Seminal Articles on e-Learning
by Steve McCarty

Many educational and professional development activities that people do today with ease through technology were done from the mid-1990s. They just took more effort, patience, and ingenuity. Therefore, a compilation of seminal works from early 1996 through 2008, while the author was a full professor in Japan, may stand the test of time. The history of innovations such as wholly online academic conferences or virtual worlds, may be of use or interest to researchers and scholars in a field that is thin on theory and disciplinarity.

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ABSTRACTS

"The Convergence of Specialist and Generalist Knowledge accelerated by Computer Communications" (1996)

Education has much to do with turning specialist knowledge into general knowledge. As a cluster specialist (Asian Studies / Japan, Bilingualism / Language Teaching, e-Learning / Online Education) the author could observe the changing nature of knowledge at an early stage with the advent of the Internet. [Edited and shortened in June 2020]

"The Internet for Educator Development" (1996)

An educator is a teacher and a lifelong learner, involved in the profession, the community, and the world. The Internet, connecting computers in a global communications network, opens mind-boggling possibilities and is already changing many paradigms related to education. This paper will introduce one of the world's first major academic conferences held entirely on-line, including a transcribed synchronous multiple user "MOO" discourse with EFL/ESL educators abroad.

"Opening the Conference Gates to K-12 and Worldwide Educators" (1997)

This pioneering contribution to a U.S. National Writing Project / Global SchoolNet online project funded by the National Science Foundation described how wholly online conferences could open the gates to participation by K-12, community college, and worldwide educators in a hitherto exclusive form of academic knowledge exchange.

"Voluntaristic Online Education and the Future with Japan" (keynote address paper, 1998)

This keynote address discusses the need for a new worldwide association to turn online education into a professional discipline. Instead of online conferences, year-round networking was preferred, so participants continued post-conference forum discussions for months, and the World Association for Online Education (WAOE) was founded later in the spring of 1998. Online relations with Japan were also discussed in the keynote address, and notice in the PDF that a video by the sea in Japan was offered by the author, more than 7 years before Google's YouTube.

"Japanese Culture Meets Online Education: Bridging the Psychological Gap" (1999)

Online education finds a relatively inhospitable environment in compact Japan with its traditional face-to-face communication style. This Educom Review article published by EDUCAUSE describes the situation in Japan when an insular society with complex f2f rituals of communication and a large paper correspondence education sector was confronted with the new online medium.


The Fifth Annual Teaching in the Community Colleges TCC 2000 Online Conference originally commissioned a report by its Writing Team on International Issues and New
Technologies for Learning. In this new abridgement, the Writing Team Chair selects representative excerpts from his original report of the online conference discussions, which took place in asynchronous (Web Board and mailing lists) and synchronous (Web chat rooms) media across various time zones. A large part of the original writing was an attached paper by Dr. John Afele proposing an African Knowledge Bank, which is linked from the References in this shortened report.

"Review of Open and Distance Education in the Asia Pacific Region" (2001)
The review of open universities and distance education in Asia, the Pacific, and North America will serve as an introduction to their educational and institutional cultures, particularly with regard to their openness to internationalization.

"Reaching out to Students - Education Online" (2002)
Highlights of an interview, a Feature Story in the Hiragana Times magazine for Japanese language learners, so each section of the interview is translated into Japanese.

"Information Communication Technologies in Asia: An Interview with Steve McCarty" (2006)
Wide-ranging interview for the UK-based International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language about innovative pedagogy in the fields of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Online Education

"Window into the Classroom: Podcasting an English for Professional Purposes Course" (2007)
This paper investigates possible ways that coursecasting the lecture parts of a class may be pedagogically useful. Particularly at a college where all students have iPods, the infrastructure becomes mobile and the learning institution naturally looks for ways to make more extensive use of iPods and related Web-based technologies. Literature on these new practices will be reviewed, including iTunesU, arguably a next-generation learning management system. This paper also reports on an experiment in coursecasting a Bilingual Education class, part of an upper division curriculum in English for Professional Purposes.

"The Future of Web 2.0 in 3D" (2008)
Colorfully illustrated interview article particularly reporting on a keynote address given simultaneously at a conference in Nagoya and in the 3D virtual world Second Life.

"Motivating Language Learners from Before Admission to After Graduation through Social Media" (2008)
2020 update of a seminal article on the media in social media, and how the author motivated EFL students through authentic Web 2.0 activities, student-generated content, and social networking.
The Convergence of Specialist and Generalist Knowledge accelerated by Computer Communications

by Steve McCarty https://japanned.hcommons.org/


概要 [Summary in Japanese]:

従来は学者・研究者といえば、一つの専門分野にのみ深くかかわるものとされていたが、現今のように、学術分野のすべてがコンピュータ化され、インターネットによって結ばれるようになると、他のさまざまな分野の知識への接触を通じ、自他の専門知識を統合して問題解決にあたったり、新機軸を打ち出したりする者が現われてもおかしくないし、またそれが待望される時代でもある。より細分化された専門知識をもち、かつ、統合的知識をも持ちあわせた者は、理解の深さと視野の広さを武器に、現代社会が直面するさまざまな問題を理解したり、社会の要請に応えたりすることができるからである。

ポストモダンの世界は複雑をきわめ、生きていくのにストレスが多く、人間関係に対する心理学の知識や、自我の確立が求められるが、これを欠いた場合、容易にマインドコントロールされる危険性がある。特に、政策を立案する立場にある者や高度な科学技術をもつ者は、専門の知識のほかに、とくに人文学系の素養を備える必要がある。これからの教育は、この点を重視すべきであるし、個人としても、生涯、自己研修を怠らないことが肝要である。山積する問題を解決するためにハイテク技術が駆使されるのは当然の勢いであるが、それを管理監督する高度な倫理が確立できるか否かに21世紀の世界の命運がかかっているからである。

This paper examines the changing relationship between specialized and general knowledge, reconsidering the view that ever-increasing specialization is superior to generalist knowledge. Trends toward interdisciplinary studies, multiple specializations, and the computerization of virtually every field are rendering untenable the traditional notion of specialization in one sub-field. Computer communications through the Internet in particular are at the cutting edge of new developments in scholarship, so academics in all fields need the auxiliary skill of computer literacy. Global computer communications are moreover changing the nature of knowledge itself, both as information and as cognition. It will be argued that these trends are accelerating the convergence of specialist and generalist knowledge.

To recognize the interdependence between specialist and generalist knowledge would grant them equal importance. Such a paradigm shift could in turn help revalorize general education, raising the status of the first two years of higher education. As it is more incumbent upon humanities scholars to synthesize learning across the curriculum (McCarty, 1995e, p. 43), generalist scholars may surface first in the liberal arts as transformed by computer communications. This paper thus predicts the emergence of a new breed of academic generalists.
Democratization, starting with Athens 25 centuries ago (McCarty, 1995d, p. 24), has fostered unprecedented freedom. Yet mental freedom brings responsibilities and difficult choices, increasing the possibility of losing one's way in the process of self-realization. Hence much general knowledge becomes necessary to navigate one's way unfailingly through life, to live wisely and find happiness.

The world is becoming increasingly complex, and advancements in all fields are accelerated by breakthroughs in technology such as the Internet. No one can keep up with the information explosion, so individuals need to be selective and self-aware, to keep their goals clear and develop strategies to find the information they need without getting sidetracked.

To be a generalist does not mean to be a jack-of-all-trades, master of none. A vast amount of general knowledge has become necessary in everyday life: four skills in at least one language, following current trends and news; health care and nutrition; human relations, including simultaneous social roles such as parent, spouse, colleague, citizen, and voter. Each citizen now has considerable general knowledge, while the knowledge of the academic is more specialized. An academic generalist has a deep understanding and a wide perspective, resulting in the ability to solve actual problems and contribute to society.

The knowledge to function in each domain of everyday life is growing more and more specialized. That is, the nature of knowledge itself is changing. The future would appear to consist of all specialized knowledge if we could see it now, just as the present would appear to someone awakening after decades. To be a generalist scholar here means to be able to readily learn specialized knowledge from various fields and to apply it constructively.

What makes an academic generalist different from the layperson is that the academic has internalized scientific standards. For example, the academic does not believe unverified assertions and does not overgeneralize based on one or two instances as laypersons often do. Academic standards are the universal aspect of a rigorous graduate school program in any field. General education in liberal arts at the undergraduate level can and should result in generalists, but it cannot readily confer the disciplined way of thinking of the scholar. It is seldom articulated in words, but professors in particular are expected to uphold rigorous academic standards and ethics.

While knowledge is becoming more specialized, user-friendly interfaces have made it easier for anyone to become a generalist. Computers have helped us realize this, since a three-year-old can now operate a computer from start to finish, using a mouse. But there are endless other cases of user-friendly interfaces: when we flick on a light switch, we do not have to think about all those electrons and the laws of nature that rule their movements. It is analogous to the central nervous system of the body that fortunately functions unconsciously most of the time, freeing the conscious mind to pursue volitional matters. In the same way, user-friendly interfaces free us from unnecessary technical details, allowing us to combine materials and media to creatively accomplish various needed tasks.
Knowledge then exists for us at two levels, like the difference between being able to operate a machine versus being able to fix or make one. It usually serves our purposes to simply operate the machine. Even the physicist just needs access to an atom-smasher that works, as a means to produce research findings, without having to specialize in atom-smashers themselves. As interfaces become increasingly user-friendly, the quality of generalist work can be expected to improve.

An Internet search in December 1995 on the keyword "generalist" showed that it appeared most often in medical contexts such as the general practitioner. It was also used for other occupations, particularly those involving computers: "The World Wide Web is a generalist's dream, and a specialist's nightmare. The person who flourishes in producing for this environment is part technical professional, part writer, part layout designer, part information analyst, and part visionary" (Morris, 1995). Another use of the term "generalist" was in university catalogues describing the goal of their liberal arts education. A well-rounded general education is needed to counteract the dangerous tendency to over-specialization, where universities turn into vocational schools and lose their universality (McCarty, 1995a, pp. 8-10; 山岸, 1995, p. 9).

"Specialization enhances production, so we specialize" (Burnap, 1995). However, the tendency to specialize further and further has broken Academia into a proliferation of narrow areas of study or hybrids thereof. One such speciality cannot even suffice to claim mastery of the field to which it belongs. In the case of foreign language teaching (FLT), linguistics is first divided into applied and theoretical. Applied linguistics has about ten branches, but they are increasing as new areas develop and their representatives seek fuller status, such as global issues or computer-assisted language learning (CALL). Bilingualism is one branch of applied linguistics, but it has been shown that, even limited to FLT in Japan, bilingualism consists of at least 26 main areas of study or auxiliary disciplines that specialists find relevant (McCarty, 1995b, pp. 7-10; McCarty, 1995c, pp. 36-43). It is therefore inevitable that researchers in bilingualism study not one but quite a number of these fragments of the linguistics field.

Scholars increasingly bridge the gap between theory and practice by applying their specialized knowledge to areas of everyday life usually considered unspecialized. Chemists on both sides of the Pacific Ocean have written cookbooks showing how food can reflect aesthetics and culture while being delicious as well as nutritious (Babcock & Shaw, 1988; 北川, 1994). In another case, English teachers combined translation skills with specialized knowledge of Japan to co-author practical guidebooks that also gave deep insight into Japanese culture (Takemoto, Narasaki, Kirkup & McCarty, 1988; Takemoto & McCarty, 1993). General-interest books are read more widely than most academic publications, and writing them can be a kind of volunteer work, as such works contribute to the local community and to intercultural understanding.
Another major trend changing the nature of knowledge is that of interdisciplinary studies. As just one example, a university course in the Psychology of Religion could be cross-listed in the curriculum under both the Psychology and Religion departments. As another example, the natural and social sciences lend their methodologies and research findings to linguistics and language teaching through neuro-linguistics, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics. Breakthroughs can result from investigating the same phenomenon on different levels from the perspective of different fields. Second language acquisition research, for example, can benefit from the findings of neuroscience: "Based on research studies using positron emission tomography (PET) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), new evidence suggests that language instruction should be initiated at a very early age in order to promote optimum bilingual development" (Silva, 1995, p. 3).

The nature of knowledge is evolving so rapidly now that universities are changing their curricula and considering what fields can abide for the foreseeable future. For the more specialized the knowledge, the more quickly it becomes obsolete. Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. is offering a new graduate program in Communication, Culture, and Technology, which "is an interdisciplinary program devoted to cultural theory, media studies, social policy, and communication technologies. This innovative new program focuses on current issues and theory at the intersection of Discourse, Language, Media, and Technology" (Irvine, 1995). Many different fields are obviously involved in the program, and it seems to reflect what general areas are considered to have abiding value for occupations in a changing society.

Similarly, in Hong Kong in 1996, two interdisciplinary conferences were scheduled. One was on language rights, while the other was on knowledge and discourse (Oda, 1995, p. 79). "[T]he organizers would like to assure all potential participants of their belief in pluralism, diversity and change, in mutual tolerance, and in the equal rights of all peoples to pursue their own beliefs and ideas, so long as these are not inconsistent with a respect for those rights in others." (University of Hong Kong English Centre, 1995). These words took on a particular urgency as 1997 approached. Academia is no longer an ivory tower for narrow specialists focusing on minutiae known only to their peers. Scholars are needed and increasingly involved in their communities worldwide.

Specialized knowledge quickly becomes obsolete, so scholars should not be wedded to one field but should have some detachment and comparative perspective. Otherwise they tend to overvalue their own specialty. What is considered specialized knowledge, moreover, tends to change into general knowledge if it becomes useful or necessary for people in various walks of life to know. That is, specialized knowledge either succeeds in becoming a part of general knowledge or else it is rendered useless and unnecessary. What constitutes specialist or generalist knowledge is not the intrinsic nature of the knowledge so much as its relative inaccessibility or accessibility.

Now the Internet is opening up unprecedented access to specialized knowledge, perhaps threatening the privileged status of specialists. This new accessibility of specialist
knowledge may naturally deconstruct the hierarchy where specialists, isolated behind a wall of jargon, assume a superiority over those with general knowledge. Among other things, *the multidisciplinary nature of the Internet is forcing academics to clarify what they mean to a general audience if they are to compete in the marketplace of ideas.*

Various trends and events can now be seen in light of the changing equation of specialized and general knowledge. One such sign of the times is the notion of the cluster specialist who needs more than one specialization to do an adequate job. The growing necessity for multiple specializations is moreover leading to a new type of generalist knowledge that consists of specialized knowledge from various fields. A generalist scholar would be able to synthesize diverse knowledge and apply it to solve problems or create new knowledge. For scientific principles and tests of truth are much the same across all disciplines. Furthermore, all knowledge, cognitive as well as factual, is ultimately interrelated by natural laws. Thus, specialist and generalist knowledge could be seen as interdependent and predicted to coalesce in the future.

The post-modern world is complex and stressful, so people need a philosophy of life as much as ever, as evidenced by *Sophie’s World* (Gaarder, 1995; 池田, 1995) becoming a worldwide best-seller in many languages. People also need a grasp of psychology to cope with human relations and to clarify their own self-concept lest they be defined and controlled by others. It is important for the welfare of the world that not only scholars but policy-makers and technocrats, among others, receive a well-rounded education and continuing self-education in the Humanities. For *the fate of the world may hinge on whether or not the high ethics can be found to administer high-tech solutions to the planet's problems in the 21st Century.*

_Scholars thus have a social responsibility to apply their knowledge for the practical benefit of humanity, to cultivate a global outlook in themselves as well as in their students, and to communicate across boundaries, be they national, cultural, or disciplinary. Now every field is becoming computerized and is being brought into dialogue with all the rest. With the advent of the Internet there is furthermore a new interface with people from all continents and occupations. Scholars can therefore have a much greater impact on society, provided they are persuasive in non-technical language and are effective at computer-mediated communication* (see Ellsworth, 1994, pp. 382 ff.).

We have now reconsidered specialist and generalist knowledge in light of the information age, and find that they are not opposite but complementary. Knowledge of both specialist and generalist scale will continue to be necessary to scholarship in the future. Perhaps _education itself has much to do with turning specialized knowledge into general knowledge_, so it may be time to search the horizon for the new academic generalist.
References


University of Hong Kong English Centre (1995). Knowledge and Discourse Conference.

I have asked Steve McCarty, who recently participated in an electronic academic conference, to relate his experiences to us in an approachable way in terms of technical issues. This has been done with a view toward encouraging branches of JALT to investigate the possibility of organizing electronic conferences and publications in the future; steps that might serve to invigorate professional discourse and enhance our standing as an association.

In the view of this writer, an educator is a teacher and a lifelong learner, involved in the profession, the community, and the world. The Internet, connecting computers in a global communications network, opens mind-boggling possibilities and is already changing many paradigms related to education. This paper will introduce one of the world's first major academic conferences held entirely on-line, including a transcribed synchronous multiple user "MOO" discourse with EFL/ESL educators abroad.

The Teaching in the Community Colleges Listserv (TCC-L), based at Kapiolani Community College in Hawaii, distributes e-mail messages addressed to the list to its several hundred members, so asynchronous discussions continue year-round. To join the discussion list, e-mail <listserv@uhccvm.its.hawaii.edu> with no subject and the message: subscribe tcc-l first_name last_name.

