

Editorial

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The papers in this issue show the truly international nature of CALL research today, featuring studies conducted by researchers with participants in the UK and Poland, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Japan and Korea, the US and Australia. However, many of them share an interest in the affordances offered by various types of online communication for comprehension or production, whether fixed or interactive computer-mediated communication (CMC), especially for spoken language but also for written text.

We open though with a look at that most common of online tools, the bilingual dictionary. While much research goes into creating new materials and activities, it is crucial to establish criteria for evaluating the multitude of resources already available to learners free on line. **Lew and Szarowska** survey real uses of English-Polish dictionaries to establish their criteria, which can be applied to other language pairs. Similarly, to improve learning and develop appropriate CALL tools, it is essential to observe what participants actually do in addition to what they say they do. **Stickler and Shi** here use eyetracking to monitor attention on different online spaces; this can also provide insights “inside a learner’s head”, and can lead to useful reflective practice for teachers and learners alike.

Captioned videos have been shown to aid comprehension, as also found here by **Mirzaei, Meshgi, Akita and Kawahara**. They experiment with a novel form where only synchronised keywords are shown – a maximum 30% of the total text chosen automatically for difficulty according to speech rate, frequency and specificity. Adjusted to the learners’ needs and proficiency, this leads to comprehension rates comparable to full captions, and may promote more effective subsequent listening. In the study by **Levak and Son**, learners of Croatian and English were paired in two different types of CMC using Second Life or Skype over several weeks. Listening comprehension improved considerably with both, with no significant difference between the two tools, though the learners of Croatian made greater improvements, perhaps due to their lower starting levels of proficiency. Finally, **Kim** compared text-based synchronous CMC (SCMC) and face-to-face modes (F2F), with mixed-nationality participants performing several tasks in both modes in random order. The results show that the SCMC format generated more advanced question forms regardless of task type, along with more accurate article use and some evidence of task effect in both modes. The roles of task, mode and technology use are all discussed.