

**Kadirova Feruza Xikmatullaevna**

*Foreign languages department*

*Tashkent University of Information Technologies*

*Named after Muhammad al-Khwarizmi*

*Tashkent, Uzbekistan*

*e-mail:*

*feruzakadirova555@gmail.com*

**Anotation:** *The research field of language learning and technology, commonly known as Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) covers research of every way of using computers for language learning purposes, from software explicitly designed for language learning to web-based environments such as virtual environments, social software and computer gaming. There is diversity in how the four basic language competences of reading, listening, speaking, and writing are represented in existing CALL research studies (Jung, 2005). This section gives an overview of the area and the research perspectives characterizing CALL, also pointing at the CALL interest in this thesis.*

**Key words:** *Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), virtual environments, perspective, Enhanced, TELL (Technology-Enhanced Language Learning), BALL (Book Assisted Language Learning), SLA theory.*

### **Introduction**

Looking at two definitions of the acronym CALL, Kern (2006) suggests that the following two definitions with seven years apart display important changes in perspective: “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning.” (Levy, 1997, p. 1) and “CALL means learners learning language in any context with, through, and around computer technologies” (Egbert, 2005, p. 4). In the second more recent definition, the perspective of language learning and technology is broadened addressing learning in a wider perspective. This displays the current trend in CALL research being more inclusive in embracing computer technologies and language learning (Egbert, 2005).

At the onset of the research area of language learning and technology, apart from CALL there were a few acronyms describing the field, such as CAI (Computer-Assisted Instruction) and TELL (Technology-Enhanced Language Learning) (Levy, 1997). Over the years, the acronym CALL has developed to be the prevailing one within the research area. There have been discussions about adapting the term to development trends (Levy & Hubbard, 2007). The motivation has been that since the research area is relatively new, it is tempting to introduce new labels that would be more appropriate for the

concept they are describing, for instance replacing “Computer” with “Technology” or use “Enhanced” rather than “Assisted”.

However, the general view advocates sticking to the term CALL as a label describing the field, since keeping the uniform label of CALL as the established global term for the area will strengthen the field (Levy & Hubbard, 2005). According to Levy and Hubbard (2005) it would be distracting and confusing to make up new words with every technological advancement since it is counterproductive “to invent new labels every time technology takes a step forward” (p. 148). Adding to the discussion of the terminology, there have been discussions about the need to use the term CALL at all. This is based on assumptions that the next step for CALL is normalization, i.e. when technology is invisible since it is fully integrated in every aspect of life (Bax, 2003). In line with the integration thoughts, claims are that just as there is not talk about for instance BALL (Book Assisted Language Learning) CALL should not be needed either (Bax, 2003; Levy & Hubbard, 2005; Warschauer, 1999).

The development of CALL displays a similar pattern as the one seen in other research areas, in terms of Kern and Warschauer (2000) from structural to cognitive and to sociocognitive approaches. In line with Kern & Warschauer (2000), these different views correspond to different pedagogical approaches and prevailing technologies. Firstly, the structural approach emphasizes a focus on language systems and structures through transmission.

From a language learning perspective, meaning is located in utterances and texts that are to be produced correctly. The second move into the cognitive side emphasizes meaning located in the mind of the learner.

According to this approach, language learning is considered an active process taking

place through mimicking and transferring correct structures. Thirdly, in line with the entry of the concept of communicative competence, the view of language learning was shifted to also embrace sociocognitive aspects.

The labeling and division into these three specific phases is debated by Bax (2003) who questions the inconsistencies in timeframes given by Warschauer and Healey (1998) and Warschauer (2000) in different publications by arguing that such an analysis “should surely attempt greater consistency in terms of chronology” (p. 15). Moreover, Bax (2003) claims that there are traces of all three phases still in existence and therefore these phases cannot be talked about as defined entities in time. To date, there are still repetitive drill exercises in use next to more socially applicable technology in language learning. In addition, it is also suggested that that there has been variation in use of terminology related to the phases given, which has been misleading (Bax, 2003; Jung, 2005), where structural, cognitive and communicative

aspects (Warschauer & Healey, 1998) were termed behavioristic, cognitive be precarious to talk about phases of CALL development within language learning, there

are certain significant aspects with these phases. For instance, according to Davies (2007) the first forms of CALL materials displayed a lack of interactivity and feedback and the web has implied that such material has changed to become more interactive. Also, at the beginning of CALL, it was considered that the mere use of computers would enhance a learning situation. Over the years, this rhetoric has changed as institutions are now more critical to launching hasty and expensive computer projects that are not grounded properly (Felix, 2003; Thorne & Black, 2007). Concerning the discussions about the theoretical grounding of the CALL field, Kern (2006) brings up the fact that there are different views of theories related to CALL research. There are claims that connecting CALL more closely to an existing area, for instance SLA, would place CALL on more solid ground as a research field. One such example is Chapelle (1997) arguing for CALL to be grounded in SLA theories and more specifically in an interactionist approach. However, even though there are strong influences from Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in CALL, this is not the only framework. There are limitations with having preference of one framework since it does not deal with all aspects of CALL research. In their overview of different perspectives, Egbert and Petrie (2005) argue for a need to increase the theoretical foundation of CALL being open in embracing a number of theoretical approaches, the interactionist being one of many

(Chapelle, 2005 in Egbert & Petrie, 2005). Other examples of existing theoretical perspectives applied in CALL are sociocultural, systemic-functional linguistics, anthropology, ethnography, and semiotic theories (Kern, 2006).

