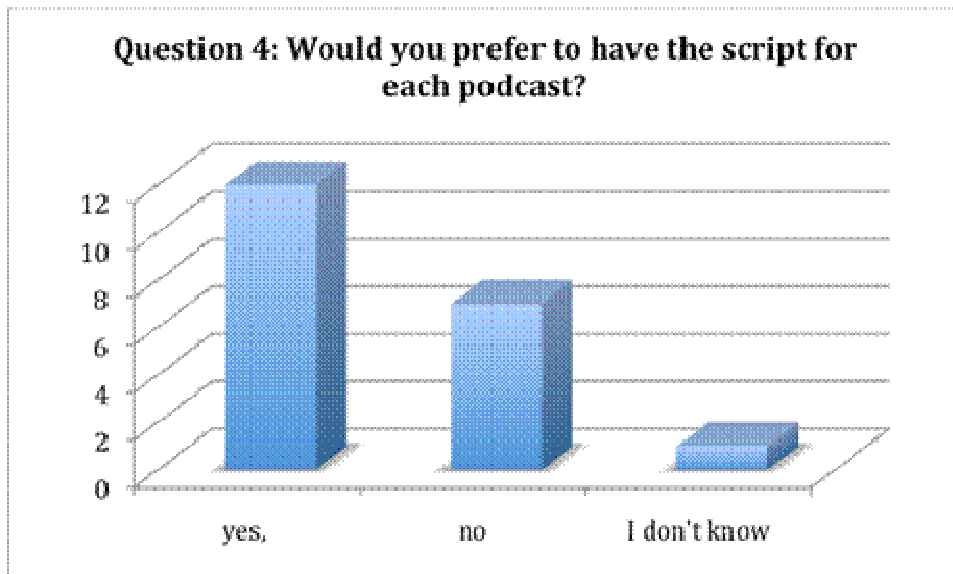
Q4: A surprising number of students answered with "no". It was expected that the students would prefer the script. This could be a positive outcome and might show the ease the students have when having the podcasts at home and not in class. It could also mean that the level of difficulty is too low and they do not need the script.

Q5: An open-ended question was asked: "Do you like podcasts as an assessment tool". The majority answered yes.

Some of the comments were:

- Good way for improving listening skills.
- It helps with listening and comprehension.
- Different types of homework is great. Podcasts are fun, you can choose what you want to listen to.
- Great with the different dialects.
- It's fun using technology.
- The more spoken German one hears the more one absorbs.
- Listening and training my ear is one of the hardest aspects of learning a language – the more practice the better!

Question 6: What would you prefer?
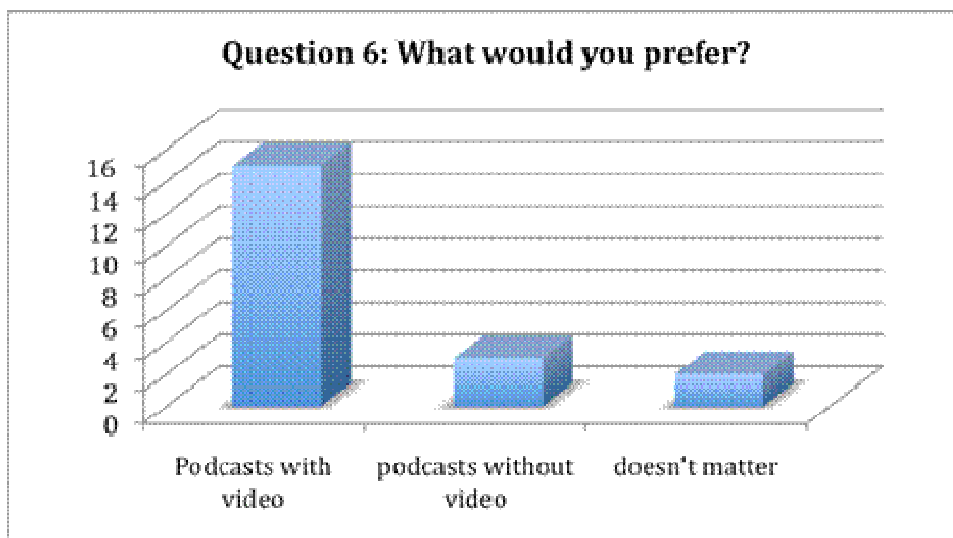
Q6: The majority of students would prefer a video podcast, vodcast.

Audio format (McQuillan, 2006) was deliberately chosen to train the ear of the learners and to make it possible for all students to download the podcasts, even if the students didn't have the latest technology.

5.2. Video Podcasts

iTunes Video podcast episodes (following 3.2.) were perceived as a very valuable part of their overall assessment.

Some comments from the final report:

- Es war hilfreich, dass ich Deutsch lernte durch Anschauen von Videos, das machte Spass. (It was helpful, that I learned German by watching videos, that was fun.)
- Meiner Meinung nach ist diese Podcastaufgabe wirklich toll. (According to my opinion this podcast assignent is great.)

Surprisingly few students used the podcasts as a mobile, hands free entertainment. They perceived it as an educational exercise, asked after their listening strategy:

- Meine Hörstrategie war, sie zwei oder dreimal zu hören. (My listening strategy was to listen to them 2 or 3 times.)
- Das zweite Mal stoppe ich das Podcast, wenn ich ein wichtiges Wort nicht verstehn kann. (The second time I stop the podcast when I can't understand an important word.)

Those last two comments show that the aim of total immersion into the target language wasn't fulfilled.

6. Discussion

The feedback of this questionnaire is encouraging for the instructor. The results of the qualitative and quantitative methods clearly showed that the students liked the podcasts. By giving the students the option to take learning home, the learning environment becomes more authentic and not as formal as the computer lab. Edirisinha *et al* (2007) also considered podcasting useful for the students; it brought a sense of informality into academic learning. Using the podcasts as part of the overall course assessment, students were more motivated. It was important to set up the podcast learning in the first week of term. The knowledge of IT varied in the class and it was important to set up the students to be able to start on the same level. A disappointing finding in this study was that the students are not accepting podcasts fully into their personal everyday life. The quote "Students are digital natives" (Prensky, 2001) seems not to be fully applicable! The students are still approaching podcasts with awe and listen to them with concentration on their home computers. They do not listen to them in a leisurely way on their personal iPods. Sutton-Brady (2009) found the same result: her students liked and used their iPods but not for language learning tasks.

The design of the home-produced podcasts seem to be appropriate for the second year German class. There might be an indication that the level is slightly too low. It should be considered in future to make the podcasts more difficult to take the students out of their comfort zone. The preference for video podcasts seems interesting. Although learners are usually mixed learners, the majority tends to be visually orientated.

7. Conclusion

Two problems might be mentioned. Levy and Stockwell (2007) note that instructors who use CALL elements in the classroom need to have a clear idea of what they want to achieve. Making audio or video podcasts to enrich the language learning environment alone is not beneficial; it needs to have the appropriate design to engage the interest of students.

The other problem might be that students will not attend classes any longer if teaching extends outside the classroom (Blaidsell, 2005). Classroom teaching should not be replaced! (Morales & Moses, 2006). CALL elements are still too dependent on the enthusiasm of the individual language instructor and the success depends on the involvement of the instructor (Chapelle, 2003). The creation of audio files in particular is getting easier every year which should encourage the even less technology savvy instructor.

Future podcast use or the application of similar technology may be guaranteed if language teacher education focused more on developing the technical abilities of instructors. The development of hardware and software will no doubt make producing additional computer material more manageable and will facilitate increased use of computer components in language classes.

To gain more information on the impact of podcasts, research on the way students master listening and how it correlates with their oral performance would be of interest. Future research should survey different learner groups. Ideally there would be a parallel scenario with one group taught the traditional/ conventional way and the other group with the podcasts integrated in their teaching.

Glossary

CALL = Computer-Assisted Language Learning

Podcast = A podcast is a series of digital media files (either audio or video) that are released episodically and often downloaded through web syndication.

RSS = RSS (most commonly expanded as "Really Simple Syndication") is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated works —such as blog entries, news headlines, audio, and video— in a standardized format.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire

Podcasts GRMN251: a series of podcasts produced fortnightly and published on UCTV and iTunes. The topics of the podcasts are complimentary material to the course textbooks "Passwort 3 and 4".

_____

How do you find the length of the podcasts?

- too long
- just right
- too short

How do you find the level of language?

- too difficult
- just right
- too easy

How do you find the questions/answers for the podcasts?

- It is useful for the understanding of the podcasts.
- It's a waste of time, I understand the podcasts' contents anyway.
- Don't know, it doesn't matter if there are questions/answers or not.

Do you prefer to have the script of each podcast?

- Yes, that would be great!
- Not really, it trains my ear better to listen without a script.
- I don't know.

Do you think the podcast is a good tool as part for the assessment in GRMN 251?

- Yes, why?:
- No, why?:

Would you prefer?

- Podcasts with video
- Podcasts without videos

What are the areas you think you need to improve in German?

- spoken German
- listening skills
- written German
- understanding of longer texts

Appendix 2

Instructions iTunes and blog

Podcasts

There are two different types of podcasts in Grmn 251. Both will be part of your overall assessment.

Podcast type A – audio = in house produced podcasts / Arbeitsblätter

There are 12 podcasts available especially produced for GRMN 251/252. They can be downloaded either directly from UCTV or iTunes.

A selection of those podcasts are part of the fortnightly 'Arbeitsblätter'.

Each podcast includes a short conversation about a place in Germany which complements the topics in the textbook. The voices on the podcasts are usually two

people, one of them is the instructor of the course and the other voice is a different native German speaker each time. The idea behind the podcasts is to familiarize the student with the voice of the instructor plus German voices with a variety of local accents. The podcasts contain only audio, no video files, they focus on the aural understanding of German.

How to download:

- Go into the UCTV website: uctv.canterbury.ac.nz/1/170
- Go to RSS (right hand side of page)
- Rightclick: 'copy link'
- Open iTunes
- Go to 'advanced': 'subscribe to podcast'

You now can download the podcasts on your mp3 player!

Podcasts type B - video = free German podcasts in iTunes Shop / final mark

"iTunes store German" has got a wide variety of German podcasts which can be downloaded for free.

You need to access the iTunes store, choose a video podcast of your choice and subscribe to it.

You need to watch one episode per week (starting week 2 and ending week 9, a total of 8 episodes).

After watching each episode you need to go into Learn/Moodle, go into Forum and comment on the episode. The comment needs to be in German. The instructor won't correct the German, only the length (minimum of 50 words) and the contents of the comment (description of what you have watched) will be considered. Each comment will be 0.5 % = 4 % of your final mark.

After you have finished the last episode you need to write a report including:

1. A description of your chosen podcast.
2. Your review: was it good, bad, interesting,…
3. Explaining your listening strategy: when did you watch the podcasts, what device did you use, how often did you listen to each episode,…?

Minimum length: one A4 page, 270 words, double lined. Due date 14 May 2010.

The final report will count 6% towards the final grade and will be marked like an essay.

Einige Vorschläge:

- Die Sendung mit der Maus
- Gallileo
- Tagesschau
- Käpt'n Blaubär

Appendix 3

Sample of student's podcast report (copied with permission)

Beschreibung der Podcast

Ich habe beschlossen, den Podcast «KultureSofa» anzuhoeren, weil ich mich fuer andere Kulture interessiere und besser verstehen moechte, wie man integriert in der deutschen Gesellschaft wird. Es wird oft gesagt, dass Deutschland ein multikulturelles Land sei und ich moechte wissen warum es so vielen verschiedenen Nationalitaeten gefaellt.

Der Podcast besteht aus einen Interview mit einem fremden „Deutshe". Ich hatte ein besseres Verstaendnis mit den „Deutscher", die aus Australien kamen, weil sie die gleiche Unterschiede wie ich bemerkt haben, als ich in Europa war. Zum Beispiel gewoehnt man sich nicht an ein grosses Mittagessen, sondern an ein grosses Abendessen, wie hier in Neuseeland. Also fuer beide Laender ist Deutschland total anders. Fuer die Leute aus Spanien gab es kein Unterschied mit dem Essen (ausser den Wuersten!) , sondern ein klares Unterschied mit der Sprache. Im Allgemein fuer die Jugendliche war dieses Problem nicht so gross, weil sie Deutsch in der Schule lernen mussten. Aber fuer die Mutter oder die Grosseltern, die zu Hause bleiben, ist dieses Kommunikationsproblem immer groesser geworden.

Es hat Spass gemacht, die Podcasts anzuhoeren, weil sie ihre persoenliche Erlebnis mit uns teilen haben. Durch sie habe ich viele interessante Tipps gelernt und ich moechte daran erinnern, wenn ich nach Deutschland reise. Ich wuerde dieser Podcast empfehlen, wenn man sein Sprach- oder Kulturkenntnis von Deutschland verbessen will. Obwohl die Auslaender ziemlich starke Akzente hatten, sprachen alle fliessig Deutsch. Ich habe es zweimal in der Woche anzuhoert und es hat mich ein bisschen geholfen, Deutsch zu sprechen. Immer wenn ich etwas in der Podcast nicht verstehen konnte, hatte ich es wiederholen. Je mehr ich die Podcasts anhoere, desto leichter wird die Sprache! Ich glaube, dass die Podcasts besonderes „KultureSofa" ganz hilfreich sind und ich habe keine Zweifel, dass jetzt ich mehr Deutsch verstehen kann!!!

Notes

[1] I also used audio podcasts produced by the learners as their end-of-year oral exam. After having had podcast exposure for half a year, the students were asked to produce part of their end-of-year oral exam as a podcast episode. The better podcasts were shared on a publicly available website created by the instructor (http://web.me.com/veraleier/251_2Oral/Herzlich_Willkommen.html). The instructions for the podcasts were clearly explained (see appendix 2). See Levy (2007) about the importance of explaining CALL components well to the learners. The students had to pair up with a classmate and record the podcast onto Garageband. The topic was to present information on a part of Germany, which was less well known than some more famous areas. The instructor announced the topic one day in advance. The students were allowed to use notes while producing the podcast but not scripts. The podcast was part of the oral assessment and counted 20 percent towards the final mark. A comparative analysis was used by comparing the normal face-to-face oral exam from the previous year with the new podcast recordings. The marking schedule was the same as for the conventional oral exam. A total of 20 marks, comprising of 7 marks for pronunciation, 7 marks for grammatical correctness, and 6 marks on ability in using complex language. The outcome of this research is not yet completed and will be presented in a later article.

[2] The idea of group membership of a forum is an important part of the design (McQuillan, 2006).

[3] A particular focus was on the question: Explain your listening strategy: when did you watch the podcasts, what device did you use, how often did you listen to each episode,…?

Article

The Merits of Using "EthnoQuest" as an English Language Learning Tool and a Medium of Cultural Transmission

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Abstract

This paper will focus on the experience of using the game 'EthnoQuest' as part of a content-based course at a small private university in Japan. 'EthnoQuest' is *an interactive multimedia simulation for cultural anthropology fieldwork*, and students enter the virtual environs of *Amopan,* a small Mexican village. The game is text based and two-dimensional and by comparison does not have any of the high quality graphics or adventure stimulating challenges of a commercial game. Nevertheless, I felt it was extremely beneficial to students taking ethnographic fieldwork courses as it opened up the field in a very accessible way. Two groups of students will be discussed; one group of students had very limited abilities in English and were very conscious of this fact. The second group, had advanced English skills and were able to use the simulations as a stepping stone to fruitful discussions about topics such as bilingualism and cultural and religious beliefs. Students with lower levels of English were able to interact with villagers at their own pace creating a comfortable and safe study environment from which to improve their English skills and enhance their knowledge of a different culture. Four simulations from the game will be analysed for their language building skills and cultural content. Finally, student feedback and problems with the software will be discussed.

