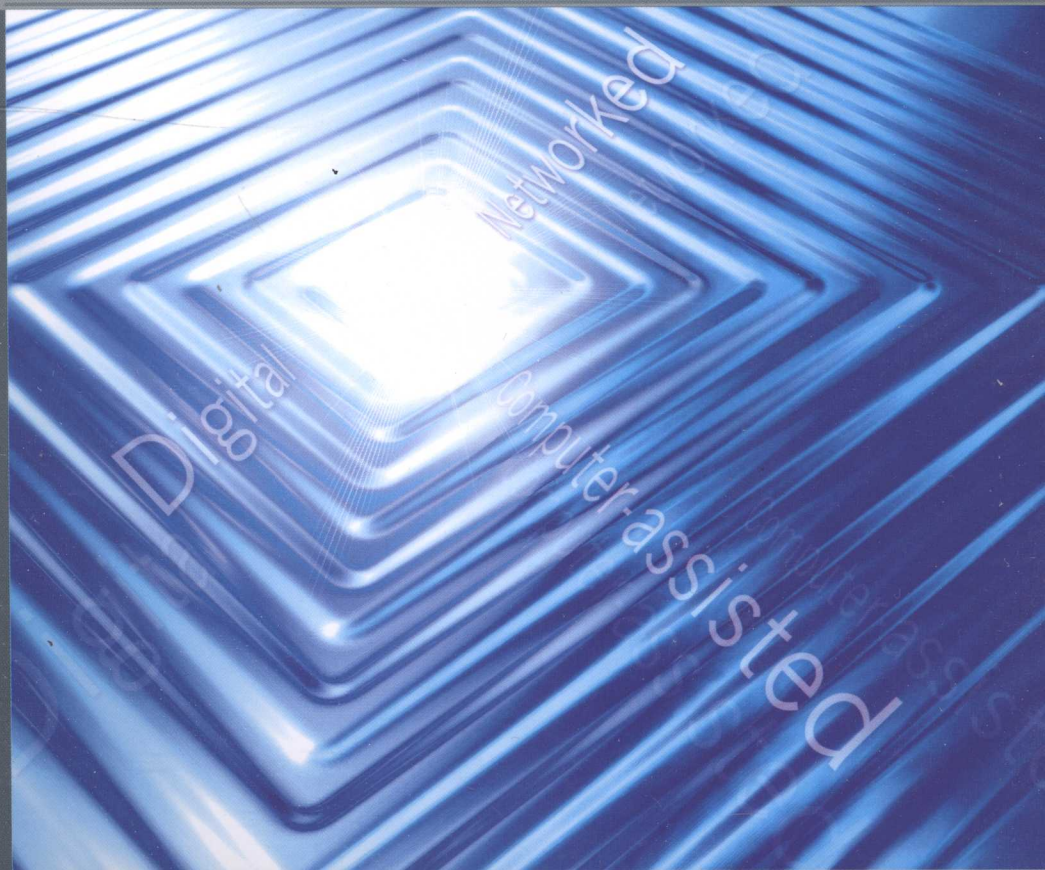


外研社 高等英语教育学术会议文集

数码与网络环境下的外语教学 ——2006年计算机辅助外语 教学国际研讨会论文集

Digital and Networked Foreign Language Learning and Teaching
—— Selected Papers from the 2006 International Symposium on
Computer-Assisted Language Learning

王薇 刘相东 编



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Preface

This book is a collection of selected papers from the 2006 International Symposium of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) (June 2-4, Beijing). The symposium was initiated and coordinated by Gary Motteram of the IATEFL Learning Technologies SIG committee, Wang Wei of the National Research Centre for Foreign Language Education of Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), and Liu Xiangdong of Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (FLTRP) and China English Language Education Association (CELEA). The four above organizations they represented were the co-hosts and organizers of the symposium. The symposium features five keynote speeches and accommodates 69 presentations, selected out of 177 abstracts initially submitted to the symposium. A total of 160 participants from eight countries and regions attended the symposium. About 80% of them came from universities in China. The theme of the event was revisited, reflected upon and discussed at a panel discussion attended by the keynote speakers, the presenters and other non-presenting participants on the afternoon of June 4th. The symposium's official website <http://call2006.fltrp.com/> plays a very important role in providing crucial information to the participants before the symposium and in giving them an opportunity to discuss and share their experiences after the symposium.