Adding to the discussion of theoretical perspectives applied, instead of attaching CALL to a specific theoretical theory, the research questions asked should guide the research. An example of a key question that has traditionally driven CALL research is if computers improve language learning (Kern, 2006). Taking the premise that computers improve language learning, general follow up questions concern what computers can do for language learning and how effective technologies are in promoting learning (Felix, 2005; Liu, Moore, Graham & Lee, 2003). However, the general view is that these questions need to be refined further into in what ways, by whom, for what purpose, and in what context computers are used (Kern, 2006). Concerning research questions that gear online language learning, the first studies were dealing with quantifiable aspects, such as amount of participation, quantifying linguistic features and learning resources but also investigating affect and motivation patterns (Kern, Ware, & Warschauer, 2004). Online language learning has shifted to embrace more qualitative methods, emphasizing questions that deal with intercultural competence, broad social non-institutional discourses and problematizing communication (Kern, Ware, & Warschauer, 2004).

Research on online environments for language learning purposes is increasing. Turning to existing studies in online language learning, collaborative aspects of web-based tools in CALL are brought up (e.g., Arnold, Ducate, & Kost, 2009, Kessler, 2009,

Mac & Coniam, 2008). Even though there are several case studies bringing up for instance online interaction and intercultural communication within language learning (e.g., O'Dowd & Ware, 2009; Thorne, 2010), there is a call for more research exploring and mapping out this area. The present thesis focuses on online language learning, in web-based environments where students interact within the frames of their language course. For the learners it is all about entering emergent

communities and getting acquainted with new genres and discourses.

Thus, more recent forms of CALL are directed at online language learning (Blake, 2011). This refers to learning activities taking place in “Web facilitated, hybrid, or fully virtual classes” (Blake, 2011, p. 19). In second language writing, the concept of electronic feedback is frequently connected to automated feedback provided by a computer (Ware & Warschauer, 2006). However, Ware and Warschauer (2006) point at two other strands of research on electronic feedback; one focusing on computer-mediated human feedback versus face-to-face feedback and the other concerning electronic modes such as online chatting and email tele - collaboration. Specifically due to these last two strands, research on online collaboration and intercultural communication within language learning is an increasing area (Dooly, 2011; Levy 2007; Ware & O'Dowd, 2008), which is in line with the research interest in this thesis.

### CONCLUDING REMARK

The theoretical grounding in this thesis puts forward that language learning has its origin in activities involving interaction with others and mediating tools. Central in individuals' acting on the world is the use of tools as mediators in which language is the tool of tools. In recent years, language learning research has turned to sociocultural perspectives of learning. With the communicative turn in SLA and CALL, focus has turned to learners' participation in language activities.

This has implied a further interest for learning outside of the classroom and an increasing focus on web-based learning environments and how online co-production is connected to learning activities. In this context, there is a need to reconsider the role of peers and the web as important sources of learning. The unit of analysis for this thesis is student activity, which means that the analytical focus is put on web-based interaction where the students' language activities are displayed through collaboration and cooperation with others. The empirical data is thus written communication and the traces of activity that the students leave in the web-based environment.

### REFERENCES:

- Alexander, B. (2006). Web 2.0: A new wave of innovation for teaching and learning? *Educause review*, 41(2), 32–44.
- Arnó-Macià, E. (2012). The Role of Technology in Teaching Languages for Specific Purposes Courses. *The Modern Language Journal*, 96, 89-104.

Arnold, N., Ducate, L., & Kost, C. (2009). Collaborative writing in wikis, In L. Lomicka, & G. Lord, (Eds.) *The next generation: Social networking and online collaboration in foreign language learning*, (pp. 115-144). San Marcos, Texas: CALICO Monograph Series, 8.

Augar, N., Raitman, R., & Zhou, W. (2004). Teaching and learning online with wikis. *ASCILITE 2004*. Retrieved May 26, 2008, from <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/perth04/procs/augar.html>

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays* (Translated by C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Ed. By M. Holquist). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bannan-Ritland, B. (2003). The Role of Design in Research: The Integrative Learning Design Framework, *Educational Researcher*, 32(1), 21-24.

Barton, D. (2007). *Literacy – an introduction to the ecology of written language*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Bax, S. (2003). CALL – past, present and future. *System*, 31(1), 13-28.

Beetham, H., & Sharpe, R. (2007). *Rethinking Pedagogy for a Digital Age: Designing and Delivering E-learning*. New York: Routledge.

Chapelle, C. A. (2005). Interactionist SLA Theory in CALL Research. In J. L. Egbert & G.M. Petrie (Eds.), *CALL Research Perspectives*, 53-64, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. *Common European Framework for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)*.

Retrieved from [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf)

Egbert, J. (2005). Conducting research on CALL. In J. L. Egbert & G. M. Petrie (Eds.), *CALL Research Perspectives* (pp. 3-8). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Egbert, J., & Petrie, G. (2005). *CALL Research Perspectives*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.