

THE  
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British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes

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*Issues in EAP*  
*Learning Technologies*

7th - 9th April 1999

The Language Centre  
University of Leeds





Fourteenth BALEAP Conference

"Issues in  
EAP Learning Technologies"

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Abstracts of papers

with a list of

Past BALEAP/SELMOUS  
conferences and publications

# BALEAP'99 "Issues in EAP Learning Technologies"

## Abstracts

**Olwyn Alexander and Sarah Price**

**Institute for Computer-Based Learning, Heriot-Watt University**

**"Using interactive network-based technology to develop confident language usage in advanced learners".**

Well-designed learning technology can be a powerful tool for helping students learn in innovative ways. Educational multimedia is usually most effective if it is task-based, learner-centred, and highly interactive. Interactivity was originally achieved between student and machine, but advances in computer and network-based technology mean that learners can now interact synchronously and asynchronously with other learners, with the network acting as facilitator and framework. Although learning is inherently an individual process, this networked collaborative working can assist individuals modify concepts and create new meanings.

In the field of language learning, technology has been mainly applied across three broad areas: drill and practice programmes, intelligent human-to-machine multimedia systems, and, most recently, to computer-mediated communications (CMC). This paper considers the application of the first and last items in this range to the teaching of English as a Foreign Language at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh. The objective in introducing this technology has been to supplement and enhance face-to-face teaching by providing an interactive resource, allowing students to work at their own time and pace in those areas where they have most need. By using the network to communicate with others, the students are encouraged to take what they have learned and articulate it in their own words with sufficient authority or 'voice', so that their writing becomes largely their own ideas, rather than an amalgam or resume of other people's. The development of this sense of 'voice' is essential to their acquiring a confidence and real proficiency in English.

We reflect upon the issues that arose throughout the development and delivery of the material, including how student feedback guided system refinements and changed the way that parts of the course were presented. We perform quantitative and qualitative analysis of the dialogues produced to ascertain whether and to what extent deep learning has taken place. We evaluate the students' experiences of using the technology and investigate the suggestion that a sense of on-line 'community' was developed through the use of asynchronous conferencing methods.

**Valerie Arndt, Carol McCullough and Norbert Berger**

**University of Exeter**

**"Talking Academics: the Exeter 'Mini-Lecture' project"**

This project was set up to produce academic listening materials for both classroom use and independent study. 'Mini-lectures', given by academics from various disciplines, and in a variety of lecturing styles, were professionally video-recorded. The lectures were transcribed and tasks were developed and trialled; they include awareness raising of spoken academic discourse, awareness raising of features of spoken language, note-taking and vocabulary extension activities. The presentation will be based on a demonstration of the materials in their password-protected website format, with its instant feedback facility.

**Roger Bowers**

***The World of Language***

**“Public awareness of language: Technology for education and entertainment”**

It may seem perverse to open an academic conference on English for academic purposes with a clearly non-academic presentation. For the notion of public awareness, as in more familiar term ‘the public awareness of science’, implies an avoidance of theory and intellectualisation in favour of popularising a given body of knowledge. Nevertheless, I propose to explore what it is that we would like the general public to understand about language, how we can exploit the curiosity that is out there, and how through technology and online facilities we can create a broad foundation of linguistic sensitivity upon which to build not only academic and vocational programmes but also wider campaigns in areas such as linguistic rights and responsibilities.

Over two years ago, with support from the British Council, we launched the **World of Language** project, details of which are available at <http://www.worldoflanguage.com>. We have not yet succeeded in our aim of creating a (literally) concrete celebration of language, as a millennium project. But we have made good strides in creating a virtual World of Language, one which is visited by online members from (*February 1999*) 67 countries. We have developed a ‘curriculum’ for the public awareness of language. And we have developed exciting design concepts for exhibitions of larger and smaller dimensions.

By looking at some of these developments, sampling some of the online links that are available, and taking one or two detours in areas such as the use of multimedia as ‘course’ or ‘resource’, we will move towards a selection of those aspects of language which, in the view of a specialist audience, have the greatest power in developing a wider and richer public awareness of what language is and does.

**Patrick Boylan, Department of Linguistics, University of Rome III**

**Alessandro Micarelli, University of Rome III and**

**Carla Vergaro, Language Center, University of Rome III**

**“Business Letter Writing with CALL”**

Applied written communication for the business world (letters, reports, memoranda, etc.) is characterized by ritualization and formulas. However, research (Jenkins and Hinds 1987, Bargiela-Chiappini and Harris 1996, Yeung 1997, Kong 1998) has shown that the rhetoric underlying the various business genres varies across cultures, i.e., the same communicative purpose is realized through different rhetorical structures reflecting the different cultural expectations of writers and readers. What researchers also agree on is the recognition of the goal-oriented nature of all communication. Taking these premises into account, the problem is how to help students to succeed in writing effective business texts (letters), that is, in setting and achieving communicative and business world goals in a particular culture.

A Computer-based Training System (CBT) using a neural network was implemented (Boylan and Micarelli, 1997) aiming at fostering creative and responsible letter writing using a holistic and self-directed teaching paradigm. One of the major components of the System is a database of model business letters the user can retrieve and use as “cases”, that is, examples of business communication to draw on.

This paper will describe the theoretical assumption underlying the program and how it works. It will then concentrate on the criteria used to label the business letter samples which form the database. These labels represent the “handles” by means of which the retrieval of cases is possible and are therefore of primary importance. The letter indexing scheme is the result of an interplay between two requirements: (1) to reflect the mental processes the user naturally goes through in composing a letter, i.e., to furnish her/him with possible paths in writing letters that correspond to his goals and

writing style and (2) to offer the user a palette of discourse strategies representing the choices the writer can make to produce a rhetorically suitable text.