There was a call for papers for The First Annual TCC-L On-Line Conference in CALLing Japan, 4 (3), 1995), the newsletter of the JALT CALL N-SIG. Abstracts for presentation proposals on the conference theme of "Innovative Instructional Practices" were sent to four vettors by e-mail. Papers were also submitted by e-mail. Conference Committee members formatted the papers with HyperText Markup Language (HTML) and started posting them on the World Wide Web (WWW) from March 25, 1996. To make interactions more like an in-person conference, a home page which included bio-data and color photos was created for each presenter. Presenters were able to send their material by regular mail to be scanned into digital format. From April 2-4 (3-
5 in Japan) there were conference events, some posted on the WWW as they unfolded. About 750 participants registered for the conference, while anyone with WWW access can also read the conference papers (see url <http://naio.kcc.hawaii.edu/kcc/kccinfo.html>).

There were about 40 TCC-L conference papers. These papers are to be published in the TCC-L(E)J, an electronic journal that can be accessed via the WWW or gopher. Conference presenters were of all races, but predominantly based in the U.S. and other English native-speaking countries. It was a multidisciplinary conference, yet about a quarter of the papers were on language teaching. Three presentations were on TEFL, one each from Mexico, Indonesia, and Japan.

A one-hour synchronous session was scheduled for each presentation and was hosted by the Daedalus MOO (MultipleUser Domain, Object-Oriented). Participants with questions and comments met the presenters in cyberspace, and the group conversations appeared on everyone’s computer screens nearly instantaneously via telnet. The possibilities of this medium have not been lost on L2 teachers, and Daedalus MOO also hosts a French language domain. While there is much the L2 teacher needs to learn first, it is even possible to join classes from other countries in real time.

Here follows part of the transcript of a Daedalus MOO telnet discussion on TESL/TEFL from 1-2 p.m., Hawaii time on April 4, 1996 (April 5 from 8 am in Japan). The passage is edited slightly for coherence. My interlocutors were ESL professors in California and Hawaii along with EFL professors in Mexico and Hong Kong.

CO SteveMcCarty

*** Connected ***

Travelers' Inn. You are inside a small building used by travelers . . .

@goto Athens Room

You see a conference room with chairs and tables which can be rearranged as needed. A tape recorder sits on a table . . . .

Dancar, Marsha, Bill Powers, Judi, and John-FR are standing here. You sense that Judi is looking for you in the Athens Room.

She pages, "Your paper is excellent, one any potential EFL teacher should have a chance to read."

John-FR asks, "If you are both teaching Japanese students to speak English, does it make very much difference that one of you is in Japan and the other [Marsha Chan] is in the US?"

Judi: "From McCarty's paper, I would answer yes, for he is looking at the constraints of the political system in Japan and its effects on TEFL."
John-FR says, "I expect the students living in the US are more motivated. How does one overcome the problems of cultural resistance?"

Steve says, "I try to acculturate and not impose Western paradigms."

John-FR says, "It reminds me of teaching Spanish in England. Students see their own culture as more important. But does not the language impose those [Western paradigms]?"

(part of a Daedalus MOO Athens Room session captured electronically by this writer)

Each MOO "room" has a description to create a shared ambience. Even so, the low-context environment can be disorienting, as the medium tends to overwhelm the message at first. And yet a substantive discussion could be discerned, an international comparison of TESL-TEFL situations. Each participant was actually operating a computer in Austin, Texas by remote control (TELNET), creating the virtual reality of seven people standing in a conference room.

Organizational and Technical Considerations

A discussion list or listserv, a mostly automated program in a host computer or server, creates an electronic network which is, moreover, a discourse community for people anywhere in the world with an e-mail address and an interest in the topic of discussion. As examples, Chubu University hosts , for discussions of FLT in Japan, yet L2 teachers abroad do join in. Provided one has a computer that has Japanese language capability, a teacher anywhere could also subscribe to at Chubu and participate in discussions of Internet applications to TEFL. Send e-mail to <majordomo@clc.hyper.chubu.ac.jp> with just the message subscribe jaltcall (or subscribe net-lang). San Francisco State University hosts a very helpful network on L2 teaching via the Internet: send e-mail to <listserv@thecity.sfsu.edu> with the command subscribe neteach-l.

Organizations like NETEACH-L and TCC-L (Teaching in the Community Colleges) further receive permission from educational MOOs for list members to participate in regular real time discussions, giving the discourse community further opportunities for the meeting of minds. They also start separate mailing lists for those more deeply involved, such as officers or organizers of their annual conferences.

Participants in the TCC-L on-line conference filled out an evaluation form either by regular e-mail or via the Web by just clicking on the form at a certain WWW address. As with much of the conference interaction, via an Internet browsing program such as Netscape, clicking on highlighted words transported us via HyperText to the evaluation form or other links. While the one-hour MOO sessions were relatively long for questions and comments on presentations, messages to a new discussion list continued the commentary and evaluation process for a time after the conference as well. These messages and some transcribed MOO discussions were also posted on the WWW. In these media, a consensus was reached to expand TCC-L scope and internationalize the 1997 conference with the theme: "The Post-Secondary Teaching Profession in the Community and the World."

The TCC-L conference organizers further secured our use of a new Webbed MOO or "WOO" at California State University. Participants were granted passwords and a construction quota to build home rooms, as it were, in cyberspace, places where we could create a textual ambience and actually meet people bring our EFL classes. The ambience can be read either in the room via telnet or by peering in through the Web. The text is programmed in ways explained by help documents in the MOO, and it can be edited through the Web without having to bother with HTML formatting. Each object constructed in the MOO, including one's own description, automatically has its equivalent home page on the WWW.
While it is inevitable that JALT will delve into these possibilities to further overcome spatial distances, one cautionary note is that money is being spent and not made by these electronic conferences and publications. Chapters may have the wherewithal but are geographically based, whereas N-SIGs, formed to overcome geography, would have to further rely on the resources of members and their institutions.

Nevertheless, for educator development, the number of electronic journals and conferences is growing exponentially, and many teachers will chafe until suitable hardware and software is available at their institutions. For one of the greatest revolutions in the history of education has already begun.

Steve McCarty, Professor at Kagawa Junior College, is on the Advisory Board of the Teaching in the Community Colleges Listserv and is a Contributing Editor of the Asia-Pacific Exchange Electronic Journal. He presented at the June, 1996 Knowledge and Discourse Conference at the University of Hong Kong. In JALT since 1983, he has been President of the Matsuyama and Kagawa Chapters, Bilingualism N-SIG Chair, and National N-SIG Representative.

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Opening the Conference Gates to K-12 and Worldwide Educators

by Steve McCarty

Greetings from a rustic seacoast in southwestern Japan. Since 1983 I have been active in the teaching profession in Japan but rather isolated from the rest of the world. A little more than a year ago, my college went online, and now I would like to share with others who are also new to this medium my own positive experiences with one Internet possibility: the completely online academic conference.

By connecting computers in a global communications network, the Internet opens new possibilities for educators at all levels worldwide, and it is already changing many of education’s paradigms. In my own experience, among the modes of interaction now available to the teaching profession, online academic conferences are particularly promising for educator development. As an example, I will introduce one of the world’s first major academic conferences held entirely online. (Portions of this article first appeared in The Language Teacher, 20 (9), 17-18, September 1996, published by the Japan Association for Language Teaching. The online version is also available.) Later I will invite readers to participate in an upcoming online conference on online instruction. In fact, readers can use this article to find out what online conference activities are possible as well as to follow links to more details, including how to conduct their own online professional conferences.

The Benefits of Online Professional Development

Online academic conferences may be a great advantage for K-12 educators and others who are eager for professional development but who are geographically distant from relevant conferences. College professors have traditionally enjoyed the privilege of attending conferences, but online conferences open the door for the first time to significant numbers of K-12 teachers. By participating in online conferences, K-12 teachers can learn about usable educational research and become better informed about the effects of their profession on society. Online conferences also allow K-12 teachers to take a more active role in generating information on educational issues. The online conference provides a forum for teachers not only to present their own classroom-based action research but also to respond to the research of others, perhaps holding it to higher standards of relevance and applicability.

These new technologies also allow educators to cross national boundaries with ease, thus promoting global communities of people involved with education. In the near future, all academic conferences worth their salt will be international as educators
around the world connect to the Internet. Grassroots initiatives toward globalism may succeed where intergovernmental relations remain thwarted by nationalism.

The Intermediary Role of Community College Educators

The premier online conference described below was organized by a group of community college teachers. Community colleges have been at the forefront of many recent innovations in educational technology, such as online instruction via the Internet. They share characteristics with both local schools and universities, because they traditionally open doors to higher education for many secondary students and encourage students to pursue further study after the associate degree. Community colleges are thus well positioned to bring together various institutions involved with learning, and community college teachers are helping to widen the circle of participation in academic conferences and include educators at all levels and from anywhere in the world.

My own experience as a junior college teacher in Japan is a case in point. Soon after getting online, I read a community college network's call for online conference papers in a computer-assisted language learning newsletter here in Japan. After presenting a paper at the network's first annual conference, I am now on the staff for the second annual event.

My hope in this current article is that I can persuade Well-Connected Educator readers to experience the exciting Second Annual Teaching in the Community Colleges Online Conference announced below.

Using E-Mail Discussion Listservs to Network

Before I describe a once and future online conference, I will introduce the type of network that hosts such conferences along with the minimum technology needed for a teacher to participate. E-mail discussion lists are now fundamental in keeping far-flung networks in communication. A listserv program in a host computer automatically distributes e-mail messages to all subscribers so that asynchronous (rather than synchronous, or real-time) discussions can continue year-round. After joining a list to receive many messages each day, a user can set a digest option so that all of the previous day's messages are compiled into just a few e-mail files. Because e-mail is relatively inexpensive and nearly as fast as electricity, the convenience and borderlessness enabled by listserv software have accelerated the pace of global networking.

With an Internet browser, you can click on the highlighted name or address of a discussion list to send a direct subscription request. You also might be able to select and copy e-mail addresses and paste them into your e-mail program without having to close your browser; print out most of the text you see; or select, copy, and paste selected information into other files.

Teaching in the Community Colleges Online Conference

The Teaching in the Community Colleges Online Conference grew out of the Teaching in the Community Colleges List (TCC-L), a discussion group that operates from a University of Hawaii listserv.
Founded in 1995, TCC-L's membership is approximately 500. Its many daily posts shed light on issues of concern to community college educators. The high level of activity and enthusiasm generated by the listserv prompted its owner, Dr. James Shimabukuro, to organize an annual conference entirely online to share knowledge more intensively and systematically.

Dr. Shimabukuro organized some of his colleagues at Kapiolani Community College and elsewhere in the University of Hawaii system, plus some active TCC-L discussion list subscribers, to form an online conference committee. The first conference was held in April 1996 with the theme “Innovative Instructional Practices.” The procedures detailed below worked smoothly enough to be included in the planning for the second annual conference, so readers who are considering conducting an online conference can use these practices as recommendations.

Call for Papers

A call for papers was sent out to both print and electronic media (such as discussion lists) that are mainly but not exclusively based in North America; this reflects the community college concept's geographical origins.

As directed in the call for papers, would-be presenters sent short abstracts for proposed presentations by e-mail to four reviewers. The papers that were accepted were then also submitted by e-mail. The requested format included block paragraphs and other inevitable variations from APA or MLA standards, because the simple text of e-mail messages precludes the use of italics and other distinctive text treatments. (For links to a variety of references on how to cite online sources in academic publications, see Heritage Online K-12 Academic References.) TCC-L Conference Committee member Kenrick Chan formatted the papers with HyperText Markup Language (HTML) and started posting them on the World Wide Web on March 25, 1996, or about a week before the conference began.

The Online Conference

Although it was intended to be a multidisciplinary conference, a plurality of the papers were on computer applications in composition and language teaching, areas in which the new technologies have had a particularly great impact. Conference presenters were from diverse cultures and backgrounds, but most were based in the United States and other English-speaking countries. Future TCC-L online conferences will aim for broader, more international participation.

The first TCC-L online conference was free of charge and required no extraordinary energies or expenses to gather people from around and beyond the Pacific Rim. With such easy participation and registration by e-mail, some 800 participants registered for the first conference. Since then, a growing number of other interested people with access to the Web or gopher sites have also freely visited the Internet sites of the presentations, plenary addresses, and archives of other conference events (Shimabukuro, 1996a). (For a gopher menu of the First Annual Teaching in the Community Colleges Online Conference papers, click on the “Vol. 3, No. 1” icon in Shimabukuro, 1996b.) The nearly 50 papers were published again after the
Interactivity

Although much of the conference could be read on the Web later, interactive events were only available to those who registered. To simulate an in-person conference, a home page that included biographical data and color photos was created for each presenter. Photos could be sent by regular mail to be scanned into digital format. Conference participants could then see the presenters and were encouraged to communicate with them in more traditional text-based ways. The actual interactions that took place before, during, and after the three-day conference were what made it a truly academic event. Those interactions in turn served to forge a stronger and more international network for conducting future online events.

Asynchronous Interactive Online Conference Events

All conference registrants, staff members, and presenters were placed on a conference e-mail discussion list. Before and during the conference, announcements, greetings, and various other bits of information were automatically distributed by the host computer to the hundreds of addresses on the list. During and after the conference, an evaluation survey was also sent out by e-mail. This e-mail survey mainly backed up a Web page with the same evaluation form, because even though many participants could more conveniently fill out the form and submit it by clicking with their mouse, they might not necessarily have selected the evaluation Web page on their own from the menu of conference events.

Conference events were held from April 2 to 4 (or 3 to 5 in places such as Japan), with some being posted on the Web as they unfolded. Participants had already had a week to read the presentations on the Web and had been encouraged to send personal e-mail messages with comments or questions directly to the presenters, whose e-mail addresses accompanied their papers. At the same time, messages and announcements of interest to all participants were posted freely to the conference's e-mail discussion list.

Finally, from the first official day of the conference, a hypernews program -- the same Hypermail 1.02 that Global SchoolNet has used to archive e-mail announcements of K-12 opportunities on the Web -- automatically organized logs of all the discussion list messages and posted them on the Web. This process has continued long after the conference, with comments and evaluations being used to plan future events. To avoid having to publish each message on the Web via hypernews, e-mail lists have been used by smaller, more focused groups such as the conference planning committee to send single messages to specific numbers of people.

MOOing and WOOing for Real-Time Interactions

Having seen photos of the presenters on their conference home pages, as well as having exchanged messages via e-mail, real-time interaction became the main experience for conference participants. To accomplish this, the conference incorporated a new medium that few participants had previously experienced: a "MOO" or object-oriented MUD (multiple-user domain). Educational MOOs are basically "chat rooms" that represent everything in them as objects -- including the
participants. (For more information about how to enter and communicate in MOOs, see Thorne, 1996.)

One-hour synchronous sessions were scheduled at the Daedalus MOO for each presentation during the three days of the 1996 conference. Because most participants had read the presentations at their leisure before the conference, much of the conference time could be devoted to interaction. An hour is a long time for questions and comments, albeit not "f2f," but "m2m" -- that is, not face-to-face, but mind-to-mind. Participants who had questions and comments were able to meet the presenters in cyberspace -- at least those who had the luck and alacrity to enter a MOO.

Like groping around in deep space, the lack of contextual clues can be disorienting, with the MOO medium initially overwhelming the message.

**Connection**

To connect, a user activates Telnet or MOO client software and uses a command to access a specific host -- in this case, to the Daedalus MOO host computer in Austin, Texas. Each guest operates the host's MOO software by remote control, creating the virtual reality of a group conversing in a conference room.

The TCC-L conference now uses a Webbed MOO or "WOO" at California State University, Northridge (near Los Angeles). A WOO is a MOO whose every object has its counterpart in a Web page, from which the objects in the MOO can be observed or edited without the need of HTML. Every MOO room has a written description to help create a shared ambiance for those who are present. Help documents that are accessible by commands in the MOO explain how to communicate, make gestures, or represent oneself in terms of objects. Conference participants have been given a password and a quota of computer memory to build their own MOO rooms, descriptions, and possessions that also can be edited from their corresponding Web pages.

**Interaction**

As a brief example, when you enter my WOO room, "The Pearl Dive," the written ambiance actually describes the view from my house: "Picture yourself on a hill in suburban Japan. In the canyon beyond you see bamboo forests and stepped rice fields. . . ." There is a hunt through shark-infested waters to find the priceless pearl. To chat with people in the WOO, I might type

```
   say, "hello"
```

Everyone in the same room sees "Steve says hello" on their computer screens. I have programmed my default mood to be represented by a pensive blue heron, so when I leave, I type the emote code and "takes flight," and everyone in the room sees "Steve (blue heron) takes flight."

