

## In Other Journals

**“Electronic Media in the Foreign Language and Literature Classroom: A Fusion between Science and the Humanities,”** by Carol A. Herron and Michel A. Moos, *Foreign Language Annals* 26.4 (1993): 479 – 490.

This is an article not to be missed by anyone in the persuading business of the foreign language technology field—in short, all language media center directors. Herron and Moos, of Emory University, present an excellent summary of the state of the art, in which you will find eloquent quotes and useful statistics. Echoing Marshall McLuhan’s communication theories, the authors argue that “today’s electronic media (e.g. computers, videodiscs) represent different stages and different forms of technological expression and communication which are not *necessarily* inferior to the mass medium of print” (479 – 80). Further, “certain technological developments, which may appear at first to have only a localized or trivial impact, are in fact in the process of redefining the very boundaries of our discipline and the ways in which we conceive of our livelihood as researchers and teachers of languages and literature” (489). The authors investigate the ways in which recent technological advances will impact the foreign language and literature classrooms, and address the benefits as well as the hurdles.

Electronic text and multimedia are two technological developments which are beginning to revolutionize the foreign language and literature classrooms. Multimedia programs such as interactive video (IAV) combine the visual power of video and the information-processing capacity of the computer to shuttle students to new frontiers of language study. Electronic text, commonly stored on CD-ROM, offers luxuries such as having the entire twenty volumes of the *Oxford English Dictionary* on one CD, or being able to extract the dialogue of certain characters in a novel by just entering a few keystrokes.

The authors review several existing multimedia programs designed for the foreign language classroom, discuss the superiority of videodiscs over video tapes and summarize research findings. Videodiscs in general offer better visual clarity and two different sound tracks (one for unaltered native

speech and the other for a slowed-down version). CAV videodiscs allow instantaneous access to each of the disc's 54,000 frames, which is necessary for programming and linking various frames and sections of text. Multimedia programs also offer the possibility of incorporating features to monitor student activity.

Similar multimedia programs have found their way into the literature classroom. Programs ranging from *Beowulf* to Herodotus contain not only text, but commentary, audio, video, and in some cases interactive capabilities. Programs like these create many new possibilities for textual communication, not the least of which is the possibility for critical theorists to explore and manipulate a "new laboratory" outside of traditional printed texts.

In conclusion the authors refer to McLuhan's suggestion that educators seek to find the balance between education and entertainment. Although external hurdles exist in implementing modern communication technology into the foreign language and literature classroom, humanities scholars need to take a more pro-active and optimistic approach to "explore these new technologies and import them creatively into the sphere of [their] activities" (489). ■

—Scott Galer  
University of Colorado at Boulder

**"Perspectives on  
the Future of Edu-  
cational Technol-  
ogy," by Howard J.  
Sullivan, Ann R.  
Igoe, James D.  
Klein, Elizabeth E.  
Jones and  
Wilhelmina C.  
Savanye,  
*Educational Tech-  
nology Research  
and Development*  
41.2 (1993):  
97 – 110.**

This article explains in detail the method, procedure and results of a study conducted on the future of educational technology by a team (Howard J. Sullivan, Ann R. Igoe, James D. Klein, Elizabeth E. Jones and Wilhelmina C. Savanye) from the Division of Psychology in Education at Arizona State University, Tempe.

The team points out that educational technology is a new discipline for which there exists no scientific basis for predicting its future. Therefore, they assert that the opinions of professionals in the field may be the best, albeit not comprehensive or unbiased, source of information on what the future holds.

The study reflects the opinions of a broad-based sample of educational technology professionals and students. The final sample consisted of 268 respondents: 53 university faculty members, 85 doctoral students, 70 master's students, and 60 trainers (individuals employed as training managers, trainers and instructional designers at corporations and other agencies nationwide, including American Express, Arthur Anderson, IBM, Intel and Motorola). The ten participating

universities were intentionally selected to provide a sample that would be representative of recognized programs in educational technology: Arizona State, Florida State, University of Georgia, Indiana University, Memphis State, University of Minnesota, San Diego State, Syracuse, Penn State and Utah State.

The survey covered six topic areas, containing five statements each, regarding an aspect of educational technology. Respondents indicated their level of agreement from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* using a five-point scale. They were instructed that the reference period for the "future" was the next twenty years. The six topic areas of the survey were: 1) Educational Technology and Learning Theory, 2) Instructional Design Models, 3) Technology and Individualized Instruction, 4) Advances in Technology, 5) Educational Technology and Schools and 6) Employment and Job Opportunities.

Happily, but perhaps not surprisingly (given the occupation of the respondents), there was strong agreement with the statement: "There will be an increased need for personnel in educational technology during the next two decades." There was also high agreement with the following statements:

- "Educational technology will play an increasing role in teacher education."
- "Advances in learning theory will have an important influence on practices in educational technology."
- "Educational technology will play a major role in the reform and restructuring of the schools."

The article includes charts and explanations of the results for the six topic areas and concludes with a worthwhile general discussion of the results. All in all, the results of this study bode well for our profession and for education in general. ■

—Mary Beth Barth  
Hamilton College

**"A Very Verbal Medium: Language Learning Through Closed Captions,"**  
by Robert Vanderplank, *TESOL Journal*, Autumn (1993), 10 – 14.

