

LLTI Highlights

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Welcome to "LLTI-Highlights." This column features a selection of important electronic discussions from the LLTI—Language Learning and Technology International—listserv. The discussions of this column were posted during the second half of the year 2004 and have been summarized and paraphrased by me. These discussions address different issues related to language learning and technology, ranging from pedagogical over copyright to technical issues. Otmar Foelsche, the moderator of the electronic discussion list, has assigned a reference number to each topic that appeared in the discussion list. This number can be used to search the LLTI archives. Instructions on searching the archives appear at the end of this column.

iPods instead of audio consoles

Jeff Magoto launched the July discussion entitled iPods instead of audio consoles (#7586) with the following: "An online posting today says that Duke is giving all 1,800 of its incoming freshmen iPods for a variety of purposes (see <<http://www.marketwatch.com/news>>). Language learning was not mentioned as one of them, but just out of curiosity, has anyone else who is faced with replacing their aging Sony or Tandberg labs ... entertained the idea of a large purchase of iPods or some sort of MP3 player/recorder combo that could: a) easily hold their entire audio collection, b) be mobile ... c) be easily upgraded, d) lower teacher/learner learning curves, and e) be more useful (perhaps) to students' other academic pursuits...." The first response to this query came from Otmar Foelsche, who wrote: "We have been using iPods for the last 2 years. We have a pool of 30 loaners that students can take out for a weekend, a trip or whatever. We have set up an 'iPod filling station' that synchronizes our loaners to the complete libraries of MP3 files in the various languages taught here. Students were rather reluctant to borrow these units in the beginning, primarily for reasons of loss or theft. Instructors still need to understand how to best integrate the capabilities of these units in their courses." Greg Kessler inquired: "... have there been any issues regarding theft and/or loss or damage with a class set of ipods? We are just about to begin using them in a similar manner and it would be helpful to hear what others have experienced...." Barbara Need joined in with another concern: "The University of Chicago

Language Labs have begun exploring the question of using iPods, but we are concerned about trying to ensure that students cannot copy the audio files from the iPod. Apple tells me that this is not easily done, but I have also heard that there is software available to let one do it..." Read Gilgen provided the first report about the use of iPods: "... We experimented using iPods for a phonetics course. The entire course materials were loaded on the iPods and loaned for the entire semester to the students. Obviously, this was a relatively small course. No thefts. Students loved them. We were able to do this as a result of a grant from the campus computing center. I am sure we could never have afforded these in the quantities we need for the size language programs we have here. However, with materials online, in MP3 format, students who already have these devices can download and use the materials in their own iPods ... Essentially we replaced our aging audio lab with an online virtual lab, and with computer labs that could double/triple for other language learning uses." Another reply to Jeff Magoto's initial message came from Samantha Earp: "I am surprised that this article doesn't mention languages, since a language project is one of the first ones we are supporting, and this detail seemed to get leaked pretty early, given many of the other on-line articles We are very excited about the possibilities, although there is no intention at this point for the iPods to replace any of the other technologies we have in place to support language teaching and learning. You can read the official press release at <http://www.dukenews.duke.edu/news/ipods_0704.html>...." Otmar Foelsche answered some of the questions raised in this discussion thread: "As to theft: we make students sign a contract that spells out that the college will bill them at market value for the lost iPod. As to the iPod filling station: We use an older G4 tower ... that contains MP3 versions of all of our .mov files from the streaming audio server. The organization of the files represents more or less the organization of the streaming server, i.e. a hierarchy of language/textbook, chapter, exercise number, etc. The files are visible in an iTunes interface with the playlists. We take an iPod and synchronize it to a particular language or a particular textbook. All this is done within iTunes. As to usage: usage has not been as high as expected for reasons stated before. Most of our users request iPods for athletic trips, weekend trips, etc. A minority checks iPods out for a couple of weeks at a time. These are often users who do not have high speed Internet connection and live off campus...."