Key words: EthnoQuest, cultural anthropology, simulations, ethnographic fieldwork.

1. Introduction

This paper will focus on the merits of using an interactive simulation designed for students of cultural anthropology as a tool to improve English language learning at university level as well as being a method of introducing students to a different culture. The simulation used in this research was "EthnoQuest" by Frances F. Berdan, Edward A. Stark, and Carey Van Loon. The simulation takes us on a journey to the fictional village of *Amopan*, which is located in the highlands of eastern Mexico. Although *Amopan* is fictional, it is modelled on actual villages in eastern Mexico and each simulation is designed to give the student a sense of what it is like to conduct fieldwork. Interaction with the inhabitants of *Amopan* is text based and two-dimensional. The player has to respond to the villagers' dialogue by choosing from a number of options. If the student answers correctly they are free to carry on, if they choose incorrectly they are given an explanation of why they have made a mistake and asked to choose again. The design of the simulation is not to teach students English; nevertheless, I found it extremely useful as a method of English language teaching for students participating in an ethnographic fieldwork course whose native language was not English.

For the purposes of this paper I would like to concentrate on two groups of students who studied ethnographic fieldwork at a small private university in Japan. Both groups of students were small, averaging six or seven students who attended classes on a regular basis. The first group of students were taking an elective intensive course over ten days and were expected to be in the classroom for six hours per day. The second group of students were taking a normal elective class of four credits —three hours per week— spread out over a fifteen-week semester. The first group of students —Group A— were final year students, and had an English ability on the cusp of upper beginner to lower intermediate level, and were very self-conscious of this fact. The second group of students —Group B— were second and third year students and with English abilities ranging from upper intermediate to advanced.

Group A did not have their own copy of the simulations; instead we all played the game together in class using a large screen. For each simulation one student was chosen to be the virtual ethnographer and the student's classmates were instructed to give advice and help. Group B had their own copy of the simulations and apart from the first and last simulation were expected to work on each simulation during allotted class time or as required homework. This paper will analyse how *EthnoQuest* was used and adapted to improve student's English ability within the confines of a 'content' course curriculum.

2. Setting the scene

The university that the above groups of students attended was a small private university in the Tokyo metropolitan area, which had recently introduced a new department of global studies, incorporating an ambitious all English language immersion programme, where, in addition to academic language instruction, all other classes in anthropology, psychology, philosophy, and international relations to name but a few, were conducted in English. Furthermore, initially, all administration staff the students came into contact with spoke only English and so students were expected to carry out all aspects of university life in English. Thus, by creating a mini-English language environment, it was thought that the university would be able to produce graduates with extremely high competence levels in English and subsequently aide Japan's efforts to globalise its education system. For further discussion about Japan's attempts to internationalise and globalise its system of higher education see Burgess, Gibson, Klaphake, and Selzer (2010); Ishikawa 2011, Goodman (2007), and MacLellan, P (2009).

The reality of such an enterprising project was that the student's level of English at entrance level was lower than expected and the vast majority of students were unable to adequately digest information in core and elective content courses. Japan is an aging society and small private universities are struggling to find enough students and so the age of accepting all students *zen'nyu jidai* who apply to university is slowly being ushered in (Poole, 2010). Additionally, the prevailing numbers of students applying to the university were monolingual Japanese with very little exposure to English language other than the compulsory English classes taken at junior and high school. The academic English programme established at the university (initially one year of intense academic English which was re-developed to create a two year programme), supported students as much as possible, and in some areas proved to be successful, but for some students the gap between the expectations of the 'content' courses and the reality of the students' linguistic skills could not be bridged.

I felt that using 'EthnoQuest' was one step in the right direction to narrow this gap and pave the way for combining elements of English language teaching with cultural exploration. Brigitte Holm Sørensen and Bente Meyer (2007: 599) define serious games as "digital games and equipment with an agenda of educational design and beyond

entertainment." 'EthnoQuest' falls into this category and when it was first introduced to both groups of students, the initial response was one of disappointment because the students automatically assumed when they heard the word 'game' that 'EthnoQuest' would be a commercial game; the type they are used to playing in their leisure time. Unlike students in Hong Kong (Chik 2011), who have the opportunity to play digital games in English or Japanese, and therefore to a certain extent improve their knowledge of both languages, Japanese students have an abundant range of games available to them in Japanese, thus limiting opportunities of English language learning even in their free time.

This initial disappointment notwithstanding, 'EthnoQuest' covers many of the concepts central to Serious Games as set out by Sørensen and Meyer (2007: 563). It provides a challenging environment for students with problems that they have to solve; students' achievements are acknowledged and praised from the inhabitants of *Amopan,* from the wise man who guides the student throughout the simulations, and from the fictional Society of Creative Research to whom you must send your reports to after every simulation. Furthermore, it allows students to explore the culture and environment of *Amopan* and then to reflect on one's findings. Students also have a chance to socialise, albeit with fictional characters, in a foreign language and simultaneously to learn about that culture and society. As an educator at university, I appreciated the fact that 'EthnoQuest' had a very academic setting and praise came from the fictional sponsors of the student's research. The virtual praise in conjunction with my own praise gave the students an additional sense of wellbeing and contributed to the creation of a safe learning environment from which students were able to muster enough confidence to communicate in English without fear of appearing foolish in front of their instructor, and or their peers and as Kang (2005) espouses the willingness to communicate plays a pivotal role in increasing competency levels in second language acquisition.

3. The Simulations

In total there are ten simulations, which depict various aspects of the lives of the inhabitants of *Amopan* and situations you may find yourself in as a researcher conducting fieldwork. These simulations, in order are: 1. *Getting There*, 2. *First Encounters*, 3. *Who's Who in Amopan?*, 4. *Working in the Fields*, 5. *Marketday*, 6. *The Day of the Dead*, 7. *A Day in the Life of the Midwife*, 8. *The Local Elections*, 9 . *A Feud Escalates*, 10. *Telling Tales, and Going Home* (for a brief description of each simulation see Appendix A.).

Figure 1. *EthnoQuest* entry page.

All ten simulations in 'EthnoQuest' were beneficial to the students' knowledge of English and cultural anthropology, however, discussing all ten would be impractical and so I have chosen four quite distinct simulations for detailed analysis in this paper, namely; *Getting There*, *Who's Who in Amopan?*, *A Day in the Life of the Midwife*, and *Telling tales, and Going Home*. The first simulation *Getting There* is crucial to the student's understanding of the game and therefore students from both groups were guided step by step through each section. The layout of each simulation is self-explanatory and follows the same pattern; therefore even students who were novices at gaming could easily understand what was happening and the problems encountered by Peterson (2011: 63-64) did not occur.

The third simulation, *Who's Who in Amopan?*, is one of the longer and more challenging simulations. Students are expected to create a census of the inhabitants of *Amopan,* reproduce it in table format and create a map of *Amopan.* During this simulation individual characters of *Amopan* residents come to the fore and it is at this point that students began to like or feel nervous around certain inhabitants they came into contact with. The seventh simulation *A Day in the Life of the Midwife* is a very interesting exercise in interview techniques and the formulation of questions in English. One continual pattern I have encountered in Japan is the difficulty Japanese students have in asking questions in English. Even my more advanced students found structuring questions in English a difficult task. Interviewing the midwife in *Amopan* enabled students to ask a number of pertinent questions in varying formats. The final simulation *Telling tales, and Going Home* is discussed here as a method of cross-cultural interpretations of folktales between the inhabitants of *Amopan*, European folktales and Japanese ones.

3.1. Getting There

The simulation *Getting There* gently eases students into the structure of the game and preparations for their year abroad in the virtual world of *Amopan*. At the beginning of each simulation students are expected to read their virtual diary, the journal abstracts are usually fairly short and the language is a mixture of slang (mainly British slang although the text book is aimed at students in the USA), and casual conversational English. In writing classes I have often tried to persuade students to start their own English language journal as one method of gathering thoughts and getting used to writing in English. I have tried various techniques such as structured journal writing in class and unstructured writing at home but have always found that at some point students become tired of writing their journal and eventually I receive at best half-hearted attempts, or at worst no writings at all. The brevity of the journal extracts demonstrated to students that journal writings do not have to be excessively long writing exercises. Furthermore, the content of the journal extracts were never too serious, helping students to understand that journal writing can be fun; for example, one extract stated:

"Stayed up all last night putting 'it' [the report] all together—took longer than I thought (always does!). Sleep today, party tonight! Can review it tomorrow before sending!"

Students in both groups had never seen this kind of journal writing prior to using 'EthnoQuest' and as a result felt more relaxed about their own journal writing. Moreover, I explained to students in both groups that their journal was confidential and although I would ask to look at it from time to time no one else would be privy to their thoughts.

Because students in Group A were taking an intensive course, I expected them to write their journals in class for the last twenty to thirty minutes of the day. Students were able to use this time to *wind* down from six solid hours of study as well as give them the

opportunity to collect their thoughts and prepare for the next day of intensive study. Group B students were expected to write their journals at home rather than in class. Obviously, I had more success for students from Group A as their journal writings were an in-class activity, students from group B kept their journal writings throughout the semester, although admittedly not on a regular basis and often only after gentle prodding.

After reading the journal extracts students are then told of their assignments for that particular simulation (See Appendix B for examples of 'to do' lists in *Amopan*). In the first simulation there is a lot if preliminary work, which has to be done before heading off to immerse yourself into village life. Once the letter of approval has arrived from the *Society of Creative Research* a letter from Dr. Elisa Sabia, who is your contact in Mexico City, will arrive. After receiving this letter you are then assigned your first real interactive task —that of packing your suitcase. In order to pack your suitcase students must drag an item from a list of words into the suitcase, if the item is suitable for the trip then it remains in the suitcase if it is not then it bounces back and the wise man tells you to try again. For students of lower levels of English this was particularly useful for expanding or re-introducing the names of common items in English. For example, words such as *raincoat*, *hair dryer*, *cellular phone*, *novel, family photos, formal clothes* and *dictionary.*

Figures 2 and 3. Sample "Journal" and "Assignment" from the simulation *Getting There.*

In feedback from his study of Japanese learners using massively, multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs), Peterson (2011: 69) found that participants in his research project with advanced and intermediate language skills were positive about learning previously unknown vocabulary such as "*whispers*, *cheers*, *spell*, *interrupted*, *village*, *quest* and *damn*." Likewise, students from Group A learnt many new words from using *Amopan*, and the above example of packing a suitcase was of particular significance because some students in this group became very animated at not being allowed to take such items as a hairdryer or a mobile phone. In fact, one of the students from Group A, who was very self-conscious of her English ability became so indignant at not being able to take these items that unconsciously she began to express herself in English without hesitation.

At the end of each simulation the student is then asked a series of questions by the wise man, if the student has made sufficient observations then answering the questions is relatively straightforward but if the student has not made detailed field notes then they will have to start the simulation over again. This is the part of the game students from both groups found the most challenging. The textbook which accompanies the

DVDs does not give the questions the wise man will ask; it only allows space for the answers (See Appendix C for samples of questions). The English ability of students in Group A was too low to expect them to make detailed comprehensive notes in English and play the game at the same time.

For these students I approached this part of the game in a structured step-by-step fashion. De Haan (2011: 46) quotes Hubbard (1991: 222) and says that it is easy to "blindly accept something as valuable for language learning simply because it involves language and problem solving and students enjoy it." I was particularly conscious of this when attempting to engage students from Group A in simple discussions about the questions at the end of each simulation. For example I often adapted the language from the original questions to a simplified version, which was more suitable for the students' level of English. Students in Group B, were better equipped to deal with this part of the simulation and little adaptation was necessary, however, instructions on how to make detailed notes were given and reemphasised each week. Students in Group B welcomed this instruction and said it helped them in their other English content-based classes where note-talking was an essential part of the lecture.

Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7. Sample assignments.

3.2. Who's Who in Amopan?

The simulation, *Who's Who in Amopan?*, proved to be both challenging and rewarding for students regardless of their language ability. Challenging because of the sheer amount of work and length of the simulation and rewarding because of the amount of work achieved when it was completed. Once again, students followed the same format

of reading the journal and looking at the 'To Do' list. During this simulation the student is required to visit a number of households and ask a number of questions in order to create a census.

Students were expected to find out who the head of the household was in each family in *Amopan.* In Japan the family system is a complex structure of relationships with a head of the household which is registered at the local city hall —for further information of the family system in Japan see Hendry (2006), and Hunter (1989). Japanese students from both groups were able to take the vocabulary from the game related to the structure of the family system in Japan and adapt it to talk about their own individual family structures. For Group A this meant expressing the structure of the family system in relation to themselves and students from Group B were able to take this one step further and compare and contrast the family system in *Amopan* with that of Japan. I came across a similar situation with the students when we were studying the simulation *The day of The Dead*, which is essentially about a festival to honour the Dead. In Japan families who remember deceased relatives often have alters in their house, and my students were able to compare the alters the residents of *Amopan* had made and decorated with those in their own household or in a relative's household. Festivals, such as the Bon festival is a time in Japan when Japanese people return to their home towns to visit the families of their ancestors and so students were able to make connections between the customs and religious practices of people in *Amopan* and their own. Paul Gee (2005) maintains that good digital games allow the player to inhabit the life of the virtual character and so the goals in the game become the goals of the player playing the game; simultaneously, the virtual character can represent the goals and desires of the real world player. I cannot categorically state that my students had the same goals and desires as the characters in *Amopan* or that the characters in *Amopan* represented my students' desires, however, cultural similarities between the virtual world and the real world bonded the students to the virtual characters, which sustained an interest in the game even during the toughest simulations.

One of the questions in the census was related to the language the residents of *Amopan* spoke, the residents were asked if they spoke Spanish or Nahuati (the native language of the residents of *Amopan*). Even though the game is in English and is targeted at English speakers the virtual ethnographer is fluent in Spanish and interacts with the residents of *Amopan* in Spanish and also learns Nahuti. There is a glossary of Nahuti terms in the textbooks and also in the virtual rucksack. Students have a chance to listen and practice various words or phrases in the Nahuti language. The fact that the natives of *Amopan* did not place English anywhere on their linguistic map —Spanish was the lingua franca— helped my students understand that in addition to English there are other languages, which are worthy of study. Many of the residents of *Amopan* could speak both Spanish and Nahuti and this led to a discussion amongst my Group B students about bilingualism in Japan.

3.3. A Day in the Life of the Midwife

The simulation, *A Day in the Life of the Midwife*, is in many respects more intimate than other simulations in that the virtual ethnographer mainly interacts with Teodore the midwife, rather than with many different characters. This creates a more intense atmosphere and challenges students' English ability because there is less action and more dialogue. Nevertheless, as mentioned previously this simulation is a great opportunity for students to really understand how to formulate questions, use follow-up questions and conduct an interview. The topics covered in the questions range from asking about Teodore's own children, her work experience and the role of a midwife (See Appendix D for sample questions). During the course of the interview Teodore is interrupted a few times and conversations have to be brought back on track.

At the end of this simulation students were asked to analyse the type of questions they asked and correct the 'questionable' questions which fell into the following ten categories; *showing disgust surprise or other strong emotions, phrasing a question as a statement, making assumptions, exhibiting cultural bias, failing to clarify vague terms, assuming you know a term, asking questions Teodore doesn't understand, offering opinions, completing Teodore's sentences, asking leading questions such as "Don't you think that?"* This was an extremely challenging task for Group A students, and had to be broken down and explained in modified English for them to understand and even then it stretched the limits of their English ability. Group B also struggled with this exercise as they were used to a more language textbook approach to constructing and deconstructing questions rather than the anthropological approach.

