

CALL Overview: Technology Tools from the Convention

By the Computer-Assisted Language Learning Interest Section

At the 2013 TESOL Convention in Dallas, Texas, USA, the Computer-Assisted Language Learning Interest Section (CALL-IS) hosted a number of presentations and demonstrations focusing on the use of technology in English language education.

New Tools/Techniques in CALL

In conjunction with the Elementary Education Interest Section, the CALL-IS presented this session, in which English language professionals explained how they are applying some of the most recent developments in the field to teacher training. Read about the highlights of some of those discussions here.

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Mobile Apps for Education Showcase

The Mobile Apps for Education Showcase provided convention participants with the opportunity to learn more about mobile device applications aligned to best practices for language teaching and learning. Below are brief summaries and highlights of the nine presentations offered in the session.

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New Tools/Techniques in CALL

Using Popplet in the Classroom

Suzan Stamper, The Hong Kong Institute of Education

In "Using Popplet in the Classroom," Suzan Stamper began by describing her experiences in a Community of Practice on "Teaching and Learning With Mobile Tablets" in which participants shared experiences using iPads and apps like Popplet. Suzan demonstrated how Popplet, with its web version (popplet.com), allows users to share and collaborate in real-time on mind maps using color coding, drawings, URLs, Flickr, YouTube, and Google Maps. Suzan next suggested some classroom uses for Popplet and summed up by highlighting that an important "tool" when exploring any technology and its uses is participating in a face-to-face or virtual Community of Practice.

Using Google Apps

Stephanie Buechele, Iowa State University

This presentation explored two Google applications that can be used to improve oral communication skills: Google Earth and Google Voice.

[Google Earth](#) is a 3D model of the earth that promotes communicative language learning through features such as tours, geotagging, and 360 Cities. Example activities like digital storytelling and roleplaying using Google Earth can help students build fluency and improve pronunciation.

[Google Voice](#) is phone number, voice mail, and SMS service that promotes fluency through voice recording. The app maintains a database of recordings so instructors can monitor student progress. Features like transcription services help students with stress and intonation.

Using an LMS With Mobile Devices for Teaching International Graduate Students

Morag C. Burke, Georgia Institute of Technology

Campus-wide Learning Management Systems are used in universities around the country for typical course management functions. However, LMSs are multiuser platforms and, when coupled with the students' own mobile devices, LMSs can be used in many creative ways for instructors and students to interact to enhance learning. The students' smartphones and laptops, when connected through various features of the LMS, can combine to form a mobile writing lab, upload voice recordings, videos, interviews, and other individual and class projects. Students and instructors can use these platforms to interact with each others' work and give feedback in person or remotely.

Formative Assessment via Technology Products in the Elementary Classroom: Examples That Work

Christel Broady, Georgetown College

This section represented the Elementary IS portion on the panel. Various forms of technology resources were presented that assist teachers in elementary schools in many assessment needs. Specifically, Christel focused on presenting the [*WIDA Can do Descriptors*](#), which link formative content language assessment to specific curriculum content and, most important, to the learner's level of English competency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Christel demonstrated how using WIDA can take the guesswork out of assessing the content mastery of elementary children. from the presentation.

Webinars for Teacher Development

Paul Sweeney, IA TEFL Delegate, Eduworlds Knowledge Ltd

Webinars are not, on the face of it, a "new tool," yet educators continue to build good practice in using webinars both as a sharing platform and a resource. Contextualizing webinars within the increasing use of video in education, this talk looked at three categories of webinar usage: peer network development (i.e., different formats and approaches assuming that the tools are accessible within a community of practice); using 3rd party resources, often from publishers; and coteaching—an innovative use of webinars to bring the input of remote teachers into K–12 classrooms in Uruguay while also developing the local teacher. See the [presentation slideshow](#).

Thinking SMALL: Training Teachers in Web2.0 Tools for Teaching and Learning EFL

Vance Stevens, Higher Colleges of Technology, United Arab Emirates

Vance Stevens documented student success in a course in presentation skills he developed for students at the UAE naval college incorporating [Google Docs](#), [Prezi](#), [Survey Monkey](#), and reflective blogs. He explained how he prepared teachers to create similar courses at the UAE air college. Vance broke the process into 20 steps and had participants track their progress in a shared Google Doc. This approach was meant to give teachers experience in the blended environment they could in turn set up for students, in which they would maintain wikis linking to what their students accomplished at the Web 2.0 sites used in their presentation course. See the [presentation slideshow](#).