With great distances involved, such as between Japan and Mexico, a message might take five or ten seconds to be transmitted, so when several people are conversing, the onscreen results may be somewhat out of order. Nonetheless, people can enter MOOs virtually at will and interact with real people (or even poseurs), so the medium has become both popular and educationally useful. This medium's possibilities have not been lost on teachers, particularly those in the language arts. MOO rooms allow students to brainstorm, write collaboratively, and even meet classes from other regions and countries. (For more information on MOOs, see Thorne, 1996.) Such long-distance synchronous communication makes participants acutely aware of the international date line and other time differences, a real aspect of the world that is
otherwise never at issue in local activities.

Many Web documents offer plenty of advice about MOOing. McCarty (1996) includes a transcript of a MOO discussion on teaching English as a second and foreign language by TCC-L participants in Mexico, the United States, Japan, and Hong Kong. The 1996 conference has also been reviewed by Judith Kirkpatrick, who coordinated the MOO sessions. Her online paper has links to the main TCC-L conference events, and further information on both MOOs and how online conferences might be better than in-person ones in terms of interactions.

Conducting Online Academic Conferences for Educator Development

However we compare online and in-person conferences, one overriding consideration is that most of us who would be interested in a certain conference theme simply could not participate unless it were online because we are geographically remote from any one conference site. Global communications have been eased enormously by e-mail, but real-time communication still faces the obstacle of time zones. As with the telephone, teleconferencing technologies also must contend with time zones, and there would not be much spice to televise if they were not crossed. It might be suggested, then, that U.S.-based online conferences conduct synchronous sessions early in the morning so that European participants can be involved, and late in the afternoon so that those in East Asia and Oceania can “attend.”

For educator development, the number of electronic texts, references, journals, chat rooms, academic discussion lists and conferences is growing exponentially. As a result, many teachers at all levels will chafe until suitable hardware and software is available at their institutions. For this reason alone, one of the greatest revolutions in the history of education has begun.

References


Heritage Online K-12 Academic References.


This keynote address discusses the need for a new worldwide association for online education or, a congress of existing associations concerned with the Internet and education. The linguistic and cultural distance between Japan and Western countries is so great that mutual understanding can only be a matter of degree. Japanese language search engines and directories quickly yield many Web sites concerned with online education, but apparently in mainstream colleges and schools the Internet is no more than a supplement to courses for credit, not the means of delivery. Yasuhiko Hirao of the Kagawa Prefectural Education Center, an inservice training facility, endeavors to theoretically justify using the Internet in public schools while presenting experimental findings in published articles and at his Web site. There are two countervailing trends related to online education that can be projected statistically into the future. According to a vernacular economic daily, the number of computers in Japan connected to the Internet will rise from 12 million in 1998 to 32 million in the year 2001. This paper concludes by posing a question for online discussion: "What can be done to give those educated worldwide a brighter future online?"
GREETINGS & KEYNOTES
Aloha from Hawai`i!

WELCOME ADDRESSES

JIM SHIMABUKURO & BERT KIMURA
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KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

STEVE MCCARTY
Video Hello (12 megabyte MPEG file)
Voluntaristic Online Education and the Future with Japan
Professor,
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VOLUNTARISTIC ONLINE EDUCATION
AND THE FUTURE WITH JAPAN

A Keynote Address for the 1998
Teaching in the Community Colleges Online Conference

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ONLINE EDUCATION AS A NEW PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE

As Academia is reconstituted in cyberspace, online teaching could be
developed into a professional discipline that upholds academic and
ethical standards in the new Internet media. Online teaching would
become a peer-regulated profession or pan-disciplinary global guild.

For this to happen, academic freedom will still be necessary to
ensure that disinterested decisions are made with respect to
education in the new media. A profession is based on the cumulative
knowledge of full-time professionals, therefore many educators will
need to make online teaching their living for there to be
professionalism. A discipline cannot develop if online teaching is
adjunct to the main professional duties of most practitioners, much
less if they are adjuncts themselves to colleges or other
organizations. That is to say, realistically, that online teaching needs
to be valued the same as face-to-face teaching in the language of
commerce.

Yet even so, online educators will be needed to supply online
libraries and other sources of knowledge shared with others. Hence
the inevitable province of voluntaristic online education.
Practitioners' institutions also need to formally recognize the
homework, preparation, networking and voluntarism that accompany
the development of a new discipline with rapidly changing technological requirements.

Unless people wish to experiment with technologically or economically led education, a vision must be set forth with clear objectives in cyberspace no less than in previous media. For unethical practices can be automated much more easily than ethical ones. Some of the crimes of the Century have resulted from the obedient misuse of the most advanced technological skills. A recent case was the Aum cult in Japan, where scientists, technicians and even a doctor practiced mass murder. Hence the indispensibility of tenured faculty members who can be disinterested with regard to the uses of this specialized knowledge.

To steer any high technology to the benefit of humanity calls for equally high ethics, which have been upheld highest historically by those who took to heart a core education in the humanities. This is not to suggest an unrealistic separation of education and economics, but rather to advocate checks and balances between colleges and businesses, faculty and administration, so that, rather than one pillar subverting the other, education and prosperity can be mutually reinforcing.

Where credentials are conferred, the role of all teachers sooner or later will be contingent upon the evaluation by educators in each specialization of the reliability of sources of knowledge available online. With the vast array of sources to select from in each field already, again the time demands on conscientious educators will be increasingly great. The institutions and societies that benefit from these efforts should therefore reward them correspondingly.

To work for professionalism in a new discipline, among the domains that need to be addressed are teacher training, in-service educator development, accreditation of online educational programs, and systematic communication among practitioners as well as with their surrounding societies. This communication needs to be coordinated
to be effective, and by an independent scholarly organization. A framework for consensus is needed to apply academic rigor to online information and programs while promoting the collaboration and professional development of online educators.

This TCC-L online conference provides a forum to discuss such issues, and other venues are also grappling with similar issues, but the networks need to be brought together. This keynote address aims not to set out a mandate but rather to spark a dialogue among participants as to what can be done by whom. Therefore please join in the prioritizing of objectives and help build a consensus on how to develop this 21st Century discipline.

The above considerations point to the need for either a new worldwide association for online education or else a congress of existing associations concerned with the Internet and education. However, many organizations founded before the worldwide turn to cyberspace are hampered by their very substantiality. Costly print publications, in-person conferences and executive meetings require substantial membership dues. The geographical limits of such academic organizations are often reflected in names starting with "American" or "National," which are problematical internationally. Whereas freed of the encumbrances of physical products and travel, a world association for online education can now be conceived, one that recognizes the intelligence and aspirations of all humanity.

**Discussion Points**

Rather than this presenter naming organizations at this stage, or proposing new organizations without knowing who in the world would get involved, a clearer picture might emerge from extensive discussions of the pertinent issues. Therefore please briefly describe professional organizations having to do with the Internet and education. How well are they equipped for the rapid changes of the 21st Century? What can educators do,
for example, if they cannot join more than two or three organizations with annual dues? Yet how can online teaching become better organized and peer-regulated to merit credibility in global educational circles? Please contribute to the conference forum discussions during and after the online conference or via e-mail anytime to steve.mc@ibm0.kagawa-ic.ac.jp.

GLOBAL AND MULTICULTURAL ONLINE EDUCATION

A new global paradigm for education in the coming Century is only beginning to emerge. It could scarcely have been predicted until the advent of the Internet that the world would be brought together by non-governmental ambassadors.

This globalism is not just a concept to revalorize taken-for-granted geographical, cultural or linguistic defaults. Instead cyberspace provides an unprecedented meeting place for people from nearly every country, plus information about those not yet represented. Rather than non-Westerners serving as just an audience, the voice that they always had will now be raised on the world stage. The future will thus be a co-creation of Westerners and non-Westerners.

How will various cultures be reflected in computer-mediated communications? Furthermore, how can each culture be represented so that cyberspace becomes a level playing field for multilateral justice and world reconciliation?

Certain leading non-Western nations such as Singapore have already developed a Net infrastructure along with public policies and educational critiques (Tan, 1997). While this presentation will have to be confined to Japan, e-mail contributions to the conference forums or to steve.mc@ibm0.kagawa-ic.ac.jp concerning the Internet and education in various non-Western countries would be most welcome. Discussions could tie in this keynote or other 1996-98 presentations for comparison and theory-building.
THE FUTURE WITH JAPAN

The linguistic and cultural distance between Japan and Western countries is so great that mutual understanding can only be a matter of degree. Unknown areas need to be filled not with projections and unverified generalities but rather with tolerance and goodwill. The cultural traditions of Japan and the U.S. in particular developed without mutual influence and happen to be nearly poles apart in common sense assumptions on many issues.

Yet although Japan is enigmatic to Westerners and Asians alike, it has a self-consistent way of life, albeit conveyed in mostly unspoken ways. Often struck by sudden natural calamities, Japanese people have tended to value security, not surprises, therefore their projections about the future in their relatively stable system can be quite accurate. This applies not so much to what is expressed strategically to the outside world in English as to what is directed to Japanese people in Japanese, therefore original sources will be translated here.

History also repeats itself, cycles of inflation or hubris followed by disillusionment or implosion, but never forced systemic change from without. Over millenia the surrounding seas allowed cultural transmission, but were rough enough so that Japan was never colonized. Twice Mongol invasions were thwarted by typhoons called "kamikaze," which reinforced the ideology that Japan was special. The very name of Japan in Chinese characters, Nihon or Nippon, can be interpreted as origin of the sun. While Japan was pre-literate, the name first appeared in the 3rd Century Record of Wei, so perhaps the Chinese invented the name. Japan was to the east where the sun rises, and there might have been an almost Rousseauvian view of Japan by lettered Mandarins. But then early rulers of Japan, who had close advisors from the Mainland if not originating there themselves, possibly adopted the flattering name from China to legitimize their authority.
This is mentioned because again in the 70s and 80s, the literature abroad that portrayed Japan flatteringly as the top nation was adopted at a time of identity politics to reinforce domestic notions of unique excellence in the Japanese way of life. The myth was renewed that Japan could pick and choose from the outside world and prosper without having to fundamentally change. One manifestation is the attitude that foreign languages like English are not needed except for university entrance exams.

But how could there be nothing unique about "the Japanese" among East Asians, yet the nation is the world's second wealthiest? Many ancient traditions and artifacts have been snuffed out in other Asian countries, whereas Japan has been able to build on the legacy of Chinese aesthetics. Another accident of history was Japan's choice of the U.S. as an opponent in WWII. Immediately after the surrender, U.S. forces rushed in to save the public from starvation, and the most enlightened occupation in world history may be the reason Japan became number two. It may not be entirely a secret even today: fight the U.S. and profit.

Yet the whole post-War generation worked so singlemindedly for material goods for the sake of their children that the nation is imploding culturally if not economically from the complacency of young people. A demographic implosion threatens educational institutions most of all. The birthrate of about 1.55 means that Japan's population will begin to decline, from the world's 7th now to the 20th most populous by the year 2050. Thus Japan is likely to join the middle ranks among nations.

**Japan's Internet and Education Plans**

The Website of the Economic Planning Agency of Japan reports on policies adopted at a Cabinet ministerial-level Council meeting on 18 November 1997. The English version does not mention anything about education, only the Japanese version (Economic Planning Agency, 1997), so here is my translation of the section on the digitization of
For the next adjustment of educational guidelines, during general study period at elementary schools, students will contact a foreign language, lifestyle and culture. With the globalization of communications, English can activate digital means such as the Internet. The networking of schools will be planned so that in the near future all schools will be connected to the Internet. By early in the year 2000 the goal is 22 computers per elementary school or one per two students [when it is the turn of a given class to use the computer lab], and 42 for every junior and senior high school or one per student, plus sufficient educational software. Fundamental information education will be required in junior high schools and as a curricular subject in senior high schools. Higher educational institutions will be able to confer credits for distance education courses utilizing multimedia, while university correspondence courses will be able to open graduate schools.

Japanese language search engines and directories quickly yield many Websites concerned with online education, but apparently in mainstream colleges and schools the Internet is no more than a supplement to courses for credit, not the means of delivery. Private vendors can take the next step after CAI cram schools and capitalize on the trendiness of the net, while Websites by educators have to first justify the formal introduction of online education by researching its purported benefits. Private colleges are flexible as to in-class content, while national educational and research institutions are regulated by law. Public elementary and secondary schools follow a national standard curriculum to which private schools tend to conform because of standardized university examinations.

Thus Yasuhiko Hirao of the Kagawa Prefectural Education Center, an
in-service training facility, endeavors to theoretically justify using the Internet in public schools while presenting his experimental findings in published articles and at his Website (Hirao, 1998). His and most other Websites of this nature tend to use private providers because of the unofficial status of these experiments. The Japanese language tends to get awkward in the attempt to literally translate newly imported concepts such as cooperative learning, project work, active learning that is autonomous and self-aware, and the teacher as a facilitator empowering learners. From a distance through the Internet, furthermore, Mr. Hirao team taught a class of seventh graders at his former school. Although they were in their first year of learning English formally, the students were motivated by contacting the real world abroad and getting even perfunctory e-mail responses from Webmasters for Peanuts or the LA Dodgers.

Mr. Hirao's thesis starts from government statements closest to justifying this work, then he boldly experiments with good results. So this trend can be expected to continue, particularly because the Internet revitalizes the English reading and writing skills in which Japanese schools have greater confidence.

Isamu Shimazaki (1998) works with elementary school children as young as ten through the Kidlink Society, which offers mailing lists and Websites in 13 languages including Japanese. The Website of Akira Taniguchi et al. (1998) centers on the high schools around Osaka that are experimenting with the Internet in their classes, while their active mailing list on English education attracts leaders in higher education who have English Websites, such as Kojiro Asao (1998) and Kenji Kitao (1997).

Whether it is the news media or any other sector of society, people agree that this is just the beginning. The Net infrastructure is getting up to speed before anyone knows how it will ultimately be used or how it will affect the staid and hitherto venerable institutions regulating Japanese society.
Online Education and the Future with Japan

There are two countervailing trends related to online education that can be projected statistically into the future. According to a vernacular economic daily (Staff reporters, 1998), the number of computers in Japan connected to the Internet will rise from 12 million in 1998 to 32 million in the year 2001. But the Japanese Ministry of Education (Mombusho, 1998) projects that the number of students entering four-year colleges and universities will start to decline slowly from the peak of 586,690 in 1997, while junior colleges decline from their peak of 254,953 enrollees in 1993 to 177,206 in 1999. The nearly 500 junior colleges in Japan are predominantly private and for females, as families have invested more to place their sons in the better universities, but equality of the sexes is becoming an issue.

In one survey, albeit statistically unreliable, visitors to a Website in Japan in 1995 were 96% male, 80% under 35 years old, over 60% from the Tokyo area, and mostly with technical or scientific backgrounds (Drake, 1995). Nishijima (1996, my translation of the gist) states that women, who like to write and chat, hold the key to mass acceptance of the electronic media. The Internet calls for a youthful sense of play, a connectivity culture, freedom and self-expression. For this to happen the Japanese must go beyond materialism and break the mental habit that forces everyone to be the same. Pessimists argue that Japan could be isolated by its organizational ways even on the Internet. Inability to express themselves in written English will leave the Japanese as passive recipients of the world network.

Not much has changed to counter the pessimism expressed by the Japanese editor above. Millions of Japanese people communicate only with each other in Japanese on networks that use similar technology but are like tidepools to the great ocean of the Internet, tides that only rise with an extra fee. Here in a remote area of southwestern Japan, however, a young woman recently said, "I play
the Internet." The flow of Japanese voices out into the wide ocean of international communication will continue to be a relative trickle, but with nearly half the population of the U.S. and a quarter of them online in a few years, there will be great potential to reach individuals willing to come out of Japan's insularity and play.

Per capita online, in most other non-Western countries the results will probably be more satisfactory to Westerners. But despite recent media hype, the difference is that Japan still has vast wealth and a high average level of technical know-how among its 125 million people. Initiatives will probably still have to come from the outside world, but the problem of influencing non-Western people must be handled with the utmost intercultural sensitivity. The Internet infrastructure will be in place and cultures can work out their differences provided there is mutual respect. The future with Japan and the rest of the world will be what individuals in concert make it, and online education in the widest sense will play a key role.

What can be done to give those educated worldwide a brighter future online? Please contribute to the conference online conference discussions or e-mail steve_mc@ibm0.kagawa-jc.ac.jp. For further reading on Asian studies, multilingualism and educational technology, see the Bilingualism and Japanology Intersection. Thank you, conference staff and participants.

REFERENCES CITED


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May 25, 1998
Japanese educators considering distance education as an alternative learning medium face many obstacles in what is traditionally a face-to-face social system. Periods of foreign borrowing have alternated with long periods of Japanese national isolationism, reflecting an ambivalence toward Western ways that still remains. Some Western culture had been adapted from the U.S. following its generous treatment of Japan after World War II, yet during the 1970s and '80s, Japan's remarkable economic success revived old notions of Western technology with an exclusively Japanese spirit. But the children for whom the post-War generation worked so hard now have grown too complacent to rebuild the economy from the unexpected recession of the 1990s. Enter the Internet, and Western assumptions will continue to be confounded as new media are adapted in terms of Japanese culture.