The paper argues in favour of dedicating greater attention to the elaboration of domain knowledge before embarking on the design of a CBT System.

**David Catterick**

**Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Dundee**

**“Academic Writing and the Virtual Classroom”**

In many educational institutions around the country the timetabling of classes by academic departments is making it increasingly difficult to schedule classes in English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Guest lectures, laboratory experiments, and conferences can all come between the international student and their weekly EAP class. One possible solution to the problem is the creation of a virtual classroom which allows students 24 hour access to materials and coursework via the WWW. This paper will present a case study of a project to use virtual classroom technology for the teaching of a *Writing Up Research* programme at the University of Dundee. Following a brief description of the technology and teaching materials used, the paper will give a detailed evaluation of the project using survey data. The paper will conclude with a set of guidelines for implementing virtual classroom technology in the teaching of EAP in other institutions.

**Nick Charge**

**UCLES**

**“Considerations in developing and delivering computerised versions of IELTS (CBIELTS)”**

With the advances in computerised testing in the past five years UCLES has embarked on a programme of developing computer adaptive and linear tests. This paper will examine the considerations involved in adapting IELTS Listening, Reading and Writing modules for computerised delivery and discuss the administrative implications of changing to this mode of test delivery. On screen examples of CBIELTS will be presented.

**Trevor Christie**

**University of Leeds**

**“Project work and the Internet”**

Project Work has become an established method of developing study skills in Foundation Year students at the University of Leeds Language Centre, exploiting the University's and the Language Centre's facilities, as well as classroom materials. Some of the students also sourced the Internet for additional information. Many, though, had limited experience in accessing information in this way, and in computer skills in general, which could potentially place them at a disadvantage in their future studies. In order to promote the learning of these skills in the students, it was decided that Internet sources should form part of project input.

This session will demonstrate the Internet elements of a project on Earth Sciences and the design of the student worksheets, including the academic skills development targeted. There will be some consideration of the ways in which the students were encouraged to approach their task and to review completed units in the context of a final written assignment. Student feedback will be presented and discussed, and where possible the impact of this method of working on the written assignment.

**Tricia Coverdale-Jones**

**University of Lincolnshire and Humberside**

**“The use of videoconferencing as a communication tool for language learning: issues and considerations”**

Questionnaires administered to a small sample of students using videoconferencing are analysed, in terms of the students' perceptions of their use of the medium. Questions focus on the affective areas and also issues of politeness and face. Reference is also made to technical considerations. The issues which arise from the student responses are categorized in terms of

- Interrupting and turn-taking
- Impersonality
- Discipline in communication and control of body language
- Lively/competitive versus aggression
- Preparation
- The topic of the role-play itself and authenticity of communication
- Positive experience

Questions addressed include the following;

a) Language learning may be enhanced in a real communication situation. Is there a need for greater authenticity in videoconferencing than in the standard role-play situations so frequently used by language teachers?

b) Are there problems of alienation from the corresponding group which do not arise in face-to-face interactions? Is there a lack of empathy, or a limit to trust?

c) Can collaboration for common goals, the sharing of working and learning experiences and the provision of both formal and informal environments overcome potential problems?

The importance of pedagogical planning and preparation will be emphasised. Means of dealing with problem areas and considerations for training in the use of videoconferencing will also be discussed.

**Alejandro Curado**

**Universidad de Extremadura**

**“Using the concordancer in computer science English: Drawing much attention”**

The application of concordancing software in the language class has increased ever since Tim Johns appreciated it (1986) as a powerful tool. The teacher-researcher (Johns 1993) has a supervising role in this type of language setting, where students 'play' with language. In the case of Spanish computer science students, English learning may be 'extremely necessary', as some of my students put it, but the fact is that few take advantage of oral classes on account of the heavy burden of classes and subjects they must bear. In fact, in order to motivate them, the more specific and subject-related the linguistic input is, the more interest they show. Thus, by letting them work with their own concordanced listing taken from a representative corpus in computer science, the teacher relies on his/her supervising role for ensuring linguistic intake. In this paper, I set out to describe how work with the concordancer succeeds in drawing students' attention no matter how low their linguistic level may be. Results and a discussion are offered on the methodology and tasks employed in the case of computer science English.

**Derrick Ferney and Sharon Waller**  
**Anglia Polytechnic University, Cambridge.**

**“Key factors in the design of an interactive multimedia CD-ROM for EAP Learning”**

Context: The paper will draw on experience gained by the Dept. of Languages at APU in producing the CD ‘Excel at Academic English’. The CD aims to help non-native speakers of English prepare for academic English examinations, notably IELTS, in preparation for study at an English-speaking university.

Indicative Contents:

- Defining the pedagogic aims of a programme
- Choosing the most appropriate authoring platform. (A detailed analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the various options will be made available in a handout, rather than being dealt with in the paper itself)
- Mapping the content into a hierarchical programme structure or flowchart
- Tackling the ‘knowledge engineering’ problem i.e. bridging the gap between authors and developers
- Designing an interface which will maximise information transfer and take account of human psychological limitations such as memory capacity, perception and attention. It will be argued that handling large volumes of text poses particular problems for interface design. Reference will be made to the guidelines on text and background colour produced by EMASHE (Glasgow University). Screen semiotics such as colour codes, control icons, fonts and positioning of screen elements will be considered in some detail as they play a crucial role in establishing consistency and helping the user navigate the material
- Building in interactivity. Help, Feedback and Control issues
- Deciding on the computer’s limitations and, in natural language applications, dealing with free text entry. The need for reference to a (human) teacher
- Evaluation procedures

Delegates are welcome to try out the programme during the conference and will be invited to complete an evaluation sheet.