Mobile Apps for Education Showcase

Anytune Slows Down Sound Tracks for Language

[Marsha Chan](#), *Mission College and Sunburst Media*

In this presentation, Marsha Chan discussed the app called [Anytune](#), which is designed for musicians and singers and allows one to adjust the tempo and pitch of music.

Learning to speak a new language fluently is like learning music. When a phrase, dialog, or speech is played through Anytune, a learner can slow it down and practice it easily. Anytune loads all songs in your iTunes library so it is easy to pick a track to practice. The “step trainer” feature lets you repeat a section and the app incrementally increases the speed with each repetition. The “loop delay” feature lets you add a specified number of seconds of pause before your set loop restarts. These features allow students to build accuracy and fluency.

Teaching Academic Multiword Constructions through Enhanced Input

[Luca Giupponi](#), *Iowa State University*

This presentation focused on [The Academic Trainer](#), a Mobile application developed by the Iowa State University English Department that aims to teach academic multiword constructions to students in advanced ESL/composition classes using the enhanced input principle. Students observe sentences from a corpus (COCA) and complete activities in order to learn a set of phrases. The app allows students to learn at their own pace and becomes a reference resource once all phrases are learned. There is great potential in the fact that the app structure and approach can be easily adapted to a wide range of inductive text-based exercises.

Instant Photo Gratification With Photobucket

[Susan Gaer](#), *Santa Ana College*

[Photobucket](#) is an app that supports instant upload from phone to specific albums. Students can upload photos from their mobile devices into Photobucket. Students can upload pictures directly to Photobucket and edit them. Projects include cellphone use, favorite piece of clothing, and “a week in the life of.” Susan Gaer demonstrated how to upload photos directly from the phone and use the app with students in the classroom.

Trace Word Soup and “Phrases in Space”

[Heather Benucci](#), *U.S. Department of State*

In this presentation, Heather Benucci discussed the U.S. State Department’s recently released, first-ever mobile app for English language learners, “[Trace Word Soup](#)” (PDF) and “Phrases in Space,” as part of the “Trace Effects” 3D video game suite. Providing learners worldwide a chance to sharpen language skills on the go, both games are available as a combined smartphone app. “Trace Word Soup” is also offered for feature phones via the unique biNu platform: over 1 million games were played by users with less advanced devices within a month of release! This presentation highlighted app functionality, including competition, social media, and language support features, and discussed distribution considerations.

It's in the Cards: Flashcard Apps for Vocabulary Learning

[Sandy Wagner](#), *Defense Language Institute for Foreign Language Center*

This presentation highlighted the benefits of using flashcard apps in mobile learning environments. As a tried and true resource for promoting vocabulary practice and retention, mobile learning devices provide the opportunity to practice vocabulary any time, any place and promote just-in-time, just-for-me learning. The demonstration also included sample flashcard apps and a comparison of features such as cost (free or fee), ease of use, capability of creating cards using the app, adding images, audio, text, and study modes. Flashcard sets were also demonstrated, highlighting the functionalities and various ways flashcard programs can be used to create flashcard sets for diverse purposes such as target language-L1 language translation, target language-definition, image-target language association, presentation of information, and possibilities yet to be determined.

ESL Robot on Mobile Devices

[Ron Lee](#), *East Los Angeles College*

Language robots can be a good tool to help students practice foreign languages. This presentation highlighted [ESL Robot](#), one such language robot. Many ESL students in the world have already been using ESL Robot on their mobile devices to learn English since it became available in May 2012. The robot is a good English tutor and a teaching assistant. Students can chat with him and ask questions, the robot can answer grammar and general knowledge questions, and the conversations are interesting. Students can talk to the robot by speaking or typing, and the robot can point out common errors made by students.

Using iPad Applications to Teach Reading

[Jingjing Wei](#), *Eastern Michigan University*

This presentation discussed the iPad application [Educreation](#) and demonstrated how it can be used to facilitate strategic instruction and provide feedback in reading projects. Both the benefits and limitations of the application were addressed.

Please contact the presenters for presentation slides and handouts.

**For more resources from the
2013 Electronic Village and Technology Showcase, go to
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