

From the Editor

When I first agreed to edit this Special Issue on CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning), I imagined the contributing authors would be mostly from Mexico and the United States. However, I was pleasantly surprised to realize that the contributors to this issue reflect the international character of technology in the modern world. We do have two contributing authors from Mexico and two from the United States, but we also have articles from Brazil, Japan, South Africa, and Spain.

The first article by M^a Victoria Fernández Carballo-Calero from the Universidad de Vigo in Spain is a good introduction to the use of computer technology for language teaching. She explains some general terms, describes some uses of computers and clearly discusses some of the advantages and disadvantages of using computers. She also examines the use of computers for assessment purposes.

The second article by Vera Lúcia Menezes de Oliveira e Paiva from Brazil presents the idea of community. More and more the Internet is being used for language learning and throughout the years, it has become less mechanical and more based on language for communication. This emphasis on the communicative aspects of the Internet (email, chat, etc.) has led to studies on the development of virtual communities of users. Prof. Menezes examines how collaborative learning communities can be created that facilitate language learning possibilities.

Three dedicated professors from the Universidad de Colima here in Mexico (Arthur Edwards Block, José Miguel Rodríguez Reyes, and Raúl Aquino Santos) have given us our third article that describes a web-based question-answering system that is in use on their campuses. This self-editing template can be used for both traditional and distance learning situations. While the article is a bit more technical, it is clearly presented and can give us another option for computer use for language learning.

Leila Kajee from South Africa gives us an example of using technology in a less-technologically developed environment. Many of her students had never used a computer before their first experiences at the university level. Her insights as she describes the implementation of an email project at her institute can be very enlightening for all who want to adopt technology in less developed settings.

Armand Affricano, who is working in Japan, examines the philosophy of using computer technology in the classroom as well as offering us some very precise suggestions for using email, e-lists and video-conferences with our students.

No special issue about CALL would be complete without a history of its use in Mexico. Mercedes Rossetti was kind enough to prepare a very informative article relating how computer use began and has developed in recent years.

Nancy McKeand from Louisiana gives a clear description of an on-line classroom management tool, *Nicenet*, that can be used as a tool to help teachers organize their classes.

Finally, Elizabeth Hanson-Smith, Coordinator of the TESOL Electronic Village On-Line sessions describes how you can take advantage of this wonderful free experience in on-line education. Even if you are unable to attend TESOL's annual convention (in Tampa, Florida from March 15-19, 2006), you can take advantage

of this pre-convention, on-line educational program which is free to both members and non-members of TESOL.

By the way, as a member of the Board of Directors of TESOL and a (very) long-time member of MEXTESOL, I would like to encourage you to, besides keeping your MEXTESOL membership up-to-date, consider joining TESOL. TESOL is the international professional organization to which MEXTESOL is affiliated. Mexican residents (as well as those of all other Latin American nations) can become special global or electronic members of TESOL for a very reduced rate. Check out the TESOL website (www.tesol.org) for details. You won't regret it. TESOL is developing more and more on-line benefits for its international members every day.

Finally, I would like to thank all our readers for the time they dedicated to making this issue a success. I also would like to acknowledge a great mentoring effort by Martha Lengeling. Special thanks to Anne V. Martin, my friend and our Style Editor for this issue, who volunteered her valuable time to help this issue become a reality.