

CALL: Revisiting Its Origin, Impact and Challenge

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ABSTRACT

Computers have aided language teaching since the 1960s. Two decades after their assistance, with the support of advance in technology and network, computers have gaining trend to be integrated in foreign language teaching as computer-assisted language instruction (CALI). CALI was basically teacher-centered teaching, therefore it was less favoured by the growing belief among educators that teaching should be student-centered. In the early 1980s, with its student-centered approach, computer-assisted language learning (CALL) commenced to substitute CALI. This paper reviews some empirical studies of the impact of CALL as well as its growing trend and challenge. Over the years 1998 –1999, the University of Melbourne held a CALL project. Despite having to tackle students with low computer skill, it was found beneficial not only to tertiary education at the university but also to year 12 students in Victoria. Therefore Australian government started to insert CALL in its curriculum. In 2004, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China also issued policy requiring CALL as means to promote English teaching. Recently, a study supported this policy that it is effective for Chinese students to study EFL writing by utilising Google Translate as a translingual CALL tool. Whilst, in Iran, a study faced challenge of the application of CALL considering limited infrastructure support, teachers' capability to cope with the technology and apply it in their future instruction.

Keywords: CALI, CALL, Australia, China, and Iran

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INTRODUCTION

Rogerson-Revell (2021) points out the smooth utilization of technology advance into pedagogy both in learning and teaching. Digital gadgets like smartphones, computers, televisions, and tablets are extensively facilitating people day-to-day lives. In addition for entertainment purposes, they are also widely utilised in language classrooms or doing self-study by both teachers and students globally. In line with her, Suga (2021) utters that language teaching, particularly second language (L2) one is evolving briskly, demanding teachers to make regular modification to catch up with this transformation. Outstanding conversion is apparent on the integration of the technology in L2 pedagogy and curriculum design. This usage of technology, predominantly computer in education according to Zhou (2021) is labeled as computer-assisted language learning (CALL). CALL is defined in

Zhou's study as any practice in which computers supported by local area network and the internet, are made use by learners to gain language progress in proficiency.

The Origin of CALL

In around 1960 as portrayed by Fathali and Emadi (2021), CALL started to appear as the outcome of the support of computers to English Language Teaching (ELT). Beforehand, Zhang (2021) states that such integration was predominantly known as computer-assisted language instruction (CALI). CALI has teacher-centered approach which is less favoured and believed to be less effective than the one CALL has that is student-centered. Consequently, in the early 1980s CALL was used instead of CALI. Zhou (2021) mentions that in the late 1980s, alternative terminology of CALL came to surface that was technology-enhanced language learning (TELL). To Zhou this naming has better self-description in terms of the activities in CALL.

The Amply Employed Terminologies

Fathali and Emadi (2021) categorise other labels related to the support of computers in education under two areas, for both general and specific learning as like TEL (Technology-enhanced learning), TELL (Technology-enhanced language learning), CAL (computer-assisted learning), MAL (mobile-assisted learning), MALL (mobile-assisted language learning), web-enhanced learning (WEL), web-enhanced language learning (WELL), computer-aided instruction (CAI), computer-mediated communication (CMC). Whilst the ones for teaching are technology-enhanced language teaching (TELT), computer-assisted language teaching (CALT), mobile-assisted language teaching (MALT), and so forth.

Three CALL Approaches

Milad (2022) clearly illuminates three main approaches of CALL. The first is that CALL is of great aid to administrate repeated training and practice, theoretically this method is known as behaviouristic CALL. This dated back to the 1960s and 1970s, computer was used as a means to deliver grammar lesson or test translation proficiency. It is claimed to be an ideal support, since computer is able to do unlimited frequency of presentation of similar lesson as well as providing straightaway neutral response. These CALL drills are still employed to date in language teaching instruction, due to the help students can get that is adjusting their own learning pace. The popularity of behaviorist CALL even took place as early as the 1950s in the United States as stated by Wang (2021), and in the late 1970s it was diluted and later on substituted by a new stage of CALL. The second approach of CALL is non-drill and non-behaviourist, it provides rich stimulus of form usage to boost the way of thinking of the students. Instead of merely mechanical manipulation, this method invites students to yield own voice by facilitating practice to gain mastery in conversational activities.

Whilst, the last approach is integrating multimedia resources and all high-tech products available, in so doing, students do own control of the course by clicking and pointing the mouse of the computer.

CALL in Australia

A project oriented computer assisted language learning (PrOCALL) was conducted by Debski and Gruba (1999) over 1998-1999 at the University of Melbourne Australia, with 250 students and 10 teachers involving many languages (Chinese, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Russian, and English as a Second Language). They found that CALL gave benefit

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to tertiary education, with higher percentage of successful students than those who failed. This was true to both advanced and low computer-literate students. The success of CALL was not only apparent to tertiary education but also to mainstream one as noted by Smith and Salam (2000), that in 1999 the Australian State Government of Victoria launched online tutorial support for year 12 students.

