

FROM THE EDITOR

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The use of computers to enhance language teaching is particularly visible in the sphere of receptive skills instruction. From the early days of CALL there have been projects aiming at creating learning environments for the development of students' listening and reading skills. Starting with behaviorist-oriented drill-based software, through communicative skill-balanced multimedia, and finishing with social networking and multimedia discussion boards, the multitude of applications of computers enlivens and enhances receptive skills instruction.

The indispensable elements of skills practice are, on the one hand, provision of input, and, on the other, testing and assessment of how a student copes with this input. Giving students massive amounts of comprehensible input in the multimedia format to digest has become largely facilitated thanks to the Internet. Videos of various kinds, either authentic or learner-made, can be easily found and transferred to the language classroom. It is precisely this topic that two contributions of this issue of *Teaching English with Technology* deal with. The use of digital video in the language learning process is presented from two different perspectives. To start with, Anastassia McNulty and Bojan Lazarevic in their paper "Best practices in using video technology to promote second language acquisition" review the current trends in using video-based language instruction in K-12 educational settings, analysing recent advancements of digital video (low cost equipment and editing software) and Web-based video sharing services that provide remarkable possibilities for supporting a variety of learning activities in ESL classrooms. A more practical perspective on the use of videos in the language classroom is presented by Maria Palmira Massi and Bettiana Andrea Blázquez, who demonstrate the reality of video-based teaching in a series of lesson plans based on short movies (shorts).

The other important aspect of receptive skills instruction is testing and assessment. A great number of tasks and techniques have been proposed to assess students' progress within listening and reading. A computer-based multiple-choice cloze test as an example of a testing procedure has been taken under scrutiny by Dennis Murphy Odo. The article "Computer

familiarity and test performance. On a computer-based cloze ESL reading assessment” aims to examine the relationship between computer familiarity and computer-based test performance on a computer-based test of second language reading that is integrative rather than discrete-point. As revealed by the results, the familiarity variables do account for a small but significant amount of the variability in the computer-based test scores. On the other hand, one more contribution in the present volume related to assessment, “The effect of error correction feedback on the collocation competence of Iranian EFL learners” by Ali Akbar Jafarpour and Abolghasem Sharifi, shows that error correction feedback is significant and has a positive effect on the collocation competence at advanced and intermediate levels, but not at the elementary level.

The volume concludes with an interesting paper related to a highly popular social networking tool, namely *Facebook*. As is claimed by Monique N. Simpson, Facebook is not different from other new teaching tools and the teacher must familiarize him/herself with the tool to use it confidently. Even though a student’s ‘lazy factor’ may jeopardise the effectiveness of Facebook-based learning, action research and a teacher’s journal can increase teacher’s self-accountability and lead to better teaching results.

I wish you good reading!