SSH on a Mac

An August Discussion on SSH on a Mac (#7608) was started by Bob Peckham with the following query: "As many of you know, I try to manage a number of web pages. This is impossible to do from on campus where I work, because of teaching, lab supervision, and a lot of face to face work. I am forced to do all of my research, programming and file transfers from home. I just got my faculty exchange computer, a very robust Powerbook, using OS 10.3.4. I have two ways of working home-to-campus remote: I can connect over my wireless broadband through VPN, or I can do a telephone wire modem connection. My campus is concerned with security, and while I know that using a classic FTP poses few big problems in either of the connections mentioned, things can change. I would ideally like to use a secure shell client (SSH), with properly installed keys, etc. This would allow some flexibility and more security. After a relative failure using FUGU ..., I wonder if there is something out there that might work with a Mac, and will not make my fragile humanities brain think that it is struggling with shell level strings." Dick Feldman shared his experience with another file transfer program: "I have used Timbuktu successfully from home. With a broadband connection, it feels almost like you are there, only about half speed, which I figure is pretty good." Steve Warren made some suggestions concerning the use of FUGU: "It has been a while since I looked at FUGU. I believe it would send files using SFTP (Secure FTP) and SCP (Secure CoPy). SCP is the option that you need. If FUGU does not have SCP, then check out <<http://www.versiontracker.com>> for an application that does." Another recommendation came from Greg Kessler: "... At Ohio University we use MacSFTP. It has been very reliable for me for the past year or so." Sharon Scinicariello had another suggestion: "You might want to try RBrowser, which is available at <<http://www.rbrowser.com>>. I haven't yet tried it on Panther, but I have found it useful since I first started using OSX." David Herren joined in: "I will echo Sharon's comments. Beyond question, the best, most powerful and easiest to use SSH client for OSX is RBrowser. It has been around for over a decade... Version 3.3.5 is the current version. It is regularly updated but always stable as a rock.... I have used every version released since mid-1996. I manage half a dozen web sites with it so it is one of those applications that launches automatically when I log in. I simply could not do the work that I do without RBrowser" Further recommendations came from Wolfgang Adolph and Keiko Schneider. Wolfgang Adolph: "A free Macintosh SSH client can be found...at <<http://www.macssh.com>>." Keiko Schneider added: "I get through

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a couple of secure servers using Transmit <<http://www.panic.com/transmit>>.”

A very engaged September discussion outlining the strengths and weaknesses of Computer-assisted language learning (#7634) was started by Valli Subramaniam with the following message: “Everyone I have talked to have been saying some wonderful things about computer-assisted language learning. The schools here in Malaysia are also being equipped with computers so that language learning is more effective. However, I am a little skeptical about this. If language learning is a social activity...it is most effective if there is interaction between people. However, lessons on the web allow limited interactions for the learners. For example, lessons using the Hot Potatoes program only allow the learners to carry out activities and limited feedback is given. There is no genuine interaction. How can this promote language learning? I hope those who have used this program or others can respond to this...” To this, LeeAnn Stone gave a very elaborate response: “If we limit our range of applications of technology for language learning to CALL, or computer-delivered language learning materials, then we indeed are not making use of the incredible wealth of interactive learning opportunities that new technologies can provide our students. Europeans have been ahead of the U.S. in shifting the conceptualization of the role of technology in language learning from computer assisted (often conceptually limited with same the assumption you made that this means solely computer-delivered) to technology-enhanced language learning (TELL). Within the umbrella concept of technology-enhanced language learning, those computer labs can provide an incredible breadth of interactive learning opportunities which entail students doing research that they share via discussion boards, through email exchanges, in MOOs, with online audio exchanges, and many other functionalities. One advantage of some of these types of activities is that, unlike many interactive activities in the classroom, they can be captured for discussion, feedback, evaluation, and correction. But the delivery of content with such resources as Hot Potatoes is not insignificant either. These types of CALL materials can provide students with often much-needed practice and reinforcement, freeing classroom time for those activities that make the best use of student and teacher time together, such as face-to-face paired and small-group activities...” Lizz Caplan-Carbin agreed with LeeAnn, and also provided a sample Hot Potato exercise: “Computer assisted language learning is not designed to replace human interaction. Its best promise is in

providing multi-modal input to remote learners, and in offering self-paced, self-controlled instruction. I can stare at a text page of vocabulary for hours and not feel confident that I have learned anything. But if I play a set of Quia exercises, for example, I am 100% certain that I know what I have learned. It is fast and enjoyable and lays a fine foundation for communication. The greatest thing about Hot Potatoes, Makers, Discovery, and other quiz engines, is that the learner can create their own exercises as a way of processing the material. Hot Potatoes is best for teachers to create customized exercises really fast. A lot of the exercises you find on the web are tailored to someone's class curriculum as a supplement. My latest Hot Potato: <<http://webgerman.com/german/wortschatz/Begriffe/match1.htm>>. Read Gilgen added: "You use technology for things technology does best. You use people for things people do best. Exercises with infinite patience, immediate feedback, etc., and models that don't depend on instructors without native proficiency can be served well by technology. Interactive speech practice is, obviously, better carried out between two or more people. It is not an all or nothing matter... use the best tools available." Tracy Dingess: "I agree. Language learning requires communication. Language learning requires communication with informed interlocutors (people). However, learning may also require practice and time spent in practice. Language learning is no different in this requirement either. It is considered true by most that language learning practice with an informed interlocutor is the ideal form of practice. But time spent with an informed interlocutor outside the classroom is often rare and costly. Computers can help meet part of the need by offering activities and resources to increase time spent in the target language outside the classroom. That being said, the computer allows the opportunity of extending the learner's time and opportunities for involvement with the target language. Any time spent, whether working on fill-in the blank activities on paper or computer, chatting at a cafe or video-chatting with an interlocutor, is well spent so long as the activities are well designed.... The computer offers the learner extra time and experience meeting the target language and working through structures, tasks, and activities, building knowledge of the language. My take on CALL? Computers and their connections to communications networks open the doors wide, offering possibilities limited only by the language instructors creativity to imagine ways for students to experience, meet, review, and be evaluated on an element of language structure or an aspect of language use, communicative creativity, and more. There are many pro-