3.4. Telling Tales and Going Home

As mentioned previously, the final simulation, gives students valuable insight into the folklore and beliefs of the villagers of *Amopan* and also teaches them stories of classical western folk tales. Prior to completing the simulations students from both groups were asked to read in English a western classical folktale such as Cinderella, Snow White or Little Red Riding Hood and then compare them with English versions of Japanese classical stories such as Peach Boy (*Momotaro*), Golden Boy (*Kintaro*), or *Princess Kaguya* (*Kaguya-hime*). After students have completed these tasks they then enter the final simulation and listen to the stories told by Luis, Pedro and Roberto. You are then invited to tell the villagers versions of Little Red Riding Hood, Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, Robin Hood, Cinderella, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. As you are telling the stories the villagers constantly interrupt adding their own meanings and interpretations. For example, the villagers berate Little Red Riding Hood's parents for allowing her to travel into the woods alone as everyone knows that the woods are too dangerous for small children. The dwarves in Snow White are spirits of the forest who have great wealth and would gladly swap Snow White but only at a price. The villagers had great sympathy for Robin Hood and his men as they too have to pay taxes and they understand the hardship paying taxes can sometimes bring.

This exercise challenged the students in that the villagers all gave their comments at the same time and students had to increase their speed reading skills in order to respond quickly to what was expected of them. Furthermore, students from Group B, were able to analyse the different stories and interpretations of the western stories and then add their own interpretations and comparisons to Japanese fairy tales.

4. Dr. Bronislaw Edmund Radcliffe-Pritchard

Throughout the game, students must listen to and watch video tapes of a previous anthropologist who visited the village of Amopan in 1965, and who goes by the name of Dr. Bronislaw Edmund Radcliffe-Pritchard. Radcliffe-Pritchard during the course of his field research in *Amopan* made a series of videotapes, which students can access and review during the course of each simulation. The videotapes are deliberately grainy in order to give the students a sense that these were made a long time ago. Students from both groups felt this was the most challenging part of the game and we had to spend extra time on each of the videotapes.

Figure 8. Sample assigment from one of the deliberately grainy videotapes.

Fortunately, the script is also available to students so they can listen and read at the same time. I adapted the videotapes into listening exercises so that students were better able to understand what was being said. One of the main difficulties that the students faced was not only the speed of the tapes but also the type of language used. Radcliffe-Pritchard comes from Yorkshire in England and although his accent is not overtly strong he uses specifically British phrases or idioms that my students were just not able to grasp.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, the experience of using this simulation field guide, I felt, was very positive in that it deposited students into a virtual world entirely in English and encouraged them to complete various tasks and challenges, which differ from the traditional classroom setting. Students from Group A, who had lower levels of English, could not fully utilize the game as a stepping stone for further discussion about anthropological topics. Nevertheless, they were able to interact with the villagers and *see* another culture, which is very different from their own. Ultimately, student feedback from this group was very positive as they felt that not only had they improved their English language skills but also gained knowledge about the 'content' aspect of the course in a fun and informative way.

Feedback from Group B, was not as positive. The main problem student's had with the game in this group was that they felt having their own copy of the game limited interpersonal skills with their classmates, especially if time was given over to the simulation during class time. After discussing what to do, we decided to work through some of the simulations together as a group, and this worked much better as the students really enjoyed interacting together with the characters of *Amopan* rather than on their own. Once this new method was established, students from Group B really became more animated about playing the game and were more willing to play the game as part of their homework assignments.

Technical problems with the game were frustrating at times, for example there is an option to save the simulation as you are working on it but this option didn't seem to work so if you stopped a simulation half way through, you had to start from the beginning and repeat the simulation over again. Sometimes the game froze if you used

it for prolonged periods of time and had to be ejected and the simulations started again. These problems notwithstanding, 'EthnoQuest' was a real boost to my anthropology courses, and provided students with a means to bridge the gap between content and language.

Appendix A.

The Simulations of *EthnoQuest*

- *Getting There*: You make preparations for your fieldwork, including obtaining a grant, packing wisely, and gaining contacts and prior information.
- *First Encounters*: You establish rapport with the villagers, find a place to stay, and learn some basic information about the village and its inhabitants.
- *Who's Who in Amopan*?: You are introduced to the villagers and their roles as you make a census and update a village map.
- *Working in the Fields*: You learn about the importance of land, rituals associated with farming, concepts of time, and food categories.
- *Marketday*: In Amopan's weekly market you map out the selling arrangements, figure out the rules of marketing, and purchase some products.
- *Day of the Dead*: You collect ritual and social data on this important domestic ritual, learn about villagers' economic investment in ritual, and gain insights into relationships between the living and the dead in this culture.
- *A Day in the Life of the Midwife* : You interview this key villager, learning about her life history and important skills and role in the village.
- *The local Elections*: You comprehend local political and social tensions as you become entangled in political factions and villagers' special interests.
- *A Feud Escalates*: You are enmeshed in a dispute that derives from volatile village relations with ranchers and others outside the village. It throws the village out of balance, which is somewhat restored by the Patron Saint's fiesta.
- *Telling Tales, Going Home*: You have an opportunity to delve more deeply into beliefs and worldview of the people of Amopan, and you must cope with leaving.

Appendix B. Examples of Assignments

***Getting There.* Assignment**

Now you need to do something with that proposal. And, in the hopes you will be funded, you need to make a lot of arrangements for a year of work in a small, rural Mexican village. Better get started.

To Do List

• Review & Submit Proposal

Be sure to look it over one last time. Mail it before the deadline. Hope for the best.

If Successful…

• Make Travel Arrangements

Get plane tickets. Find passport. See if you need any shots (hope not!)

• Establish Contact person in Mexico City

Get letter of introduction and make arrangements for meeting. Find out if there's additional information available on Amopan.

• Get to Amopan

Need bus tickets. Need courage.

Appendix C. Questions from the Wise Man.

***Who's Who in Amopan?* Assignment**

You are now prepared to solicit census information from the villagers of Amopan, and have a census form to complete. You will also be creating a current map of Amopam using Radcliffe-Pritchard's 1965 map as a basis for your new map.

To Do List

• Take a Census

Interview villagers who live in central Amopan to identify them by residence, name, age, gender, marital status, occupation, language, and relationships to others.

• Make a Map

Update Radcliffe-Pritchard's 1965 map of the central part of Amopan by locating buildings, roads and other current village features. Identify these cultural and natural features as specifically as possible.

Appendix D: Sample Questions from the *Wise Man: Getting there.*

1. How long will you be in Amopan? (hint look at the filed documents in your knapsack)
2. What is your total budget?
3. How long did it take to get your proposal approved?
4. Why do you think it took so long?
5. What is the exchange rate?
6. What direction from Mexico City is Amopan?
7. What do you know about Bronislaw Edmund Radcliffe-Pritchard?
8. What was a major problem Radcliffe-Pritchard encountered in Amopan?
9. Why is it a good idea to have a contact (Professora Sabia) at the University in Mexico?
10. Why is it a good idea to have a letter of introduction from the president of the municipo?
11. What kinds of preparations did you make? Why were they important?

Appendix E: Sample of Questions and follow up questions asked to the Midwife.

- Main Question: How many children do you have?
    - Follow up Questions: So you gave birth to six children?, How old are they?, Do they all live here with you?
- Main Question: Did another midwife help you deliver them?
    - Follow up questions: What was your mother's name?, What made her the best midwife here?, Did you help her when you were a child?, Could you tell me how long you have been a midwife?
- Main Question: Do you remember when you delivered your first baby?
- Main Question: Do you remember how old you were at the time?
- Main Question: How did you learn the skills to become a midwife?
    - Follow up questions: How long did it take you to learn everything?, How did she teach you?, It must have been a lot of work to have learned so much.
- Main Question: Could you tell me why you decide to become a midwife?
- Main Question: Are you the only midwife in Amopan?
    - Follow up question: Does it keep you very busy?
- Main Question: Can you describe what you do as a midwife?
    - Follow up questions: Do you help women prior to their giving birth?, How do you help them prior to their giving birth?, How do you help them during childbirth?, Do you continue to help women after she gives birth?

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Article

The Impact of Text-Messaging on EFL Freshmen's Vocabulary Learning

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Abstract

The present research investigates the effectiveness of text-message vocabulary learning on EFL freshmen. The results of the pretreatment interview with EFL learners showed that many of them have difficulty learning vocabulary through the traditional paper-and-pencil way; therefore, text-message vocabulary learning was hypothesized to be a potential way to help EFL learners consolidate their vocabulary knowledge. To this end, 43 participants from among 85 freshmen studying in Torbat-e-Heydarieh Azad University participated in the study. The participants were divided into two groups of 21 and 22 on the basis of their proficiency. The book *Check Your Vocabulary for Academic English by David Porter* (2001) was taught to both groups, and they were told to make some sentences in the class to become familiar with these words; they were requested to work cooperatively in small groups of 3 or 4 in order to have the opportunity to talk more about these words. Fifteen to 20 words were introduced and taught to these students on each session. Then, the participants in the experimental group sent the researcher one text-message containing an original sentence for each word covered in the class. They were also asked to send a text-message containing a sentence to their three predetermined partners. The participants in the control group wrote one sentence using each covered word, and they were also asked to write one sentence to exchange with their three partners and bring their assignments to the class next session. The results of independent samples t-test for the post-test and the delayed post-test showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the initial vocabulary learning and the retention of the vocabulary between the two groups.

Keywords: MALL, Involvement Load Hypothesis, Spacing Effect

1. Introduction

Vocabulary is an indispensable component of language (Adolphs & Schmitt, 2003; Nation, 2001; Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001; Laufer *et al.* 2004). L2 learners are aware of the extent to which limitations in their vocabulary knowledge restrict their communication skills (Nation, 2001). Consequently, one of the main obstacles that L2 learners encounter in their endeavor for learning vocabulary is the number of words they need to acquire in order to become fluent in their L2 (Nation, 2001). Teachers may well understand this need but may not know how to support their students in this endeavor. Therefore, from a pedagogical perspective, there is a need for research that helps to identify and design learning tasks that provide opportunities for L2 vocabulary learning. To achieve this goal, it is believed that text-messaging can be applied in language

teaching and learning not as a method but as a complementary teaching aid since vocabulary gains can be fostered by its portability, immediacy, motivation, and the spacing effect it generates (Thornton & Houser, 2005). Considering the scant amount of class time, it sounds logical to devise a complementary means of learning words to help learners, teachers, syllabus designers, and materials writers to take technological initiatives in this endeavor. This complementary way could find its way through text-messaging vocabulary learning.

2. Review of the related literature

Laufer (1998) and Nation (1990) postulate that if students of English as a Foreign Language want to understand non-specialized English texts, they need to learn 5000 base words which is deemed just a minimal requirement. This presupposes that learners should purposefully practice or rehearse the words to facilitate long term retention (Hulstijn, 2001). However, in many educational milieus around the world, the amount of class time is limited. In Iranian universities, for instance, a typical class meets once a week for 90 minutes. This problem obliges teachers and researchers to make difficult choices about how to use that limited time to promote language learning. Since EFL students usually have limited opportunities to speak and hear the target language only in the classroom, it makes sense to draw on other kinds of practice and exposure. One such way is through an interaction which allows students to use language and teachers to give feedback via text-message. Vocabulary learning via text-message is one of the burgeoning areas in communication (Thornton & Houser, 2005; 2008; Chinnery, 2006; Lu, 2008). Text-message vocabulary learning is likely to provide several of the optimal psychological conditions for the effectiveness of any vocabulary activity described by Nation (2001). First, cumulative learning is the most effective way of learning vocabulary; learners are more capable of dealing with a limited amount of information at a time, so too much information may confuse or de-motivate them. Second, motivation and interest are particularly important enabling conditions for noticing, which is the first step in learning. Nation (2001) states that the third psychological condition for vocabulary learning is that text-message vocabulary learning offers a novel and portable learning experience as well as a relaxing condition; therefore, learners can study the words almost anytime and anywhere. The researchers, however, postulate that there are occasions where learners are not eager enough to pay money for such a way of learning, nor do the teachers like to spend time being on call. Also, student-initiated use of language supported by teachers can foster vocabulary learning by increasing the 'Cognitive Involvement Load' (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001, p. 542) through the 'Spacing Effect' (Greene, 1989; Dempster, 1996; Seabrook, Brown, & Solity, 2005). By using the word to make a sentence, sending it at spaced intervals to teachers via text-message, and receiving the feedback learners can build a net of well-connected and well-practiced paths and thus retrieve the target word more easily.

The 'involvement load hypothesis' sheds light on the present study. Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) conceptualized a motivational-cognitive construct of involvement to represent the degree of cognitive processing imposed on an L2 learner by a given task. As they note, the construct of involvement consists of three components, namely, *need*, *search*, and *evaluation*. Each of the three components can be either absent or present when learners are processing a word during tasks.

The *need* component refers to the motivational and non-cognitive dimension of involvement, which is present depending on whether the word is needed and required for completion of the task in question. It is hypothesized that the need component can manifest itself in two degrees of prominence: moderate (1) or strong (2). Need is moderate when it is highly required of the learners (e.g., when the teacher has students complete the sentence requiring a word), and it is strong when it is self-initiated by the

learners themselves (e.g., when learners decided to look up a word in a dictionary while doing their assignments to meet their own individualized needs).

Search and *evaluation* constitute the cognitive dimension of involvement where learners are required to pay attention to word form as well as word meaning. Whereas the need component can occur in two degrees of prominence (i.e., either moderate or strong), search is not hypothesized as the relative degree of cognitive processing; instead, it is of an all or nothing nature. The search component is said to happen when the learner makes an attempt to find the meaning of an unknown L2 word in a dictionary or from other sources, such as teachers and peers. Moreover, the search component is at work when the direction of translation is from the first language (L1) into the L2 or vice versa.

The third component is evaluation which requires learners to make decisions during tasks, such as "a comparison of a given word with other words, a specific meaning of a word with its other meanings, or comparing the word with other words in order to assess whether a word does or does not fit its context" (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001, p. 14). Evaluation takes place without search providing that the meaning of the target word is explicitly given by the text or a teacher. Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) believe that the presence of evaluation, like theneed component, comprises two possible degrees of cognitive processing: moderate (1) or strong (2). Evaluation is moderate when learners are required to recognize differences between words, whereas strong evaluation involves making a decision as to how additional words work in combination with the new word in an original sentence or text.

The spacing effect also sheds light on the present study. Based on research on memory and learning, for an item to be stored in long-term memory, distributed practice is superior to massed practice (Dempster, 1996; Seabrook, Brown, & Solity, 2005). Study conditions in which repetitions of items to be acquired or learned appear in spaced or distributed sequences have been found to lend themselves better to subsequent retention than presentations in which repetitions occur quickly (Braun and Rubin, 1998**;** Cuddy and Jacoby, 1982; Dempster, 1987; Greene, 1989; Hintz-man, 1976; Seabrook, Brown & Solity, 2005). This phenomenon has been known as the spacing effect which further argues that memory for items which are presented and then immediately repeated, i.e., massed practice, is worse than for items which are repeated after some intervening items have appeared, i.e., distributed practice. To provide evidence for the practical and pedagogical aspects of the spacing effect, Traxler (2007, p.8) puts a great emphasis on the fact that "mobile learning allows students to take advantage of small amounts of time and space for learning". We stipulate that the spacing effect can also increase students' vocabulary gains since they are given the opportunity to send and receive text-messages in a distributed fashion, not a massed one, as is the case in traditional paper-and-pencil vocabulary learning.

