

IN OTHER JOURNALS

Summaries of articles of interest to IALL members. Articles selected by Marie Sheppard, Editor, and summarized by Mary Ann Lyman-Hager (Pennsylvania State University), Judith Moses (Harold Washington College), and Brenda Tunnock (Northwestern University). Please consider submitting summaries of articles that you have found especially helpful.

"It's Showtime", by Steve Rosenthal, *New Media* (March 1993): 36 – 39.

The possibilities of desktop video are fast becoming reality, and the *New Media* magazine editors offer readers a great service in presenting an unbiased account of the two major competing products in desktop video—Apple's QuickTime for the Macintosh and Microsoft's Video for Windows (VfW) for the IBM world. This article offers a taste of the salient features of each, so that developers of digital video programs can plan ahead and create the desktop environment they need. Certainly we all hope that some day we will not have to lug videodisk or videotape players and monitors to class or to conferences, and the promise of being able to digitize clips of materials and to plan lectures in a presentation mode,

with video "buttons" to play the appropriate video at the appropriate time, is a real boon to our profession.

In Rosenthal's opinion, "the two formats have a lot more in common than not, and the technical differences are trivial to most end-users." (p. 36) He continues: "The chief benefit of these video formats—as opposed to pre-existing digital video products—is that they can play back on most desktop computers without special hardware." (p. 36) And, as is the trend for major vendors in the multimedia arena, both products are (or soon will be) cross-platform products: "Apple has released QuickTime for Windows for developers to integrate into their Windows applications, and Microsoft has demonstrated a prototype VfW player for the Macintosh." (p. 36)

If users wish to capture their own video from external sources or to play back video recorded at higher levels of quality, they will require additional hardware with either format. For Macintosh users the RasterOps Media Time, the Mass Microsystems QuickImage 24, and SuperMac's VideoSpigot are all available for under \$1000. For IBM users there are several dozen PC-based video digitizers available, which are slightly lower in cost than the Macintosh equivalents. Among these are the Truevision

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Bravado, Media Vision's Pro MediaSpectrum, Cardinal Technology's SNAPplus and the Windows version of the VideoSpigot sold by Creative Labs.

As a word to developers, Rosenthal notes that "QuickTime enjoys a solid lead, primarily in the sophistication of its interfaces and services" and says that "Microsoft officials agree privately that Apple begins the contest with a substantial head start in system software, utilities, video applications and cross-platform solutions." (p. 39) However, the author is quick to add that Video for Windows (perhaps because of Microsoft's widespread product acceptance) will undoubtedly show up in Excel, Word for Windows, and Ami Pro environments. He concludes that "[e]ven if QuickTime continues to dominate on the Macintosh, and even if it spreads to other platforms, most analysts predict Video for Windows will win the desktop video battle on the PC platform by dint of its larger potential installed base. Thus it will dominate the desktop video market as a whole." (p. 39)

M. A. Lyman-Hager

"New Project Announced: Technology and Foreign Language Learning", *ACTFL Newletter* (Winter/Spring 1993): 5

Analysas Corporation and the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) Federal Language Training Laboratory (FLTL) have signed an agreement to commercialize the CIA's interactive multimedia foreign language instructional materials. These materials operate on either IBM or Macintosh computers and include "full motion, full-screen video with text, graphics, audio, animation, and user audio playback". The

materials may be used on a self-study basis or as a supplement to classroom instruction. The initial course in beginning Spanish (EXITO) has won interactive media awards; and new programs in Russian, French and Arabic are under development.

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J. Moses

"The Teacher-Learner Relationship and Classroom Interaction in Distance Learning: A Case Study of the Japanese Language Classes at an American High School", by Hyangsoon Yi and Junko Majima, *University of Georgia; Foreign Language Annals* 26.1 (1993): 21 - 30

In this article the authors describe their study of both a first- and a second-year Japanese distance learning class at Milledge Avenue High School (MAHS), Georgia, where the programs produced by the Satellite Educational Resources Consortium (SERC) have been in use since 1989. The impetus for foreign language tele-classes in high schools in Georgia stems from a commitment by the state to teach less commonly taught languages and the inability to hire qualified teachers in those languages. For those unfamiliar with the format of tele-classes this article provides a balanced overview of two such classes in action. For all readers this article provides preliminary research on some of the pitfalls of distance learning and on those aspects that appear to be crucial to its success.