grams out there that offer asynchronous communication functions for voice, video, and text conversations which can be utilized by an instructor to generate productive output from their language learners in extra activities outside the classroom as well as inside..." Doug Worsham added: "...Tracy Dingess makes a good point when saying that 'It is not the tool and its limitations,' but the way we use the tool for instruction. I have made much the same argument several times when other instructors tell me that their students don't communicate enough when they are working in computer labs. These instructors say that this is because Internet activities result in limited interaction. For me, this limited interaction is not at all an essential characteristic of computer labs or Internet activities. Instead, it is a result of how the labs and the Internet are being used as teaching tools. In the case of activities involving accessing online content, making good decisions about how to set up the task often determines how much interaction will come out of the activity. Simply setting up an activity so that there are two students for each computer, rather than one, is often enough to turn dull mouse-clicking into an opportunity for communication and negotiation. Giving the students a compelling task that allows them to manipulate, analyze, and discuss the online materials, and then allowing them to report on their findings, is another way to ensure that an Internet activity includes meaningful social interaction between learners. Facilitating successful CALL or TELL activities requires the teacher to use the same teaching principles and techniques s/he would use in a traditional classroom. These principles shouldn't be left at the door when we walk into the computer lab." In agreement with this posting, LeeAnn Stone quoted C. Jones from an article in *System*, 14.2 (1986), pp.171-178, who stated that "It's not so much the program, more what you do with it: The importance of methodology in CALL."

Ghosting an OS X lab

A rather long discussion thread on a technical issue continued throughout the entire month of October. This discussion, entitled Ghosting an OS X lab (#7648), was launched by Jörg Waltje with the following posting: "Does anybody have a good idea or application that would work for 'ghosting' a Mac OS X lab? So far we have been storing a pristine image of our computers on an external hard drive, and that is very unwieldy. I am looking for a way to clean and refresh (or update) machines without re-installing operating system and contents one-by-one. I know there is ghosting available for Windows machines, but have not been able to find similar mechanisms for an OS X lab." Bob Majors was the first one to offer advice:

“There are a number of choices, depending partly on if you want to periodically image machines or refresh them at logout/restart. The best single source for this info is <<http://macosxlabs.org>>. I create a clone master, run some Apple scripts I have written to automate some of the processes described at bombich.com as well as to make international keyboards work when the image is cloned and distributed. Use NetRestore Helper to create the image, place it on an OS X server, then have the clients NetBoot and NetRestore from the image...” Frank Citino had similar suggestions: “There is a method using NetRestore and NetRestore Helper from Bombich Software. You can download it from bombich.com. You use NetRestore Helper to create your image which you can store on a firewire drive. If you boot from a bootable partition on the firewire drive, you can then use NetRestore to copy your image up to the local hard drive. If you want to do this over a network, you will need an OSX Server to run NetBoot. It works basically the same way only you are booting off of a bootable netboot partition on the OSX Server and then you use the Bombich products.” Additional resources were pointed out by Frank Keller: “... Netimage, Carbon Copy Cloner and Radmin are all management tools for imaging that you can use with OSX. Macosxlabs.org and bombich.com are the sources for working with OSX in a lab environment.” Jianxiong Wu added: “In our OSX lab, we use Disk Utility to do the whole machine imaging, but use Radmin to do daily maintenance, refreshing, tripwire and update. The machines in our lab are scheduled to start up every morning at 4:00am to check the server for any new updates, including new software installations, and to clean up any unnecessary stuff. This has worked great for us. Radmin is free under a BSD-style license. For more information and download, visit <<http://rsug.itd.umich.edu/software/radmin/>>...” John Madden also recommended the same products others had mentioned, but specified the order in which they should be used: “To ‘clone’ one OS X Mac to another, use Carbon Copy Cloner <<http://www.bombich.com/software/cccl.html>>. To rebuild a lab, use Radmin, which requires some comfort with the Unix terminal. The software can be found at <<http://rsug.itd.umich.edu/software/radmin/>>...” Jose Rodriguez and Marty DeWindt both pointed out that Carbon Copy Cloner is free. Todd Bryant suggested two possible options: “... local refresh software (i.e. it keeps a local copy of each OS X account, then refreshes it on every reboot), or server-based (like Assimilator). For local refresh we are using Deep Freeze, which is cross-platform and works nicely...” Harold Hendricks agreed with Todd Bryant’s