2.1 Empirical studies on text-message vocabulary learning

Levy and Kennedy (2008) were successful in their study conducted in (2005) with a small group of highly motivated third-year students who had already invested considerable time and energy in their Italian study, so they decided to test the applicability of SMS also in first-year courses for complete beginners. Overall, while 84% said they had enjoyed receiving the messages, most had also found them useful, as they agreed that the messages had helped consolidate their vocabulary (87.3%), extend their vocabulary (82.5%), and develop their interest in Italian vocabulary (80.7%), a smaller majority felt the messages had helped strengthen their knowledge of grammar (78.6%). From a theoretical perspective, they assume that the facilities provided by bulk SMS services, to send messages to groups of recipients, schedule

them ahead of time and repeat them at intervals would satisfy the key conditions for vocabulary learning identified by Nation (2001) enumerated earlier.

Alternatively, Lu (2008) highlights that vocabulary learning via SMS merits receiving attention. In the study conducted by Lu, one class of 31 vocational high school students (10th graders) was invited to join the study. In the first week, 15 participants learned the first 14 target words via mobile phone (group M1), while the other 15 learned the same vocabulary using print materials (group P1). In the second week, the two groups switched their media for another 14 target words (group P2 and group M2). That is, group M1 became P2 while group P1 became M2. Both groups of participants were encouraged to read the lessons as often as they could. They were told they would have recognition tests on the target words on the last day of each week. A reward-based scheme was clearly announced to arouse their interest in studying the vocabulary lessons. In the following two weeks, participants received their vocabulary lessons. On the day when the final SMS lesson was delivered, the immediate post-test, the post-treatment questionnaire, and the interviews were conducted. Three weeks later, participants took the delayed post-test. In a pre-treatment, participants were required to recognize 50 words – 28 target words and 22 non-target words with similar length to the target words – and write down their Chinese translations. Lu (2008) states that the within-group comparison of the pre-treatment test and the immediate post-test scores shows that both groups, regardless of their medium, made significant progress in learning the 28 TWs (two-tailed t-test comparing the pre-treatment test scores and the immediate post-test scores of each group; t (28) = 2.62, $P < 0.05$). However, this gain decreased in the delayed post-test. None of the delayed gains in the four groups reached the significant level.

Overall, in the light of the results gained, Lu concluded the mobile phone groups had greater vocabulary gains than their paper-group counterparts in both immediate and delayed post-tests. In the first week, the difference of the immediate gains between the two groups reached the significance level (two-tailed t-test comparing the gains; t (28) = 2.62, $P < 0.05$). The benefit of SMS lessons diminishes in the delayed post-tests, yet the first mobile group could remember nearly three words out of the 14 target words which had been previously unknown to them, with little reinforcement during the three weeks.

Although Thornton and Houser (2005) and other researchers (Lu, 2008, Kennedy and Levy, 2008) supported the potential of SMS in vocabulary learning, they did not address the importance of interaction, nor did they take advantage of the Involvement Load Hypothesis. Their studies were all teacher-initiated or unidirectional in the sense that the teacher sent the students some lessons and quizzes to check their vocabulary gains. Moreover, the number of words to be learned was really limited (5 words per week); the amount of experimental time was also limited. However, the present study would be more reciprocal, i.e., the students would send their sample sentences to the teacher, and the teacher would provide them with sufficient feedback. Moreover, for each session of instruction the students should send two SMSs to three partners. So, the present study aims to investigate the effectiveness or impact of text-messaging or SMS on learning academic words of Iranian TEFL freshmen college students from Azad University in Torbat-e-Heydarieh. It is important that empirical evaluation of text-messaging technologies and pedagogical approaches be expanded via sending and receiving word SMSs in order to improve the process of learning academic words or reviewing them since these messages can be easily restored or saved in mobile phones, and students can take advantage of the spacing effect in their vocabulary learning. The following research questions are pursued in the present study:

- Is there any difference between students' initial vocabulary learning via paper-and-pencil and text-messaging?
- Is there any difference between the retention of new vocabulary learned via paper-and-pencil and text-messaging after a two week interval?

3. Method

3.1 Participants

There were approximately 85 freshmen studying at Torbat-e-Heydarieh Azad University of whom 43 registered for this class voluntarily. Twenty five females and eighteen males aged between 18 to 24 participated in this study. Based on the average scores gained from three vocabulary tests, namely, Word Associates Test by Read (1998), Levels Test (Production) by Nation & Laufer (1999), and Academic Vocabulary Test by Schmitt & Clapham (2001), the participants' level of vocabulary knowledge was assessed. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in the participants' knowledge; therefore, 21 of the participants were assigned to the experimental group, 12 females and 9 males; the control group consisted of the other 22 participants 13 of whom were female, and the rest were male.

3.2 Instruments

The *pre-treatment interview* about students' perspectives towards language learning showed that many students were frustrated at the large amounts of vocabulary they needed to possess in order to deal with their English classes. In this interview, students were asked some general questions about 4 to 5 minutes. The *pre-test* consists of three vocabulary tests; they were administered to find out the participants' level of vocabulary knowledge. The tests were Word Associates Test developed by Read (1998), Levels Test (Production) by Nation & Laufer (1999), and Academic Vocabulary Test by Schmitt & Clapham (2001). After being instructed for twelve sessions, a *post-test* consisting of 8 multiple choice items, 8 sentence completion items, 8 multiple choice questions testing collocations, 8 sentence completion questions testing collocations, and 8 word completion questions was developed. The post-test was developed on the basis of the words taught in these twelve sessions of instruction from a book named *Check Your Vocabulary for Academic English* (Porter 2008). *A priori* content validation was also conducted by 4 English professors from Torbat-e-Heydarieh Azad University and the University of Tehran on the basis of the table of specifications included in the book. A *delayed post-test* was then administered after two weeks, which is a common practice, to explore the retention of vocabulary gains. The same post-test was administered as delayed post-test but the order of the items was changed to reduce the practice effect of the previously held exam.

3.3 Procedure

The English Department of Torbat-e-Heydarieh Azad University advertised this English class, and out of 85 male and female freshmen, 43 enrolled for this class. A pre-treatment interview was conducted with 65 of these freshmen, asking them some questions about the areas in which they experienced difficulties in language learning; almost all of the interviewees were desperate to learn words which are essential in order to get their messages across in their language classes; in addition, they said that the amount of in-class time is limited, and they cannot activate the essential words. Then, the participants were divided into two homogenous groups based on the average scores of three vocabulary tests elaborated earlier; twenty-one of the participants were randomly assigned to the experimental group, 12 females and 9 males; the other 22 participants made the control group, 13 females and 9 males. The treatment lasted for twelve sessions of instruction plus three sessions for the pre-test, post-test, and the delayed post-test. The Levels Test (Production) by Nation & Laufer (1999) was

administered because it mainly deals with word production skill which was needed while sending text-messages as well as writing sentences using paper and pencil. The Academic Vocabulary Test by Schmitt & Clapham (2001) was used to gauge students' academic and university recognition words. Word Associates Test by Read (1998) was also used as a placement test since the covered book has a section dealing with word associates and collocations, and this section would also appear in the post-test and delayed post-test. The teaching procedures followed in both groups were similar; both groups attended the class twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 to 12 p.m.; the class lasted for a period of seven weeks; the experimental group came to class from 8 to 10, and the control group came to class from 10 to 12 p.m. The participants in both groups were taught approximately the same; the same book was taught to both groups, and they were told to make some sentences in the class to become familiar with these words; they were also asked to work cooperatively in some small groups of 3 or 4 in order to have a greater opportunity to talk more about these words. 15to 20 words were introduced and taught to the these students in each session. The book had many exercises so that 15 to 20 words would be quite logical to be covered; each unit consisted of six sections including filling in the gaps, choosing the right word, finishing the sentence, word substitution, choosing the best word, and making a collocation.

The spacing effect was at work when the participants received and reviewed the text-messages containing new sentences at some intervals, and they did not need to resort to massed practice. It was spaced in a sense that they sent their SMSs not at once in a massed fashion, but rather they sent their SMSs in the mornings and afternoons. The participants in the control group wrote one sentence for each covered word; they were also asked to write one sentence to exchange with their two partners and bring their assignments to the class in the next session; they thus received feedback on their assignments as it was a normal case in the traditional paper-and-pencil assignment. The students in the text-messaging group received feedback immediately; they were sent the correct sentences or the incorrect part rewritten in the parentheses. Other students in the paper-and-pencil group received feedback when they returned their assignments to the class; the mistaken parts were underlined or given explicitly. The same procedures followed in subsequent sessions. After being taught for 6 weeks (12 sessions), the post-test was administered to find out the results. Finally, a delayed post-test was administered after a two week interval to investigate the retention of vocabulary gains.

4. Results

The following tables and figures contain the descriptive and inferential statistics concerning the gained scores.

Table 1. *Independent samples t-test for the pre-test*

Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean differences	df	t	Sig(2-tailed)
Pre-test Experimental	21	**27.52**	4.30	1.02	41	.68	.05
Control	22	**26.50**	5.44				

Table 1 also presents the results of an independent samples t-test to compare the vocabulary gain of the control and the experimental groups in the pre-test. As can be seen, there was no significant difference in the scores of the experimental group and the control group, t (41) = 0.68, p < 0.05 , so they were homogeneous.

4.1 Results and discussion for the first research question

In order to investigate the impact of 'text-messaging' and 'paper-and-pencil' on the initial vocabulary learning of EFL freshmen, the post-test was conducted. It consisted of

5 sections covering 8 multiple choice, 8 sentence completion items, 8 multiple choice questions testing collocations, 8 sentence completion questions testing collocations, and 8 word completion questions . The results of the post-test are represented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Independent samples t-test for the post-test*

Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean Differences	df	t	Sig(2-tailed)
Posttest Experimental	21	**25.85**	4.83	3.44	41	2.02	.05
Control	22	**22.40**	6.23				

As Table 2 presents, the mean of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group. This shows that the experimental group outperformed the control group. Also, the standard deviation of the experimental group was lower than the control group. This means that the participants in the experimental group were more homogenous.

Table 2 also indicates that the effect of text-messaging on vocabulary learning is not statistically significant, t (41) = 2.02, p < 0.05 although the experimental group outperforms the control group in vocabulary gain.

The results gained in the present study are not in line with what Lu (2008) concluded. In the light of the results gained, Lu concluded that the mobile phone groups had greater vocabulary gains than their paper-group counterparts in both immediate and delayed post-tests.

The reasons for the discrepant results gained by Lu (2008) mentioned earlier and the present study can be explicated as follows: (a) the number of words that Lu's participants were required to know was really limited, about 28 words altogether, while in the present study students were required to learn 15 to 20 words per session, about 200 words altogether. When the load of vocabulary is not much, it is easier to commit them into memory which was the case in Lu's study; (b) the limited treatment period in Lu's study could be another potential source of discrepancy. The treatment period in his study was two weeks which is not comparable in this regard with the present study which lasted for 12 sessions of instruction or six weeks plus two weeks interval for the delayed post-test.

4.2 Results and discussion for the second research question

In order to address the second research question on the potentiality of vocabulary retention via text-messaging a delayed post-test was administered. The results of the delayed post-test are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. *Independent Samples T-test for the Delayed Post-test*

Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean Differences	Df	t	Sig(2-tailed)
Delayed post-test	21	**17.95**	4.36	2.13	41	1.63	.11
Experimental Control	22	**15.81**	4.19				

P<0.11

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test for the delayed post-test. As can be seen, the mean of the experimental group was higher than the mean of the control group, so it is concluded that the experimental group outperforms the control group in word retention.

As indicated in Table 3, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the vocabulary retention of the control and the experimental groups for the delayed post-test. The effect of text-messaging on vocabulary retention was not statistically significant, t (41) = 1.63, p< 0.1; it is therefore concluded that there was no difference between the retention of the vocabulary learned by students in the control and the experimental groups after a two week interval.

Interestingly, the results obtained from the delayed post-test of the present study were consistent with that of Lu's which was the only study to date that investigated the retention of vocabulary via text-message. Lu (2008) reported that the vocabulary gain decreased in the delayed post-test and none of the delayed gains in the four groups reached the significant level. Overall, the mobile phone groups had greater vocabulary gains than their paper-group counterparts in both immediate and delayed post-tests. However, the results of the post-test and the delayed-post test in the present study do not point to the superiority of the treatment.

5. Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of text-messaging on EFL freshmen's vocabulary learning. Although the findings did not substantiate that text-message vocabulary learning could be undeniably beneficial, they elucidate that it can be deemed as a complementary approach to enhance their vocabulary repertoire. The success of this trial in demonstrating the acceptability of messaging for language learning purposes, albeit at a lower frequency than was initially envisaged, opens the way for further incorporation of messaging into the course and linking it to assessment. The present study has also highlighted the significance of individual differences in the students' reactions to the messaging. This means that catering for such differences will need to be a priority in further research. These results should also provide useful insights for other educators and researchers interested in applying a similar approach in the teaching of other languages.

6. Pedagogical Implications

Word knowledge plays an essential role in determining the success of EFL and ESL learners. It is determinant in speaking, reading, writing and listening (Adolphs and Schmitt, 2003).Therefore, vocabulary learning has been a great concerns for teachers, learners, syllabus designers, materials developers, as well as test developers.

The results of the present study can be of use in educational centers. This study, according to the results achieved, may bear some hints for English teachers who might certainly pay some attention to teaching vocabulary via text-message or any other of the four major skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing, because learning through MALL devices cannot be limited to any skills or subjects in isolation. The suggested point for teachers in language centers and institutes is that they can modify the way they assess and instruct the students and move toward a more learner-oriented method or approach. In like manner, students can take advantage of the findings of this study. They should know that they can use their mobiles to strengthen their vocabulary knowledge and command by sending and receiving learning units to each other.

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Article

Learners' Attitudes to Repetitious Exposure in Multimedia Listening Software

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Abstract

The positive effects of using different types of listening texts (i.e. audio, video) in listening enhancement as a part of foreign language learning are already well known (Turel 2004: 178-84, Tschirner 2001: 310, Ridgway 2000: 182, Borchardt 1999:10, Adair-Hauck et al. 1999: 273, 289, Peter 1994: 202, Hart 1992: 5). As multimedia enables us to combine and present different listening texts on the same digital computer platform more effectively, the same listening texts can be presented to language learners in different forms (Turel 2004: 129-38, Trinder 2002: 79, Heron et al. 2002: 37, Brett 1998: 81, Chanier 1996: 7, Ashward 1996: 80, Brett 1996: 204, Fox et al. 1992: 39, Leffa 1992: 66). In this research, the language learners were provided with listening texts in the form of audio-only and audio-visuals (i.e. audio + visuals, audio + animation, video-only, video + visuals). They were also provided with the opportunity of re-listening to the same audio-only with visuals and audio-visuals without visuals. This study investigated 45 autonomous intermediate and upper intermediate language learners' perceptions of the opportunity of re-listening to the same audio-only with visuals and audio-visuals without visuals through interactive multimedia listening software that aimed to enhance the listening skills of the participants. The results reveal that the language learners are in favour of re-listening to the same audio-only with visuals and audio-visuals without visuals. They believe that such an opportunity improves their listening skills and helps prepare them for the real world.

Keywords: Media types, multimedia, listening texts, repetitious exposure, language learning.

