Editorial: Taking stock of the 33rd volume of CJLT

Michele Jacobsen

The present issue of CJLT includes eight articles (six research papers, two position papers) that explore diverse areas of educational technology research and a book review. The fourteen authors who have contributed their research and critical perspectives to this issue hail from universities across Canada and the United States. The following section provides an overview of the research and commentary presented in this issue.

Elizabeth Murphy, from Memorial University Newfoundland, provides the first article, entitled "A Framework for Identifying and Promoting Metacognitive Knowledge and Control in Online Discussants". In this position paper, Murphy develops a framework to be used by researchers for analysing transcripts of online discussions for evidence of engagement in metacognition, by instructors assessing learners' participation in online discussions or by designers setting up metacognitive experiences for learners in online settings. Murphy’s framework improves upon existing models or frameworks (e.g., Henri, 1992) that support the identification and assessment of metacognition which have been described as subjective, lacking in clear criteria, and unreliable in contexts of scoring.

The second paper, contributed by Stéphane Allaire, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, is a research paper entitled, "Soutenir le cheminement de stage d’apprentis enseignants au secondaire par un environnement d’apprentissage hybride". Allaire employed participatory research to study the contribution of a hybrid learning environment when used by student teachers in secondary teaching for reflective analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses are used to explore the potential of the devices and the strategies used to support the student teachers in their integration into a innovative practicum context, a diversified reflective practice and the co-construction of knowledge.

Stéphane Levesque, from the University of Ottawa, contributed the third article, entitled "Terrorism plus Canada in the 1960's equals Hell Frozen Over: Learning about the October Crisis with Computer Technology in the Canadian Classroom." Using a quasi-experimental design, Levesque investigated the role and impact of a digital history program (the Virtual Historian©) on high school students' historical thinking and reasoning about a controversial episode in Canadian history. Levesque's purpose was to examine whether use of the Virtual Historian©, a web-based inquiry program to teach Canadian history, improves the learning of a key episode in the school curriculum (French-English relations and the October Crisis, 1970).

In the fourth paper, entitled "Cyberbullying in Schools: An Examination of Preservice Teachers' Perception", Qing Li, University of Calgary, conducted a survey with 154 student teachers. Several questions that guided this research probed concerns, confidence, preparation and school commitment. While a majority of preservice teachers understand the significant effects of cyberbullying on children and are concerned about cyberbullying, most of them do not think it is a problem in their schools, though concern is high, a vast majority of the preservice teachers surveyed have little confidence in handling cyberbullying.

In the fifth paper, entitled, "Instructional Designers at Work: A Study of how Designers Design", Dennis Dicks from Concordia University, and Cindy Ives from Athabasca University, interviewed eight professionals in the field to explore "What constitutes good instructional design?" and "How do instructional designers create good design?" The instructional designers were asked to reconstruct how they helped faculty members deal with challenging design problems as they adopted a learning management system and other web-based technologies in support of their teaching. Dicks and Ives analysis suggests that instructional designers employ a set of social skills and cognitive tools that enable them to act as a pedagogical "conscience" in the design process. The authors interpret these ID skills in terms of "theory of mind" in the context of instructional design.

Ke Zhang, Wayne State University in Michigan and Curtis Bonk, Indiana University, contribute a position paper to this issue, entitled "Addressing Diverse Learner Preferences and Intelligences with Emerging Technologies: Matching Models to Online Opportunities". In this sixth paper, Zhang and Bonk critically review various learning theories, models and learning technologies. The authors highlight a few key models, such as Gardner’s multiple intelligences, Fleming and Mills’ VARK model, Honey and Mumford’s Learning Styles, and Kolb’s Experiential Learning Model, and attempt to link these to trends and opportunities in online learning. The intersection of such models with online technologies offers instructors and instructional designers new ways to think about addressing diverse learner needs, backgrounds, and expectations. The key argument is that increased value can be derived from inter-connections between the theories, models and learning technologies.

The seventh paper, by Lan Li and Allen Steckelberg, from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, and Srihabagya Srinivasan, Texas Tech University, is entitled "Utilizing Peer Interactions to Promote Learning Through a Web-based Peer Assessment Approach". Peer assessment is an instructional strategy in which students evaluate each other’s performance for the purpose of improving learning. This study explored student perceptions of a Web-based peer assessment system. Students designed a webquest that was assessed by their peers. Students were asked to reflect on the web-based, peer assessment process by responding to a questionnaire. Findings suggest that Web-based peer assessment can be effective in minimizing peer pressure, reducing management workload, stimulating student interactions, and enhancing student understanding of marking criteria and critical assessment skills.

The eighth paper in this issue, entitled "ICT in Teacher Education: Examining Needs, Expectations and Attitudes", is contributed by Zuochen Zhang and Dragana Martinovic from the University of Windsor in Ontario. This exploratory case study focused on pre-service teachers’ expectations of and attitudes toward the learning and integrating of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) into their teaching and learning. A sequential mixed method research design resulted in emerging themes related to participants’ social conditions that impact their perceptions and attitudes regarding the ICT and beliefs about the use of ICT in their future careers. Findings from this case study, compared to earlier studies done in the same setting, show unexpected consistency in teacher candidates’ comments despite changed circumstances.

The final manuscript in this issue is a delightful book review of "Handbook of Visual Languages for Instructional Design: Theories and Practices" by Gail Kopp from the University of Calgary.