Wen Qiufang of National Research Centre for Foreign Language Education of BFSU talked about corpus-based learner language research in her keynote speech while Gu Yueguo of the Institute of Beiwai Online Education of BFSU discussed issues arising out of his five-year hands-on work on EFL online education in China. Among the three invited keynote speakers from abroad, Phil Hubbard of Stanford University (US) lectured on CALL teacher education, Gary Motteram of Manchester University (UK) introduced social computing, and Mike Levy of Griffith University (Australia) reviewed CALL research in detail.

Twenty out of the 69 articles presented at the symposium were selected for this book. The articles are divided into six sections; each of them deals with a particular aspect in CALL. In "Teachers in CALL" section, Tang Jinlan et al. explore the importance and roles of feedback from online tutors, Yu Li et al. discuss the importance of face-to-face tutoring to art students, Wei Huiyu proposes ways in

which Chinese teachers can improve their teaching by using computers, Ruan Quanyou argues that teachers should use action research as a methodological approach to the study of CALL and Li Ming presents a case report of web-enhanced language learning for teachers. In “Learners in CALL” section, Janson reviews the impact of teacher correction and computer-assisted self-correction on usage of English tenses from the learners’ perspective, Liu Wenyu et al. study the learners’ attitude and behavior in web-based language learning, and Wang Xiuwen surveys learners’ perceptions of the effect of interaction in web-based courses on learner outcomes. In “Instructional Design and Material Evaluation” section, Guan Lin explores issues in designing ELF multi-media materials in assisting listening comprehension, and Zheng Lihua discusses principles in designing foreign language instruction in distance education.

As the Ministry of Education emphasizes more and more on the use of multimedia and network in foreign language teaching, CALL will enter the domain of research of more and more teachers and researchers, which is reflected by the fact that many participants of the symposium asked us about the time for the next CALL symposium. Let’s hope for a better symposium next time.

We think some improvement can be made. Firstly, participants of the symposium were mainly teachers of English. We had very few who taught other foreign languages or Chinese. This was possibly due to the fact that the working language was English. Secondly, the concurrent sessions of paper presentations were the only form of academic exchange in the symposium. As CALL is a computer-based interdisciplinary field of research, we probably should consider arranging more workshops in the future.

Wang Wei & Liu Xiangdong

Oct. 10, 2007

Beijing Foreign Studies University

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Keynote Speeches

Teacher Education in CALL: The Seven Central Questions

Phil HUBBARD
Stanford University, USA

Introduction

I am pleased to have the opportunity to give the opening keynote for this important conference on computer-assisted language learning (CALL). From 2004-2006, I had the unique opportunity to work with a fellow keynote speaker, Mike Levy, on the first volume devoted to teacher education in CALL (Hubbard & Levy 2006a). I will be referring to that work throughout this paper because a lot of what I have learned, I am tempted to say, most of what I have learned, about teacher education in our field has come through working with the authors of that volume, one of whom is another keynote speaker at this conference, Gary Motteram. For background, I started working in this area about seven years ago, after realizing that I had actually been doing CALL teacher education for fifteen years or more, but doing it informally and calling it “helping teachers”.

Let me begin with an overview of this paper: I will start with why I think teacher education in CALL is so essential at this particular moment. It is important to note that it has been around for a number of years. In fact, when I first started in CALL back in the early 1980s, the university where I was teaching, Ohio University, already had a series of CALL courses taught to master's students in linguistics and TEFL. Nearly a quarter century later there are still many institutions in the US, and I assume worldwide, that offer no courses in technology for language teaching. In addressing this situation, I will present several strands of evidence as to why it has recently become more critical for language teachers to have competence with technology.