1. Introduction

When the available foreign language learning (FLL) software on the market is examined carefully, one sees that some of it provides language learners (LLs) with the opportunity of re-listening to the same listening texts (LTs) in different forms. For instance, in *Beginning Kurmanji Kurdish* (Turel 2011), *Advanced Turkish* (Turel 2010a), *English for Business - Introduction to a Company* (Brett 1994) and the other products in the same series, *Beginning Turkish* (Turel 2003) and *Talk Now! Learning Turkish* (Turel 2000)*,* LLs can re-listen to the same video segments without visuals. It is important to find out and discuss what LLs think of such opportunities. Do they use such opportunities in the way they are supposed to? If not, how can their design be improved so that LLs use them to their benefit? It is not enough simply to present different LTs in multimedia listening software (MLS). What is more important is to present them effectively, which is "among the concerns often raised in the domain of CALL" (Al-Seghayer 2001: 203)*.* None seems to have investigated LLs' attitudes towards the opportunity of re-listening to the same LTs in a different form. It was thought necessary to find out what LLs think of such

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opportunities and explore how they can be designed more effectively, which is also a concern in the field of CALL (ibid). Presumably and probably rightly, it is due to these facts that De Ridder (2002: 183) states that " …although many things have been said about *what* can appear on screen, little is known about *how* it should appear and if the presentation influences in any way the amount of language assimilated by the user, and the quality of the information that has been acquired."

2. Repetitious exposure in multimedia learning software (MLS)

In general, LTs (i.e. *audio* and *video*, which are the main listening elements in many language courses), can be presented in different forms as different listening media types (i.e. *audio-only, audio + visuals, audio + animation, video-only, video + visuals*) in MLS. Each media type has its own role and impact in FLL (Tschirner 2001: 310; Nicholson and Ngai 1996: 32; Peter 1994: 202; Hart 1992: 5).

Providing different (listening) media types is particularly easy in a multimedia environment, as multimedia enables programmers to present and design them effectively (Soboleva and Tronenko 2002: 498; Herron et al. 2002: 37). For example, multimedia software can slow down communicative behaviour (i.e. the speech rate) and is able to highlight and focus on its various features (Tschirner 2001: 312-3; Zhao 1997: 57-8, 60). For example, as shown in Figures 1, 2, 4 and 5 below, the LLs' attention is drawn to different aspects of the aural texts through visuals, subtitles, instructions and links. Similarly, we can provide the opportunity of re-listening to (the same) material as *video-only* without *visuals*, *audio-only* with *visuals*, *video-only* with *supplementary-visuals* or *audio* with *animations* (Turel 2010b:1602-03, see also Figures 1 to 6 below). Such provision might benefit LLs in a variety of ways.

In order to encourage LLs to rely heavily only on what they hear (i.e. *speech*) and progress their listening skills, LLs can, for instance, be given the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without the *visuals* at the post-listening stage (Figure 1). This is what the social learning (Robinson 1989:119-130; Bandura 1977) and the conditioning (Skinner 1953) theories of learning require us to do, as "repeated exposure to similar or parallel stimuli, with spaced practice over time, produces behaviour changes more effectively than do one-time learning trials" (Robinson 1991:164; Robinson 1989:119-133; Carroll 1977: 507). Such an opportunity can, additionally, enable LLs to (1) focus upon *speech-only*, (2) improve their acoustic channel (i.e. getting used to pronunciation, stress, intonation and different accents), (3) find out whether they can understand the same LTs without *visuals* and (4) see what kind of difficulties they might have when there are no *visuals* in real-life. They also prepare LLs for similar real life situations.

Figure 1**.** A sample of the material where the LLs can re-listen to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* at the post listening stage.

Similarly, LLs can also be provided with the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-only* with (supplementary) *visuals* or as *video* at different stages of listening (Figure 2). Such provision can enable LLs to further benefit from the positive aspects of *visuals,* which are already well-documented (Moreno and Mayer 2002: 156-63; Gyselinck et al. 2002: 675, 680; Al-Seghayer 2001: 203; Brett 1997: 46-7; Mueller 1980: 335-40). This is also what the dual-coding theory (Paivio 1986)*,* noticing hypothesis (Robinson 1995; Schmidt 1990; Schmidt and Frota 1986) and the attention theory (Schmidt and Frota 1986; Schmidt 1990:133) require us to do. The underlying assumption is that one element that targets to teach one thing is presented using both verbal and visual elements (i.e. two elements), which can draw attention to salient features and provide more paths of recall. This can even expand limited working memory (human cognitive capacity), as the processing of information requires using both verbal and visual senses (Kalyuga 2000: 1). Such provision also provides LLs with repeated exposure, which is a requirement of the social learning (Robinson 1989:119-130; Bandura 1977) and the conditioning theories (Skinner 1953).
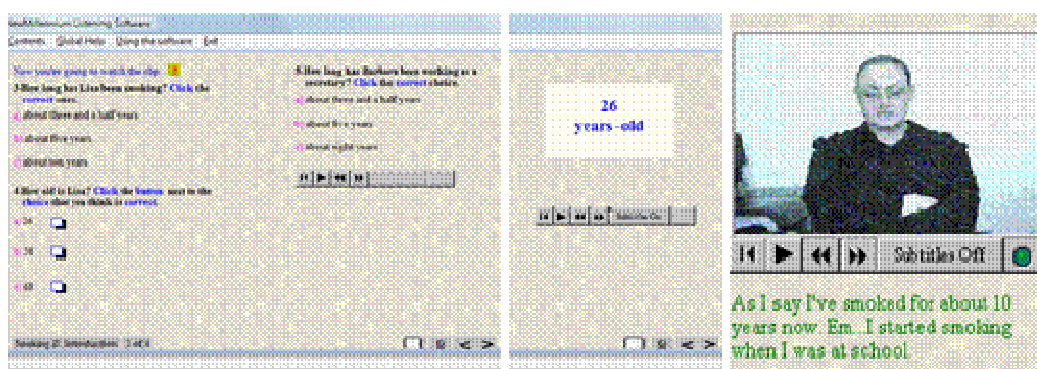

Figure 2. A sample of the material where the LLs can re-listen to the same *audio-only as audio + visuals* and as *video.*

In light of the literature review and building on previous research (Turel 2004: 38-211), this study, therefore, addressed the following research questions, which deal with the design of listening media types in MLS in the context of 'repetitious-exposure'.

1. Do autonomous intermediate and upper-intermediate language learners (AILLs) want to have the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* (i.e. *audio + visuals*, *audio + animation*, *video-only*, *video + visuals*) without *visuals*? In particular:
   - Is re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* useful?
   - Can re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* improve their hearing (*acoustic*) skills (i.e. help them get used to aural language)?
   - Can re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* improve their listening?
2. Do AILLs want to have the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals*? In particular:
   - Is re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* useful?
   - Can re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* improve their listening?
   - Can re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* prepare them better for the real world?

3. The study

3.1. The aim of the study

The study represented an attempt to gather some empirical data to find out what LLs thought of the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* and *audio-visuals* without *visuals* in MLS that aimed to enhance their listening skills as a part of self-study FLL.

3.2. The participants

The participants were 45 non-native speaker (NNS) students (56% male, 44% female). They were all at intermediate and upper intermediate level in listening and were attending an intermediate course of general English. They had been tested, grouped and placed by the English Language Programme (ELP) units of the institution. To some extent, they were a ready-made group (i.e. clustered sampling) for the study in that they had already been tested and placed. In terms of their background, they could be considered heterogeneous, as they were from sixteen different nationalities and all were computer literate in that they had used computer for word processing or the Internet (Appendix 1).

3.3. The software

The software was an Intermediate Multi Media (IMM) application designed to develop and practise LLs' listening skills as well as to improve their listening development as a part of FLL. The software consisted of five units and most units were divided into several subsections. Each subsection (lesson) featured at least one *video* or *audio* clip, the length of which varied from 21 seconds to 2:59 minutes, and was made up of three gradual stages: the preparation stage, the while-listening stage and the post-listening stage. In total, the software contained around 20 minutes of video and 15 minutes of audio materials, which were authentic and could be presented in different forms. In terms of topics, the materials consist of different topics such as British Weddings, Polar Bear, Smoking I, Smoking II and Directions. While some *video* and *audio* clips were used as they were, the others were combined and presented as different media types. The materials were not just repeated over and over. Conversely, repeated exposure was across periods of time and involved multiple contexts each time. Therefore, not only did the accompanying comprehension tasks vary each time, but also the presented features of the materials changed (see Figure 2 above and 3 below). The different media types were:

Audio-only: More than three minutes of the LTs were initially presented as *audio-only*. Initially, the LLs were requested to listen to *audio-only* material and complete the accompanying comprehension tasks. Later, the LLs were requested to watch / listen to the same *audio-only* materials with (supplementary) *visuals* and complete the accompanying comprehension tasks. These were the default options and were intended to be compulsory. Finally, at the post listening stage, the LLs were presented with the same *audio-only* material in the form of *THs (Talking Heads) video* (Figure 2 above) without (supplementary) *visuals*. Additionally, the LLs were presented with the option of watching / listening to the same *audio-only* materials with subtitles.

Figure 3. A sample of *audio-only* as a media type.

Audio-visuals: The rest of the LTs were presented as *audio-visuals* in different forms either as *audio + animation, audio +* (supplementary) *visuals, video (THs) +* (supplementary) *visuals* or *video-only.*

Audio + animation: More than three minutes of *audio-visuals* were presented in the form of *audio + animation.* The animations were supplementary contextual. *Audio + animation* featured in one unit and consisted of ten different clips (Figure 4). The unit consisted of one lesson and the lesson consisted of four pages. On the first page, the objectives of the lesson and the importance of 'directions in FLL' were emphasised. The LLs were also requested to complete the pre-listening tasks. On the second page, as shown below (Figure 4), the LLs were requested to click on the place labels, and listen to the audio clips while following the 'animating ball'. On the third page, the LLs were provided with *audio-only,* and requested to listen to *audio-only* without the visual support (i.e. the animated ball) and find out the directions. On the fourth page, the LLs were requested to answer the pertinent questions and finally to listen with subtitles.
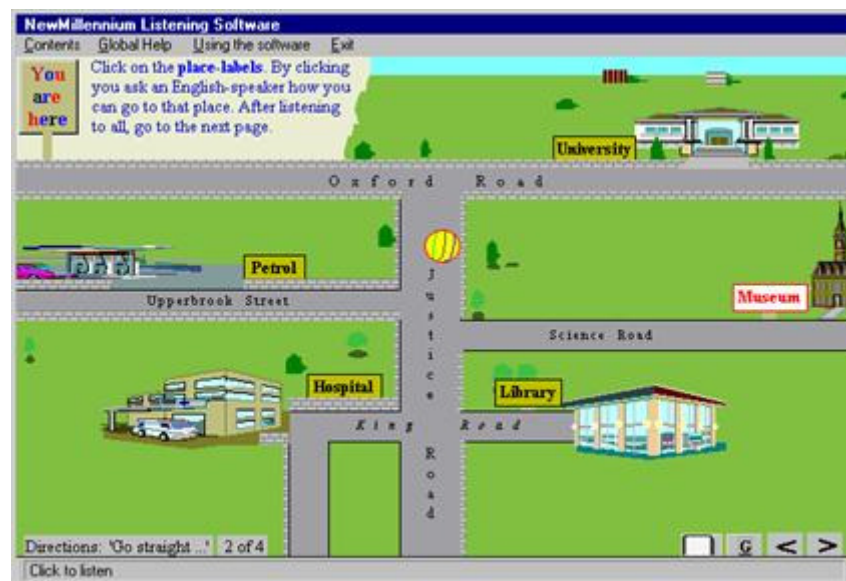

Figure 4. A sample of *audio + animation* as a media type.

Video (talking-heads - THs) + visuals: More than twelve minutes of *audio-visuals* were presented in the form of *video (talking-heads - THs) + visuals* (Figure 5) . The visuals

were supplementary contextual. *Video (THs) + visuals* featured in two units and consisted of 8 lessons. In total, it featured ten different clips, the length of which varied from 21 seconds to 02:59 minutes. In these lessons, the LLs were requested to complete the preparation exercises at the pre-listening stage (see Exercise 1 in Figure 5). Then, the LLs were requested to watch the *video (THs) + visuals* media types and answer the pertinent questions (see Exercise 2 in Figure 5). Later, they were encouraged to watch initially *video (THs) + visuals* without visuals, then with subtitles and lastly listen to it as *audio-only* (see suggestions in Figure 1 above).

Figure 5**.** A sample of *video-THs+visuals* as a media type.

Video-only: Eight minutes of *audio-visuals* were in the form of *video-only*. It featured in one unit and consisted of 8 lessons. It featured 10 different clips, the length of which varied from 18 to 93 seconds (Figure 6). In these lessons, the LLs were requested to complete the preparation exercises at the pre-listening stage. Then, the LLs were requested to watch the *video-only* media types and answer the pertinent questions (see, for example, Exercise 3 in Figure 6). Later, they were encouraged to watch initially with subtitles and lastly listen to it as *audio-only.*
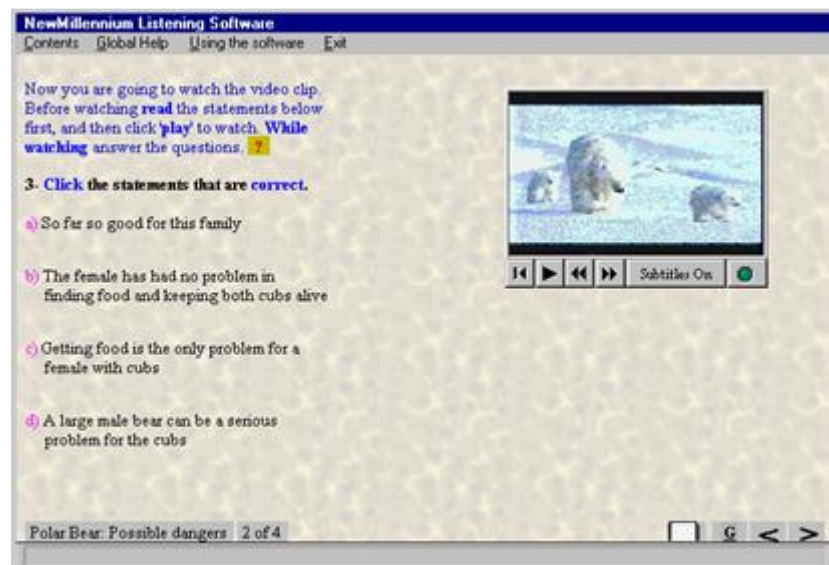

Figure 6. A sample of *video-only* as a media-type.

In all cases of *audio-visuals* (i.e. *audio + animation, audio + visuals, video-THs + visuals* or *video-only)*, the LLs were provided with the opportunity and encouraged to

re-listen to the same *audio-visuals* materials without *visuals*, if they wished to do so. It was not compulsory, and there were no accompanying comprehension tasks for them to complete (see also Turel 2010b:1602-03).

As a whole, each lesson was made up of three gradual stages. At each stage, a wide range of objectives were aimed to be achieved, as explained below:

At the pre-listening stage, the LLs were provided with a wide variety of tasks. Not only was the objective to prepare for the LTs, but also for the real world. Some were: working with a reading text; working with visuals; guessing (1) the order of topics, events or information, and (2) words; drawing attention to titles, the role of the speakers and their role in understanding LTs; drawing attention to words and their role in understanding LTs; requesting LLs to follow directions; activating LLs' knowledge about their own culture; and informing through provision of textual and audio/visual instructions on which strategies they needed to follow.