Japan currently ranks second only to the U.S. in the number of Internet users, but very few of those more than 8 million people are communicating with the outside world. The Japanese-language Net is huge and has its own Web search engines for those who can read Chinese characters and have the appropriate software. Although writing English is not as difficult for the general public as speaking it, the language barrier will continue to be the most intransigent obstacle to using the Internet for outside communications.

Industry observers have predicted that the number of Japanese Internet users will rise to 30 million, but the big question is how to reach these users in terms of their own language and values, which are reflected in a communication style that prefers the diminutive to the demonstrative. The economic decline of the '90s is restricting the spread of luxuries such as Internet use, which is expensive and made more so by the per-minute online charge.

A more subtle obstacle to the spread of Internet use, ironically, is the post-War democratic ideology of equality. The ostensibly harmonious and monocultural Japanese society is liable to become divided into information haves and have-nots. If both computer and English literacy are demanded, most non-Westerners are excluded, leaving only those with the interest, the motivation and the wealth to master both. In addition, the new media run afoul of many taken-for-granted assumptions about human relations, including proper introductions, in an elaborate face-to-face social system. Communicating through a terminal may be more comfortable to those used to an abstract way of thinking and an independent learning style, but both are alien to Japan historically. The Internet may become more acceptable to the ideology of harmony when it more closely resembles TV, which is already ubiquitous in Japanese society.

Correspondence schools in Japan illustrate some relevant trends, although none is yet accredited to offer online courses. Japan is a credentialistic society, as people are judged more in terms of their affiliations or relations than for their individual qualities. Post-War Japanese culture assumes that people differ only by effort, not by ability -- illustrated by the popular saying that genius is 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration. The educational system rewards those into which the most
information can be crammed. They in turn become the public officials who maintain the system that
favored their learning style. But correspondence or online education requires a self-motivated
approach that is not demanded in the Japanese educational system where the teacher usually
motivates through pressure on the students, who work together to support each other. Thus, fewer
than 10% of the total graduates earn their degrees from the correspondence division of Japan
University. Even among those, many would credit their perseverance to local chapters meeting face-
to-face for information exchange and mutual encouragement.

In Japan and many countries in Asia, colleges need accreditation from a national government agency
like the Ministry of Education before they can set up a program in the first place. No online classes
can be offered for credit yet in Japan, but there is a proposal to accredit some courses televised at
a distance. At this stage some teachers are introducing the Internet into face-to-face English or
computer-related classes. Pioneers are still in danger of being the protruding nail that gets pounded
in, so the Web sites of educators are often housed on independent ISP servers, even when their
school or government agency has its own Internet domain.

Private schools and colleges have somewhat more freedom with the curriculum, but private
companies probably will be the first to go strongly into online education. This is a logical extension
from current after-school cram sessions that use computer-assisted instruction or televised lectures
from Tokyo. There are elaborate credentials for most occupations and skills in Japan, with tests at
three or more levels for each, so correspondence courses are a big business, many publishing their
own textbooks.

Compounding the problems inherent in bringing the Internet into the classroom is the lack of
awareness of its educational potential. Magazines recommending Web sites are replete with
entertainment or adult sites. Recently there was the news of simultaneous arrests in several
countries of online child pornography purveyors. An editorial in the daily vernacular Asahi Shimbun
warned that no laws stop Japan from becoming a haven for such practices. Yet many non-
Westerners are disturbed by the content of news that they find shameful, so there is a legitimate
concern about letting in all that Westerners seem to find entertaining.

Eventually, people involved in education will see the merits of online media, but right now they are
concerned about how the dark side can be avoided. At my college in Japan, for example, many spam
messages soliciting porno or other money-making schemes were sent to an e-mail address that was
available but had never been used. This indicates that spammers are developing algorithms to
collect the world’s e-mail addresses. As another example, Chinese scholars may join a mailing list
that seems academic; however, if the list is unmoderated they are liable to receive messages that
are illegal to keep on their hard disks. Non-native users of English may also misunderstand a message
or its motives. Those seeking distance education online are targeted by bogus diploma mills that
sound very similar to famous universities.

There are plans afoot at a number of Japanese colleges to offer online courses in the future. As
reported in the 19 August 1998 Asahi newspaper, Tezukayama University in Nara City announced
that anyone could join some of their classes through their Web site. It is free of charge and non-
credit by necessity, however, because online education has not been approved yet by the Ministry
of Education. Tezukayama University expects that credits can be offered in the future, and that other
universities will soon unveil online services as well.
Late last year, Kyushu Institute of Technology hosted the annual research meeting on information processing education, sponsored by Japan’s Ministry of Education and a consortium of national universities. A special session held for the first time on distance education was a striking example of changing attitudes toward information technology, with broadcasting by two-way satellite to 15 other universities. Most of the presenters at our session were not present at the meeting, but rather beamed in from their own universities. As the only non-Japanese, I was invited to make my oral and written presentations in Japanese. Representing the World Association for Online Education, I offered to serve as a bilingual conduit to foster collaboration with distance educators abroad.

A nascent trend toward digital education is emerging, but no one in Japan presumes to map the future. Authorities have traditionally sought reliability to the point of predictability. While the Internet infrastructure is in place, no one knows what it is to be used for. It may be just as well that in Japan people develop a tolerance for ambiguity, for not having things explicitly stated, and for things not being what they seem. But across borders it becomes all the more difficult to communicate. Among the paradigm shifts prompted by the new online world is therefore the necessity for intercultural adaptation skills. In academic terms the interdisciplines of computer-mediated communication and intercultural communication need to be brought together and applied to world issues. In a small but multicultural world, educators could take the lead by developing intercultural sensitivity while growing accustomed to remote communication in order to overcome distance psychologically.

Steve McCarty is a Professor at Kagawa Junior College [at the time of writing] in Japan and President of the World Association for Online Education (WAOE) https://www.waoe.org. His multilingual Website is an Asian Studies WWW Virtual Library 4-star site: https://www.waoe.org/steve/epublist.html
Team International generally dealt with East-West (that is, trans-Pacific) intercultural communication issues, while Dr. John Afele from Ghana gave compelling testimony to North-South issues relevant to education through the Internet (Afele, 2000).

The online conference format allowed for accepted papers posted before the events, topic prompts or questions, to be discussed in asynchronous forums such as e-mail lists and Web board posts, plus synchronous Web chat sessions during the scheduled conference period, with dialogue able to move across different media.

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**Web Board introduction to the International Team's Mandate**

Steve McCarty: To start from the critical questions, there is a default context to much discourse over the Internet that reflects many taken-for-granted assumptions unconsciously carried over from an era of provincial communications. The very concept of "international" often implies the blessings of the U.S. radiating outward to a passive audience in "other" countries. Westerners are called "people" while less wealthy and powerful non-Westerners are often called "tribes" and so forth. Economically powerful mother tongues are called "languages" whereas the less powerful speak "dialects" and so forth. Western societies are treated by sociology, non-Western societies by anthropology. Internet culture is conflated with American culture and reified into a democratizing force, whereas the outcome depends on the true purpose for which technology is utilized.

The intercultural communication dimension is therefore not just a concept to plug into a two-dimensional chart of factors affecting distance education outcomes. It is rather a long road paved by intercultural sensitivity and a gradually widened outlook that begins to contemplate what true globalism would involve. It is a movement from monolingualism and monoculturalism to multilingualism and multiculturalism at the individual and societal levels (McCarty, 1998).

The above-mentioned article speaks broadly to Conference Chair Jim Shimabukuro's second question for the International Writing Team concerning the "major stages that will define the anticipated changes," which followed from his first question about "the potential, via new technologies, for learning in two- and four-year colleges that is truly international and multicultural." Fortunately it is now possible, even without changing the curriculum, for each subject to be embedded in a larger context via the Internet. Nowadays people can live in two worlds for the cost of little more than one. To a considerable extent the f2f world is geographically constrained to the local context, but the cyber world is where students and educators in each field can join a larger community of scholars and practitioners, accelerating the evolution of knowledge. Less clear in outcome is the negotiation of ethics online, the contention of purposes, between the world community of scholars and other sectors of society with more economic might. Educators have proven to be good learners and have generally upheld the higher ethics in their communities. Now the necessity of lifelong daily learning may work to the advantage of scholars, who have a worldwide community that can finally be connected, and readily organized through shared ethics and standards such as the scientific method.

As Academia is reconstituted in cyberspace, it will be helpful for the curriculum to include new subjects as well, aimed at more knowledgeable enculturation of learners into the cyber world where people will
Increasingly work, play, and interact globally. The default context of Internet discourse should thus be the world that includes all humanity.

**Excerpt from an asynchronous and then synchronous dialogue among Team International members**

Gloria McMillan (Pima Community College): Have any of you attempted to re-shape an existing course to include a global component?

Thomas Danford (West Virginia Northern Community College): I have tried to get students to become aware of global microbiology events, outbreaks of infectious disease and the like. Often these events are wonderful "teaching to the moment" situations. It can also lead to a discussion of cultural aspects, since behavior and customs influence disease transmission and impact.

*Discussion initiated on the Web Board continued during the Web chat. Excerpts, slightly edited for clarity:*

<KeikoS> (online conference participant:) Steve sensei, you brought up a point I have never thought about, Internet and Americanism. I guess I have been Americanized, too.

<Steve> As an expatriate I can gain some objectivity about the US. Keiko, Japanese people who speak out in English are rare, and desperately needed.

<KeikoS> What happened to my humble Japanese with my English?

<Steve> My Japanese speaking is more polite than my English. And yes, I bow, even on the telephone because the gestures and attitudes accompany the language. Like fish seeing the water, it is hard to see the default context.

<KeikoS> Where there is communication, there is communication style, which could be different in cultures. Or is it that Internet culture is different altogether?

<Steve> Between the US and Japan you can see how greatly communication styles can differ.

<Danford> Do you think that it interferes with or deters communication, that styles are different?

<KeikoS> Sometimes things don't get across as intended.

<Danford> I don't see much difference between the Internet and physical/real life, except that the Internet can much more easily be multicultural.

<KeikoS> I feel Internet is a different mode of communication. I write like a Web page these days: header here, bullets there, reference to URL.

<Danford> Well, I certainly write differently for MOO [online chat rooms] versus a Web page.

<Steve> I feel very at home in cyberspace after all these years and can be myself, sorry!

<Danford> I feel at home in cyberspace too!

<KeikoS> Comfortable in cyberculture. Shinagawa sensei brought up how we teach culture online in language classes.

<Steve> There is overlap, yes, with the Language Team.
Dialogue among Team International members took place on other conference forums as well, such as the e-mail discussion list following up the presentation by Mauri Collins and Zane Berge. Excerpts:

Steve McCarty: Another example of convergence to divergence is the situation where technologies that support global collaboration are still used by faculty and students within commuting distance of the campus, when each educator, student and institution could be anywhere in the world. Why not have, say, area studies taught from the area, with Asian studies taught from Asia, and so forth, like foreign correspondents? The various logistical and social barriers to this evolution could make an interesting discussion or research theme. Where there is convergence there is all the more urgency to recognize divergence, to practice intercultural sensitivity and appreciate, for example, the accommodation made by non-native users of English in giving us a lingua franca.

Gloria McMillan: What a cognitive and affective leap [it would be] having hosts in the country whose literature (or other composition-related topic) we are studying. Several steps precede "getting it" for people, especially bureaucrats who are mainly concerned with the bottom line and lack of disruption to existing courses and delivery mechanisms already in place. If we see the goals, they probably instantly think of the barriers.

Some folks here suggest a Web page of Global Literary Finds. This could be aspects that only the new format highlights, that students would never get in the typical 2nd hand or 3rd hand exposure to global cultures that they get in community colleges from anthologies and teachers who--by and large--have never been near the place whose literature (or whatever) they are studying. We found something unique about haiku that even published poets who were at our session didn't know [necessity for a seasonal reference].

John Afele (University of Guelph, Canada; more recently, World Bank and ADB regional project manager): I share with you the optimism for creating a world in which people and their own cultures are integrated without losing their own sense of belonging. That the advances in convergent communication technologies would allow us to touch each other. The process of defining a Global Village/Community would rely on how successfully the academic community employs the modern tools to impact knowledge, through virtuality, while being relevant to local communities: Global knowledge, local impact.

Technologies, as proven, can measure their progress in tangible formats, whereas orchestrating a unifying social philosophy is more subtle. Yet, in my ability to interact with you, to learn what distance education can achieve in creating a knowledgeable global society, I am optimistic that we would grow to know and understand each other more; to provide solutions to some of the chronic ailments of humanity - rural poverty, particularly in the South... the likelihood of some families not eating anything at the end of the day, and that is most likely going to occur in Africa.

John Afele [In response to questions]: For a predominantly formally illiterate rural population, such tools [as discussed in the Collins & Berge keynote] would be relevant, and in areas where telecom infrastructure is poor. Therefore, wirelessness and simplicity would be keys in the community access mechanisms.

As for the secondary schools in Ghana, they are very grammar school type. The goal is to reach the university, and a number of students fall out at two stages (GCE O, and A Levels - British system). The basic and secondary school structures in Ghana have recently changed, but I wonder if the new system would actually learn what the majority of Ghanaians do and why - philosophy of existence and the TOOlS and Processes of livelihoods.

At the end of the day, even the most socially just society must be translated into FOOD. The question would be asked: Our new school system in Ghana, wherever else in Africa, does it bring food? The tools and processes relevant to the immediate community would best be developed in community colleges.
References


Review of *Open and Distance Education in the Asia Pacific Region*

**Steve McCarty**

*Original Source: OLS (Open Learning Systems) News, Issue 78, pp. 78-80 (December 2001).*

(Book edited by Olugbemiro Jegede and Glenn Shive, Open University of Hong Kong Press, 2001).

This book provides a valuable description of the history and recent initiatives in Open and Distance Education (ODE) in Northeast Asia: China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Taiwan; Southeast Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam; South Asia: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka; and the Pacific Rim: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Pacific, and the USA.

Among the general observations that could be made, the economic level of the country correlates well with the educational technology and availability of ODE. Canada and Australia were among the first to adopt DE to challenge the tyranny of distance separating their citizens, and to provide equitable access to educational opportunities. Whereas universities in most countries in Asia are competing among themselves and wary of foreign entrants taking their potential customers with Web-based approaches, Canadians are most inclined to form domestic consortia. The US, content with its huge domestic market as in other areas of trade, has hardly thought of going international with DE (p. 440).

Other themes running through the book are the emphasis on quality assurance and the need for teamwork among content specialists, curriculum designers and computer support staff. To go beyond shovelware, instructional design, much time, experimentation and costs are required. Recognition is also increasing for modularization or standardization for transferability, market surveys, multilingual courses, cultural sensitivity, teacher training as a priority for distance or online courses, the shortage of technical staff, lack of facilitating skills among existing faculty, teacher-dependent learning styles in East Asia, the need for continuous lifelong education, interactive approaches, Web-based where available and, above all, learner support in every way possible.

The Hong Kong chapter is most impressive, stemming from the Centre for Research in Distance and Adult Learning (CRIDAL) that organized the book. Indeed, it seemed that sometimes the other authors were including items they had little to report about in their own countries because they were dutifully using the categories provided, such as quality assurance or international collaboration. But the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK) itself is clearly a leader, for example, in the Asian Association of Open Universities.

Often not well known, most countries in Asia have OUs, although few have moved much beyond correspondence by post. OUHK and others have, incidentally, drawn inspiration from the UK Open University, and those in developing countries are often dependent on outside support to make progress. Quite a few of the world's mega-universities identified by Sir John Daniel of the UKOU are found in Asia, particularly China's Radio and TV university with 3 million enrolled, and India's IGNOU with 600,000. IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open U) is also praised for its research orientation.
Hong Kong’s educational vision is remarkable, aiming for "an educational system that is rich in tradition but cosmopolitan and culturally sensitive" (p. 70), "to enable every person to attain all-round development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics according to his/her own attributes" (p. 69), capable of lifelong learning, contributing to the nation and to the world.

In Japan the personnel system in public universities has not allowed for media support staff, and quality assurance is also a snag. Media literacy is recognized as a problem for faculty, not students. At the same time, there is considerable demand for DE among teachers. It is "important to foster an IT culture also at the organizational level" (p. 101).

A related undercurrent was brought out in the New Zealand chapter. Their government has encouraged open competition, and local universities fear competition from foreign low-cost Web-based education. The author lamented that other countries protect the local educational industry.

Korea has made remarkable progress, for example providing even non-degree programs for teacher training, and aiming for Net-based, government-supported teacher education programs with their own software platform. But they have found teachers not facilitating learning, with students passive, using the PC just for information processing, not as a communication tool.

In Taiwan, 70% of adult students were found to be teacher-dependent.

Moving to Southeast Asia, countries may know what to do but lack the money. The elite minorities, however, who do get a university education, stamp ODE as second class. This was brought out in the Indonesia chapter but is probably a worldwide issue until the paradigm changes to value education for all, which can only be achieved by ODE.

Malaysia is trying to retool its workforce for the information age, but too few local institutions are preparing ODE materials. Yet there is a wariness in their questioning if international DE programs can cater to the needs for learning support and regular interaction with instructors (p. 199).

