M-LEARNING & DISTANCE LEARNING FOR L2

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M-LEARNING AND L2 IMPROVEMENT

RESEARCH REPORT: HOW READY ARE VIETNAMESE LEARNERS TO LEARN ON THE MOVE

MODES OF CALL INSTRUCTION DELIVERY

DISTANCE LEARNING

- Term applied to many different types of learning environments including teleconference, hybrid, blended, or virtual.

- Discussion: Why does the new minister of education promote distance language learning?

DISCUSSION: WHY DL CLASSES

- people who work full-time and therefore need special access to instruction
- those who want fewer in-class hours
- those who like to work independently
- students with strong motivation to learn languages such as Arabic, Vietnamese, Filipino, or Punjabi have no local classes
- DL formats require much more self-motivation and self-discipline => usually high dropout rate for the DL learning environment for all disciplines (Carr 2000).

TELECONFERENCING

- Teaching languages through teleconferencing (two-way interactive closed-circuit TV) has the longest track record in the field.
  - Interactivity issues
  - heavily oriented toward a teacher-driven pedagogy
  - organized around the teacher's delivery of information (lecture)
  - Very difficult to have pair/group work
  - sound delays, gaps in fluidity in handovers that make the medium critically different from face-to-face interactions, the tendency toward passive viewing
- Teleconferencing language courses are readily accepted by faculty curricular committees as being equivalent to the classroom experience. Why?

HYBRID OR BLEND COURSES

- Become popular with administrators and faculty alike
    - Direct control by teacher
    - Administrators recognize the potential for stretching expensive human resources

- Many hybrid-course teachers tend to view the computer components of this format as only suitable for drill-and-kill, or mechanical grammar practice

COMPLETELY VIRTUAL ONLINE COURSE

- Come in all shapes and sizes and encompass different combinations of asynchronous and/or synchronous modes

- Take advantage of the authoring features provided by standardized course management systems, such as WebCT, Blackboard, Sakai, or Moodle (Brandl 2005)

- Learning activities: archived lessons, web links, multimedia libraries, drop boxes, announcements, internal mail, bulletin boards or discussion forums, wikis, chat tools (synchronous textual exchange and sometimes voice exchanges too), whiteboards, quiz templates, and customized grade books.

EVALUATION OF HYBRID COURSES

- Adair-Hauck, Willingham-McLain, and Earnest-Youngs (1999) and Green and Earnest-Youngs (2001):
  - Elementary French & German classes
  - Control: 4 regular classes/a week
  - Treatment: 3 regular classes + 1 online session for activities
  - Findings: Same outcomes on tests of listening, speaking, and cultural knowledge; Treatment group slightly better on measures of reading and writing ability
- No significant difference/slightly better phenomenon for blended learning

EVALUATION OF COURSES TAUGHT ENTIRELY ONLINE

- Three studies with empirical data (Cahill and Catanzaro 1997; Soo and Ngeow 1998; Blake and Delforge 2005): online learners were found to outperform students in conventional courses on the grammar output measures.
- Cahill and Catanzaro (1997): introductory online Spanish. Findings: the writing samples of students in the online course were judged to be significantly better than those in the traditional classes.

- Soo and Ngeow (1998) compared the performance of 77 students enrolled in conventional English classes with 111 students who studied English exclusively through a multimedia CALL program: pre- and posttest TOEFL scores showed that students in the online group not only made significantly greater improvement than those in conventional classes but also did it in a shorter period of time.

- Research problem: isolating the format variable from all of the other factors that contribute to L2 learning outcomes—for example, learner characteristics, instructional method, and media attributes

DISCUSSION

- Make a list of the requirements needed to succeed in a DL course

- Defend or refute the following statement: "Distance learning language classes are appropriate for all language students."

COMPUTER BASED TESTING

- Key concepts: validity; reliability; authenticity; washback
- ED Quiz
- ED Toefl iBT
- MOODLE QUIZ