**Andy Gillett**  
**University of Hertfordshire**  
**“EAP on the Web”**

The object of this forum is to provide an opportunity for people who have some experience of designing web pages for EAP, or for people who would like to try, to get together and share their experience. I would like to invite people who have some experience to bring their attempts along to the session. This might then lead to a small group of interested people who would continue to correspond after the conference. We should have a live internet connection, ceiling projector and large screen, Netscape Communicator, floppy and CD drives. This will allow people who have something on the web to connect directly to their web pages. We will also be able to access web site being developed on floppy disks.

**Robin Goodfellow**

**Institute of Educational Technology, Open University**

**“Learning to learn in a distributed online environment”**

This paper will describe the theory, design and implementation of an international course in EAP to be run online from the OU's Institute of Educational Technology in Spring 1999. The course (Lexica English Online, acronym LEO), is aimed at upper-intermediate/advanced learners of English, who have limited access to tuition and a requirement to master a body of vocabulary, eg: for proficiency examinations, academic publication, occupational training & development, etc. Its delivery platform is a distributed learning environment originally designed for learners of French, and tested in 2 pilot courses in 1997 & 1998 (Goodfellow & Lamy 1998, Lamy & Goodfellow 1999). In this environment, distance learners download software tools and tutorial material from a central web site, study alone at home or in their educational institutions, and are supported by virtual peers and tutors via a computer conference. The aims of the course are to help the learners to acquire a body of vocabulary specified by themselves and to support them in the development of independent, technology-supported study strategies which will help to improve their future vocabulary learning and their language learning in general (Goodfellow 1995). Learners apply the downloaded tools (a word-study program incorporating functions for corpus-building, item selection, annotation, thesaurus-building, concordancing and self-testing) to the study and practice of vocabulary contained in a set of target texts specified by them. This work is supported by web-based resources and online tutorial and peer group discussion focusing on the relation between the learning strategies involved in the use of the tools, the specific words each learner has selected, and the general ideas derived from the literature on lexical structure and the mental lexicon. The tutorial and discussion leads on to set of activities in which the world wide web is exploited as a source of further texts on which to use the tools. At the end of the course each learner receives a personalised assessment of their approach to the acquisition of vocabulary, and recommendations for further study. The learners in the Spring 1999 course include a group of post-graduate students at Iowa State University in the USA, and individuals from higher education institutions in Indonesia, Australia, Israel and Spain. Key questions for the evaluation of this course will be the extent to which these disparate and distributed learners have been helped to create a learning community online, and the degree to which their textual interaction is characterised by reflection on language and learning issues.

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R. Goodfellow & M-N. Lamy (1998): Learning to learn a language, at home and on the Web. In *Selected Proceedings of EuroCALL97*, ReCALL Vol.10 No.1.

M-N. Lamy & R. Goodfellow (1999 forthcoming) Reflective Conversation in the Virtual Language Classroom. *Language Learning and Technology* (online journal <http://polyglot.cal.msu.edu/llt>), January.

**Katie Gray**

**Continuing Education, University of Oxford**

**“Capturing speech”**

A look at how the text-based nature of cmc (computer mediated communication) can be turned to advantage: by offering participants the chance to voice ideas and issues that might find no forum in a face-to-face setting and by blurring distinctions of genre, discourse and style a different kind of participation can be encouraged by the medium.



**Lynne Hale and Victoria Odeniyi**  
**Middlesex University.**

**“How do you know you are doing a good job?”**

This presentation will explore how an internal quality review of an in-session unassessed English Language and Learning Support service challenged the providers of that service to find ways of demonstrating the effectiveness of the support in terms of ‘value added’. ‘Value added’ can be understood as a measure of student achievement indicated by the difference between entry and exit benchmarks (PCFC/CNAA, 1990), (FEU,1995). This gives rise to a number of questions. If it is considered desirable to measure proficiency at the beginning and end of a support experience how can we best assess these benchmarks? Given the complex and varied profiles of the majority of students seeking support at a new, urban university like Middlesex (cf Thorpe,1998) diagnostic indicators are difficult to categorise. As for exit measures, surely the ultimate goal of support is to effect improvement in the students’ academic work which is revealed in coursework. And if the desired improvement has taken place, how can we be confident that it the indicated student achievement has been reached solely through the support?

Caul (1993) advocates asking the students. This is a common practice. Yet even this presents logistical problems for a multi-campus support service with open classes where at deadline times, which vary according to subject, class sizes diminish.

We turned to technology in an attempt to address some of these issues relating to the effectiveness of the support. A pilot project was set up using university web pages to establish:

1. A virtual board of studies where individual students or a student representative can communicate feedback on in-session support;
2. A registration process which includes a skills inventory which students can use for self-assessment on entry and exit from support;
3. A study skills helpline to document the electronic tutor/student interaction. The presentation will report on the progress of this project.

**Julia Hathaway**

**Richmond, the American International University in London**

**“From passive consumer to discriminating user: Using study plans to maximise the use of language learning software packages.”**

Using recent case studies, this paper looks at how individual student study plans can increase and improve students’ use of language learning software packages where these are used on a self-access basis. Such resources can often have novelty value and be temporarily attractive to students but then lose their appeal. How can they be integrated into an effective, longer-term language learning landscape? This can come about through the use of individual study plans. These study plans are based on Holec’s (in Riley, P. Discourse and Learning, 1985) now classic analysis of the components of autonomous learning. They are designed to enable students to develop awareness of their aims and purposes and to increase consciousness of their preferred individual methods and procedures of language learning. As a result, students use these costly I.T. resources as informed, aware and discriminating users and as part of an overall, coherent individually designed plan of study. Case studies of such study plans illustrate how computer software packages can often become a vital, integrated and highly valued part of the students’ range of language learning resources.