There is less to report for other Southeast, South and Central Asian countries, which depend on technical and financial assistance from abroad. In Papua New Guinea where most do not have Net access, officials want those who do have access to take advantage of it with multimedia delivered over the Web, but there are also voices criticizing how it serves a privileged minority. Hawaii is unfortunately not covered, but the USPNet satellite Internet based in Fiji is described in some detail by Ruby Va'a et al.

So to place chapters on North America in the book presents quite a contrast, for example with Canada's CANARIE aiming to bring fiber cable connections to the whole country. In the US the big issue identified is commercialization of higher education, in the "volatile technology sector of the 'new economy'" (p. 435).

The lead writer on the US is Hong Kong-based, and such perspectives from abroad are much needed. "[F]or-profit educational service companies (p. 435) can staff up with many adjunct instructors, [which] trend haunts teaching staff of mainstream universities and fuels their skepticism and anxiety ... which they tend to associate directly with DL."
The poorer countries show that the above considerations are a luxury, and they have little choice but to pool resources and admit their need for assistance in getting onto the playing field before asking that it be level. This book goes some distance in showing nonetheless that East-West learning should be two-way like the online educational technologies that can facilitate such exchanges.

**Bio-data** as of 2018: **Steve McCarty** lectures (and works in faculty development) at Kansai University, Osaka Jogakuin University, and the government foreign aid agency JICA. By PC or tablet see his online library at: [http://www.waoe.org/steve/epublist.html](http://www.waoe.org/steve/epublist.html) or also by mobile phone see the publications on Educational Technology and Language Teaching at his e-Portfolio: [http://www.portfoliogen.com/waoe/241144](http://www.portfoliogen.com/waoe/241144)

Will online learning catch on in Japan?

Of all the Websites on the Internet, the majority are in English, which limits how online education can benefit people outside of the English reading and writing audience. However, Japan's number of Internet users is the second highest in the world. So why is online education not as prevalent in Japan as it is in the U.S.?

"Communicating through a terminal may be more comfortable to those used to an abstract way of thinking and an independent learning style ... both alien to Japan historically," states Steve McCarty, professor of Kagawa Junior College in the Shikoku area of Japan, in an Educom Review "Online education requires a self-motivated approach that is not demanded in the Japanese educational system." https://www.educause.edu/ir/library/html/erm/erm99/erm993a.html

However, that is not to say online education is nonexistent in Japan. In 1995, McCarty's college went online, which helped take McCarty out of the isolation of the Shikoku region and share his research findings on Japan and bilingualism with people all over the world. McCarty saw the power of utilizing the Internet as a tool and has worked over the years with other educators around the world in promoting online education.
だが、日本にオンライン教育が存在しないわけではない。1995年マッカーティ氏の大学がオンライン上にサイトを開設したおかげで、それまで四国地方に限られていたマッカーティ氏の行動範囲が広がり、日本やバイリンガルリズムに関する研究結果を世界中の人々と共有出来るようになった。マッカーティ氏は、道具として使えるインターネット力を実感し、世界中の教育者らと共同し数年間にわたってオンライン教育の促進に取り組んでいる。

He is currently President of the World Association for Online Education (WAOE), [http://www.waoe.org](http://www.waoe.org), an online scholarly organization of educators from around the world. WAOE seeks to dispel misconceptions concerning online education as well as to increase the access to Internet technology for non-Western educators. In fact, WAOE currently presents information in eleven different languages. In April 1998, WAOE was conceived at a completely online conference and quickly grew to over a thousand participants from about 50 countries.

マッカーティ氏は現在、世界各国のオンライン教育者らのための団体である世界オンライン教育学会(WAOE)の会長を務めている。WAOEでは、オンライン教育に対する誤った認識を解くことと、非西洋諸国出身の人々のインターネット・テクノロジーへのアクセス推進に努めている。現在WAOEでは、11ヶ国語で情報提供をしており、1998年4月には完全なるオンライン会議で生まれ、すぐに約50ヶ国から1,000人がWAOEに参加するようになった。[http://www.waoe.org/japanese](http://www.waoe.org/japanese)

McCarty was the keynote speaker at the conference and presented "the need for an academic organization to turn online education into a professional discipline." Many people took note of his address and e-learning is gradually rising in Japan as well as around the world. McCarty was also invited by a government-sponsored e-learning consortium to present at e-Learning World 2002 held in Tokyo this July.

マッカーティ氏が上記の会議の基調演説を行い、その中で、「大学はオンライン教育を専門的な学問分野へと変えていく必要がある」と呼びかけている。多くの人が彼の説に注目し、日本も含む世界各国でeラーニングが徐々に広がりつつある。マッカーティ氏はまた、日本政府援助のeラーニング協議会に誘われ、7月に東京で開催されるeラーニング・ワールド2002でプレゼンテーションを行った。...

Most online programs are struggling to set up," McCarty admits. "But I would like to help them with the technology (e.g., software like learning management systems) and the paradigm shift involved in online education ...

「オンライン・プログラムのほとんどは、現在開設に向けて奮闘中ですが、私としては、オンライン教育に移行する際に求められる（学習管理システムのような）ソフトなどの技術面やパラダイム・シフトの分野で協力していきたいと考えています ...」
"People need to overcome the preconception that online education is just a human-machine interaction," asserts McCarty. "Online can actually broaden one's world socially as well as intellectually. I have actually met more people in person because online education gave me access to people I would never have encountered had it not been for the Internet ..."

「オンライン学習は人間と機械のやりとりだという偏見を捨てるべきでしょう。オンラインは個人の世界を社会的、知的な面で広げることに役立ちます」とマッカーティ氏は言う。「私の経験からすると、インターネットがなければ知り合うこともなかった人たちと知り合うチャンスが与えられたので、多くの人と実際に会う機会が増えました ...」

Bio-data as of 2018: Steve McCarty lectures (and works in faculty development) at Kansai University, Osaka Jogakuin University, and the government foreign aid agency JICA. By PC or tablet see his online library at: http://www.waoe.org/steve/epublist.html or also by mobile phone see the publications on Educational Technology and Language Teaching at his e-Portfolio: http://www.portfoliogen.com/waoe/241144
Interview with Steve McCarty

1. Your research interests span a number of areas but have generally followed the rise of online learning. Looking back at your work, why did you get involved in this area and how has your own interest in it evolved? Have there been different phases in your work?

Like many far-flung IATEFL members, solitude on an outer island of Japan was becoming less splendid, and I was chafing even at national EFL activities because the native and non-native speaking teachers would not get out of their enclaves and work together. So when my college got connected in 1995 I immediately started networking with colleagues abroad concerned with the educational possibilities of the Internet. Mailing lists, electronic bulletin board systems (BBS), completely online academic conferences, chat rooms like MOOs and proto-videoconferencing software such as CUSeeMe captured the imagination of early adopters.

There were relatively few with a Net presence, however, in liberal arts areas including TEFL and my specialties of Asian Studies, Japan, and bilingualism. By learning HTML I sought both to have most of my publications available online and to make Japanese versions of my main Websites, starting in 1996. Since 1997 the bilingual Website with annotated links to my online publications has been an Asian Studies WWW Virtual Library 4-star site, linking to over 200 sites. In 2000 I started a Website for mobile phones, in 2003 a blog, and 2005 a podcasting blog, with my East Asian students involved all along in expressing their culture online.

As for phases, studying Japanese including the Chinese characters from 1979, and moving to Japan thereafter, turned me into a hard worker. Then professional development opportunities in TEFL were essential to my work, and I tried to give back the enrichment through volunteer work for academic organizations and Japanese society. Researching bilingualism suited my background, and recently I can finally teach it in the content-based EFL curriculum at Osaka Jogakuin College. Online education cuts across all disciplines, so this phase since the mid-90s has added multidisciplinarity as well as multimedia to my research. As the leadoff keynote presenter of the 1998 Teaching in the Community Colleges Online Conference, I proposed
turning online education into an academic discipline, which resulted in the World Association for Online Education (WAOE).

2. Which areas of CALL and online learning would you like to have explored more if you’d had the chance? Why?

CALL was too expensive for my college at the time, but my sons enjoyed the CD-ROMs from age 3 with a Mac. Whereas Internet technologies were affordable and leveled the playing field for students as well as scholars. I lack the time for synchronous events, such as with HorizonLive Wimba or Elluminate, even if they were not scheduled in the middle of the night, Japan time. I would use a Web cam, Skype and the like for more lifelike online communication if I had the time. Similarly I would add video to Websites and podcasts.

3. Having taught for twenty years or more in Japan, what is your view of the relationship between teaching and research in higher education?

As a college faculty member I have always seen research as an everyday process of enquiry and experimentation in a mutually reinforcing relationship with teaching, professional development, and publications. It may be no coincidence therefore that teachers who value students, do action research, and network online are also more visible in publications and academic societies. Japan’s education ministry encourages documentation in all these areas, and does not discount online publications and projects, perhaps because technological proficiency is valued.

4. You are the President of the World Association for Online Education (WAOE). Can you tell us about your involvement with this association, what its aims are, and how you see its role developing in the future?

From geographical isolation, riding the wave of new technologies for education, this organization made global communication and pioneering in educational technology an everyday event. Educators from over 50 countries, otherwise going from site to site like masterless samurai, have collaborated and shared expertise. They formed a library of experience that could in turn answer the questions that frequently came from outside the organization. Which new technology would be best for a certain
pedagogical goal? Is a certain online university claiming accreditation legitimate or a diploma mill?

While the WAOE cannot take credit for online education becoming professionalized, our emphases from the start on ethics and open source sharing have set an uncompromising standard in the field of distance education. A reliable international group can be set up on short notice, recently for example mentoring a new open university for Mongolia. When I was asked to teach online education at a national university graduate school of education, WAOE mentors participated in audioconferences and other communications via WebCT learning management systems based abroad, with people and technologies spanning six countries. After working together for years in virtual learning environments, several members finally met f2f for a group presentation in 2004 at the University of Sussex.

5. English language education in Japan has been hampered by a number of cultural factors. What is your experience of the role of CALL technology in the Japanese institutions where you have worked? Is it being used to improve English language education in Japan?

The Japanese have positive cultural attitudes toward technology and mediated experiences. The notion of English conversation has been used lightly even for children when it is actually a challenging set of proficiencies. Foreign language speaking is a risky business in a culture of peer group affiliations where individuals avoid directness and mistakes to save face. My idea has been that we should talk about the native and non-native acquirer, and not measure acquisition by speaking. CALL technology can actually bring realism to the classroom by focusing on achievable tasks.

But CALL has two different meanings, I think, historically. One refers to offline technologies through which students practice discreet skills like reading, listening and speaking. Our college has, for instance, computer-assisted speed reading software that incorporates pedagogical principles to improve L2 reading. But CALL as a field seemed to flounder at the turn of the century until it reinvented itself to include network-based or Internet-based language learning. Among online technologies our faculty and students can use blogs, the Criterion Web-based essay-correcting software, WebCT, and a well-staffed CALL center.
6. Osaka Jogakuin College has had a prominent place in the use of iPods in its English courses. Can you describe how this project has developed? Has it been successful? What is going to happen in the future?

This college was first in the world to distribute iPods to all students in early 2004 and to load the iPods with English listening materials and conversational strategies. The idea arose intuitively, and there was a learning curve at first, but then the iPod became a popular product, which solidified student motivation. Students often have long commutes to the middle of Osaka, and so they do more English listening than they would otherwise. Certain courses require the use of iPods, such as a current events course where students have to synch the latest news from a Mac computer room to do their homework, which is graded. In the future video iPods may become more prevalent as video materials are produced by faculty and staff.

7. The use of iPods looks forward to the next phase of mobile learning. What is the potential of this technology in the field of language education? What kind of initiatives can help to make it effective in Japan?

When all the students have devices like a mobile phone and an iPod, it becomes a mobile infrastructure, and the educational applications are limited more by our imagination than by the requisite technical skills. When podcasting sites were made available mostly free of charge in the iTunes Apple Music Store, a whole new source of authentic and up-to-date listening and video materials could be recommended to students and produced ourselves. In North America, Apple is slowly rolling out iTunesU, a software solution to house the audio and video files of a college, both privately for courses and publicly for PR or to contribute to society. Whether Apple goes far or not with this free service requiring a Google scale of memory, there will be a need for this kind of service, and both universities and companies will pay for it. If nearly every entity has wanted a home page, they will also want their voices to be immortalized on the Net.

This semester (April-July, 2006) I have a “coursecasting” site for an upper division Bilingual Education class, meaning that the lecture parts of the course are recorded with an .mp3 format voice recorder and uploaded to
an annotated podcasting blog for the students to review. I also maintain a public site “Japancasting” at [now defunct domain] <stevemc.blogmatrix.com> where there are various presentations and interviews including content by students when their performances would be of general interest.

At Buckingham Palace and some museums one carries an audio set as a guide. Imagine iPods used similarly for campus tours for visitors, or during college events and festivals. For example, students could race to computer rooms and download an audio file in English, then follow the directions on a sort of treasure hunt around campus. The best listeners would thus be rewarded.

The goal would be a two-way mobile infrastructure where the wired and wireless technologies were seamlessly and authentically integrated into the curriculum. Students would see the technology as a path to achieving their own goals. Although teachers would have to dedicate more time to online communication, the students need to be transmitters as well as receivers.

8. Japanese universities have been slower in taking up online and distance education programs. Why is this? What is the future of online and distance education in Japan?

The education ministry prefers incrementalism to maintain its grip on trends, while they need a deeper understanding of the online education field. They started merging formerly national universities without realizing that Internet technologies can integrate the campuses most efficiently and economically. There is also an element of competitive protectionism among universities in Asia, knowing that the educational flow of distance education would be predominantly into their countries from prestigious English-medium universities that also have better technological expertise. Japanese people rationalize that everything is close together so distance education is not needed, but ultimately everyone with a busy schedule can benefit from surmounting time and space through distance technologies.

Certain rituals of everyday communication privilege face-to-face relationships in Japan, but there is a countervailing trend already emerging whereby mobile phones and computers provide a comfortable distance and
add intrigue to otherwise dull everyday communications through their very mediation. A recent TV show where a young man posted his love life to a BBS, and people around Japan vicariously got involved, may have helped people to realize that, rather than a human-machine interface, the computer can widen one’s social as well as intellectual horizons.

9. You have had extensive experience with WebCT and Blackboard. What role have course management systems had in English language education in Japan? Can they be used as something more than merely administrative platforms? What is the future of course management systems of this type in the educational process?

Even with many hours of training there are difficulties with these systems. As many functions as they have, users grow exasperated with what they cannot do. While they provide a platform, generally other software solutions are needed for the content. Open source systems such as Moodle have become popular, but teachers have to be volunteer administrators and trainers. Since WebCT was localized into a Japanese version between 1998 and 2000, several dozen colleges have used it, often struggling to afford it, such as professors pooling their research funds. With WebCT recently acquired by Blackboard, there is uncertainty again about the cost-benefit ratio.

Learning management systems have a suite of course management and communication tools that are empowering for 21st Century networking and teaching online. But in terms of training they represent a long march that is starting to be superseded by the next phase, audio-video exchange systems over a mobile infrastructure.

10. Looking to the future, what are you working on at the moment? How do you see the future of your teaching and research interests in online learning developing?

The first semester of coursecasting is accomplished, so the cycle turns to compiling and imagining further research. Three book chapters are coming out this year, on global online education, global virtual organizations, and the global classroom, respectively. Reactions from readers are also part of the cycle.
Content will always be king, so in whatever medium I aim to investigate and publish about convergences among Asian Studies, bilingualism, and online education.

Bio-data as of 2018: Steve McCarty lectures (and works in faculty development) at Kansai University, Osaka Jogakuin University, and the government foreign aid agency JICA. By PC or tablet see his online library at: http://www.waoe.org/steve/epublist.html or also by mobile phone see the publications on Technology and Language Teaching at his e-Portfolio: https://www.portfoliogen.com/waoe/241144
Window into the Classroom:
Podcasting an English for Professional Purposes Course

Steve McCarty

Abstract
This paper investigates possible ways that coursecasting—podcasting the lecture parts of a class—may be pedagogically useful. Particularly at a college where all students have iPods, the infrastructure becomes mobile and the learning institution naturally looks for ways to make more extensive use of iPods and related Web-based technologies. Literature on these new practices will be reviewed, including iTunesU, arguably a next-generation learning management system. This paper also reports on an experiment in coursecasting a Bilingual Education class, part of an upper division curriculum in English for Professional Purposes. The conclusion will address the hypothesis of the usefulness of coursecasting and podcasting special events for the learner and other stakeholders, also suggesting some ways to use new Web-based technologies for research and publications.

Key words: podcasting, coursecasting, iTunesU, bilingual education

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Introduction

This paper investigates possible ways that coursecasting—podcasting the lecture parts of a class—may be pedagogically useful. Particularly at a college where all students have iPods, the infrastructure becomes mobile and the learning institution naturally looks for ways to make more extensive use of iPods and related Web-based technologies. Literature on these new practices will be reviewed, and there will be suggestions for leveraging the technologies to contribute to goals of the college.