At the while-listening stage, the LLs were provided with exercises or tasks and LTs. LLs were mainly instructed to read the tasks firstly and then watch/listen to the LTs, and lastly answer the questions. The objective was to enable LLs to fully focus on the LTs. Additionally, LLs were occasionally requested to listen/watch and answer simultaneously. The aim was to prepare for the real world, where there are many cases in which we are supposed to listen and answer simultaneously. The main goals at this stage were: (1) to get the main message (main idea comprehension), not syntactical clues, of the LTs, (2) to help and guide to improve their listening skills, not to test (Ur 1992: 27), (3) to require them through provision of a wide range of tasks to implement effective while-listening strategies (O'Malley et al 1985b: 582-3, Bacon 1992a: 403), (4) to get detailed comprehension (deeper meaning), (5) to get full comprehension, (6) to distinguish factual argument from unsupported opinion, (7) to infer and identify the speaker's attitude, (8) to seek for specific information and (9) to follow instructions/a routine of a map and the like.

At the post-listening stage, the aim was (1) to focus on potential causes of failure, (2) to focus on certain features to which it was thought that LLs' attention was needed to be drawn to, (3) to enable the LLs to check to what extent they had understood, to draw attention to (4) syntax and (5) lexis and their role in understanding LTs, (6) to draw attention to strategies and elements, and their role in understanding LTs, (7) to draw attention to authentic features of the input and the like. Feedback was also available at all three stages, which was complementary and explanatory.

The assumption underlying the provision of different media types in different forms is that different aural texts have different strengths and aspects. Thus, different features of the aural texts can contribute to FLL in separate ways. For example, in terms of richness, it can be said that priority should be given to *video – only* (Adair-Hauck et al. 1999: 289), as (1) it features motion visuals, which is its strength in telling a story (Hart: 1992: 5). (2) Some feature the 'target world' (i.e. target culture, authentic settings, different accents, paralinguistic cues). Thus, the way the native speakers dress, act, smile, laugh, reject, eat and greet; facial expressions, body language and the like are all authentic. Not only do these permit LLs to witness the 'target world', but they also help LLs to better understand the target culture, language, life-style, cultural differences and the like (Tschirner 2001: 310, Adair-Hauck et al. 1999: 273, Nicholson and Ngai 1996: 36). These conditions are effective and necessary for FLL. As a result, LLs will acquire many things more quickly. Regarding the role of video in interactive multi media (IMM) software, Peter (1994: 202) says that "…the main conclusions… about the role of video in multimedia are […] that video is a rich medium that can be included in a program…". In the same way, if target LLs are children and young

learners, it is better to use audio accompanied by animation (*audio + animation*) and video featuring animations (*video-only*), as children and young learners in general overwhelmingly favour them. Likewise, in terms of improving LLs' acoustic channel, which is the most privileged in terms of getting used to aural language, it can be said that *audio-only* can be more beneficial, although 'listening without visual clues is something we do for a relatively small proportion of our listening time' (Ridgway 2000b: 182). Since *audio-only* do not feature any visuals, LLs have to rely completely on speech. This naturally and ultimately will improve their acoustic channel. Furthermore, some LLs are highly visually oriented and some are highly auditory oriented (Carson and Longhini 2002: 408; McLoughlin 1999: 222-23; Brickell 1993: 103, Dunn 1983: 496-506, Reid 1987: 92). This pedagogically requires the provision of different media types (e.g. McLoughlin 1999: 222, 229; Hoven 1999: 92, Borchardt 1999: 10). Likewise, listening relies on the senses of sight and hearing. Therefore, not only do all these require us to include *audio-only*, but they also require featuring audio-visuals (i.e. *audio-only + visuals, audio + animation, video-only, video–THs + visuals*) in IMM listening software.

3.4. The procedure

The LLs accessed the software in separate classes, with a maximum of 12 in each class. There were 14 Pentium PCs with appropriate headphones. The LLs were introduced to the software in the first ten / fifteen minutes of the first session. They were shown its major features using a computer projector, including how to run and control it, and how to make full use of it. After the introduction, the LLs were requested to complete the learners' profiles questionnaire (Appendix 1). The main source of the learners' profiles questionnaire was Brett's data collecting procedures for finding out LLs characteristics (1999: 465-9, 474; 1996: 211-12). Having conducted the learners' profiles questionnaire, the LLs were free to use the software as they wished for at least two teaching sessions.

3.5. Methodology

The research questions aimed to find out the LLs' perceptions of the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* and *audio-visuals* without *visuals* in MLS for self-study. This is one of a range of different topics that are covered in CALL research (Baturay et al. 2010, Al-Seghayer 2001:203; Hegelheimer and Chapelle 2000; Brett 1999: 344, 417; Ortega 1997; Brown 1997; Brett 1996; Deville et al. 1996; Mangiafico 1996; Stevens 1995; Crosby 1994, Dunkel 1991: 8).

The investigation of the LLs' perceptions required the use of quantitative (descriptive) and interpretative research (Nunan 1993: 218, Chapelle and Jamieson 1991, Dunkel 1991: 19-20), which is only one of a range of research methods generally employed in the field of CALL. This method has an important role to play in the investigation of effectiveness in particular when LLs' attitudes towards CALL are investigated (Chapelle and Jamieson 1991: 43). This is important as attitudes towards language study are consistently shown to be related to achievement (Masgoret and Gardner 2003; Linebarger 2001; Baltova 2000; Gardner 1985).

Additionally, qualitative analysis was also used to strengthen the research (Fitz-Gibbon 1999: 38). A combination of two different methods for one study provides methodological triangulation (Seliger and Shohamy 1995: 121), which confirms findings and increases the validity of the conclusions reached through different sources, as each method uses different data collection methods and data analysis techniques.

Discovering the LLs' perceptions, in the context of the research questions, the design of the software, and the type of data that needed to be collected required the use of questionnaires (Munn and Drever 1995: 10, Chapelle and Jamieson 1991: 44-5),

interviews, observations and log-files. The questionnaires, interviews, observations and log-files were pilot tested before administration and they were revised to correct any misinterpretation (see Turel 2004: 272, 285 for details). For example, during the pilot testing, it became obvious that everything was not clear. Therefore, some items were eliminated, some new ones were added, some were revised syntactically and some were partly changed.

Questionnaires were the key means of data collection. The questionnaires consisted of structured (closed) questions in the form of 6-point and 2-point scales (Appendix 2). The questionnaires also featured multiple measures of similar attitudes so that the invalidity and unreliability in the answers could be guarded against. They were conducted after the LLs had finished working with the software.

The interviews were semi-structured interviews, as they had pre-determined objectives and focuses. The semi-structured format gave the researcher the opportunity of including more questions or changing them to a limited extent during the interviews, depending on the responses that were received from a respondent. This gave an interviewee a degree of power and control (Seliger and Shohamy 1995: 166-7). Eight (out of 45) LLs were interviewed shortly after using the materials (i.e. within one or two weeks). The selection was based on the principle of 'first-accessed, first-interviewed'. Although the main purpose of the interviews was to crosscheck the main data, they also raised some interesting issues.

The instrument for the observation was a checklist, as this enabled the researcher to focus on pre-determined aspects of behaviour (Appendix 3). They were conducted while the LLs were using the software.

The log-data, which was part of the software, was used to track and register the LLs' look-up behaviour. This enabled the crosschecking of the observations.

The data from the questionnaires was analysed using descriptive statistics (SPSS- one-way frequency method/test). The qualitative data (interviews) were categorised according to categories that were extracted from the data itself and then applied.

The correlations between the attitudes variables and the type of LLs were calculated by using SPSS. The Spearman test in Bivariate was used, as the variables were ordinal (SPSS 1996: 203, 165, Norusis 1998: 365-6), with the data also being cross-tabulated. When at least one of the variables was not ordinal, their correlation was computed by using Chi-square in Crosstabs (SPSS 1996: 164, Norusis 1998: 352). When the expected value in one or more cells was low (cell count was below 5), then Fisher's exact test was used instead of Chi-square (SPSS 1996: 164, Norusis 1998: 315).

4. Results

The results of items 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 (Appendix 2) were obtained with the aid of a one-way frequency (descriptive statistics of SPSS). Observation items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 (Appendix 3) were used to check if the participants used the media types or not. Interviews elicited the LLs' attitudes to the design of the same media types in different forms in MLS.

4.1. The learners made use of the opportunities

Observations (Table 1), log-data (Table 2) and interviews revealed that the LLs used the opportunities of re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* and *audio-visuals* without *visuals*, as shown below.

Observed number	video	video without visuals	video + visuals	video + visuals without visuals	audio + animation	audio + animation without visuals	audio	audio + visuals
27	100%	22.2%	100%	3.7%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 1. The LLs' use of the listening media types according to observations.

ID code	The elements the click of which were registered					The number of sessions	Total time
	audio-only	audio-only + visuals	audio + animation	audio-over clips of the reading text	drag & drop activity of video-(THs)+visuals		
2	v	v	v	v	v	3	8:01:20
5			v	v	v	2	1:15:58
7			v			4	5:20:08
8						1	0:03:58
11	v	v	v	v	v	2	5:28:34
15	v	v	v			2	2:55:46
16	v	v	v	v	v	3	4:51:35
17	v	v	v	v		3	6:15:13
18	v	v	v			2	3:13:15
21	v	v	v	v	v	2	2:26:46
22			v	v	v	2	3.01.58
25	v	v	v	v	v	3	5:14:40
27	v	v	v	v		2	7:53:19
28		v	v	v		5	6:54:15
31			v	v	v	5	3:03:38
32			v	v	v	2	4:11:35
35						1	1:39:13
36				v	v	1	0:16:10
38						1	2:15:38
41	v		v	v		5	5:37:12
42	v	v	v	v	v	4	5:29:30
44	v	v	v	v	v	1	1:31:11
45	v	v			v	3	3:34:30

48				v	v	2	3:01:11
49	v	v	v	v	v	3	3:03:53
52	v	v	v	v	v	5	5:37:31
53	v	v	v	v	v	3	6:25:31
56	v	v	v	v		3	6:22:21
57	v	v	v	v	v	2	3:03:32
59	v	v		v	v	3	6:30:01
60	v	v	v	v	v	1	1:16:18
62			v	v	v	2	2:32:11
63	v	v		v	v	3	3:18:51
64	v	v	v	v		3	5:25:57
65		v		v		1	2:21:49
69			v	v		2	3:10:41
72			v			3	2:34:11
74	v	v	v	v	v	2	4:23:00
75	v	v	v	v	v	2	3:49:92
77			v			1	0:12:13
78	v	v	v		v	2	2:30:39
79	v	v	v	v	v	2	5:05:56
81	v	v	v	v	v	3	6:15:58
85			v	v	v	2	3:00:06
Total	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**mean**	**mean**
44 LLs	**61.36**	**63.63**	**79.54**	**77.27**	**63.63**	**2.47**	**2:54:10**

Table 2. The tabulated log-data from the LLs.

Comments arising from the interviews regarding re-listening to *audio-visuals* without *visuals*, included the following:

'I think it is very important especially to improve the listening with re-listening the same audio-visuals without visuals' (Subject 1/Interview)

Comments arising from the interviews regarding re-listening to *audio-only* with *visuals*, included the following:

'I think it is better because … it explain[s] more information about the subject, the topic. [So you mean it gives more information about the topic]. Yeah' (Subject 2/Interview) (see also below for other interview data)

The observations (Table 1), log-data (Table 2) and interviews show that the LLs listened to all available media types in the software, although LTs in some forms (Table 1) were not used by all of these LLs.

4.2. Re-listening to the same audio-visuals without visuals is considered useful

When the LLs were asked whether it is useful if they can also re-listen to the same *audio-visual* texts (*video-only, video (THs) + visuals, audio + animation, audio + visuals*) without *visuals* (item 7), it revealed that they find re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* useful.

No.	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
7	It's useful if you can also listen to the same *audio + visuals* without *visuals*	28.9	55.6	8.9	6.7		
					Agree	Disagree	No-answer
17	Re-listening to the same *audio-visual* texts without *visuals* is **not** necessary				13.6	86.4	2.2

Table 3. One-way frequency table of the LLs' attitudes to the opportunity of re-listening to the same audio-visuals without visuals.

Table 3 shows that 84.4% agreed or strongly agreed that it is useful. When the same question was asked in the negative form with two-choices (item 17), 86.4% agreed.

4.3. Learners think that re-listening to the same audio-visuals without visuals can improve their hearing skills (i.e. help them to get used to aural language)

When the LLs were asked whether re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* could improve their hearing skills (item 8), 77.8% agreed or strongly agreed (Table 4).

No.	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
8	Listening to the same *audio-visuals* texts without *visuals* can improve your hearing skills	31.1	46.7	17.8	4.4		
					Agree	Disagree	No-answer
18	Re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* texts without *visuals* does **not** improve hearing skills				11.1	86.7	2.2

Table 4. The LLs' attitudes to the role of re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* in improving hearing skills.

When the same question was asked in the negative form with two-choices (item 18), 86.7% agreed (Table 4) that re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* can improve their hearing skills.

4.4. Learners think that re-listening to the same audio-visuals without visuals can improve their listening

When the LLs were asked whether re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* can improve their listening (item 9), 80% agreed or strongly agreed (Table 5).

No.	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
8	Listening to the same *audio-visuals* texts without *visuals* can improve your listening	31.1	48.9	17.8	2.2		

Table 5. The LLs' attitudes to the role of re-listening to the same audio-visuals without visuals in improving their listening.

The quantitative results were also supported by most of the qualitative data (7 out of 8). There were some interesting reasons: Having the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* can:

• improve their listening (6 times mentioned)

"I think it is very important especially to **improve the listening** with re-listening the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals*." (Subject 1 / Interview)

"I think it's also good. It's good and useful because this makes us sure about this is listening and **improve our listening**." (Subject 4 / Interview)

I: … Should we give this chance to students?

S: Yeah, yeah. If it's finally, after after we watch the visual before, that's ok that's ok. It will **improve** their **listening**.

I: You think that it's useful if we include this option.

S: Yeah, I think so, I think so...' (Subject 6 / Interview)

"I think it's a very good idea because … **we need to listen audio without video clip**, but at first we can't listen audio without visuals. So, I think **it's very good to improve my listening**." (Subject 10 / Interview)

• help them remember what they say (mentioned once)

"I think em… after the first listening watching the video [is] better because you can … remain … [remember] remember what you say." (Subject 2 / Interview)

• help understand better, as it requires LLs to focus on what they hear (once mentioned)

S: Em… it's a useful way to, to re-listen to the same audio-visual without.

I: Why?

S: Because now you **understand** em… **the audio very well** . And now **you must now understand every single word alone without help with visuals** .

I: And how does this help you?

S: To help my listening, to catch the word… (Subject 3 / Interview)

• help focus on pronunciation (once mentioned)

"I think it's very useful particularly to listening because I **heard pronunciation very clear**. So I think it's very useful." (Subject 7 / Interview)

There were some LLs (1 out of 8) who thought that it was not necessary to re-listen to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals*.

"I think it's not necessary without visuals because with screen it's better to use." (Subject 9 / Interview)

There were also some relationships between different variables (Table 6). There was, for instance, a significant positive association at the 0.01 level (2-tailed test) (P< .0001) between the view that regarded re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* useful and the views that regarded re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* texts without *visuals* improving hearing skills and listening.

Significant P. values of Spearman's non-parametric and Chi-square correlation table between the variables (7-9, 17-18). Only the variables that have significant *p* values haven been given		8- Listening to the same audio + visuals texts without visuals can improve your hearing skills	9- Listening to the same audio + visuals texts without visuals can improve your listening
7- It's useful if you can also listen to the same *audio + visual* texts without *visuals*	Cor. Coefficient	.480**	.461**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.001
	N	45	45
8 -Listening to the same *audio + visuals* texts without *visuals* can improve your hearing skills	Cor. Coefficient		.549**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N		45

Table 6. Significant P. values of Spearman's non-parametric and Chi-square correlation table between the variables (7-9, 17-18).