choice of program: "We have moved both our Mac OS X and Windows XP labs to Deep Freeze, with good results for keeping the student folders clean and restoring the computers to a know state daily. We are very impressed with the program.... For our Mac OS X lab imaging, we use NetRestore from <www.bombich.com>. This is free to educational institutions." A final recommendation came from Karen Cavanagh "You might also want to look into Apple Remote Desktop. This software allows you to manage desktops as well as copy software out to the desktop (in effect Ghost). We have used it to copy the menu bar out to all the machines in a lab."

Watching Videos in the Lab

Tom Browne started a November discussion on Watching Videos in the Lab (#7715). His initial message addressed copyright issues: "I would like to pose a 'hypothetical' question to lab people who have video on reserve in their facilities. I know one of the ideas of 'Fair Use' is that the copyright holder is not being deprived of any income. If a teacher assigns the students to go to their lab and watch a movie for a class discussion next week, individuals can go to the lab and watch the movie. I think most of us would be willing to agree to provide this service if we had the facilities. Now, lets say, instead of having students check it out and watch it, it was digitized on a secure streaming server with password protection and the original put away. Students can still come in and watch the video for next week's discussion, just in a slightly different way. Has anybody considered doing anything like this...." Ed Dente added: "We plan to begin doing this next year. We have full confidence that we are within our Fair Use rights..." Henry Wilmer shared his experience with this issue: "We do this, but we are using videos from publishers from whom we have gotten permission—Annenberg for French in Action and Destinos as well as the publishers for Deutsch Aktuell. As for films, we don't usually provide these from our streaming server.... Our school does have an educational license from a clearing house that allows showing of many recently released films for entertainment in our auditoriums on Saturday nights. This might also cover delivery from a secure server, but I have not checked it out yet...." Jack Burston cautioned: "Normally, as soon as you digitize media (audio or video) you have legally changed its nature, for which copyright permission is required. ... This is all independent of whether you make it available to students for listening/viewing. The tricky legal question here is whether or not the TEACH Act provides an exemption. The primary consideration is whether the material constitutes an essential part of the curriculum and

if so, whether access is strictly limited to students enrolled in the course. As far as I know, there are also restrictions on the source of the material. Videos marketed for the pedagogical market (e.g., the *Chemin du retour* DVD) and full-length commercial movies do not qualify. Perhaps someone with a legal background can provide us with more details?" David Flores took a similar position: "I know that Films for the Humanities & Sciences has separate licensing fees for digital delivery of their stuff. One of the murky areas of copyright law is whether the purchaser of a copyrighted work has the right to 'space shift' that work. In other words, do I as purchaser have the right to copy the material that I have purchased from one medium to another one? If I own a VHS tape of a program, am I legally allowed to digitize it and put it on a DVD? The answer to that question is murky, as far as I can tell. Personally, I believe that I should be able to. I should not have to buy new copies of my stuff every time a new video/audio standard comes out. Unfortunately, ...the trend is to restrict the user's rights as much as possible while broadening the restrictions that the copyright holder can place on the use and distribution of the work in question..." Judy Shoaf had no problem with Tom Browne's proposition: "It is an irony of the TEACHact that in fact it would be more legal to the movie in a password-protected class website or course management system than to put it on reserve for students to watch outside of class... because a digital classroom emulates face-to-face teaching more closely..." Leslie Graul shared her experience: "...the distributor of one video for which we paid performance rights stipulated in the written contract that we not distribute the video in any way that was not a face-to-face situation... I do not know how common that clause is in contracts..." Read Gilgen did not consider this to be so problematic either: "It is my understanding that the librarians view the library (or lab in our case) to be an extension of the classroom and that providing materials for use by students clearly falls in the fair use arena. Lawyers for publishers/producers would argue that library/lab use constitutes public performance. We have long maintained that we need to (legally) exercise our fair use rights and not be intimidated into limiting use because some lawyer is making (unfounded) noises that it is illegal..." Dick Feldman recommended limiting the availability of videos in the lab: "I agree with Jack here, though my own tentative analysis would include commercial movies. I have consulted with copyright people from the libraries. I see the key elements as being the language center as a place dedicated to instruction and the films being part of a curriculum and a specific assignment. We are considering

offering streaming video, but only for the very restricted period of an assignment (several days) only in our center (LAN access only) and only available to students in the class..."