**John Higgins and Goodith White**

**University of Stirling**

**“Learning about textual coherence: experience with a logging version of a text re-ordering activity”**

A special version of the computer program SEQUITUR was developed which logs all student input. This program presents the beginning of a text and three possible continuations, one correct and two others picked at random by the software. Learners click on one and it is either added to the text or they are told to try again; the process continues until the text is complete. Input is timed so that responses can be classified as CONFIDENT + RIGHT, CONFIDENT + WRONG, HESITANT + RIGHT and HESITANT + WRONG. This paper reports on trials with low intermediate students using texts broken up into short segments, and with advanced EAP students using text broken into complete sentences, thus depriving learners of purely syntactic clues.

**Steve Issitt**

**EISU, University of Birmingham**

**“Creating an EAP self study programme”**

This paper describes the design and production of a set of self study materials for use by pre-sessional and insessional students. The main aim will be to itemise and specify the steps involved in transforming materials initially developed for teaching use into a coherent computer-held self study programme. The course was designed for MBA students but the processes are seen as very relevant for many other subject areas.

The issues faced by the non-IT specialist will be strongly emphasised and the practical applications of such programmes will be considered and evaluated.

**Huw Jarvis**

**University of Salford**

**“Study skills in IT: practical suggestions for training pre-sessional EAP students in the efficient and effective academic applications of networked university computers.”**

The massive potential for computers in teaching and learning and the motivational power the technology have been well documented. The contribution of EFL in this has been extremely positive, Levy (1997 :3) comments, “Arguably, within the field of computers and education, especially within humanities computing, it is teachers in the area of EFL and foreign languages more generally that have been in the vanguard.” However, the extent to which we are equipping non-native speakers with the skills needed to use computers efficiently and effectively in their academic studies remains questionable. My own research (1997 :48) suggests that “Despite a very positive contribution from the current literature, regrettably, the study skills element appears to be largely neglected”. My paper will provide a rationale for the inclusion of a computer study skills element when training students on pre-sessional EAP courses. The paper will illustrate some practical tasks that students can be set in order help them become more efficient, more effective and more focused on ‘academic applications’ when working on a university computer network.

Although the paper will be of interest to practitioners already involved in the field, it will be ‘jargon free’ and as such open to people with little or no experience in this area.

**Tim Johns and Jonathan Rees**  
**EISU, University of Birmingham**

**“The use of software in the ‘one to one’ writing consultation - tools for student learning and academic research.”**

Traditionally many universities have offered a system of one to one “writing” consultation as part of their English language insessional support for international students. Recently, in many institutions this kind of service has come under strain for logistical and financial reasons. As a result, many international students receive less consultation time than they desire or require.

This paper examines how tutors can use existing “off the shelf” software (concordancing programs) to help students to obtain maximum benefit from the consultation time.

It shows how students can be taught within these sessions to develop their own analysis strategy, enabling them to make use of concordancing software and self-access remedial grammar software for post-consultation learning purposes.

It discusses how new software such as the Trawler text analysis program (developed at the University of Birmingham) may prove of value not only in broadening the scope for student post-consultation self-correction but also for pre-consultation self-assessment.

It concludes by looking forward to the likely shape of things to come in terms of the the use of technology in the 1 to 1 situation.

**Bob Jordan**  
**University of Manchester**

**“EAP - The Human Dimension: The Facts Behind the Figures”**

This paper is based on a questionnaire that was distributed to BALEAP member institutions between summer and winter 1998. It begins by looking at the background of the BALEAP EAP teachers: their experience abroad, the foreign languages they can speak, and the reasons why they embarked on ELT in the first place. It then looks at their preferred areas of EAP and at their biggest difficulties now. These difficulties are compared with those outlined by Tim Johns (Birmingham) nearly 20 years ago (reported in ELT Documents: 112, 1981). Finally, it surveys the biggest changes in EAP in recent years together with the present greatest needs in EAP - all from the respondents’ point of view. They also suggested EAP research areas that most appealed.

**Tim Kelly**  
**CELTE, University of Warwick**

**“Recording Lectures. A How-To Guide for EAP Video & Computer Freaks.”**

I propose to present a paper suggesting the best ways of recording authentic academic lectures to create video resources and video- based CD ROM materials for EAP. Drawing on my background in film and my experience of recording lectures at St Andrew’s University and Warwick University I will explain some of the special constraints of filming in an academic context. I will offer tips on how to deal with the problems of poor lighting and sound quality in noisy lecture halls, how to deal with lecturers who never stop moving and with audience interaction – as well as some of the problems encountered by the use of slides and OHPs. I would also offer some additional tips on recording video for computer applications and on the use of digital equipment.

**Susan Linklater and Esther Dunbar**  
**University of Glasgow**  
**“Integrating IT Skills in an EAP Course”**

This talk will describe how IT skills training is being developed and integrated into a pre-sessional and pre-entry EAP course. Specifically, it will consider how EAP students can improve their language skills through training in IT skills (e.g. electronic database searching techniques, email) which are essential for academic study; and how these skills, once acquired, enable students to continue to improve in all the language skills. There will be a demonstration of some of the Internet-based tasks that we have developed for our students. Finally, we will consider how such tasks can encourage learner autonomy.