Following that, I will shift to the title part of the talk, the seven central questions, and will then outline the framework that Mike Levy and I have developed on CALL education objectives, which constitutes the opening chapter of our book. I will conclude with a brief discussion of some of the approaches and options currently available in CALL teacher education, especially those that have

evolved out of the multiple chapters of the book and that seem to represent important themes. One point about the book is that it is an international volume: the twenty chapters represent multiple languages, multiple countries, and multiple levels. While I am speaking from a North American perspective and from my personal experience with teacher education in CALL, the issues that come up are ones that have impacted all of us and will be impacting us even more in the future. So, even though the settings may be quite different and the cultural issues and implementations in these settings may be different, there is a core I believe we share as colleagues.

Why CALL teacher education is important

I noted that this topic has become more important in recent years, but what is the evidence for that? Below are several areas that provide support for this contention.

Enhancement of job prospects

In the US and increasingly internationally, there is evidence that job prospects are greatly improved for teachers who have some technology background. Kessler (2006) surveyed the job postings at the TESOL Career Center in March 2006 and noted that 60% listed experience or training in CALL or online teaching as a necessary or at least desirable attribute. This suggests that language schools and university departments are becoming aware of the increasing importance of CALL and of the value of having teachers who know something about technology on their staffs.

Student/program expectations

In addition to the evidence from job listings, there are student and program expectations. It is common in educational settings to hear people talking about how the students are ahead of their teachers in being able to use the technology. In the early days of technology in education, this was seen as positive at some level because it gave a few students an important role as “experts” in the classroom and thus increased their motivation. But it also meant that in some respects teachers were missing important opportunities to enhance their students’ education. These days the disadvantages of their ignorance of technological applications clearly outweigh any advantages. Students have a right to expect teachers to be competent in the use of technology in the classroom, as do the programs that hire them. In the same way that an education degree certifies that

the teacher has sufficient content knowledge and pedagogical expertise, it should be an indication of technological facility. We will return to this in a moment when we discuss technology standards.

Professional necessity

So far we have looked at external motivators, the importance of CALL competence to secure a job and to meet the expectations of students and employers. To that we add professional necessity, the internal motivation that most teachers have to be good at what they do. Technology is not just something imposed on us; it is an extraordinarily powerful and versatile pedagogical tool, as the other talks at this conference will demonstrate. As computers and other devices with computers embedded in them, such as electronic whiteboards, become as common as the chalkboard was when I was a student, to become adept at using them should be a matter of professional pride irrespective of outside pressures. This is not just true for the traditional classroom environment; as education continues to move online, if a teacher is not competent and comfortable not only with the technology, but with using multiple parts of that technology simultaneously, then he or she is not going to be able to be an effective online teacher.

Evidence of teacher transformation

An area related to professionalism showing the impact of CALL teacher education in recent years is the evidence of teacher transformation that is reported as a result of that education. Slaouti & Motteram's (2006) chapter in the book focuses on this, giving a number of example reflections illustrating how teachers' attitudes toward and understanding of technology change as their experience with technology increases. Another chapter towards the end of the book (Kolaitis et al., 2006) describes a group of experienced teachers from a US community college English program that worked together on a project centered on learner training. In the process of training themselves to train their students, they discovered that they not only learned a lot more about how to use CALL, but that there was actually wash back on how they viewed second language learning outside of CALL. It was an opportunity for professional renewal, a chance to deeply reflect on their own experiences and their own beliefs about second language learning.

Professional initiatives

At a broader level, there are serious professional initiatives in this domain, notably standards and certification. There is a growing standards movement within the United States and some other countries, including China; in fact I heard the topic addressed at a meeting with some graduate students at the National Research Centre for Foreign Language Education at the Beijing Foreign Studies University just prior to the conference. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has developed a set of standards for teachers in general, focusing on the K-12 area in the US, but since ISTE is an international society, the standards it developed are having an impact outside the US as well. TESOL has formed a technology standards task force to produce standards for both teachers and students in ESL/EFL. In the teacher education volume, Murphy-Judy & Youngs (2006) discuss standards in the context of foreign language teaching in the US, Colombia, and the European Union. In line with standards, there is the related area of teacher certification, a topic also touched on by Murphy-Judy & Youngs. As an example, the TESOL organization has had an online teaching certificate program for several years, and so it is possible to get not only the training but also the official confirmation from a respected organization that certifies proficiency in this area.

