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EDITORIAL

ReCALL editorial September 2023 issue

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Given the breadth and scope of the topics covered in this issue, we can safely say that it represents the wealth of topics that are currently at the core of computer-assisted language learning research. This issue includes eight articles that explore virtual exchange (VE), virtual reality (VR), game-enhanced learning, automated writing evaluation, automatic translation, data-driven learning (DDL), and massive open online language courses (LMOOCs).

The first, by **Irina Rets, Bart Rienties** and **Tim Lewis**, focuses on the impact of VE on perceived intercultural effectiveness (IE) development among pre-service teachers. In their study, they conclude that three factors were crucial in determining the students' perceptions of their IE development – that is, (1) their ability to overcome challenges during VE, (2) the level of engagement with and from their VE partners, and (3) engagement with cultural difference.

The study that follows, that by **Alice Gruber, Silvia Canto** and **Kristi Jauregi-Ondarra**, also focuses on VE, only this time it is based on the use of high-immersion VR for synchronous online collaboration among learners of English. The authors analyse student perceptions regarding their level of presence and engagement, their communication, and their views on using VR for intercultural encounters compared to traditional videoconferencing tools. Their findings revealed that there was a significant correlation between student willingness to communicate in the VE-VR setting and their positive attitudes towards meeting students from other countries in VR.

The third study, by **Sangmin-Michelle Lee**, explores the factors that affect incidental L2 vocabulary acquisition and retention in a game-enhanced learning environment. The results provided evidence that playing the game greatly facilitated this and concluded that conscious learner attention, in conjunction with the salience of the word, was the main facilitating factor in incidental vocabulary acquisition and retention when using a game-enhanced language learning environment.

The fourth article, by **Svetlana Koltovskaia**, draws on user perceptions to explore how Grammarly shaped post-secondary L2 writing teachers' feedback when used to complement their own feedback to their learners. She concludes that despite Grammarly being a useful tool, it should never replace teacher feedback and, most importantly, teachers should train their students beforehand on the use of the tool and how to respond to automated feedback, as, among other issues, Grammarly sometimes misses some of the L2 errors.

We move now from automated feedback to automatic translation in the study by **Assim S. Alrajhi**, who investigates and compares the quality of Google-translated texts (GTTs) across writing genres and explores student attitude toward Google Translate output. The findings show that GTTs have greater literacy levels and richer content in persuasive and expository genres, and higher style levels in narrative and descriptive genres, as well as a higher literacy level, better style and richer content compared to learner production at an intermediate level of English proficiency. In terms of pedagogical implications, the author suggests Google Translate is a useful tool that can

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serve as a scaffolding approach to L2 writing and support L2 learning, as well as extending the learners' linguistic knowledge.

The sixth study, by **Miguel Blázquez-Carretero**, questions how useful generic spellcheckers, such as that embedded in Microsoft Word, are compared to a prototype computer-based pedagogic spellchecker created by the author himself in order to aid L2 learners in self-correcting their written production in Spanish. The study presents immediate implications for the development of spellcheck packages and L2 pedagogy alike by illustrating how complex spelling rules can be easily adapted and rendered accessible to learners of Spanish as a foreign language by providing a tool that offers feedback with an explanation of why the error occurred and how it can be corrected, avoiding time-consuming tasks such as editing and self-correction.

The seventh study in this issue is the first of two review studies. The first, by **Jihua Dong, Yanan Zhao** and **Louisa Buckingham**, employs a bibliometric approach to analyse 126 articles and 3,297 cited references from 1994 to 2021 taken from the Web of Science to determine common research themes, high-impact publications, and the most recent transformative research in the field of DDL. The analysis shows that there is a consensus that DDL plays a favourable role in promoting learning outcomes.

The second review study, by **Yining Zhang** and **Ruoxi Sun**, closes this issue by analysing 71 studies focusing on LMOOCs in order to gain a deeper understanding of the current state of research and identify future directions for LMOOC research. The authors found that three research topics have increased during the period 2014 to 2021: that of LMOOC implementation, LMOOC effectiveness and its drivers or obstacles, and inclusiveness in LMOOCs. The authors also point to future LMOOC research trends.

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