Furthermore, this paper analyzes iTunesU, arguably the first of a next generation of learning management systems to support audio and video as well as written course files. iTunesU will facilitate coursecasting along with supplementary course materials and podcasting projects by students. This paper also reports on an experiment in coursecasting a Bilingual Education class, part of an upper division curriculum in English for Professional Purposes (EPP).

The conclusion will address the hypothesis of the usefulness of coursecasting and podcasting special events for the learner and other stakeholders of the learning institution, also suggesting some ways to use new Web-based technologies for research and publications.

New Directions for Research

Podcasting itself is part of a new generation of Internet-based technologies often called Web 2.0 for imprecise convenience. The point is that new research techniques are also afforded and called for. Podcasting as a neologism or practice has only arisen in the past two years, while coursecasting is less than a year old. Given the timetables of print publications, there can only be a limited number of books and refereed journal articles on podcasting, but hardly any yet on coursecasting or iTunesU. To substantiate this point,

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Chart 1: Keyword searches on 10 August 2006</th>
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<tr>
<td>Keyword or metadata tag searched</td>
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<tr>
<td>Web search engine and number of hits on the keywords</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google (searches whole texts of HTML, etc. Websites)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technorati blog search (27+ million registered blogs)</td>
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<td>Technorati tags (metadata identifiers bloggers write)</td>
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<td>del. icio. us tags (social bookmarking encourages tags)</td>
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<td>Google Scholar (searches limited to academic works)</td>
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consider the above chart of keyword searches, with large numbers rounded off to approximations.

These radically different results show, for one thing, that podcasting can be taken as a given to Internet and iPod users, although vetted academic sources are relatively few or forthcoming. The newer applications of podcasting—coursecasting and iTunesU—have received much less attention, almost non-existent in scholarly and print publications thus far. The one hit from Amazon is actually an article of first impressions about coursecasting. Nevertheless, Web mentions are rapidly increasing and both the analytical as well as the how-to genre can be predicted to increasingly find their way onto paper.

**Links to add an online dimension to this paper**

The so-called Web 2.0 technologies have afforded another new mode of research besides Web keyword searches. While this paper cites representative sources and has space for few illustrations, the reader can be referred to a new generation of Websites to view the sources online by clicking, or for further sources. The author created a coursecasting and iTunesU research social bookmarking site at [http://del.icio.us/coursecasting](http://del.icio.us/coursecasting) with about 80 links initially, each with one or more tags to identify the type of content. By clicking on the tags at the right, one can have only the links to articles on a certain topic display, which helps to focus and share research sources. For the reader to just click to read the references in this paper, there is a tag paper1 added to each link cited in this paper. Thus the reader may click on paper1 on the right side of the above Website to display only the online references for this paper. They include PowerPoint presentations, PDF and MSWord files to download as well as Web pages.

Furthermore, using another Web 2.0 technology, for the reader to actually view more examples of Websites than would fit in this paper, such as an administrative interface for iTunesU, a Flickr photo sharing site [http://www.flickr.com/photos/steve-illustrated](http://www.flickr.com/photos/steve-illustrated) was established, with a Research set subdirectory apart from personal photos to show various screen shots of Web-based technologies. There also with the same paper1 tag as the del.icio.us site, only the illustrations relevant to this paper are displayed as a set, and can be viewed as a slide show.

Through the above links, this paper becomes a hybrid publication, both on paper and online.
Review of Pedagogical Literature on Podcasting, Coursecasting and iTunes

Coursecasting and iTunesU both rely on podcasting, which has been defined as follows:

[A] podcast is content such as a radio show that is recorded in the ubiquitous MP3 format and broadcast (or more accurately, published) on a web site for download by anyone who cares to listen to it on a mobile device or a computer. Through the use of RSS (Really Simple Syndication), information about the web site and the podcasts (or other content) that is available on the web site is provided in a lightweight XML format. The RSS files, or “feeds,” can be harvested by content aggregators designed for podcasts, such as iPodder or iPodderX, or by other aggregators, such as iTunes, all of which can download “subscriptions” either on demand or at predetermined intervals. (Rogers, 2005)

For a white paper on what podcasting is, including video, with a glossary of technical terms, see Meng (2005). For more information on podcasting for English language teaching in Japan, the pioneering implementation of iPods with listening materials at Osaka Jogakuin College, publicizing podcasts, and configuring a podcasting blog for iTunes, see McCarty (2005). Within the scope of this paper, the following discusses podcasting in a pedagogical context:

Digital audio and mobile audio players such as the iPod are being adopted by young people on a massive scale. The new technology of Podcasting is allowing audio content creators to make and distribute content easily to those mobile audio users. To leverage this interest and technology, teacher preparation programs are beginning to use Podcasting to disseminate information such as university information, sound seeing tours of campus, advising and orientation information, and lectures. (Pownell, 2006)

Incorporating podcasting into teacher education shows how rapidly and deeply the uptake of this technology has been in universities. The context could as well be faculty and staff development, since teachers are enjoined to develop and produce imaginative applications of podcasting and MP3 players such as the iPod. Just as some museums such as the Queen’s Gallery in Buckingham Palace pass out head sets for visitors to listen to a guided tour, iPods could be lent to campus visitors or used for English treasure hunts at college festivals, while podcasts of concerts, lectures or other events could attract interest in the college.

The “lectures” alluded to in the Pownell (2006) citation above could be publicly
offered presentations, interviews and so forth. A prominent example is Stanford-on-iTunes
http://itunes.stanford.edu, which is a pilot project of Apple’s iTunesU, showing what can be
offered on the open Web in addition to password-protected course sites restricted to
registrants. Whether through Apple or independently through podcasting blogs, the bulk of
“lectures” will be coursecasts, recording the sounds of the classroom for asynchronous on-
demand listening and, increasingly, viewing.

Sloan finds podcasting a useful educational tool
- for distance learning
- to facilitate self-paced learning
- for remediation of slower learners
- to allow faculty to offer advanced and or highly motivated learners extra content
- for helping students with reading and/or other learning disabilities
- for multi-lingual education
- to provide the ability for educators to feature guest speakers from remote locations
- to allow guest speakers the ability to present once to many sections and classes…
- to offer a richer learning environment (2006)

Sloan also suggests

two things that make podcasting such important technology. First is the value add. The
richer learning experience it allows students to bring to the classroom. Second, and
this could be the most disruptive to the existing paradigm, is that RSS based
instruction may allow for new learning methods to emerge that enable learning and
higher education to reach learners and potential students for whom the traditional
higher education paradigm may simply not be an option. (2006)

RSS pushes content to subscribers such as when the iPod is synched to iTunes to
automatically download the latest podcasts. Because of the vast literature on podcasting,
the focus here is on aspects of podcasting that are involved in or informative about the
pedagogical potential particularly of coursecasting and iTunesU, more specifically for EFL
in higher education.

First consider the learning implications for blind or visually impaired students and the
fact that there are various individual learning styles. How could podcasting serve learners
with various and special needs?

Kaplan-Leiserson outlines a number of pedagogical uses of podcasting, writing that
“the medium is perfect for learners who prefer to take in information aurally” (2005). “Even
though critics initially said students would stop attending classes, Maag found that attendance did not in fact decline, because students ‘didn’t want to miss what was going on’ (Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005). Margaret Maag’s cited experience at the University of San Francisco also shows that the difference between one-off podcasts of course lectures or related events and coursecasting much or all of the lectures of a class is a matter of degree. Similarly, an iTunesU site would compile coursecasts and other podcasts of a higher educational institution along with text files and learning management system functions. Podcasts and coursecasts

[p]rovide another channel for material review… podcasting can ease learner worries that they missed key information in their note-taking. The audio files can be reviewed at their leisure for understanding or before testing. In Maag’s end-of-course survey, this was a main reason students rated the recorded lectures as a strength of the course. (Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005)

Podcasting can also

[a]ssist non-native speakers. Learners who aren’t yet proficient in the language may struggle to keep up with lectures or presentations. Being able to review recordings of those events as many times as necessary for understanding can be of great benefit. Podcasting can also be an excellent technology for learning a language, not only for listening to speech and pronunciation but also, in combination with a recording device, for capturing a learner’s own speech for review by themselves or a teacher. (Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005)

The above considerations apply to EFL situations such as Japan at least as much as to ESL and studying abroad.

Podcasting can also be used to provide feedback from the instructor to learners or vice versa in lieu of writing. It can enable instructors to review their own lectures, or for others on campus to subscribe to the lectures (Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005). This provides a window into the classroom while, particularly in the case of foreign language teaching, the instructor can listen to his or her own speaking with a view to making various adjustments for more comprehensible input.

Podcasts can furthermore

[r]eplace full classroom or online sessions when content simply requires delivery. In many cases, learning requires interaction, questioning, practice, and so forth. But when what’s required is simple delivery of information, a full-fledged in-person or online course may not be necessary. (Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005)
The above alludes to courses that are face-to-face, wholly online, or blended mixtures of the two. Online courses will increasingly be enlivened by audio and video lectures. In another variation of the above, instructors can have students access lectures asynchronously at their own convenience along with questions or other prompts, then design the in-class time to be more interactive.

Finally, podcasting or coursecasting can

1. provide supplementary content or be part of a blended solution. When a full course is necessary, there may be occasions when supplementary material would be helpful to learners. Subject-matter-expert interviews are just one example of this type of content. The material could be available for access on a voluntary basis, or it could be a required component of a classroom or online course in a blended solution. In any case, the RSS technology allows instructors to make the material easily accessible to learners and to alert them when new content is in the pipeline. (Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005)

While such lectures and interviews could be planned in advanced and linked from an online syllabus, unanticipated opportunities also arise to interview a subject matter expert or to record a public lecture related to a given course with permission. Thus, during the Bilingual Education course described in this paper, two lectures by a bilingualism expert visiting Japan from Canada were recorded with a digital voice recorder and turned into podcasts.

Thomas summarizes the taxonomy of Graham Stanley which categorizes ESL podcasts into three types:

1. authentic podcasts that are not aimed at ESL students and can often be a rich source of listening [;] 2. podcasts produced by teachers, often for their own classes, and usually aimed at helping students learn by producing listening content that is not available elsewhere; and 3. student podcasts produced by students, but often with teacher help… (Thomas, 2006, p. 6)

This author has produced the above three kinds of podcasts, and Thomas introduces Japancasting http://stevemc.blogmatrix.com among 11 iPodder ESL podcasting directory entries, concluding that “[e]ducationally oriented broadcasts on such themes as Japanese culture, history and society are interspersed with interviews from students and professors. …Links are also provided to additional resources [related Websites], audio scripts [transcripts, summaries or PowerPoint presentations to download] and photos related to
the podcast resources” (Thomas, 2006, p. 8). Podcasts with or by the Osaka Jogakuin College students, moreover, go beyond Stanley’s envisaged student podcasts that “tell about their lives and interests” (Thomas, 2006, p. 6). Selected student presentations and interviews by or of students can be considered publishable if they would be of general interest, and the Japancasting site statistics on the hundreds of downloads serve to support their inclusion.

Coursecasting would seem to apply mainly to number 2 of Stanley’s three types of ESL podcasts. Coursecasting Bilingual Education, a podcasting blog introduced in the next section, is in that category and has deliberately not been publicized, since it is for use internal to the institution, whereas the public site Japancasting is widely publicized, in the Apple iTunes Music Store and many podcasting directories both abroad and in Japan. Thus the two sites also encompass the two types of podcasts, private and public, that will appear in iTunesU sites of universities in the near future. After the first group of eight pilot iTunes universities, half of which made public sites like Stanford’s, over a hundred universities are working with Apple to roll out their iTunesU for the school year starting in fall 2006, so the amount of attention, represented by hits in keyword searches on iTunesU, coursecasting and the like, is about to grow exponentially. Colleges outside of the U.S. are not among the selected institutions at this stage, but the technologies can be cobbled together with similar results through podcasting blogs for coursecasting and other forms of podcasting.

Turning to coursecasting, there are few academically vetted sources published yet beyond those cited above which allude to coursecasting in the context of, or as a subset of, podcasting. However, a recent faculty development seminar presentation available online with many illustrations is suggestive of the pedagogical potential of coursecasting. Blezard (2006) outlines “Educational Possibilities” first in terms of “Content to Coursecast,” namely “Lectures; Guest presenters; Foreign Language, Linguistics, Communication Disorders (Listen and record); Music in History, Humanities, Art, Literature; Virtual or real tours; Remedial or supplementary materials; [and] Existing podcasts” (Blezard, 2006) [reformatted with punctuation added].

“Listen and record” in the above could be on the part of students, by adding a microphone such as iTalk to their iPods in lieu of note-taking. At a certain moment, particularly in lecture halls, students could either speak their notes into the microphone or record the professor’s lecture with permission. This is another major use of iPods for education after listening to podcasts and coursecasts. Students could record all kinds of out-of-class assignments, voluntary projects, and oral messages for professors as well. Also
in the above outline, “virtual” tours are viewed on the computer screen whereas “real tours” refer to using audio podcasts for guided tours of actual places like a campus.

Blezard (2006) further outlines “Learning Styles” in terms of “Supporting Diversity,” through “Repetition; Non-traditional students (Missed classes); Visual learners; Audio with images; Lyric Tracks (Transcription); [and] Source text material” (Blezard, 2006) [punctuation added].

“Non-traditional students” are adults, often working full-time jobs, such as distance learners taking online courses. “Source text material” refers to the capacity of iTunes to display PDF format texts for learners to view while listening to related audio files, as is useful with transcripts for foreign language learners.

At this stage the sources on coursecasting tend to be journalistic articles and blog entries by educators, and the same is true of iPods, iTunes and iTunesU, so this paper is exploring a new area for research. The following anecdotal article is suggestive of current trends and pedagogical possibilities.

College students are increasingly turning to their MP3 players to complete their assignments as academic podcasting continues to expand its scope. Now professors aren’t just uploading lectures-to-go, they are seeking out new ways to use the technology to connect with students and share their work with other educators. … Schools such as the University of Florida and Vanderbilt University have adopted news-based podcasts so that students can remain informed despite their hectic schedules. (Leonard, 2006)

At Duke University

[m]ultimedia, radio and foreign-language teachers have seamlessly integrated podcasting into their curriculums, and now science and math teachers are quickly embracing the technology as well. “It takes the pressure off of students with respect to note taking, so they can feel like they can actually listen and not always be worrying about writing everything you say down,” said Lori Leachman, a professor of economics at Duke. (Leonard, 2006)

many professors record lectures and post the podcasts for students to download as study aids or to use in order to catch up on missed classes. However, …Michael Cheney… at the University of Illinois…is able to supplement assigned reading with
comments, clips and video for his online course. He notes that accessibility and variation of content are key issues for online courses. Furthermore, he feels that podcasts featuring his voice give students across the country a sense of who he is, personalizing the online experience. (Leonard, 2006)

It is clear that podcasting provides a breakthrough technology for what online courses may lack in comparison to face-to-face classes, while podcasting and coursecasting provide further learning opportunities outside of class for traditional students who are usually able to attend face-to-face classes. For another article on how American universities such as Purdue are implementing coursecasting, see Read (2005).

The University of Illinois at Springfield has also established the Higher Educational Podcast Repository, a virtual centralized location housing academic podcasts. The expectation is that the online searchable database will enable instructors to upload and download educational podcasts. Theoretically, teachers could share lectures, media and exercises with other faculty across disciplines. (Leonard, 2006)

The above concept alludes to the possibility of podcasts becoming reusable, sharable learning objects, where instructors would not have to create new content for each element of each lesson but could search learning object repositories for a one-off lecture or other recorded event related to a syllabus item or learning goal. At the same time, students could search for lectures by professors at other universities to understand their own course of studies more deeply.

The above-cited repository http://ed-cast.org/default.aspx, which also includes a rubric to assess the quality of podcasts, contains 23 vetted podcasts from Japancasting, including student podcasts based on presentations that excelled in campus contests. The students consented to record their presentations again, but anonymously. Further with regard to academic repositories of reusable, sharable podcasts, it would be very laborious to listen to innumerable podcasts and coursecasts, assess them, and categorize them into disciplines for directory style searches. Thus such repositories are in the early stages and await a large team effort, but their pedagogical potential is already understood.

Turning to iTunesU, Apple captured the imagination of universities with its initial announcement in early 2006 at http://www.apple.com/education/solutions/itunes_u/. From the viewpoint of the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS), one of the universities selected by Apple to implement it:
iTunesU is a free, cross-platform multimedia distribution and learning environment system wherein educational content—course audio/video lectures and supplemental course-related material—is hosted online and made available to students. In addition to course-related material, lectures and presentations from UIS public events, sports, news broadcasts, and concerts can be delivered through iTunes U. Students can download course-related content from iTunes U using a Windows PC or a Mac, or take it with them using an MP3 player. Students can access iTunes U content from Blackboard with one click. With secure authentication, content within iTunes U can be restricted to registered students, faculty, or staff, or it can be made available to all, depending on an instructor's request. (University of Illinois at Springfield, 2006)

“Blackboard” mentioned above is a company that provides LMS hosting and services, and which recently acquired WebCT. Blackboard has also been strongly criticized for getting a U.S. patent on basic LMS elements having much prior art from earlier innovators, arguably deserving only copyright protection, then suing the Canadian LMS company Desire2Learn. Blackboard was originally free, then started charging fees, which raises questions about Apple’s business model for iTunesU with this partnership.