**Tony Lynch**  
**University of Edinburgh**  
**“Using mixed media to individualise post-task language analysis”**

In recent years we have seen a revival of interest in the problems - and pleasures - of teaching lexicogrammar and in the role of ‘noticing’ in language learning. I am particularly interested in finding ways of helping my students to notice the language forms they have produced in speaking tasks, which are inevitably less accessible than those used in writing. This talk will describe one attempt to do that on a pre-sessional EAP course by integrating the use of three electronic media: video, audio and microlab. It may offer one solution to the difficulty of individualising the post-task analysis of students’ own performances.

**Joan McCormack**  
**Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Reading**  
**“Self-access learning as an integrated part of an EAP programme.”**

The number of SACs is increasing, a response to the move towards learner autonomy. Due to the unstructured nature of the self-access centre, and the wide range of users, evaluation of the extent to which it is helping learning to take place is difficult.

However, observations over a period of two years suggest that many learners do not benefit as they should, as the initial introduction and guidelines or ‘pathways’ are not sufficient to equip many students with the confidence or ability to determine their own learning. Students either say they cannot choose what is beneficial to them as they see the teacher the ‘expert’ or they may regard the time as ‘not serious like a real class’. In order to overcome some of these difficulties SAC learning has been integrated as part of a study skills course.

Steps were taken in three areas

- 1 Student questionnaire to ascertain their goals; the administration of these questionnaires is deliberately delayed until half-way through the term, as at this stage students have a more realistic view of what their real needs are, and how to be specific about them.
- 2 Learner training through the study skills class, looking at factors such as those which make learning successful, the techniques which students use to learn vocabulary etc. The focus is on the learner identifying those strategies which can be successful for themselves.
- 3 Further support over a period of time through individual tutorials to help students to apply effective strategies to their learning, set appropriate goals and objectives, and to monitor their own progress. It became obvious that this was necessary, as in many cases students needed some individual help to apply what was done in the classroom directly to their own approach to study.

This paper looks at the potential benefits of this integration of an SAC within an EAP curriculum. It is based on the premise that learner training, over a period of time, with the SAC seen as an integral overt element of the programme, is essential if these centres are to be of optimum benefit to the students.

**Eddy Moran and Scott Windeatt**

**The Language Centre, University of Newcastle upon Tyne**

**“Who’s in charge? EAP software, autonomous learning, and the locus of control.”**

Educational software is usually designed to allow some choice over aspects of the material to be studied, and the degree of choice available to individual learners depends on the locus of control, or the extent to which control of the program lies with the learner or with the program. Software in which the locus of control lies with the learner will typically “allow learners to proceed at their own pace, control the sequence of instruction, choose the amount of practice, or decide the level of difficulty attempted” (Higginbotham-Wheat 1990: 252) and it has been claimed, the relative effectiveness of varying the locus of control “is a central theme of CAI” (Niemiec 1996: 157).

Learner control is generally seen as desirable, partly because it helps to develop learner autonomy (“Not all packages ... allow learners to move around the materials with as much freedom as would seem desirable for the development of cognitive and metacognitive autonomy.” (Kenning 1996: 126)), and partly because learners are likely to make better - because more carefully-considered - decisions than the authors of the software (“Not that one would wish to argue that learners always know best. Simply that developers are not infallible and can make wrong assumptions.” (Kenning 1996: 126); “... (the argument is that) learners make better decisions than teachers or instructional designers because they have a bigger stake in the educational outcomes and intimate knowledge of their learning preferences” (Niemiec 1996: 158))

This paper will consider findings from research into the effects of varying the locus of control with learners of different levels of proficiency, and the implications for the design of EAP software, and for training learners in the use of software and the Web.

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Niemiec, R. P., Sikorski, C., & Walberg, H. J. 1996, “Learner-control effects: A review of reviews and a meta-analysis.” *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 15(2), 157-174.

**Hilary Nesi and Rod Revell**

**CELTE, University of Warwick**

**“Theory, pedagogy and practice in academic listening: a dissonant trio?”**

The University of Warwick is currently producing an interactive CD-ROM which aims to equip non-native speakers planning to study at university in English with the necessary skills to cope effectively with lectures. The materials on the CD-ROM will be based on a corpus of some 40 lectures in a wide variety of subjects delivered by a random sample of lecturers to undergraduate and postgraduate audiences.

In making sense of these lectures and, more particularly, of the challenges which they present for non-native students, the project team has drawn on the accumulated theoretical knowledge base on

academic listening and, in considering their application for teaching purposes, has reviewed existing teaching materials in the field. Both background and teaching materials are limited; only recently has the first collection of papers on academic listening been published (Flowerdew 1994), and there are relatively few academic listening course books.

This paper will look at some aspects of current theoretical and pedagogical practice in the light of insights drawn from the Warwick corpus of academic lectures.

**Pip Neville-Barton**

**School of Languages, UNITEC Institute of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand**

**“Modelling & Moderating: Using Video to Enhance Student Oral Performance”**

A significant feature of the Diploma in English (Advanced) programme at UNITEC is the student conference at the end of each semester. This conference is organised by the students with some staff assistance. Each student is required to present a 15-minute paper which is assessed as part of their final mark.

Although this is a worthwhile activity on many grounds, it raises significant pedagogical problems. Two particular issues are those of establishing performance criteria, and moderating assessment. Both of these have been resolved using video technology.

Leading up to the conference students are understandably concerned about their public presentation in a foreign language, and about the requirements for gaining a pass in this assessment. The use of video footage of previous conferences has been used to model the type of performance expected, to discuss performance criteria, and to demonstrate that this task is possible for anxious students.

Time restrictions and the numbers of students taking part in this conference necessitate at least eight parallel sessions. Hence there is a need for approximately 12 markers. Assessment of conference presentations on a topic of the presenter's choice is a subjective English language situation, thus effective moderation between markers is essential. The use of video footage in pre-conference moderation sessions has been shown to be both effective as a moderation tool, and efficient in terms of time commitment.