This means that the LLs who regard re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* useful also tend to believe that it can improve their hearing skills (i.e. getting used to aural language) and listening.

In the same way, there was a significant positive association at the 0.01 level (2-tailed test) (P< .0001) between the view that regarded re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* can improve hearing skills (i.e. getting used to aural language) and the view that it can improve listening. This means that the LLs who think that re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* can help improve their hearing skills also tend to believe that it can improve their listening.

There were some relationships between the LLs' characteristics and their attitudes (Table 7). There was, for instance, a significant negative relationship at the 0.05 level (P< .0005) between the LLs who regarded themselves good about learning English and understanding when listening to English and the views that regarded re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* useful and improving listening.

Significant P. values of Spearman's non-parametric and Chi-square correlation table between the learners-characteristics variables (2-19) and variables (7-9, 17-18). Only the variables that have significant *p* values haven been given		13c- How good they feel about learning English	14c- How good they feel about understanding when listening to English
7- It's useful if you can also listen to the same *audio-visual* texts without *visuals*	C. Coef.	-.280	
	Sig. (2-t)	.080	
	N	40	
8 -Listening to the same *audio-visuals* texts without *visuals* can improve your hearing skills	C. Coef.		
	Sig. (2-t)		
	N		
9- Listening to the same *audio-visuals* texts without *visuals* can improve your listening	C. Coef.	-.352*	-.291
	Sig. (2-t)	.026	.065
	N	40	41

Table 7. Significant P. values of Spearman's non-parametric and Chi-square correlation table between the learners-characteristics variables (2-19) and variables (7-9, 17-18).

The LLs who agree that they feel good about learning English and understanding when listening to English tend to think that re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* is not useful and cannot improve their listening.

4.5. Learners find re-listening to the same audio-only with visuals useful

No.	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
10	It's useful if you can also listen to the same audio texts with visuals	44.4	37.8	13.3	2.2		2.2
					Agree	Disagree	No-answer
19	Re-listening to the same *audio* texts with *visuals* is **not** necessary				6.7	91.1	2.2

Table 8. Simplified one-way frequency table of the LLs' attitudes to re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals.*

When the LLs were asked whether it is useful if they can also re-listen to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* (item 10), 84.1% agreed or strongly agreed. When the same question was asked in the negative-form with two-choices (item 19), 93.2% agreed (Table 8).

4.6. Re-listening to the same audio-only with visuals can improve listening

When the LLs were asked whether re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* can improve their listening (Table 9, item 11), 79.5% agreed or strongly agreed. When they were asked the same question in the negative form with two-choices (item 20), 91.1% agreed (Table 9) that re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* can improve their listening. They consider having such an opportunity beneficial.

No.	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No-answer
11	Listening to the same *audio texts* with *visuals* can improve your listening	31.1	46.7	20.0			2.2
					Agree	Disagree	No-answer
20	Re-listening to the same *audio texts* with *visuals* does **not** improve listening development				6.7	91.1	2.2

Table 9. The LLs attitudes to the role of re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* in terms of improving their listening.

4.7 Re-listening to the same audio-only with visuals can prepare for the real-world

When the LLs were asked whether re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* could prepare them better for the real world (item 12), 68.9% agreed or strongly agreed (Table 10).

No.	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
12	Listening to the same *audio texts* with *visuals* can prepare you better for the real world	33.3	35.6	26.7	2.2	2.2	

Table 10. Attitudes to the role of listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* in terms of preparing them better for the real world.

The quantitative results were also supported by all of the qualitative data (8 out of 8). Some interesting reasons emerged. Having the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* can:

• enable LLs to have more information about the topic/subject (3 times mentioned)

S: I think … it's better because it … **explain** [s] **more information about the subject, the topic**.

I: So you mean it gives more information about the topic

S: Yeah.' (Subject 2 / Interview)

"I agree with you because it's with visual make **more declaration for the students** and improve his skill more." (Subject 6 / Interview)

S: I think it's better because **in the end I can construct my idea.**

I: Do you mean it helps you to understand better?

S: Yes. ' (Subject 7 / Interview)

• help LLs to find out if they have understood audio-only (once mentioned)

S: I think if I listen first without visuals, and after that with visuals, it's better.

I: Why?

S: Because first to decide which words I can catch or not, first of all. But if I watch the visual with audio at the same time first thing, I think I can't catch this word, but if the first time if I just listen to the audio without visual, I can decide which word I can catch or which one is difficult for me.

I: So it helps you to find out if you can understand without visuals or not?

S: Yes yes. (Subject 3 / Interview)

• help LLs to understand *audio-only* (once mentioned)

S: I think it's very useful.

I: Why?

S: Because it's **helps for me to understand easily**. (Subject 10 / Interview)

• help draw LLs' attention to salient features (twice mentioned)

"I think it's also useful because it make me sure about if I have mistakes in my answer and cannot hear. This is the word. **Visual make me attention this is the point I need to** answer." (Subject 4 / Interview)

S: I think very good idea **because I can understand what's the point of the sentence. Visuals tell me**.

I: So you find them useful.

S: Yes. (Subject 9 / Interview)

There were also some relationships between different variables (Table 10). There was, for instance, a significant positive association between the view that regarded re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* useful and the views that regarded re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* prepares learners better for the real world and improves listening.

The LLs who think that re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* useful also tend to believe it can prepare them better for the real world and improve their listening. The LLs who think that re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* can improve their listening also tend to believe it can prepare them better for the real-world. The LLs who think that re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* is necessary also tend to believe that it improves their listening development.

Significant P. values of Spearman's non-parametric and Chi-square correlation table between the variables (10-12, 19-20). Only the variables that have significant *p* values haven been given		11 -Listening to the same *audio-texts* with *visuals* can improve your listening	12 -Listening to the same *audio- texts* with *visuals* can prepare you better for the real-world	20- Re-listening to the same *audio- texts* with *visuals* does not improve listening development
10- It's useful if you can also listen to the same *audio texts* with *visuals*	C. Coef.	.807**	.496**	
	Sig. (2-t)	.000	.001	
	N	43	44	
11- Listening to the same *audio texts* with *visuals* can improve your listening	C. Coef.		.580**	
	Sig. (2-t)		.000	
	N		44	
19- Re-listening to the same *audio texts* with *visuals* is not necessary	Fisher's Exact Test			.000

Table 11. Significant P. values of Spearman's non-parametric and Chi-square correlation table between the variables (10-12, 19-20).

There were also some relationships between the LLs' characteristics and their attitudes (Table 12).There is, for instance, a significant positive relationship at the 0.05 level (P< .05) between attitude-variable V10 and characters-variable V17. The LLs who practise listening alone also tend to think that re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* useful. The other significant relationships are as below. The younger LLs tend to think that re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* cannot improve their listening (at the 0.05 level, (P< .05).

Significant *p*. values of Spearman's non-parametric and Chi-square correlation table between the variables (10-12, 19-20) and learners-characteristics variables. Only the variables that have significant *p* values haven been given		5- Age group of the LLs	13a- How confident about learning English	15c- How good about improving their list	17- How often LLs normally practise listening alone	18- How often want to learn Eng. with comp.	19- How often want to practise listening with comp.
10- It's useful if you can also listen to the same *audio texts* with *visuals*	C. Coef.				.360*		
	Sig. (2-t)				.016		
	N				44		
11 -Listening to the same *audio texts* with *visuals* can improve your listening	C. Coef.	-.423**			.362*	.325*	.295
	Sig. (2-t)	.005			.016	.034	.057
	N	43			44	43	42
12 -Listening to the same *audio texts* with *visuals* can prepare you better for the real-world	C. Coef.	-.321**	-.289	-.271			
	Sig. (2-t)	.033	.067	.091			
	N	44	41	40			

Table 12. Significant *p*. values of Spearman's non-parametric and Chi-square correlation table between the variables (10-12, 19-20) and learners-characteristics variables.

The LLs who tend not to want to practice listening alone and learn English with a computer also tend not to regard re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* can improve their listening. The LLs that tend to be younger, confident and very confident at learning English and good at improving listening also tend not to believe that re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* can prepare them better for the real-world.

5. Discussion

The LLs were provided with the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* (i.e. *audio + (supplementary) visuals*, *audio + animation*, *video-only*, *video-THs + visuals*) without *visuals*, and the same *audio-only* with *visuals*.

The LLs agreed that re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* was useful. They think that this can improve their hearing skills (i.e. help them to get used to aural language, focus better on what they hear and pay attention to pronunciation) and listening. The results match the findings in the field of FL learning style preferences in that some LLs are auditory (Dun and Dun 1979: 238-44, Dunn 1983: 496-506, Reid

1987: 96-7). Presumably, they want to re-listen to *audio-visuals* without *visuals*, as it suits their auditory learning style preferences better.

The results also match the well-known advantages of *audio-only* as an LT in that audio is beneficial for LLs in terms of them getting used to aural language as well as helping them to rely completely and heavily on speech, which would naturally and ultimately improve their acoustic channel.

The results are also consistent with the social learning theory, as it suggests that repeated exposure to similar or parallel material contributes to learning. Here, the LLs are in favour of re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals*.

From the standpoint of designing MLS, the implication is to provide the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals*. This can help LLs during the FLL process, as repetitious exposure is one of the invaluable factors in FLL (Robinson 1989: 119-33; Carroll 1977: 507), and the option of listening to *audio-only* helps LLs to get used to aural language, focus better on what they hear and pay attention to pronunciation.

As a result, such an IMM software design is likely to lead to a better preparation for the real world. There is, however, one issue that needs to be emphasised here. Although the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-visuals* without *visuals* was considered by more than 77% (1) useful, and (2) improving their hearing skills (i.e. getting used to aural language) and (3) listening; the number of those who re-listened to *audio-visuals* without *visuals* was very low. This might be due to different reasons such as:

1. *Audio-visuals* without *visuals* options were not default, but optional. The underlying assumption is that the *audio-only*, which was default, was re-listened by all the LLs (100%).
2. *Audio-visuals* without *visuals* options were not accompanied by any listening tasks. The *audio-only*, which was accompanied by listening tasks, was re-listened by all of the LLs. These potential reasons are consistent with what Mangiafico (1996: 107) found.
3. LLs in comparison with *audio-only* in general prefer *visuals* more and this might also be another reason why all of the LLs did not re-listen to *audio-visuals* without *visuals.*

This means that the design of *audio-visuals* without *visuals* in an IMM environment needs to be further developed so that more LLs use such an option. It also means that only presenting LTs on screen is not enough. To overcome this, the following can be suggested:

1. *Audio-visuals* without *visuals* option can be default rather than optional (at the post-listening stage)
2. Listening tasks can be provided with all *audio-visuals* without *visuals* options, which can further encourage LLs to use such opportunities. Findings show that LLs pay little attention when they are not required to give an answer (Mangiafico 1996: 109), and they participate actively when they are required to use language through interactive activities (Little 1995: 179, Ruhlmann 1995: 54, Mangiafico 1996: 113)

The LLs find it useful if they can also re-listen to the same *audio-only* with *visuals*. They think that re-listening to the same *audio-only* with visuals can improve their listening and better prepare them for the real-world.

The results match the findings in the field of FLL and acquisition in that the LLs have revealed that re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals* helps them to have more information about the topic, understand easily and better, and prepare them for the real world. In terms of the role of visuals, this substantiates previous findings (Herron *et al.* 2002: 37, Ginther 2002: 133-67, Rubin 1994, Secules et al 1992: 480-82).

The results are also consistent with the dual coding, the redundancy, the comprehension input and the noticing theories, as providing LLs with re-access to audio with additional comprehension cues (visuals) can help comprehension, noticing, awareness and recalling.

The results are also consistent with the social learning theory, as it suggests that repeated exposure to similar or parallel material contributes to learning.

For the production of learning and cost effective MLS, the implication is to provide the opportunity of re-listening to the same *audio-only* with *visuals*, as (1) this is what the LLs want. (2) There is a consistent correlation between attitudes and achievement. (3) This provides a repetitious exposure at different stages of listening with different aspects of the input each time, which is one of the invaluable factors in FLL. (4) The above mentioned hypothesis, theories and facts (i.e. learning style preferences) require us to do so. Such an IMM listening software design can be a positive enhancement of better understanding and listening development.

There is, however, one issue that needs to be mentioned here. While re-presenting *audio-only* LTs with (supplementary) *visuals*, the requirements of the cognitive load theory (Kalyuga 2000: 161, Sweller, 1999) and working memory should not be ignored. In short, we need to be precise and keep the balance. Failure to take into account such implications not only can decrease the effectiveness of multiple modalities in re-presentation of *audio-only* LTs with (supplementary) *visuals*, but it can also decrease working memory resources available for learning and inhibit acquisition (Kalyuga 2000: 161-72).

Further research might try to find out how LLs can be encouraged to use such opportunities to their fullest effects. It might also try to uncover what the effects and contributions of re-listening to the same LTs in different forms (*audio-only* with *visuals* and *audio-visuals* without *visuals*) at different listening stages in MLS to FLL are.

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Appendixes

Appendix I: The learners' pre-exposure characteristics - questionnaire results (in %)

		Male			*Female*		
Gender		56.5 %			43.5 %		
Nationality	Libyan 30.4 Saudi: 6.5 Syrian: 4.3 Estonian: 2.2	Japanese: 10.9 Tai: 13 Chinese: 8.7 Portuguese: 4.3		Spanish: 4.3 Colombian: 2.2 Italian: 2.2 Bulgarian: 2 .2		Kurdish: 2.2 Mongolian: 2.2 Vietnamese: 2.2 Israeli: 2.2	
Native language	Arabic: 43.5 Japanese: 10.9 Chinese: 19.6	Spanish: 6.5 Kurdish: 2.2 Italian: 2.2		Mongol : 2.2 Russian: 2.2 Vietnamese: 2.2		Bulgarian: 2.2 Portuguese: 4.3 Mandarin: 2.2	

Age group	11-15 years	16- 20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	More than 30 years	No answer
	4.3	23.9	34.8		34.8	2.2

Any other languages (apart from English and their native language) they speak			No		Yes	
			76.1		23.9	

The period of learning English	1 - 2 years	3 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	More than 10 years	No answer
	37	26.1	21.7	8.7	6.5

Their level in English	Pre-intermediate	intermediate	Advanced
		87	13

Their level in listening	Pre-intermediate	Intermediate	Advanced
		100	

Their reasons for learning English	Post-study: 45.7 World language : 26.1	Job: 21.7 Communication : 2.2	No-answer: 4.3

Computer literacy	Basic User	1	2	3	4	5	Proficient User
		37	10.9	32.6	17.4	0	No-answer: 2.2

						No	Yes
Those who used software for learning a foreign language before						76.1	23.9

		1	2	3	4	5	No-answer	
How they feel about learning English	confident							not confident
		13	21.9	39.1	10.9	4.3	8.7	
	relaxed							not relaxed
		13	19.6	50	8.7	4.3	4.3	
	good at it							not good
		8.7	26.1	41.3	13	0	10.9	
How they feel about understanding when listening to English	confident							Not confident
		8.7	13	41.3	21.7	8.7	6.5	
	relaxed							not relaxed
		6.5	15.2	39.1	21.7	8.7	8.7	
	good at it							not good
		6.5	10.9	52.2	15.2	6.5	8.7	
How they feel about improving their listening	confident							not confident
		6.5	19.6	41.3	17.4	6.5	8.7	
	relaxed							not relaxed
		8.7	19.6	39.1	17.4	8.7	6.5	
	good at it							not good
		6.5	23.9	37	19.6	2.2	10.9	

	a lot	often	sometimes	occasionally	never	no-answer
Do they normally study English alone?	10.9	30.4	54.3	4.3		
Do they normally practise listening alone?	6.5	28.3	52.2	8.7	4.3	
Do they want to learn English with computers?	21.7	26.1	32.6	15.2	2.2	2.2
Do they want to practise listening with comp?	32.6	26.1	26.1	8.7	2.2	4.3

Appendix 2: Questionnaire about the design of media-types in one MLA

This questionnaire is about *the priority of media types* in the *NewMillennium* multimedia-listening software. *Please tick the appropriate choices (more than 1 is possible)*

	Questions	SA	A	N	D	SD	DK
7	It's useful if you can also listen to the same **audio + visual texts without visuals**						
8	Listening to the same **audio + visual texts without visuals** can improve your hearing skills						
9	Listening to the same **audio + visual texts without visuals** can improve your listening						
10	It's useful if you can also listen to the same **audio texts with visuals**						
11	Listening to the same **audio texts with visuals** can improve your listening						
12	Listening to the same **audio texts with visuals** can prepare you better to the real-world						

	Questions	A	D
17	Re-listening to the same audio-visual texts without visuals is not necessary		
18	Re-listening to the same audio-visual texts without visuals **does not** improve hearing skills		
19	Re-listening to the same audio texts with visuals is not necessary		
20	Re-listening to the same audio texts with visuals **does not** improve listening development		
21	Would you like to add anything about media types		

Your full-name: ……………………………………………………. Thank you very much.