The seven central questions

Let us move on now to the content promised in the title of the talk: the seven central questions. Given the time limitations of this keynote, I will concentrate on introducing these questions and offering a few ideas or directions for answering them that have emerged from the book or from my own experiences.

1. What should CALL teacher education include?

There are a number of books in recent years aimed at introducing the field to teachers and teacher candidates. While they have differed in their focus, looked at collectively, they provide evidence for development in three areas: technical training, pedagogical training, and training for lifelong learning. For the first area, it is clear that for success in CALL a certain amount of technical expertise is necessary. It is of course difficult to determine what the “minimum” might be for a given setting, but a good place to look for inspiration is the “can do” list at the ICT4LT (Information and Communications Technology for Language Teachers) site (Davies, 2007) at http://www.ict4lt.org/en/ICT_Can_Do_Lists.doc. While

a certain level of technical expertise is needed, pedagogical expertise specific to CALL is also critical. Teaching and learning through computers and other modern technologies is different from the classroom teaching and learning, and simply exporting techniques from traditional teaching misses new opportunities made possible by CALL and may be ineffective or inefficient for other reasons. We have over 25 years of published literature on CALL practice, often supported by research, and a modern language teacher should be aware of this pedagogical domain. Finally, since changes in technology appear so rapidly, training for today must also include a foundation for lifelong learning in CALL. This point is addressed admirably in Robb's (2006) chapter, which centers on the topic of independent learning for teachers using technology. We need to be giving the teachers both the tools and the confidence that they can go on and continue learning on their own, because by the time they graduate applications they were working with the year before may no longer exist in their current form. Teachers need to learn to have a relationship with technology that is very open and will continue to grow.

2. How should teachers be taught?

This is a question I will address in more detail toward the end because the chapters in our book provide several options and give a number of helpful suggestions. Briefly, teachers need to be taught in ways that will help them remember what they are taught, and continue to remember long after the course is gone. They need to be able to apply what they have learned. To do so they need not just theoretical knowledge or practical information, but a way of going from that knowledge to the actual applications that are relevant to their current teaching. And then, following that notion of lifelong learning, they need to be taught so that they are given the encouragement, competence and confidence to learn more once the courses are over.

3. When should teachers be taught CALL?

For pre-service teachers, this is an open question right now. Some CALL courses are taught at the end of the program with the justification that they need to know a lot about the methodology, about second language acquisition and so on, before they get the technology laid on top of that. In other models (e.g., Hegelheimer, 2006) CALL instruction occurs at the beginning of the program so that teacher candidates have a strong technical base, and then they are able to, ideally, make use of that and maybe do more with technology as the program

proceeds. I believe the best model is one that has technology training throughout the program, although that is often difficult to implement due to institutional obstacles.

For in-service situations, sometimes, the training just occurs when it is convenient and when there happens to be sufficient funding available for it. But more, ideally, I think, it occurs when there is an identified need or a project so that teachers are more motivated. We know from research on task-based and project-based learning that such an approach is more likely to lead to deeper engagement with the learning process, especially when there is enough infrastructure in place so that people will be able to follow through on it.

4. *Where should they be taught?*

Pre-service teacher candidates need to be taught it in a way that links the skills and knowledge to their anticipated future teaching environment, so they need to receive their training in settings that make such a connection possible. One of the common complaints in surveys such as that reported in Kessler (2006) is that training in pre-service programs, particularly technical training, is too far removed from what they will actually be doing. Ideally, if an educator knows where the candidates are going to be teaching he or she can try to simulate that setting. When working with a group of teachers who are going to be teaching in various settings, then, a reasonable compromise is to try to simulate a range of likely scenarios.