Another point about this whole phenomenon of podcasting with iPods and iTunesU is that, unlike nearly all other Web-based technologies that are accessible through Web browsers such as Internet Explorer or Firefox, iPods and iTunesU only work fully through Apple’s iTunes program, which is a media player and browser that accesses only Apple’s iTunes Music Store. There is a category of podcasting sites that are mostly free in iTunes, but one needs a credit card account with the Music Store in order to nominate a podcasting site to iTunes. In other words, iTunes is free and cross-platform, but it is proprietary. This gives pause to many educators who favor open source solutions and the openness of Web interoperability generally.

Michael Feldstein of the State University of New York Learning Network, however, has been briefed by Apple that iTunesU standards are mostly open, and he was assured that their business model is mainly to sell more Macintosh computers through the halo effect of iPods and iTunesU. Whereas individual universities would find it prohibitive to distribute multimedia files similarly themselves, Apple can leverage its huge investment in its online Music Store to provide this service at low cost to itself, and promises that it will be free until 2007 and that they do not intend to charge for the service after 2007. And yet, Apple has accepted non-disclosure agreements requested by its partners, among which Blackboard is prominent, so there are aspects of Apple’s briefings that iTunes universities
cannot disclose, while it is a normal business practice to reveal few details about future plans. Feldstein concludes his series of reports by believing that Apple would like to “keep iTunes U free and free from lock-in for the long-term” (2006).

If you think about how the majority of classes in the majority of colleges use an LMS, it’s primarily as a file sharing utility. Share the syllabus, share the handouts, share the assignments. iTunes U can serve this same purpose better than the typical LMS. You don’t have to go through logins and click through multiple screens to find what you want. The content is organized in an easy-to-use, hierarchical offline tool. And if you use RSS feeds, students don’t even have to explicitly log in to check for new documents; content is pushed right to their desktops whenever they are online and iTunes is open. …iTunes U supports PDFs, so teachers can send text documents as well as sound and video files. iTunes U even has a drop box and a sharing folder, so students can submit content to the teacher or to the class. (Currently upload is a browser-based interface, not built into iTunes itself.) If you supplement this capability with a discussion board and maybe a shared calendar, then you’ve provided pretty much everything that the majority of web-enhanced classes use today. You’ve also greatly diminished the value of licensing a traditional LMS to cover the entire campus. This is precisely why Apple draws the distinction between a learning management system (which is narrow) and a learning environment (which is broad). (Feldstein, 2006)

Considering that Apple is working with Blackboard, which has patented traditional LMS functions, Apple could be keeping its options open by calling it a learning environment. In the view of this researcher, the above functionalities point to iTunesU as a next-generation LMS. Blackboard can see the threat to its LMS licensing business in the above, although this is of course speculation based on their actions. They appear to be moving quickly to join or merge with that which they cannot competitively defeat or financially acquire.

A theorist of digital democracy substantiates the above points and puts the issue in larger perspective:

What we believe about information, such as ‘information wants to be free’, structures our worldview. Our knowledge about information may be true or not, but in either case it structures our relationship to information. If we believe the learning environment to be a marketable good in all cases, then institutions and tools will reflect that belief, and with that you have changed the premises of education and
educational institutions toward a market mentality and in that transformed the future. (Hunsinger, 2006, p. 193)

We can see the transformation of knowledge production and provision toward a commodification model in current events. Systems and forms of knowledge are rapidly changing, as knowledge becomes more business centered than science centered. With businesses such as Blackboard moving into teaching…the traditional forms of knowledge that science and human development require are moving from the public to the private sphere. …We have a choice between the open models of shared knowledge versus a closed model of owned, proprietary knowledge. (Hunsinger, 2006, p. 198)

Returning to Feldstein, he concludes his series on iTunesU as follows:

if Apple is successful with iTunes U then we should see a proliferation of student- and faculty-created multimedia in the classroom. Apple’s iLife software suite really does drastically lower the barrier to producing audio, video, and digital images. iTunes, iPods, and video iPods make it easy for users to organize and use those newly created multimedia assets. iTunes U completes the ecosystem by making it easy to share the files. (Feldstein, 2006)

There is little doubt that iTunesU will be successful as over 100 universities implement it imminently and many more queue to be selected by Apple in the future. Like any previous LMS the functions will grow and mature, assisted by user community recommendations and innovations. The significance for this paper is the disclosure of current and future technological trends and circumstances contextualizing coursecasting, the podcasting of a class.

**An Experiment in Podcasting an English for Professional Purposes Class**

Turning to empirical research and the importance of experimentation, the implementation of educational technologies must build on previous experience. For example, first one is a consumer of Web-based content, then a producer of HTML pages and more dynamic content such as online multimedia. One starts using an iPod with the iTunes program, experiencing a prototype of iTunesU such as Stanford on iTunes, listening to lectures while commuting as a student would do. Then various experiences of producing podcasts prepare one technically for coursecasting. Building on previous experiences with the related technologies involved, it is then that one experiments with podcasting the lecture parts of a class and related events. Through that experience, issues particular to coursecasting become evident, and adjustments can be made in future
semesters to improve the pedagogical usefulness and all-around quality. Therefore, since each accomplishment builds on the previous, it is important at any stage not to shy away from new technologies but to keep experimenting and aiming for further new accomplishments.

In teaching EFL according to methodologies accepted in the profession, actually a lecture course tends to be a rarity, or students do not reach a level of learning through lectures until they make a leap to studying abroad at an English-medium university. If there is a laxity at most colleges in Japan regarding homework and expectations of achievement, Osaka Jogakuin College (OJC) by comparison sets ambitious goals and achieves, for example, relatively high average student scores on TOEIC-IP tests.

Focusing on content-based EFL, the first three weeks of OJC core courses could be characterized in bilingualism terminology as BICS or basic interpersonal communication skills (Baker, 2006, pp. 174–175). The relative ease of BICS (Baker, 2006, pp. 178–179) is evidenced by the rest of the first two years of the English curriculum at OJC being devoted to EAP or English for Academic Purposes (Jordan, 1997, pp. 3–5), which involves CALP or cognitive/academic language proficiency (Baker, 2006, pp. 174–178). Then from the third year of the OJC 4-year college the curriculum features concentrations of courses in EPP or English for Professional Purposes (Jordan, 1997, pp. 3–4). This can also be expressed as moving from EGAP to ESAP, that is, from English for General Academic Purposes to English for Specific Academic Purposes (Jordan, 1997, pp. 249–250). CALP in the L2 takes much longer to acquire than BICS (Baker, 2006, pp. 178–179), and EPP or ESAP represents a step beyond EAP or a “pinnacle” of EGAP (Jordan, 1997, p. 249) with the specialized vocabulary and so forth of a field along with the research methods of a specific discipline to learn.

OJC guidelines specify that EPP courses, which are 52 classes of 50 minutes in one semester for four credits, consist of three-quarters lecture time and one quarter discussion by the students. For the many hours of lecture obviously an enormous amount of content is to be presented to teach students about a professional discipline previously unfamiliar to them. This raises issues such as retention and review where coursecasting is hypothesized to be pedagogically useful.

A leading bilingualism researcher stated in a presentation that, relevant to the OJC curriculum, “[c]ontent-based approaches to second language instruction were first introduced in immersion programs but have now been adopted as the preferred approach
in foreign language education” (Genesee, 2006). Another point he made was that content-based L2 instruction can be either language-driven or content-driven. It could be inferred from his distinction that EAP is generally language-driven but that EPP could equally well be content-driven. Again regarding the medium of instruction, bilingualism research on L2 acquisition after adolescence is insufficient, and Genesee has defined immersion programs as having instruction at least 50% in the target language medium. Thus Genesee, asked if the upper division EPP curriculum at OJC, where instruction is over 50% in English, represents a case of immersion education, answered that such programs have been termed “immersion-like” (Genesee, 2006).

The first EPP course in Bilingual Education at OJC was in the spring semester from April through July of 2006. Students were to learn about bilingualism, bilingual education and its types. Major related issues were biliteracy, biculturalism, and creating a good school. Cases were examined of bilingual education in Europe and North America as well as in Japan. Many readings in both Japanese and English were assigned to balance content-driven with language-driven curricular goals. To access the detailed syllabus online, see the directions below.

This paper focuses particularly on the experiment of coursecasting the lecture parts of a class. An MP3 format voice recorder was held while lecturing, then files were uploaded after class to the podcasting blog “Coursecasting Bilingual Education” http://www.odeo.com/channel/93074. In addition, annotations describing the main points of the lecture were added to each entry for extra assistance to students in reviewing the lectures. The APA format for citing such online sources in a research paper was also provided. When there were handouts made by the instructor, the files such as MSWord documents were made available to download by linking to them from a lecture entry for that day.

While the site was introduced early in the course, at a rather late stage it was evident that a computer lab hands-on session with earphones was necessary to orient students to use the podcasting blog. Thus an opportunity, albeit with few informants and no possibility of control groups, was missed to gather empirical evidence on the how students’ use of coursecasting might have made a difference in this first offering of Bilingual Education at the OJC 4-year college. In this pilot experiment it was just observed that a how-to computer orientation would be needed at the beginning of the class, plus follow-up training.

Moreover, coursecasting is too new for comparative empirical studies to be available as to possible drawbacks as well as benefits. Coursecasting is not suggested as a substitute
for attendance except in distance education. OJC students know well the strict attendance policy, and a necessary part of coursecasting orientation would be to emphasize that attendance is essential and that coursecasting is a supplementary enhancement of the course in online media. All the students were able to accomplish the written coursework culminating in a research paper, and there is no reason to assume that drawbacks will outweigh benefits when coursecasting is fully implemented with appropriate orientation.

Notwithstanding the above considerations, students were asked to write in Japanese or English an anonymous *kansoubun*—a feedback mechanism for frank reflections familiar to students in Japan—on their impressions of the Coursecasting Bilingual Education site. There happened to be rare absences during the computer lab orientation session toward the end of the course, so the students’ comments are just impressions but nonetheless informative. Their English comments are slightly edited for grammatical clarity and the mostly Japanese comments are translated by the author as follows, with the five students in random order:

Student A wrote that “If I’m absent from the Bilingual Education class, I can listen to the lectures?! I think that it’s very good. I can improve hearing English; also I can feel like I’m attending class. I will go to the Website tomorrow. Thank you for a half year.” This student and all the others had very good attendance, but a possible drawback of coursecasting is the temptation to skip a class if they overlook the participatory aspects of the class that are not recorded. In any event, is not likely that sociable Japanese students regard the class as a mere transfer of information. If they must be absent for some reason, however, coursecasting provides some recourse.

Student B wrote that “To review I could go over it again and, for example, realize, oh, that was what was said. Parts of what the teacher said in class that I didn’t understand; I could also read the annotations and understand. It’s a good Website, I think. By the way, I like the photo.”

Student C wrote that “I think it’s good that I could listen again to information that I didn’t catch in class. Not only that but the class contents are also written a little, so it’s very good for listening and easy to understand. But some of the files are very long, so if they were broken into shorter segments, I could listen to a lot of them.” The student provides useful feedback while pointing out how written summaries aid listening comprehension.
Student D wrote that “I think it’s very convenient to be able to listen to course contents by PC. Even if I attend class properly there are things I don’t catch, and if I miss class and go to this site, I can know what kind of class it was, which is good.”

Student E wrote that “It was so good!! Before my own final paper I can learn from some classes again and again, then I can cite the teacher’s sentences. It was a useful system. It was easy to navigate the lectures arranged by titles. I think it’s very convenient if I’m absent or for writing a paper. At first I didn’t know what was going on, but it turned out to be a unique class with a good feeling.” Besides the extra review and documentation, this student points out the aid for understanding as well as navigation of having titles for class lectures. Ordinarily class lectures are not given an explicit title, but in documenting the coursecasting, this further benefit for students was revealed.

The podcasting blog “Coursecasting Bilingual Education” ended up having 20 entries, and the main page is illustrated below (Figure 1), then an example of what appears after clicking on a lecture title, another Web page with an embedded media player, an annotation describing the lecture, and a link to download a course document. Whereas the homepage can be accessed at the URL http://www.odeo.com/channel/93074/view, the example lecture “Becoming Bilingual brings greater Choices” is located at URL http://www.

Figure 2. Web page of the first lecture with a link to download the syllabus

Conclusion

Coursecasting was hypothesized to be pedagogically useful, and the body of the paper provided a large number of citations and suggestions in support of the conclusion that coursecasting and other podcasts of related educational events are useful for learners and learning institutions. As also reported by the students in the Bilingual Education class investigated, in various ways podcasting supports review, comprehension and retention of lectures, plus providing additional sources for research papers.

It could be added that the students also acquire a Web-based technological skill that provides another avenue to use their iPods for education, not least by opening up the vast listening resources available through the iTunes program and at free podcasting sites. By the same token, because the technology is new, a hands-on orientation near the beginning of the semester is needed for students to be able to take advantage of coursecasting through a podcasting blog or, in the future, a next-generation LMS like iTunesU. The only potential drawback of coursecasting, the temptation to skip a class because part of it is available online, can be addressed in the orientation to the coursecasting site by making clear that it is not a substitute for class attendance, participation and interactions that are not recorded but are evaluated.
In conclusion, based on the research findings and pilot class experiment, in reference to the initial hypothesis, the usefulness of coursecasting and educational podcasting accrues to all stakeholders who take advantage of the available technologies:

- For EFL students, coursecasting provides review, target language listening practice, alternative access to class lectures in the case of unavoidable absence, written reinforcement of lectures through podcasting blog entry titles and annotated descriptions, downloading of course documents, citations for their written course work, and a base for online research.

Moreover, insofar as the voices of students are recorded in podcasts, whether as course work or public performances as in the case of the Japancasting site, the students can check their own pronunciation and other speaking skills. This alerts students that the Internet is increasingly becoming an oral as well as aural medium, with wireless extensions to iPods and mobile phones. Perhaps most significantly, the students become not just consumers but producers of online English content, which places them more fully in the target language community with benefits for developing intrinsic motivation and a bilingual identity.

- For teachers, coursecasting and podcasting can provide various forms of professional development such as checking the comprehensibility of lectures, offering more supplementary materials, and making various online connections to and from the classroom. The teacher is empowered with technologies while the class is enhanced.

- For the learning institution, more documentation of course content is provided, and various imaginative uses of iPods and podcasting have been suggested, such as for campus tours in Japanese or school festival activities using English. As in the case of Stanford, if iTunesU is acquired, a portion of faculty lectures or special events can be offered as public podcasts to the credit of the institution. The college is seen as one that embraces new technologies that are empowering for students and other stakeholders involved.

- For the general public, the proceedings of the college, special events including concerts, and the fruits of its research become more visible and audible as educational benefits to the community. As one example, parents and high school students can make better informed decisions in comparing colleges.

In sum, coursecasting and podcasting generally provide all stakeholders of the college with more of a window into the classroom and other sites of educational activity.

For further research, using so-called Web 2.0 technologies, the iTunes News and Coursecasting Research site at the social bookmarking site Del.icio.us [http://del.icio.us/](http://del.icio.us/)
coursecasting/ was mentioned in the introduction. More specifically, to just click to read the online references for this paper, see the items at the above site sorted by the tag “paper1” at http://del.icio.us/coursecasting/paper1. Furthermore, at the photo sharing site Flickr, computer screen shots related to this paper similarly tagged with “paper1” can be viewed as a batch or slide show at http://www.flickr.com/photos/steve-illustrated/tags/paper1. There are screen shots that show, by comparison with the regular user interface of iTunes, how the iTunesU administrative interface turns the iTunes program into a new kind of LMS through links to designer functions. To view the Research set of all screen shots on e-learning and online education, see URL http://www.flickr.com/photos/steve-illustrated/sets/72157594230044274/.

References


**Bio-data** as of 2018: Steve McCarty lectures (and works in faculty development) at Kansai University, Osaka Jogakuin University, and the government foreign aid agency JICA. By PC or tablet see his online library at: [http://www.waoe.org/steve/epublist.html](http://www.waoe.org/steve/epublist.html) or also by mobile phone see the publications on Technology and Language Teaching at his e-Portfolio: [https://www.portfoliogen.com/waoe/240948](https://www.portfoliogen.com/waoe/240948)
Flying above a slide of an online presentation embedded in a blog <waoe.blogspot.com> with its podcast, which was recorded in Sydney, for listening while clicking through the slide show.

Representative Web 2.0 site <www.mypopstudio.com> where the author’s Computer Communication students dragged-and-drop clips to mash up reality TV shows and make songs. In this slide the singer is actually the author’s other avatar.

Coursecasting, that is, podcasting the lectures of a whole course on Bilingual Education.

Homemade meishi including QR Code whereby camera-equipped mobile phones in Japan can access the author’s mobile phone site, a new interface between the material and digital worlds.

Avatar faces his creator in a YouTube video that was played during the keynote presentation.

Scene from a YouTube video taken by Gavin Dudeney in Barcelona during the same keynote presentation, with another participant abroad also visible.