Vanderplank describes the value of television in language learning as well as reporting on the use of closed captioned materials in the ESL classroom. He outlines the debate for and against the use of television programming in English language instruction, in the end arguing that television with caption support is a "very verbal medium" worthy of inclusion in language teaching. The author also provides a rationale for the value of multimodal language materials—they appeal to verbal as well as to visual learners.

In relating his experiences at Heriot-Watt University, Vanderplank notes that captioned news, documentaries, and

detective shows have repeatedly captured student interest. The writer also offers classroom and self-study activities based on captioned programming for the teaching of speech registers. ■

—Pete Smith  
University of Texas at Arlington

**“Effects of Multimedia Courseware Subtitling on the Speaking Performance of College Students of French” by Isabel Borrás and Robert C. Lafayette, *The Modern Language Journal* 78.1 (1994): 61 – 75.**

*“...oral communication was found to be significantly affected by the use of subtitles...”*

While there are both opponents and proponents for the use of target-language subtitles in second/foreign language learning, Borrás and Lafayette seek to prove that not only are subtitles an asset to language learning, but also that they increase the rate at which speaking skills are acquired. (Note that in this model, the subtitles are not translations into English, but appear in French.) The article reports on a study of the effects of subtitling in multimedia courseware on oral communication skills and task performance.

The authors review previous studies using subtitles in foreign language learning. In these studies, groups exposed to subtitles scored significantly better on tests of listening and reading comprehension. For their own study, the authors hypothesized that target-language subtitles could also serve to increase speaking ability.

The test group consisted of forty-four Louisiana State University students in the fifth of a series of five courses designed to fulfill the foreign language requirement. Borrás’s courseware package, *Practicing Spoken French*, which incorporates HyperCard and videodisc technologies, was the media applied in evaluation. On tests of oral performance, oral communication was found to be significantly affected by the use of subtitles: performance on descriptive and narrative tasks exceeded that of subjects not shown subtitles. In addition, written draft samples revealed that: 1) those typed on the computer were better organized and had fewer spelling errors than handwritten samples, 2) reuse of lexical items seen in one of the optional stacks was higher, and 3) reuse of difficult words such as numbers or proper names heard in the video segments was higher among the subtitles vs. no-subtitles group. The researchers conclude that “the statistically significant difference found in this study in favor of the subtitles condition for higher oral communicative performance strongly suggests that when learning from ‘authentic video’ in a multimedia environment, having the opportunity to see and control subtitles, as opposed to not having that opportunity, results in both better comprehension and subsequent better productive use of the foreign language” (70).

A second variable, that of task level, was introduced. Higher-level tasks were more cognitively demanding. The researchers found that subtitles plus higher-level tasks produced the best performance of all the experimental conditions.

The researchers observed that the use of interactive media did not seem to pose a problem even for students who were not familiar with HyperCard. The attitudes of subjects toward the multimedia experience was very positive but correlated poorly with their oral performance. ■

—**Cyndy Van Sant & Marie Sheppard,  
University of Colorado at Boulder**



# IALL '95 at Notre Dame

International Association for Learning Laboratories

May 23-28

## Language Labs on the Leading Edge

### Theme of the conference:

Advancements in electronic technologies have placed many language labs at the forefront of the technological revolution in education. Computers, digital media, and satellite communications are now commonplace in many labs around the world. New labs and renovated labs often include many or all of these technologies, and at many institutions it is the lab directors who are the most knowledgeable about them. Often it is lab directors who are the keepers of technological memories; who, while constantly informing themselves of advancements, at the same time maintain an experience file of the good and the not-so-good of years past. The goal of IALL '95 at Notre Dame is to share that experience, provide information about the latest technologies along with an opportunity to develop familiarity with them, to provide opportunities for professional growth, and to continue to assess and evaluate the role of technology in the language learning process.

Founded in 1842, the University of Notre Dame has a rich traditional heritage. The campus, located on a scenic 1250 acres on the north side of South Bend, Indiana, is home to about 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students from all over the United States and some 72 foreign countries. Right next to Knute Rockne football stadium is perhaps the most technologically advanced classroom building in the United States, DeBartolo Hall. Its 84 classrooms are all connected to Media-On-Call, a centralized media distribution network for images, sound and data. Over the Internet and via satellite, the world can be

brought into meeting rooms that vary in size from 20-seat seminar rooms to a 450-seat auditorium. Uplink capability makes worldwide broadcast of some IALL '95 proceedings a possibility to consider. Make plans now to attend for sure, perhaps to present, at IALL '95 at Notre Dame.

Put it on your calendar. Pre-conference workshops in video editing, computer applications, instructional design, lab design and management begin May 23 and 24; conference sessions begin May 25 and finish May 27 in the afternoon. Board and council meetings are scheduled on May 28. The call for proposals will appear in September 1994.



### IALL '95 at Notre Dame is for you if you are:

- ◆ managing a language lab, learning lab, or media lab...
- ◆ interested in the role of the language lab...
- ◆ planning a new lab or renovating an old one...
- ◆ new to the profession...
- ◆ a teacher or researcher in language learning methodologies
- ◆ interested in the role of technology in teaching and learning...

### Exhibits PLUS! IALL '95 at Notre Dame will feature:

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- ◆ Managing people, resources and money
- ◆ Getting money: \*budgets \*grants
- ◆ Pre-conference workshops: \*computer applications \*video editing \*multi-media \*networks \*and more
- ◆ Keeping it legal: copyright issues

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