This paper describes these situations in more detail, and uses this example to discuss how the use of video technology in a very 'normal', low-key way is both sensible and effective.

**David Oakey**

**University of Hull**

**“An EAP module via the Merlin internet learning environment.”**

This is a 10 credit EAP module which is delivered in part through Merlin, a web-based learning environment being developed at Hull. I intend the demonstration to highlight the benefits and limitations of web-based course delivery in a university context where student numbers are increasing and classroom contact hours are limited. Students taking this module come from a wide range of departments and their other course commitments mean that we have difficulty in timetabling their EAP classes.

The demonstration will feature examples of how a web-based environment can allow students access to the module independently, how it enables a tutor to give written or oral feedback on students' individual or group performance of written or oral tasks, and how it can simplify the time-consuming administrative aspects of a module with a large and diverse student body. The demonstration is also intended to stimulate discussion of possible limitations of web-based courses such as lack of security, validity of assessment, and student computer non-literacy, and the ways in which these can be overcome.

**Jim Ross**

**London Guildhall University**

**“Real tasks – real learning: San Andrés and EAP”**

This presentation will briefly contextualise the learning situation at London Guildhall University in which this multimedia CD-ROM was developed, and describe how it is being delivered. It will then go on to describe the contents of the CD-ROM, both the package of twenty tutorial lessons focusing on skills development, and the research content materials - the San Andrés of the title. From this the methodology of the package becomes apparent – the ‘real tasks’ of the title, which I will then seek to justify.

The second half of the presentation will be based around a demonstration of the package, concentrating on the tutorial exercises designed to develop students learning skills but also taking a look at the content research materials and how they have been interactively designed.

It will conclude with a look at refinements of the package under development, some a response to requests from students who have used and evaluated the package. Finally, I hope to have time to respond to questions from the floor.

**Leslie Sheldon**

**University of Strathclyde**

**“Some uses of PC technology in teaching English and modern languages (1:1 self-access/group scenarios)”**

This paper considers the potential, practical applications and concrete obstacles (both technological and ‘cultural’) encountered in the effective introduction PC technology to teaching staff and students in EAP contexts. Despite fine words about the need to learn something ‘new’ and ‘cutting edge’ (e.g. the use of digital cameras/scanners, e-mail audio/video attachments and the World Wide Web), and of maximum perceived relevance to students, such factors as a the ‘technophobe’ humanities background from which most EAP teachers come, and the apparent lack of key concepts/skills/vocabulary on the part of both teachers AND students temper such idealism. The sheer cussedness of insitutional computer ‘support’ facilities (and other not untypical infrastructure problems) means the appeal of the new is much more modest in practice.

However, there IS considerable potential in new technology and the paper considers some of these, as well as outlining some solutions (e.g. the use of peer ‘multipliers’) exploited at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow to overcome the problems.

**Lesley Shield, Open University, UK,**

**Lawrence B.Davies, Nanzan University, Japan and**

**Markus J.Weininger, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brasil**

**“MOO ex Machina: real learning in a virtual environment”**

While the most popular (and most transparent) language learning activity within Multi-User Domain – Object Oriented [MOO] is probably ‘chat’, MOO can offer a far broader potential range of language learning activities. As Turbee (1996) notes “The types of activities that can be created for a MOO are limited only by the imaginations of the teachers and learners.” Less apparent than ‘chat’, and potentially more powerful for learning, is the fact that it is possible to use MOO to interact not only with other players, but also with the MOO environment. Users have access to a range of interactive tools such as whiteboards, bulletin boards, newlists and MOOmail, which supplement and extend ‘chat’ into more meaningful and constructive activities. Communication, both synchronous and asynchronous, adds both the immediacy of real-time interaction, and the more

considered exchanges afforded by email. Finally, running a web browser at the same time as a MOO client, even allows the incorporation of web-based multimedia into text-based MOOs, thus providing learners with a well-stocked toolbox to enhance 'lateral thinking' (de Bono, 1982.). The presenters discuss the first phase of a study set up at Schmooze University (an EFL/ESL MOO) integrating the sociocultural aspects of MOO, the MOO environment and the multimedia opportunities afforded by the World Wide Web. Learners worked collaboratively to research and produce the content of a website based on information, tools and descriptions located in a specially-developed project area within Schmooze. Having negotiated their website's content, they used a specially-created web-authoring template to post their project to the Web. The problems and successes experienced in planning, designing, implementing and maintaining a MOO activity of this sort are outlined, and the presenters provide practical suggestions for teachers who may be interested in using MOO with their learners but also wish to consider what the technology may offer beyond replicating the traditional classroom environment.

#### **References:**

de Bono, E. 1982. *de Bono's Thinking Course*. New York, New York: Facts on File, Inc  
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**Lesley Shield, Open University,  
Markus Kötter, Open University and  
Mirjam Hauck, Open University  
"Taking the Distance out of Distance Learning"**

The Centre for Modern Languages at the Open University is one of the biggest providers of distance language learning courses and materials in the world. Since 1995, it has been investigating the use of different sorts of technology, from telephone to Internet-based audiographics software to provide speaking and listening practice to its students.