The role of a single teacher in a traditional classroom is partitioned in tele-classes among the TV instructor, the telephone instructor, and the classroom facilitator. The authors explore the role of each in terms of their input to the instruction and their relation to each other as well as to the students. They also explore the students' reaction to the instructors, the students' perceptions of each, and the students' interaction with each other in the tele-class itself. Additionally, the beginning Japanese class had the advantage of a native speaker, a Japanese exchange student, but this is not a planned component of the distance learning experience.

The authors focus on the crucial role of the classroom facilitator in contributing to the success or failure of distance learning. The successful facilitator described in this article was one who was a foreign language teacher, excited about the potential of tele-classes, and learning Japanese along with his students. He provided encouragement to keep students engaged while watching the program and met with students in his office before and after class. His participation went beyond the requirements generally stipulated by distance learning for the classroom facilitator, but this study indicates that this type of involvement is necessary for successful tele-classes in foreign language.

J. Moses

"Internet Bibliography", *Syllabus* 27 (March/April 1993): 20

The list contains 12 books and other sources covering the history, development, uses, resources and terminology associated with the Internet. Brief descriptions of these resources are given, along with publishing information and pricing. Included are such invaluable works as *The Whole Internet*

User's Guide & Catalog, by Ed Krol, and *Zen and the Art of the Internet*, by Brendan P. Kehoe.

B. Tunnock

"Adventures with Languages: Multimedia Development Project", by Jean E. Jacobson, *Athelstan Newsletter* 5 (1993): 13

Adventures with Languages is a three-year, federally funded project started in the Richmond School District (Richmond, CA) to develop new ways of using multimedia in foreign language instruction. Six schools in the district are participating in the pilot project, four of which conduct it with both Spanish and Japanese language students. The students are guided through six media stations—computer, multimedia, telecommunications, listening, activities, and conversation—which were modeled on IBM's Teaching and Learning with Computers system and are designed to reinforce the materials worked on at each of them.

Students work with materials on laserdisc, audio tape, computer, and videocassette—including tapes recorded on a camcorder by the teacher and students. The computers are IBMs equipped with a commercial multimedia authoring system and a multimedia journal-creation program. The latter program allows students to import pictures of themselves, record their voices and music, and put a story together around these materials, which is then stored on disk. The next issue of *Athelstan* will contain more information about this project.

B. Tunnock

"Textbook Grammar: Does It Reflect Native Speaker Speech?" by Eileen Glisan and Victor Drescher, *The Modern Language Journal* 77 (1993): 23 – 33

There are two issues to deal with in considering the role of grammar instruction in a second-language classroom: How much emphasis on grammar instruction should there be in a proficiency-based language curriculum, and does (and should) the treatment of grammatical structures in current language texts accurately reflect the frequency of their occurrence in the speech of native speakers?

Glisan and Drescher preface their study with a brief reference to the theories of several researchers who are concerned with language learning and acquisition—including Theodore Higgs, Stephen Krashen, Barry McLaughlin, and Herbert Seliger. They then focus on studies that lead them to the conclusion that certain guidelines need to be followed in order for grammar instruction to assume a meaningful role in second language teaching; specifically: 1) grammar should be presented in real contexts and discourse, 2) grammar needs to be presented as a means for real communication and interaction in the target language, and 3) there should be a correlation between the time spent on a grammatical

structure and the frequency of its occurrence in native speech.

There have been many studies seeking to verify the accuracy of grammar rules and correlate the importance of a grammatical structure in a language text and its actual usage in the language. Perhaps not surprisingly, they have often come to the same two, basic conclusions: 1) textbook grammar rules are often wrong and/or incomplete, and 2) the amount of time devoted by these texts to certain structures far outweighs the number of times the student will come across them in normal discourse.

Glisan and Drescher conduct their own study in Spanish using recordings of various Spanish speakers from eight different Latin American countries. They transcribed their recordings and did frequency counts of several grammatical categories and structures and compared their counts to the weight each of these categories and structures were given in six different Spanish texts which are currently popular in American universities. Their findings correlate with those from the previous studies and they conclude that, though recent textbooks use a more innovative approach than their predecessors, there is still a long way to go before the grammar presented in the text accurately represents the grammar in native speech.

B. Tunnock