

Guest Editorial Preface

Special Issue from the GloCALL 2015 & 2017 Conference

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Welcome to the 2018 August (Vol. 19, No. 2) issue of CALL-EJ. Since 2005, the PacCALL and APACALL organizations have jointly organized an annual conference to bring together participants who have an interest in CALL within the Asia Pacific region. In this issue, it is the pleasure of the editors, Peter Gobel, Kyoto Sangyo University, Japan and Kean Wah Lee, University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus, Malaysia to publish five selected papers from the GloCALL 2015 and GloCALL 2017 conference held in Daejeon, South Korea, and Brunei Darulsalam respectively.

The selected articles report on the results of a range of CALL-related academic work carried out by researchers from Vietnam, Japan, Malaysia, and Thailand. The studies have examined a range of CALL topics ranging from innovative CALL-based pedagogies to develop writing and speaking skills, to factors affecting tools adoption for language learning, through to ICT policy implementation.

The first article, “Tablet Detectives: Teaching Narrative Fiction through a Digital Framework” by Twitchell and Bonner is an examination of the effectiveness of using a digital framework called ‘Tablet Detectives’ to teach narrative fiction in a fun and creative way. Often, English language teaching in Japanese universities is still dependent on lecturing and reading/translation teaching methods. This creative approach enabled students to collaborate and interact with authentic materials in a more engaging way than is normally the case in the Japanese context.

Still on the theme of innovative CALL-based pedagogies is the second article by Kongsuebchart and Suppasetsee entitled “The Effect of a Weblog-based Electronic Portfolio on Thai EFL Undergraduate Students’ English Writing Skills.” The study examines Thai Undergraduate students’ exploration of E-portfolio via weblog to improve writing proficiency. The findings reported an increase in writing proficiency after undergoing a semester of the intervention. The Thai students also reported positive opinions towards learning through the Weblog-based E-portfolio.

The third article by Okada attempts to answer the question, “How do Speech Model Proficiency and Viewing Order Affect Japanese EFL Learners’ Speaking Performances?” Focusing the study in a Japanese university context, the study aimed to uncover the effect of viewing order (from more- to less- proficient speaker model or less- to more- proficient model) on Japanese freshmen speaking performance. Findings revealed that both speaker models helped enhance learners’ awareness of self/others and improve their own public speaking skills in the EFL classroom.

The fourth paper, “Influences on Smartphone Adoption by Language Learners” by Nguyen Thi Le Hang Doan moves away from pedagogic effects of the CALL approach to look at factors affecting smartphone adoption for language learning in Vietnam. Based on a survey involving 348 EFL learners, and based on the heuristics of the revised Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), findings revealed that perceived usefulness, perceived playfulness and self-management of learning had a positive influence on students’ intention to use smartphones in learning English. Nguyen also provided practical implications for the use of smartphones for language learning.

The fifth and final paper by Auh, Tan, & Lee traces the implementation of the national e-learning policy in the context of a Malaysian Higher Education Institution. Viewing the enactment through the theoretical lens of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), it was found that the main stakeholders involved had a tacit acceptance of the policy, but the lack of support and weak infrastructure were deemed as the main obstacles in implementing the policy successfully.

We hope you will enjoy reading these collected articles and that you will find the research findings and instructional implications relevant to your own research interests and teaching purposes. It has always been our intention in launching our annual conference to introduce professionals in the field of language teaching to available CALL tools that could be adapted to academic contexts with minimal computing resources, and to increasing experience with computer-assisted language learning and teaching.

In closing, while we thoroughly enjoyed editing this selection of papers for this special issue, we must acknowledge the generous contributions of a host of reviewers and colleagues from various countries for their generous time and effort in reviewing and proofreading the articles that were submitted for consideration. Their comments, advice and counsel were invaluable, both to the authors of the submitted articles, as well as to the editors.

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