In response to student need, activities using telephone conferencing were implemented and evaluated between 1995-7. Certain constraints were identified which resulted in further trials involving e-mail and telephone conferencing with opportunities for learner-collaboration outside fixed meeting times, as well as participation in tutor-mediated sessions. The increased robustness of Internet audio technology now allows learners more flexibility for synchronous collaboration in terms of time, independence and availability of channels than does telephone conferencing. Two subsequent sets of trials have been set up, one using audiographic techniques and one using audio only. It is hypothesised that some features observed in the telephone environment will be applicable to the new, Internet-based environment, but that the increased flexibility will modify not only learner but also tutor behaviour even further than in the telephone/email trials, allowing increased collaboration and peer support and improving the learning experience by promoting fluency skills, increased risk-taking and the re-cycling of previously acquired vocabulary and structures in new settings.

While the current research is being carried out with French and German learners, it is believed that the findings are extensible to learners of English. The presenters therefore propose not only to outline the results of their investigations so far, but also to demonstrate the software and to discuss ways in which it could be used effectively by English learners.



**Barbara Skinner**  
**University of Ulster**

**“Computer conferencing - does it motivate EFL students?”**

This presentation will firstly examine what computer conferencing (CC) is and how it works. Secondly, it will look at how CC can be used in English language teaching and in particular, the positive effects it has on students' motivation for language learning.

The talk is based upon reflections gained from using CC sessions as an add-on component to a Pre-sessional EAP programme. The presenter found that students were motivated to use CC for three main reasons: that it gave them the opportunity for 'real' communication and to be part of a 'real' community, that it enhanced their personal confidence and that it helped them overcome writing apprehension.

The presentation is aimed at ELT professionals who have no prior experience of using CC.

**Benita Studman-Badillo and Hilary Nesi**  
**CELTE, University of Warwick**

**“The fifth study skill: assumptions and expectations regarding the role of the Internet in British universities.”**

The size and scope of the Internet has increased enormously within the last three years, and it now contains hundreds and thousands of sites of potential interest to Higher Education students. According to Kurvink (1998) the dilemma faced by modern educators is “not whether we use the Internet, but how”. This paper reports on a survey to discover both whether and how the Internet is being used in British universities to support subject teaching and learning, and argues that courses in English for Academic Purposes should reflect the value currently placed on Internet resources by subject departments.

The survey report summarizes findings from three major information sources: interviews and questionnaires involving respondents from the majority of subject departments at Warwick University, comments mailed to Higher Education mailing lists and newsgroups, and the library and departmental websites of over 40 British universities, many of which refer students to Internet resources.

The findings suggest that university departments now expect incoming students to be relatively skilled in critical Internet use. This paper is presented as an analysis of what we feel to be a neglected area of non-native speaker student need.

**Christopher Tribble**  
**CALS, University of Reading; IELE, Lancaster University; Department of Applied Linguistics, King's College, London University**

**“Big corpora, little corpora: what relevance do they have for the teaching of writing?”**

In this paper I shall be considering some of the problems which face teachers of writing in academic settings and ways in which electronic corpora may constitute a useful resource for those of us working in EAP. The paper will have three main sections:

Part 1: Genre knowledge and teaching writing

Part 2: Where might corpora come in?

Part 3: Towards a corpus informed pedagogy of writing in EAP

In the first part I shall summarise how genre approaches to the teaching writing have developed, and comment on the kinds of knowledge that writers need in order to make allowable contributions to

the genres in which they wish to participate. I shall then give an overview of the kinds of insight that can be gained from a variety of electronic corpora - including the British National Corpus / a specialist research corpus of professional writing / a collection of Polish university student essays / multi-media encyclopedia essays. During this discussion I shall also outline some of the practical problems which can arise in using such resources. In the final section of the paper I shall make some proposals for a practical, corpus informed approach to teaching writing in EAP.

**Ruth Vilmi**

**Language and Communication Centre, Helsinki University of Technology**

**“Collaborative Writing Projects on the Internet: more than half a decade of experimentation”**

Ruth Vilmi has been interested in collaborative writing projects since 1993, when she organised an email writing project involving 240 students globally. From 1994 onwards, the project included not only email, but also many other activities on the Internet. The technology was developed in order to handle the mail. The email project, now known as the International Writing Exchange (IWE), is still running. In addition, new task-based activities, such as the International Robot and Environment Activities have been tried with international teams. In this presentation, she will tell how these early projects have led to various interactive and interdisciplinary activities such as designing and testing language teaching software with students and researchers at HUT. She will demonstrate Xercise Engine, an authoring tool produced in Java by students for creating interactive language learning materials or adventure games on the Web. She will also show Websort, the Java program being developed for handling the mail generated by the IWE. In conclusion, the writer will tell about the current status of the Kings' Road Project, a multidisciplinary, multilingual, international project (both live and virtual) for Russian, Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian students of all ages, along the historical road from St.Petersburg to Bergen. The live project requires local research, with oral presentations on the findings, as well as creating stories and acting; everything is done in the students' mother tongue or in a foreign language. Local sports and relay events will also be arranged, from one end of the road to the other, as well as art and photography exhibitions, music and dance festivals and fancy dress balls, where students can prepare, serve and eat local delicacies; all the events will be recorded in virtual reality and products will be made, using the Internet and software developed by local students.

**Aisha Walker**

**Computer Based Learning Unit, University of Leeds**

**“Providing Support for In-sessional Academic Writing: the potential of the internet”**

This paper looks at the potential of the Internet in supporting in-sessional academic writing by describing and evaluating a course taught via the Internet. Lesson materials were delivered through the World Wide Web and students used e-mail to submit their assignments. An analysis of e-mailed work is presented which shows how one student worked to incorporate the elements taught in the course and tried to build on the work of other students. The analysis also shows that e-mail can be useful in the initial stages of the writing process, with appropriate facilitation from the teacher, but, in the later stages, has drawbacks due to product quality. The final issue explored is how e-mail use can be developed in supporting the teaching of academic writing, in particular in the scaffolding of students' writing skills through collaborative argumentation.

