

GUEST EDITORIAL PREFACE

Using Technology for Language Learning

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It has been an interesting experience to guest edit this issue of IJCALLT. The international focus of the manuscripts really brought into sharp relief for me differences not only in CALL contexts but in understandings of the how, what, and why of using technology for language learning. It also brought up questions of what kind of research is worth reporting, what format it should take, who is to judge its worthiness, and by what criteria. Although these issues have been addressed in the past, I hope to see more in-depth discussion somewhere soon. Examples of disparate emphases are evident in all of the articles reviewed for this issue of IJCALLT, and the diversity of those chosen for this issue make it worth reading.

In the first article, “E-learner Characteristics and E-Learner Satisfaction: A Study of Taiwanese EFL University Students,” researcher Po Hsuan Chen takes a quantitative look at language learners’ satisfaction with their online language classes. As part of his methodology, Chen combines previously separate instruments and concepts to paint both a broad and a detailed picture of learner satisfaction. Using advanced statistics, the author shows the importance of both his method and his results and presents researchers and teachers with further work to do.

In the second article, “Auditory and Visual Training on Mandarin Tones: A Pilot Study on Phrases and Sentences,” Xinchun Wang also uses a simple but effective experimental approach to show how students of Mandarin Chinese can achieve better tone production using tutorial software. The author makes a compelling case that combined aural and visual models can make a significant difference for learners.

Next, Chinese doctoral student Congcong Wang looks at the awareness and experiences of teacher education students that might help them to better teach in classrooms that are linguistically, culturally, and technologically diverse. In her article, “Pre-Service Teachers’ Perceptions of Learning a Foreign Language Online: Preparing Teachers to Work with Linguistic, Cultural, and Technological Diversity,” she uses a qualitative approach to suggest that teachers worldwide may need certain experiences during their teacher education programs that heighten their awareness of language learners’ needs.

In the fourth article in this issue, Dr. Revathi Viswanathan takes on the cutting edge issue of using mobile devices for language learning. In “Augmenting the Use of Mobile Devices in Language Classrooms,” Viswana-

than provides an overview of common mobile devices and their uses outside of the classroom in India and then suggests through a field-based pilot study how they may be used to enhance classroom language learning. Implications of this study include ideas not only for teaching with mobile devices but topics for future research.

Finally, Libyan scholars Reima Abobaker and Ibtesam Hussein review the text *Assessing Language through Computer Technology* by Chapelle and Douglas (2006). Although this text is not brand new, it has not received nearly the attention it deserves, particularly from CALL researchers who need to be able to measure language gains. Abobaker and Hussein suggest that this text can be useful for test administrators, teachers, and researchers who want to develop efficient ways to use technology in assessment while taking into

consideration the possible challenges and problems. I hope that we'll see more studies that use language assessments in this journal.

Thanks go to IJCALLT Editor-in-Chief Dr. Bin Zou for allowing me to participate in this process and for his incredible unflappability and very timely assistance. I also thank the anonymous reviewers who did "emergency" reviews so that the issue could get out on time and the authors for their patience and effort on behalf of the journal. Special thanks to Dr. Levi McNeil for manuscript reviews from vacation spots around the world. I encourage readers to continue to send manuscripts to IJCALLT to share research on interesting ideas and effective experiences with the rest of the field.

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Joy Egbert conducts research on learning environments, particularly as they involve English language learners and technology. Her most recent focus is on differentiation and engagement. Dr. Egbert teaches courses in the English as Second Language (ESL) endorsement and the ESL course in the elementary program at Washington State University. Egbert is especially interested in ESL and technology, specifically computer-assisted language learning (CALL). Egbert has taught ESL pre-kindergarten through adult, and is certified K-12 in Idaho for computers and ESL, and at the secondary level for English and Russian.