Recently, as conveyed by Rogerson-Revell (2021) that Australia through its immigration department employs artificial intelligence (AI) and automated scoring for immigration purposes. Out of its five test, the department applies the Pearson Test of English (PTE) Academic (<https://pearsonpte.com/>). Speaking proficiency is tested by The PTE by means of voice recognition technology and audio recordings performed by test-takers are calculated with computer-based language assessment for scoring.

CALL in China

Similar to Victoria's Education Department, as stated by Zhang (2021) that in 2004 the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China also issued a government policy to insert CALL in the curriculum. College English Teaching in China should employ CALL technology in encouraging English teaching. Wang (2021) further explicates that this College English Curriculum Requirements was actually issued for trial implementation in 2004, aiming to expand English usage ability in all-round way particularly listening and speaking. It also promotes students' autonomous learning and reforms their way in learning individually, with additional emphasis not only knowledgeable in English but also having insight to learn distinct global cultures. With the support of technological enhancement, in the long run teacher-centered language teaching can be elaborated towards autonomous learning with limitless constraints of time and place to study.

Tsai (2022) claims that 'technology is no longer optional but necessary'. He expands the government focus out of listening and speaking, to learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing by utilising Google Translate as a translingual CALL tool. The study found that Google Translate (GT) could boost writing performance of more highly proficient Chinese English major university students as well as less-proficient non-English majors. The text produced had better loaded content, high level vocabulary with reduced errors in spelling and grammar. Besides enhancing writing performance, GT also gains positive attitudes, which is apparently higher from non-English major students than English major students. Despite this possible help of GT that makes writing swift, favorable and able to produce higher accuracy than students' self-writing. Tsai (2022) advises for prolong English proficiency development in comprehending the translation made by GT, followed by continual revisions and corrections.

CALL in Iran

With the growing trend of CALL worldwide, many countries have continuously given contribution to the study of CALL in individual countries. However, Fathali and Emadi (2021) have addressed indication that The Islamic Republic of Iran as one for which there is no record of such trend. Actually in occurrence, CALL has increasing trend in Iran, the rationale according to them why there is no record is that Iran-based CALL has not yet gained a solid position. Existing publication fluctuates sometimes bring sharp rises then followed by sudden falls. This is also supported by Meihami and Esfandiari (2021), that there is 'paucity' of realistic research about CALL teacher education in Iran. This wobbly drift takes place in several countries on their way to introduce CALL.

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Not only having limited record of contribution to CALL, Meihami and Esfandiari (2021) mention that there was no formal CALL teacher training preparation program in Iran. They believe the grounds why it is not easy to attend it is due to the fact that it is new pedagogy happening in the country, supporting facilities for such training has not been made available, personal need to take advantage of the aid of technology in teaching has not been sensed among EFL teachers, and no teaching manual accessible for EFL instructors in adopting CALL in their classes.

Potential upcoming CALL teacher training program is advised by Nami (2021), taking form as collaborative learning tasks that can facilitate the progress of teachers' knowledge and experience.

CONCLUSION

From the implementation of CALL in both Australia and China as reviewed earlier, it is the initiative from the Government to issue policy regulating the integration of CALL in school and education curriculum, that can open the widespread usage of CALL in all aspects. In so doing, the readiness of the supporting facilities as well the competence of the teachers by way of sound teacher training program should be made available by the authority. Otherwise, like in The Islamic Republic of Iran that CALL cannot stand in solid position.

Three recommendation have been postulated by Toyoda (2001) to ensure the success of CALL program, First, infrastructure to support technology are all arranged and apparently can function to its most support. Second, sufficient computer literacy is occupied by the students, at least essential computer skill to be able to enjoy the advantage given by high-tech advance. Third, which is somewhat the most vital, is the interaction and giving support with classmates during the lesson. To add on, Tsai (2022) recommends the students for prolong progress in English writing-mastery to comprehend the translation done by Google Translate (GT) as a translingual CALL tool. They also need to make suitable revisions and corrections to follow up. For EFL teachers, his advise is gaining comprehensive grasp of GT then adopt own supporting instructional methods readily applicable within classrooms with varied pedagogy purposes.

To ensure stable position of CALL, Zhou (2021) suggests characteristics as follows: (1) stakeholders can be facilitated to learn English with the support of computer; (2) stakeholders can learn related lesson that enables improvement in foreign languages mastery by resources of computer; (3) stakeholders are well informed to use the prerequisite software for foreign language majors; (4) stakeholders can run assessments, do scoring, study queries, do students' placement, and arrange test foundation with the support of computer; (5) stakeholders deal with computer to pursue researches on applied linguistics; (6) stakeholders are facilitated by computer to post multimedia coaching; (7) stakeholders can arrange foreign language teaching system thoroughly and scientifically.

Recently, CALL has evolved as stated by Rogerson-Revell (2021) to be able to perform automated testing of speaking and pronunciation, similar to the British Council and Cambridge Assessment. Despite the fact that it is a promising trend, however criticisms have been put forward specifically with the reliability and validity matter with automated scoring and use of artificial intelligence (AI). In contrast, less automated testing is believed by Buczek-Zawila (2021) can function as technology-related solutions to open up provides manifold chance for the triumph of the training of language aspect in classroom setting.

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