**Wang Lixun**

**EISU, University of Birmingham**

**Software Demonstration: “Bilingual Sentence Shuffler”**

- The Bilingual Sentence Shuffler is a Computer-assisted Language Learning program based on parallel texts.
- It is a sentence-shuffling program, which deconstructs a text by shuffling the sentences, and then asks the user to put the sentences back to their correct order.

**Background**

- Reordering is a kind of text manipulation.
- General interests in text manipulation are: first, as a way of examining text structure; second, as a teaching and learning aid.
- There are many advantages of computer-controlled manipulation, such as that it is automatic, controllable, student-centred, communicable via network, and provides instant feedback.
- Sentence-shuffling is not successful as a textbook exercise; but when using the computer, sentences can be moved around on the screen as if they were pieces of paper, and the user’s performance can be recorded via log files and made available for further research.
- History: ‘Jumbler’ is a well-designed pioneer sentence-shuffling program written by Tim Johns in the early 80s. The Bilingual Sentence Shuffler takes ideas from ‘Jumbler’ and further developed them.

**Why a Bilingual Version?**

In foreign-language learning many teachers have long preferred the ‘direct’ method, that is, the use of the mother tongue should be totally excluded. But total exclusion is often difficult, and the use of the mother tongue is not necessarily bad. This program tries to question the assumption of “total exclusion of mother tongue in foreign language learning”.

Apart from that, other reasons are:

- Familiarity with activity
- Difficulty: Switch in other language if stuck
- Stimulates Contrastive Analysis (explicit or implicit)
- Second Foreign Language Learning
- Translation Teaching
- Potential for Reciprocal Learning
- Potential for Text Analysis

**Tilly Warren**

**University of Westminster**

**“Grammar for EAP - computer or lecture format?”**

The CALLCO Grammar project delivers EAP grammar awareness and training using the local network of computers in the University of Birmingham. The materials are based on a course of lectures called ‘Remedial Grammar’. written by Tim Johns and used with great success for several years. Both the computer program and the lecture course use techniques of data-driven learning pioneered by Johns to raise awareness of the important relationship between grammar and lexis in English and academic writing.

Now that students are able to study grammar both in lectures and on the computer a monitoring project was set up to track students using the computer materials only, going to lectures only or making use of both facilities. This presentation will show examples from each type of delivery and discuss the results of the monitoring project in terms of the relative effectiveness of self-access computer grammar materials and the traditional lecture format.

**Angela Whitehead**  
**ELTU, University of Manchester**  
**“Developing CALL software for EAP pre-sessional students”**

This paper focuses on the design and implementation of a piece of CALL software for EAP pre-sessional students using the Asymetrix Toolbook authoring program. It gives suggestions of how technology can be exploited to produce tasks on the computer which can be used by students in self-access mode to give practice in study skills and consolidate classroom work. There will be a description of the materials developed and of students' attitudes towards the program.

**Kate Wilson**  
**University of Canberra**  
**“Technology: a strait-jacket for critical thinking in the academic writing process of NNS students?”**

This paper investigates the place of note-taking in the academic writing process of non-native speaker (NNS) students and asks whether computer technology enhances or constrains this skill. First, I will present my research findings about note-taking in non-native speakers' academic writing and will attempt to persuade you of the importance of teaching note-taking as an integral part of the EAP course. My research suggests that note-taking can be a useful strategy to help students' develop critical thinking and gain a 'voice' in their academic writing. Next, I will discuss the uses of computer technology in note-taking and whether EAP teachers should be encouraging or discouraging their students from using technology as a tool to support critical thinking.

**Birgit Winkler and Hilary Nesi**  
**CELTE, University of Warwick**  
**“On screen or in print? A comparative study of the use of a learner's dictionary in book form and on CD-ROM.”**

**Abstract:** Although three of the major dictionary publishers have now produced dictionaries on CD-ROM for advanced learners of English (Collins Cobuild on CD-ROM, Longman Interactive English Dictionary, and Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary on CD-ROM) no studies have yet been published which compare the processes and products of on-line look-up and traditional dictionary consultation.

This paper reports on a study of the ways in which dictionary format affects the outcome of a writing task, and of the strategies employed by users of the two types of dictionary.

Twenty pairs of subjects, all first or second-year students in the Department of English Studies at the University of Graz in Austria, were asked to write a summary with the help of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, available to half the group in printed form, and to the other half in electronic form. Questionnaires and interviews were also used to find out about the subjects' attitudes to the task.

The paper presents some of the major differences between the two groups in terms of user behaviour and task outcome.

**Christine Zaher**

**Richmond, the American International University in London**

**“Coping with Internet plagiarism in freshman writing courses”**

With its wealth of information and ideas, and its “Papers for Sale” websites, the Internet is clearly both a blessing and a curse when it comes to freshman writing. The fact that Internet plagiarism is now a fact of college life is well documented. The writing teacher is in a particularly vulnerable position as tailor-made papers can now be ordered with the greatest of ease. So what can the instructor do to ensure that what is submitted is the student’s own work?

The presentation will address this question by outlining a strategy for academic writing instruction. The presenter will talk through the steps she follows leading to the completion of a typical freshman writing assignment. The strategy takes into account both process and product writing concerns, and is designed in such a way that plagiarising from the Internet is both discouraged and detectable. The steps under discussion are:

- Information for students about course requirements
- Choice of subject
- Choice of sources
- Pre-writing strategies
- Drafting (including instructor input)
- Revision (including peer input)
- Submission requirements

The presenter will also explain what policy she uses on the occasions when plagiarism is detected.

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