Today Web 2.0 technologies, mobile learning, or 3D affordances can be selected or combined according to learning objectives. For fuller details read the keynote address in the conference e-proceedings <wirelessready.nucba.ac.jp/Mccarty.pdf> or see (and hear) the author’s online library <waoe.org/steve/epublist.html>.
MOTIVATING LANGUAGE LEARNERS
FROM BEFORE ADMISSION TO AFTER GRADUATION
THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract of the Presentation

This presentation will demonstrate how language learners can be motivated not only beyond classes but before and after their years in higher education. Cases of social media will include social networking services, podcasting, online video, and various forms of online presentations and publications. Learners are reached through their familiar media channels and find out about new technologies. From the learner side, campus English contest entries and Computer Communication class activities are turned into student-generated content (Sener, 2007; Lee & McLoughlin, 2007) with recognition from abroad. Students are no longer a passive audience of uncommitted spectators but rather active creators in the target language community. Goals of language learning enter real life as bilingual and bicultural choices. The teacher no longer descends from a remote power distance into temporary juxtaposition with students, but rather, as Dörnyei (2001) recommends, sustains personal relationships to motivate students. An interviewed student shows both instrumental and integrative motivation, and that formal performances motivate her to master English. There are indications needing further study across cultures that online social media can enhance these motivational effects.

1 Introduction to This Article

This proceedings article focuses on cases of utilizing new affordances of online social media at a college to reach and motivate foreign language learners from secondary school to after college graduation. First, referring to the conference theme, the meaning of media in the widest sense is explored along with the often taken-for-granted role of media in perception and communication. Then the discussion turns to online presentations, social media and social networking sites
(SNS) in particular, utilizing Japan’s Mixi as an example. The presentation itself in early December of 2008 will provide more contextualization and theory with the philosophy alluded to in the Abstract. This article refers to related publications for further study, most often in the form of links because the other articles are available online. Alternatively, after reading this article, the reader can browse all of the linked articles together, along with currently forthcoming publications, at the author’s online library, the Bilingualism and Japanology Intersection: http://waoe.org/steve/epublist.html, or the fuller version of links annotated in Japanese: http://waoe.org/steve/jpublist.html.

2 Online Social Media

The CLaSIC 2008 theme “Media in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning” first raises the question of what media in the broadest sense are, and what media do. Media function like prisms between phenomena and perception, infrastructural communication channels to represent objects to human subjects, where the phenomena or objects could be conceptual as well as physical. Even the sense of sight takes phenomena through a certain apparatus before an object is perceived. Then there may be secondary process thinking, with possible awareness of contents and patterns. Objects are not perceived directly but through media, and the perceptions of different individuals cannot come into contact directly except as intermediated by a common prism or shared medium. The media may be multiple and changing over time, thus changing perceptions even of the same phenomena. Each successive medium redefines the previous media and renders them identifiable in terms of paradigms. The implications of an accelerating succession of new educational media were explored in an earlier presentation (McCarty, 2005a).

Not long ago, the above presentation may have been over at the time, but a podcast was recorded at the time in Australia and posted from Japan to a site in Canada with a photo of Queensland at http://stevemc.blogmatrix.com/entry:stevemc-2005-09-22-0000/, and the PowerPoint presentation can be viewed at any time by clicking through the slides at http://www.slideshare.net/waoe/definitions-and-knowledge-in-successive-educational-media/. That is to say, the synchronous event also became asynchronous, and the number of media through which the same presentation can be perceived has multiplied. Online presentations can be accomplished in many different ways, one of which is to stack a slide show on top of its podcast by capturing the code of the contents and players from
different sites and embedding the code in a blog post. Technologies will be drawn from this repertoire later in showcasing college students’ English performances to a global audience.

Considering the above discussion of online presentations in terms of media rather than technology highlights a fact that is often overlooked: that media are a sort of dimension, particularly in work that involves communication, such as education and research. It would present a certain challenge if only the medium of radio were available to describe the world of television. Most readers can recall when only paper with few illustrations carried the burden of abstractly representing various phenomena, or citing a fragment to represent some source, whereas now the convenience of linking has opened up new perspectives and ways of thinking. One publication does not just refer to others, but is connected to them, incorporating them through hypertext, which makes a larger statement involving the significance of media.

As the media are successive, televised analysis can describe radio more comprehensively than the reverse, and online media can be most comprehensive, with the previously taken-for-granted media redefined as offline and so forth. With this introduction, when it comes to social media, the Internet is the appropriate place to find its definition, and Wikipedia could be a suitable source not least because wikis are an example of social media. A Google definition search on the terms define:social media on October 13, 2008 yielded five results including the Wikipedia entry. The first definition was succinct and to the point of this presentation:

**social media:** A category of sites that is based on user participation and user-generated content. They include social networking sites like LinkedIn or Facebook, social bookmarking sites like Del.icio.us, social news sites like Digg or Reddit, and other sites that are centered on user interaction. (Search Engine Watch, 2008).

Wikipedia gives examples of the wide variety of sites that can be considered social media:

Social media can take many different forms, including Internet forums, weblogs, wikis, podcasts, pictures and video. Technologies include: blogs, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-postings, email, instant messaging, music-sharing, crowdsourcing,
and voice over IP, to name a few. Examples of social media applications are Google Groups (reference, social networking), Wikipedia (reference), MySpace (social networking), Facebook (social networking), Youmeo (social network aggregation), Last.fm (personal music), YouTube (social networking and video sharing), Avatars United (social networking), Second Life (virtual reality), Flickr (photo sharing), Twitter (social networking and microblogging) and other microblogs such as Jaiku and Pownce. Many of these social media services can be integrated via social network aggregation platforms like Mybloglog and Plaxo. (Wikipedia, 2008)

Wikipedia distinguishes social media from industrial media, also called mainstream or mass media:

Social media are distinct from industrial media, such as newspapers, television, and film. While social media are relatively cheap tools that enable anyone (even private individuals) to publish or access information, industrial media are relatively expensive tools that generally require significant financial capital to publish information (which often limits their use to commercial purposes). (Wikipedia, 2008)

Besides the empowerment of individuals involved, social media can rival industrial media in the parameters of reach, accessibility, usability and recency (Wikipedia, 2008). Few mainstream outlets have a greater global audience (reach), more frequent updates (recency), or ease and affordability of viewing and especially production of content (accessibility, usability) than social media. Among social networking sites (SNS), Facebook, MySpace, Cyworld (South Korea), QQ (China), and Mixi (Japan) each has tens of millions of users. Other Internet sites among the world’s most often visited, such as YouTube, include social media functions such as posting comments, tagging keywords, embedding code in blogs, and other forms of sharing. The user-generated recommendations constitute a form of meritocracy that in turn influences what kinds of functions, sites and media will be developed next. The artificial online environment thus serves users better by coming into closer accord with human nature. There are also cultural preferences, where for example the functions of Mixi are found to reinforce pre-existing Japanese patterns of social relations (McCarty, in press).

For the purposes of this brief article, a glimpse of Mixi will give a flavor for this particular SNS. As the interface is only available in the Japanese language, parts of
the screen shot are translated, while some of the main functions are enumerated below. While Mixi will be referenced at times in this article, the reader can substitute another SNS in considering similar issues in reaching students. For a fuller discussion of Mixi, how it was used with students, its technological limitations and cultural significance, see the related papers and online presentations linked from http://waoe.org/steve/epublist.html

![A Mixi user’s site – top of the profile page](image)

Fig. 1: Upper part of a Web page of a Mixi User’s Site

3 Motivating Language Learners Before Admission
Online social media open up new opportunities for college representatives to reach the wider community. With the low birth rate in East Asia, the number of high school seniors declines significantly every year, intensifying the competition among colleges (including universities) to reach their quotas of new student admissions for government subsidies and institutional survival. For secondary school students, grammar-translation methods of English teaching can demotivate students before they realize the possible rewards of English for International Communication. Thus colleges with English-related departments are pursuing every avenue to bring their merits to the attention of prospective students. The Web and social media are where young people are looking for information and gathering, so college staff members need computer literacy in online technologies. Faculty members are drawn into outreach efforts, placed in a humbler yet broader role in education as a service profession. Student enrollments are not guaranteed, so good practices in teaching become more important, and research skills can be turned to community service. Young people are not automatically motivated toward a foreign language, and teachers in East Asia are expected to provide such motivation. Teachers can agree with many of the goals of these extra outreach efforts and aim to promote bilingualism through a more positive view of English for International Communication.

This is the case of one faculty member in Japan within the past year, with an emphasis on social media. While the college may be focused on attracting students from Western Japan to central Osaka, when information appears on the open Web, not password-protected sites, the potential audience is global. More specifically, Japanese language information has a national audience and English assumes a wider potential but a much smaller audience within Japan.

For the sake of completeness on outreach efforts, it could be mentioned that regional high school students occasionally join English seminars at Osaka Jogakuin College (OJC), while OJC teachers give demonstration classes at high schools that conduct events for colleges in the region. For example, the author teaches a communicative English class while other colleges present other subjects, and students of the high school choose which sessions to attend as they consider their choices of college and major. There are also the demonstration classes at Open Campus events for high school seniors considering whether or not to apply, and the classes are similar in content to actual lessons in the content-based EFL curriculum. Such events could be publicized.
Furthermore, for two years in a row OJC has been the site of a two-day summer seminar for junior high school students, which had support from Osaka Prefecture the first year, then just organizational support in 2008 from a consortium of Osaka area colleges and universities (the same consortium appears in Figure 3 in a different context). The author was asked to write an article about the seminar for an online campus publication. Considering the audience, the author volunteered to write the article in Japanese. First year junior high school students were most numerous, just months out of elementary school and beginning regular English classes, so it was challenging to design interesting activities for most of two days, changing every half hour, and teaching in English insofar as possible. Part of the article (McCarty, 2008a) is reproduced below from the college Intranet. At this stage, the college wishes to use such accomplishments for outreach, but policies need to be established to assuage concerns such as protection of personal information privacy under Japanese law before campus reportage can be released on the open Web.
This year is not claimed to be representative for an EFL faculty member in Japan or for the author, but is perhaps indicative of a trend where a broader range of college outreach efforts draw faculty members into applying their pedagogical, research and writing skills outside of the regular classroom. While the discussion
thus far may have served to introduce the current sociocultural setting, the connection to the theme of this presentation becomes clearer when the resulting product is documented on the open Web or in social media. A case in point occurred in connection with the already-mentioned consortium where institutions share an interest in drawing students into the hub of Osaka from surrounding regions while displaying their comparative strengths to secondary school students already living within commuting distance. The consortium invites all its members to submit articles by representative students and faculty members for the Website (shown in Figure 3 below), which are updated as often as once a month. Young people themselves tend to prefer the big cities with their amenities and jobs available, so the site provides a service in that sense. Faculty articles are ostensibly about the attractions of studying in the Osaka area, with indirect publicity through the affiliation of the author in the byline, and these articles are of course in Japanese to reach the most potential students. OJC takes a different approach, as a college of English majors, and designated the author to write an article (McCarty, 2008b), which in simple English introduces the merits of studying in Osaka.
Finally, with regard to reaching students before admission, two striking examples involve the use of social media, specifically the social networking site or service (SNS) Mixi, which the author has also used to reach students between classes and even after graduation. Mixi allows members, besides following site updates by their circle of friends, to freely join topical communities. There is a community for OJC
as a whole with over 700 members, which the author joined to offer motivational encouragement. It may be objectionable to copy others’ posts from a password-protected members’ site, so the students’ messages are simply described as follows. In February of 2008 a bulletin board system (BBS) thread started with a student who was accepted for the school year starting in April of 2008 asking if there were others like her in the community. She was clearly trying to get a head start on networking to make friends, and indeed there were 44 replies to her post, including by the author, responding to her Japanese message but in English, welcoming new students. Then, antedating a possible admission even further, in September of 2008 a high school senior posted a message to the community saying that she was thinking of applying to the 2-year division of OJC for April of 2009. She was not confident in her English achievement but was interested and willing to try. This time the author responded to the Japanese message again in English but expressing reassurance and encouragement of her efforts. Among the many smilies that one can choose from in Mixi, the author selected the animated image of an archer shooting an arrow to symbolize her striving toward that goal.

4 Online Activities with College Students

The content-based EFL curriculum at OJC involves teaching topic discussion, reading, writing, and some other subjects in English, yet incoming students cannot be assumed to have the requisite listening comprehension skills for such immersive classes. Thus, since the entrance ceremony in early 2004, OJC became the first college in the world where all students received iPods. Moreover, the iPods were loaded with college-created listening files for the students to use before starting classes, and then for homework in certain classes. The chronology is detailed along with the technology of podcasting in McCarty (2005b), which is available online (see References).

For each content-based EFL class the author teaches, the syllabus indicates the instructor’s e-mail address and a class Website or blog post of links for the class. When the author’s first or second year students of core courses have excelled in campus-wide contests, the author has recorded their peace dialogue or presentation as a podcast with the transcript linked for the sake of EFL students anywhere. This student-generated content (Sener, 2007; Lee & McLoughlin, 2007) has received recognition from abroad, which confirms the global audience to the students and is hypothesized to enhance their integrative motivation (McCarty, in press). Instrumental motivation evidently predominates in East Asia, but it is reasoned
that for students to be active content creators in the target language community represents a transformation in perspective. Students can see that the instructor appreciates their work and gives extra time to placing it online, so they are motivated at least to reciprocate. The authentic collaboration to place student products online sustains personal teacher-student relationships, which Dörnyei (2001) recommends to motivate students.

In 2006 the author experimented with coursecasting, that is, podcasting the lecture parts of each class for a semester course in Bilingual Education, plus two related public lectures at other universities in Osaka during the same semester by bilingualism researcher Fred Genesee from McGill University in Canada. The podcasting blog “Coursecasting Bilingual Education” at http://www.odeo.com/channels/93074 was thus available for students at the time to review, for students enrolled in later years, or for anyone who found the site through a search engine keyword search or otherwise.

The author’s Computer Communication class is most suitable for a variety of Web 2.0 activities, some of which have been posted online. One was a narrated slide show where the student introduced her home region through her voice and photos of the scenery. Including the podcasts, students’ own photos and other personal information are not shown, out of caution, but their voices are heard and they still find it exciting. A voice comment posted to the online narrated slide show by an EFL educator in Europe was a pleasant surprise to the student, again showing the global audience and appreciation of the student’s work in the target language community. In another instance, the instructor collaborated with students on a YouTube video about the Mixi social networking site. The students were genuine resources on the Japanese-language site and gave frank opinions about how teachers might be regarded in students’ social networks. Cf. “Social Networking in Japanese Student Territory with Mixi” at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXBwr6gMrrM.

How the author approached several classes about Mixi and what it revealed about Japanese socioculture in new media is dealt with extensively in McCarty (in press). For the focus of this brief article, why and how to keep in touch with students after semesters are over and even after graduation are considered next.

5 Contacting Students After Graduation with Social Media
Having developed personal teacher-student relationships, as Dörnyei (2001) recommends, it is natural for both sides to wish to stay in touch, and the technology of SNS makes it easy and convenient to do so. Until recently, contact with students could end abruptly after the current semester, and when students graduate they lose their campus e-mail, blog, and learning management system (LMS) accounts. But the teacher might wish to follow milestones in former students’ lives, for example whether or not they are applying the EFL skills they learned in college in the workplace or society. If the teacher and students became SNS friends, in Mixi in this instance, the teacher could send out occasional messages of encouragement along with personal and professional milestones in blog posts with multimedia such as photos or YouTube videos. Students would be reminded in the case of a foreign instructor that part of their world is this cross-cultural relationship where they can use English for authentic communication. A teacher could finally do longitudinal research with student subjects after they graduate. Various new possibilities are opened up by the use of social media.

As an example, in late 2007 the author interviewed a student in her last semester for research, and then she had graduated by the time the author compiled the interview data in 2008. Without knowing her new e-mail, mobile phone or any other contact information, it was still possible to reach her through the Mixi messaging system to confirm that the English data for publication meant exactly what she had intended. Not knowing students’ contact information, as one’s institution may prefer, protects both teacher and students from possible suspicions about motives, yet the parties can remain in touch at a safe distance as Mixi friends or through other such social media.

6 Conclusion

It has been shown to be useful to apply online technologies such as social media to be able to reach students where they look for information or congregate socially. To reach and motivate language learners not only outside of class but from before admission to after graduation represents a paradigm shift in what it can possibly mean to be an educator in society. Teachers can now, for instance, find out more about the long-term results of their teaching in their students’ actual lives. Conversely, students can continue to draw motivation from messages to them or milestones in the teacher’s life and research posted to social media. The potential teachable moments or opportunities to enhance students’ motivation to communicate with the L2 target community are virtually unlimited. When the
teacher utilizes technologies that students use, generational and other sociocultural barriers can be surmounted. Furthermore, if the teacher utilizes cutting-edge technologies that students would like to learn, a motivational sense of challenge can be kindled. If the teacher can do it, perhaps she can, and the teacher becomes a model of technological empowerment as well as of bilingualism.

References


*Return to the Bilingualism and Japanology Intersection online library*