Web cams for Windows XP lab

John Mark Esposito's message started another string of discussions on technical issues in support of pedagogical goals during the month of December with his initial posting on Web cams for Windows XP lab (#7746): "We are in the process of researching web cams for our lab. ASL would use the cams for several different purposes: 1) in order to do lab assignments (they are the only ones that don't do them) and 2) in order to do their required video taped projects each semester. French, Italian and Spanish would also have use for them, but ASL is our priority at the moment. I am looking for some advice for any good cams that could be secured somehow with our setup. The best ones that I have seen were in Mac labs. Ours would have to be secured somehow to the monitors or stations with the ability to tilt up and down depending on the height of the person sitting in front of the computer. Would you have any recommendations? ..." Gus Leonard had experience with this issue and shared his expertise: "We have found the Logitech QuickCam Pro 4000 to be the most versatile web cam, as it tends to have drivers that work with the versions of PC and Mac. It is compatible with Flash Communicator/Breeze and other web video chat tools and can be used to capture video with Windows MovieMaker on XP. You will find more information at <<http://www.logitech.com>>. For tie-down, I bend the USB cable and thread that eye through a cheap washer from the hardware store. The resulting loop gets added to the lockdown cables I already have to the computer.... The other option I explored was to get some Mini-DV cameras.... I have 10 set up in a 24 station iMac lab on desktop or floor tripods with a FireWire cable running to the computer for direct capture to HD. That way, students don't use expensive Mini-DV tapes for their projects. I bought a bunch of lockdown cables from <<http://www.ddsecurity.com>> that came with a lock slot that could be glued to the cameras.... Then, a laptop lock ties the camera to the desk with a 6 foot range. An added bonus to the mini-DV cams is that you will have extra hardware for lab users to checkout for other language projects...." Another recommendation came from Vito Brondolo: "I have a Veo Velocity Connect on my PC with Windows XP Prof and it works very well (\$ 79.99 on the www.veo.com site). It does not have a microphone though, but for language projects you may want a separate one... so that the audio quality is better." Peggy Marcy reported some problems with her attempt at using web

cams, and she included another question in her message: "... I bought Logitech web cams, but even as fast as our computers and network (100/100 switches) are, the cameras were still too jerky of motion to satisfy our ASL department.... Do the Mini-DV cameras eliminate some of the jerkiness?... I know they would on individual recording, but do you use them to video conference with also? How smooth do the motions appear during video conferencing?" Otmar Foelsche replied: "Catching satisfactory footage of ASL work is extremely difficult, because of the speed of the motion. Really satisfactory video can be obtained with expensive equipment and 60 fps" Gus Leonard had another answer: "No, Mini-DV cams don't eliminate jerkiness in web conferencing. That is more to network conditions than anything else, as I understand it. Our ASL faculty is pursuing the work, even given the video quality. The class sizes are small and often taught online during summer and winter interims where she can provide more support. But the normal face to face classes all require video presentations to be submitted in digital format and that is where the labs here get the bulk of their use. There have been some fascinating projects done with the Internet2 project <<http://www.internet2.edu/about>> where there is dedicated network available...."

The discussions of the Language Learning and Technology International (LLTI) list server have been archived and posted on the web. These LLTI archives can be accessed from the IALLT Home page, which is located at <http://www.iallt.net/>. A link to the LLTI list server appears at the top level of the IALLT Home page. The LLTI list server page gives instructions on how to subscribe or unsubscribe to the list server. In addition, there is a link to the LLTI archives. These archives can also be accessed at <<http://listserv.dartmouth.edu/archives/llti.html>>.

To search the archives, type the subject in the first search field. The search engine will match the subject with the subject headings of the archived messages. You may also type a key word or words in the second search field. This search will look for the key words in the body text of all messages. If the reference number that has been assigned to a discussion topic is entered in this field, the search will bring up a complete list of all discussions dealing with the topic. You may also want to restrict search by limiting it to a specific author or by entering beginning and ending dates. Such a restriction is particularly useful for searches on frequently occurring topics. Any questions or comments related to the LLTI list server may be

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addressed to Otmar Foelsche, the moderator of the LLTI discussion list. Otmar can be contacted at otmar.foelsche@dartmouth.edu. ♦

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