Appendix 3: Observations about the design of media types in one MLA.

Subject no / name: ....

About the priority of media types	
1	They listened to the *video-only*	
2	They listened to the *video-only* with visuals	
3	They listened to *video + visuals*	
4	They listened to *video + visuals* without *visuals*	
5	They listened *audio +animations*	
6	They listened *audio +animations* without *visuals*	
7	They listened to *audio-only*	
8	They listened to *audio-only* with *visuals*	

Non-participant observer's name: ………………………… Signature & Date: ……………………….

Book review

Evaluating Computer-Assisted Language Learning: An Integrated Approach to Effectiveness Research in CALL

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Ever since technology and computers were first introduced into language teaching and learning, there were doubts concerning whether multimedia resources had much to add to the language learning experience. This pointed out the need for a comprehensive evaluative model for CALL aimed at helping to determine the kind of multimedia tools which are more effective in language learning, based on the measurable impact these resources make on the learning of language students. This book rightly responds to this need by means of providing a very useful and comprehensive evaluative model for CALL aimed at helping schools, colleges and universities to determine the kind of multimedia resources worth investing in, based on the measurable impact these resources make on the learning of language students. This evaluative framework is also very helpful for CALL researchers looking at the effectiveness of the use of different kinds of e-tools and methodologies. In fact, one of the strongest points of this framework is the fact that it can not only be used for the evaluation of the language learning software, but also to evaluate teaching and learning in computer-based environments, as well as the digital platforms themselves.

Its author draws on current and past research on CALL and e-learning to inform his CALL evaluation framework while he explores the existing evidence for the impact of computers on language learning. He also applies this framework to the study of three kinds of media through which to examine the principal factors influencing both the language learner and language learning: the digital platform, the software program, and the pedagogy employed; concluding that "an evaluative model for CALL had to deploy the appropriate metric tools and research approach to assess empirically both the impact of each distinct element and any added synergies that may operate when all the elements are working together in a real-life setting" (p. 3). The author successfully connects theory and practice, and describes the process of creating the evaluative

framework in such a clear and detailed way that it can be used by researchers interested in developing and putting into practice a similar framework relevant to their research. The first five chapters are more theoretical, whereas the rest of the chapters present different case studies and a final evaluation framework.

Chapter 1, of the nine chapters the book is divided into, is an introduction which, as stated in the title itself, points out the need for "systematic quality control in CALL" (p. 1) and for empirical data capable of proving that CALL "makes an objective, measurable and significant difference to students' learning" (p. 1). This chapter also provides an overview of the different studies carried out in the field of CALL, examining Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), Web-Enhanced Language Learning (WELL) and Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL); together with the different tools used in educational institutions. At the same time, it is a thought-provoking reflection on the state of the art and on the need for an integrated approach to the evaluation of CALL. It broadly introduces the theoretical framework and the research questions, and includes a summary of the chapters that follow, which deal with different case studies.

In chapter 2, the theoretical framework is expanded; the main concepts regarding CALL pedagogy, SLA theory and the data collection techniques are defined; and the platforms and programs are introduced. The following chapter, Chapter 3, raises questions for debate concerning the impact of CALL on teaching. These questions are answered in Chapter 4 by means of a discussion on CALL enhancement criteria, drawing upon Chapelle's (1997; 2001) criteria, and mapping these criteria against those suggested by other authors while adding six new ones. As for chapter 5, it presents the qualitative and quantitative measures of the model for evaluating CALL while explaining and exploring concepts such as validity, objective measures, problems encountered when doing research in CALL, the different kinds of variables, the types of data and the way to report the findings. For the sake of clarity, these concepts and phenomena are organised into different tables.

Following this theoretical part, Chapters 6, 7 and 8 deal with the different case studies, the results of which inform Chapter 9. The 3 case studies presented look at the three 'P's and their sub-elements: programmes, digital platforms, and pedagogy. Following the case studies, Chapter 9 offers an evaluative framework made up of the combination of theory and practice. The case study presented in Chapter 6 (case study 1) makes a comparison between Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs) and Digital Labs. It also evaluates the following two digital platforms against the different criteria previously stated: Robotel at the University of Ulster, and Melissi at the University of Portsmouth. In chapter 7 (case study 2) two versions of the *TellMeMore* language learning software package are evaluated; i.e. version 7 of the *TellMeMore* 'Education' CD-ROM; and version 9 of the *TellMeMore* 'Campus' online version, providing a step-by-step and enlightening description of how the study was carried out. Case study 3 is dealt with in Chapter 8, which aims at evaluating pedagogy in two different projects, TOLD and BILINGUA, again providing a meticulous description of the way the Model of Evaluation can be applied to various pedagogical approaches, namely behaviourist, communicative, constructivist and blended.

Chapter 9, the final chapter, presents a new framework for evaluating CALL, which combines the theory dealt with in the initial five chapters with the findings of the case studies of Chapters 6 to 8. This new framework is presented by means of different tables and figures that help to organise the information in a clearer and concise manner so as to make the use of this information easier for other researchers involved with similar kinds of research. The first tables shown are an evaluation flowchart; and a list of synthesised criteria for evaluation of CALL programmes, platforms and pedagogy, with definitions (MFE2). These are followed by a set of 12 different tables concerning

the different criteria, ranging from language learning potential to tuition delivery modes. The author wisely concludes that "what has been established is a systematic agenda and methodology for CALL evaluation, which may also serve as a more research methodology for CALL research" (p. 289) with the ultimate goal of generating "an ongoing, logically-sequenced, and ever enlarging meta-analysis that will, with every new study carried out using sound methodology in line with an agreed agenda for CALL evaluation, add credibility to the body of evidence for CALL's effectiveness" (p. 289). It won't take long for the reader to realise that this goal has been only too well achieved.

The great amount of information displayed in such a numerous amount of tables makes it hard at times for the reader to fully process the interpretations of the results and the conclusions obtained. This in turn makes reading the book more complex, in spite of the articulate discourse and coherent structure of the book as a whole. However, this cannot be considered as a weakness, but rather a consequence of the great investment of time and effort that the author had to put in carrying out the studies and in presenting them in a clear and precise way; as well as in developing such a consistent and robust model for evaluating CALL. Overall, this book can be considered as a great achievement that shows the maturity of CALL as a scientific discipline, the effectiveness of which can be measured objectively thanks to the thorough, systematic, theoretically-based and logically-sequenced Evaluative Model provided and described throughout the book.

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Book review

How to Teach English with Technology

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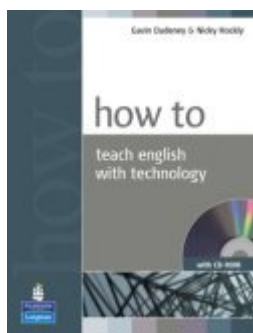
Gavin Dudeney and Nicky Hockly

How to Teach English with Technology

How to... series editor: Jeremy Harmer

Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2010, 192 pp
ISBN: 978-1-4058-5308-8

Every once in a while there is a volume that interrelates technology and language learning. In the past few years books have tended to promote what could be called 'teachers' literacy' in the use of ICT in foreign language teaching. However, many teachers use information technologies regularly, either retrieving information from the Internet, downloading exercises or even creating online tests. So what distinguishes one book from another? In principle, it seems that books can be divided into three main groups: first, those that approach the issue from a very theoretical perspective including pedagogical theories; the second group would include manuals aimed at teacher trainees which tend to be basic but need to integrate theory and practice; and the third would comprise predominantly practical guides, targeted mostly toward practicing teachers who need to discover and integrate new materials and aspects into their classes. *How to Teach English with Technology* corresponds to the third category. The new Longman series *How to…* comprise practical volumes which take into account the fact that teachers already have some experience with their classes, but for one reason or another, need time for preparation. Thus, innovation in their classes necessarily has to be paced and introduced gradually. This series of books emphasizes the importance of including additional audiovisual materials, such as *How to Teach English* (Harmer, 2007), which includes interviews with experienced and novice teachers about their activities in class. *How to Teach English with Technology* includes a CD-ROM containing the recordings of interviews with teachers who speak about their experience using computers and technology, plus nine video tutorials which include different types of projects or activities such as creating webquests, a keypal project, setting up and using a Skype account, using Hot Potatoes, joining Webheads, and a controversial use of 'Second Life' in the classroom. Additionally, there is a somewhat limited *webliography,* a video on the use of smart boards and a tour of the Longman dictionary.

The 12-chapter book also includes four appendices which first describe the theoretical background of each topic. At the end, there are references to the technical devices, software or hardware described in the chapter and some suggestions for classroom

activities. The book is oriented towards a progressive degree of difficulty and expertise. As the authors mention, some teachers may only use some parts while others will be able to integrate most aspects into their teaching. Overall, all the chapters are well-written and organized. Although Dudeney and Hockly include both theory and practice, the book is mostly practical and emphasizes activities and ideas for both teachers' development and class management alike. Thus the first chapter is aimed at introducing the value of technology in education and language (either first, second or foreign) followed by topics such as the computer as a word processor, the use and creation of websites, internet-based projects, how to use email and how to use chat, keypal projects, chat rooms, blogs, wikis and podcasts, the use of interactive whiteboards or online reference tools and technology based courseware or designing materials with or without authoring tools such as Hot Potatoes, Clarity Software, Creative Technology or Quia. The last section of the book includes issues relating to the trainer more than the trainee such as: e-learning, online teaching and training and an interesting chapter called 'Preparing for the future'. Finally, as mentioned above, the book includes activities and suggestions for the class which are related to the webliography and interviews presented in the CD-ROM and a reader-friendly jargon-free glossary.

According to the authors, one of the important goals of the book is to get teachers to replace their fears about using technology with confidence in the fact that change does not happen overnight and is, moreover, a process that may take some time and need not be rushed. Teachers need to trust and use technology to the extent where they feel confident. Some will simply type exercises or prepare simple activities for the Internet, while others may be able to convince their students to take a further step in their technological experience and adopt a significant role in the class. Another significant aspect that is well covered in the book is the importance and way of approaching teacher-created materials and the use of external websites when dealing with the Internet by suggesting examples of both. The authors strongly believe that content-based and cooperative language learning should be the methodology used in today's teaching and, therefore, project work and synchronous and asynchronous communication have a leading role in establishing internal (class, school) and external links (other schools, countries, students [for instance with keypal projects]).

Hopefully, some teachers will be intrigued by the title of the book but indeed the content is worth looking at. Although studies on potential rejection of the use of technology in teaching foreign languages are still reported, the immense potential should overcome the possible drawbacks. Dudeney and Hockly have trimmed a valuable and well designed volume whose flaws are insignificant in relation to the quality and interest of explaining how to integrate ICT in the classroom step by step. In their review of the book, García Laborda & Magal Royo (2007) pointed out other suggestions for improvement such as the inclusion of more tutorials or videos (video recordings of the teachers at work, though a challenge in itself, could have been a great asset) as Harmer (2007) did in another volume of the series. We also missed references to tools, materials and websites which are not produced by commercial publishers such as Isabelperez (www.isabelperez.com), whose website receives over 100,000 visits a month, the onestopenglish website (www.onestopenglish.com) and easytestmaker (easytestmaker.com/default.aspx). The chapter on future developments, although it is very interesting, could have expanded into the possibilities of the web 2.0 or the importance of the semantic web in further educational developments. I disagree with García Laborda & Magal Royo that the book is too subjective since a book of this very nature should be personal if it is really intended to convince and influence practicing English language teachers. Overall, this is a self-contained book for teachers, trainers and trainees alike. It includes a wealth of useful information and the CD-ROM with

interviews adds a positive degree of realism, which readers will definitely enjoy reading and, who knows, maybe get some ideas to make their classes even more appealing.

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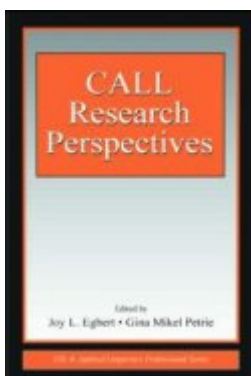
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Book review

CALL Research Perspectives

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CALL Research Perspectives

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Although, as pointed by García Laborda (2007), the introduction and the chapter by Huh & Hu can be a little controversial in some of its claims like the special relevance of some researchers, while leaving the work of general practitioners and more unnoticed researchers as just a simple cooperation to topics outlined and developed by the gurus in Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), the reader may not want to miss the whole picture of a well-balanced volume.

The introduction clearly reflects the editor's interest in producing a book to illustrate and help professionals in the field from general practitioners to initiating (and not so novice) researchers. Both initial chapters emphasise the way to research, and, more importantly, some of the major constraints of research in CALL.

The second part of the book deals with different aspects of current research. These 12 chapters address each topic with a different style, and also show different levels of intensity and inclusion of new information. There are two chapters with special relevance in the language education field: Metaphors that shape and guide CALL research, and Interactionist SLA Theory in CALL Research. The first is an interesting approach to the value of educational metaphors in language education research. Although not very conclusive and opinion based, the chapter proposes that metaphors may lead to how people do their research like the "conduit" and "berry-bush", "magister/pedagogue", "community and meeting place" (pp. 28-31) metaphors. The second addresses Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective of second (or first) language acquisition which justifies computers as interfaces between the learner and the linguistic goal content.

Two more chapters address the ergonomics of CALL: Visuality and CALL research and Authentic language in digital environments. Ergonomics can be understood as the physical facilitation for computer users (including body comfort but also visual ease).

However, the chapter on ergonomics by Raby is inconclusive and does not seem to show either the meaning or the implications of ergonomics in CALL.

The chapter by Egbert, Flow as a Model for CALL Research, deserves special attention because it can justify why many students show a special interest in computer-assisted language learning. The Flow theory has been used in education and games for a long while but, as mentioned by the author, it is necessary to draw its implications into e-learning.

The volume is an extremely welcome contribution to the field although it would perhaps have been interesting to address some aspects relating to language evaluation (especially considering that Chapelle takes part in the publication), and a second part addressing language acquisition processes (Leeser, 2007) or the importance of subconscious learning through computer input would be interesting topics for further discussion (or more volumes). In general, the book will be an interesting reference for all those in the CALL field and an attractive reading for teachers and researchers alike.

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Events Calendar

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http://www.eurocall-languages.org/resources/calendar.html, which is regularly updated.

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