For in-service teachers, there are three options: on-site, off-site, and online. If it is possible for them to get their training on-site, it is going to be much more relevant for them. They will be able to work in familiar surroundings and connect what they are learning to what they are already doing. It is the responsibility of the teacher trainers in that case to know what their facilities are like, what the goals of that particular language program are, and so on. Off-site settings, such as workshops at conferences, can be useful too because they provide the opportunity to connect with peers. Again, it is important for the instructors in those settings to help the participants make connections between the material and their current teaching environment. Recently, we have seen the expansion of online courses related to CALL, an excellent example of which is provided in the chapter by Bauer-Ramazani (2006). Online instruction is especially appropriate when working with teachers who will either be doing online courses themselves or some kind of blended or hybrid course with an online component. Learning online is a good way of accomplishing two related goals: becoming familiar with

the online learning environment itself and internalizing the relevant information.

5. *Who should teach?*

If a program has a resident CALL expert, peer teaching can be especially effective. It is important, though, for the administration to realize that such expertise and the extra time spent using it with the staff should be compensated. A second option is to use a computer specialist: this is a common way of handling instruction, particularly within large institutions such as universities. The problem with many computer specialists, though, is that, while they are good at providing some basic technical background, often they lack the pedagogical knowledge to help teachers make the connections to language teaching or even to teaching in general. Computer education specialists provide a better solution in that they know how to link the technical to the pedagogical, although they are often limited in their understanding of the unique characteristics of language teaching and learning. The best source, if they are available, are CALL education specialists—people who can understand not only the technology and the ways to link it to educational goals, but also understand second language acquisition and learning issues.

6. *How will we assess knowledge?*

There are several methods that can be used to assess the knowledge gained through instruction. Course completion is perhaps the most widely used way. In courses clearly labeled as involving educational technology or better still, technology in language education or CALL, evidence of course completion and the accompanying grade are on teacher transcripts. Certificates showing completion of workshops are also helpful in this area. It is important to note, however, that it can be difficult to judge the content and value of these experiences without knowledge of the reputation of the institution or organization providing the education. As mentioned above, standards and certification movements are gaining ground, and once these are in place, there will presumably be some forms of assessment to verify the claims made that a particular class or course of study meets the standards or certification requirements. Another approach is to set up formal testing, especially for technical skills and knowledge. In fact within the US, the Educational Testing Service (ETS: www.ets.org) has recently started an ICT test called iSkills aimed at high school and first and second year college students. Although designed for students, it is potentially a way of measuring teacher ICT

competence as well, though not specifically for teaching purposes and not targeted at language learning. Finally, as a means of demonstrating accomplishments in acquiring pedagogical skill and knowledge, a recent direction is the use of portfolios. With portfolios, both pre-service and in-service teachers can have a collection of their own work, showing what they have done and how they have done it, consisting of projects, reflective journals and so on. This can readily be kept in an electronic format for easy updating and distribution.

7. What are the obstacles?

So far, I have been discussing the questions we need to answer that will help us achieve certain learning objectives. The last one I want to address is: what is going to keep us from doing that, or more precisely, what are the obstacles to effective CALL teacher education?

The biggest one is simply inertia, the tendency of things to stay the way they are. First, there is inertia at the level of pre-service and in-service teachers themselves, particularly the latter. Then, there is inertia at the level of the faculty who are teaching them. And finally there is institutional inertia at the level of the administrators and supervisors of the faculty. If a teacher education program has been successful in the past without integrating a technology component, then why add all this complication? I would advise such programs to look ahead and make reasonable predictions about what the teachers will need five years, ten years, or fifteen years from now. If their graduates do not have a technology background, they are going to be at a clear disadvantage, at least with respect to other teachers, and quite possibly with respect to the students as well. Despite resistance to change, change is sometimes necessary.

Several of the other obstacles are fairly straightforward ones that exist in almost any arena when attempting to make changes in education: not having enough time, not having the right facilities, and especially the lack of the experienced and knowledgeable trainers. The fact that these are obvious does not make them any less forbidding. We need to find ways of overcoming them.

But there are more subtle obstacles than those. One that I run into a lot when I go to the TESOL conventions—and we talk about it as well at other CALL conferences—is the perception among our language teaching peers that people in CALL do CALL, and that CALL is an area just for people who are enthusiastic about technology. It is not really a central part of second language teaching and learning. Because of that perception, a lot of teachers who are using technology are doing so without any training in it, and, in some cases, in quite a few cases