The main purpose of this second section is to take stock of the 33rd volume of the Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology.
and Technology (CJLT). The second purpose is to locate the 33rd volume of CJLT, and the Fall 2007 issue in particular, in the history of the field. Why? The Fall 2007 issue of CJLT is the first that was distributed to all members of The Canadian Network for Innovation in Education (CNIE). While the disciplines of Distance Education and Educational Technology can often bear a strong family resemblance, the disciplines are also distinct and there is enduring value for both to continue to be served by a reputable Canadian peer-reviewed journal that publishes research in both English and French. Thus, starting in Fall 2007, all CNIE members now receive both CJLT and the Journal of Distance Education, edited by Mark Bullen, Lucie Lavoie and François Pettigrew. Both educational technology and distance education scholars are encouraged to take a moment to mark this event in our shared history during which scholars have come together to form a new association that supports two peer-reviewed scholarly journals in which to publish our work and advance the collective knowledge in both fields.

The Canadian Education Media Council first published the newsletter Media Message in January 1972, which eventually became the Canadian Journal of Educational Communications [CJEC], published from 1979–2002. Back issues of CJEC from V. 15 in 1986 – V. 27 in 2001, will soon be archived and available online at the CJLT website. This was an open issue and contained an editorial by Michele Jacobsen and seven articles, including one in French, about various approaches to educational technology research and teaching (four research papers, two case studies and one position paper). Authors used experimental, qualitative, survey, case study, critical inquiry and descriptive approaches to investigate key questions and fill gaps in the knowledge of our field. Authors in this issue hail from a variety of academic and public institutions in Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

**An Appeal:** If members of the former AMTEC and CADE communities, and present CNIE community, can help this editor locate CJEC back issues from between 1979 – 1985, and earlier versions of Media Message, these will be scanned and electronically archived on the CJLT website.

CJEC was the precursor to CJLT, which was launched in 2002, and first published as a dual medium publication by editors, Dr. Rick Kenny and Dr. Mary Kennedy (i.e., print version followed by full text web version). The present editorial team has supervised the dual medium publication of CJLT since 2005. During the past 3+ years, we have added 11 new issues of CJLT to the collective knowledge base in educational technology.

**Table 1. Summary of Contents of the Eleven Issues of CJLT from 2005 to 2008.**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
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<td>21 (19 / 2)</td>
<td>22 (19 / 3)</td>
<td>14 (12 / 2)</td>
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The CJLT is unique in the international field of educational technology in that manuscripts are accepted and published in either in English or in French. The Editorial Team and Editorial Board are very fortunate to include members who are fluent in either or both of Canada’s official languages. The present CJLT Editorial Board includes over 60 international scholars.

In the remainder of this report, I present highlights from the 33rd volume and 2007 publication year of the Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology.

**Volume 33 – Calendar Year 2007**

In brief, three open issues of the journal were published in 2007. A total of three editorials, two book reviews and 22 scholarly articles were published and shared with the international academic community. The journal received 54 new manuscript submissions in 2007 which is a 36% decrease over 2006. An acceptance rate of 40% in 2007 shows a slight increase over 2006 (37%), as does the higher rejection rate in 2007 (43% versus 34%). In the past year, the editorial team was able to maintain a fairly regular publication and distribution schedule for the first two issues of the journal and published three solid issues.

**Winter 2007, Volume 33.1 – 7 articles, 1 editorial**

This was an open issue and contained an editorial by Michele Jacobsen and seven articles, including one in French, that summarize various approaches to educational technology research and teaching (four research papers, two case studies and one position paper). Authors used experimental, qualitative, survey, case study, critical inquiry and descriptive approaches to investigate key questions and fill gaps in the knowledge of our field. Authors in this issue hail from a variety of academic and public institutions in Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

**Spring 2007, Volume 33.2 – 7 articles, 1 editorial, 2 book reviews**

This was an open issue that consisted of an editorial by Michele Jacobsen and seven articles (one in French) that summarize various approaches to educational technology research and teaching by American, Canadian and Mexican researchers. Two book reviews rounded out the second issue of CJLT in 2007. The Spring 2007 issue contains the article nominated for the 2008 CJLT Editor’s Award, “Un Nouveau Regard Sur Les Profils Des Enseignants A L’égard De L’intégration Des TIC” by Martine Leclerc from Université du Québec en Outaouais, Gatineau, Quebec.

**Fall 2007, Volume 33.3 – 8 articles, 1 editorial**

Volume 33.3 (Fall 2007) is open issue and consists of an editorial by Michele Jacobsen and eight articles (one in French) that summarize various approaches to educational technology research and teaching by Canadian and American authors.

**Dual Medium to Open Access**

The 2007 calendar year saw the sixth full year of the publication of the journal as a dual media publication, using both print and online delivery (i.e., CJLT / RCAT website [www.cjlt.ca] launched Feb 2002). Full text articles are on the website with a one issue (4 month) delay. The titles, authors and abstracts of each current print issue are provided at the time the issue is mailed out to members and subscribers. This was the final year that the online version was hosted at Athabasca University under the auspices of the International Consortium for the
Acceptance and Rejection Rates

Journal activity was tracked to calculate the approximate acceptance / rejection rate for 2007. A total of 54 manuscripts were submitted in 2007 (which includes 48 English and eight French), a 36% decrease from the unusually high 85 submissions in 2006. CJLT published 22 articles in 2007 for an approximate acceptance rate of 40%, which is slightly higher than the acceptance rate in 2006 (37%).

Of the 54 manuscripts submitted in 2007, 23 were rejected for a 43% rejection rate (an increase over the 2006 rejection rate of 34%). At the end of 2007, approximately nine articles (17%) remained in a category labelled, "ongoing consideration". Included in this category are articles that will be published in an upcoming issue, or those that were sent back to authors with suggestions for revisions and an invitation to resubmit.

Table 2. CJLT Submission and Acceptance Rates, 2002 – 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volume and Publication Year</th>
<th># Articles Submitted</th>
<th>% +/- compared to prior year</th>
<th># Published *</th>
<th>% Acceptance Rate**</th>
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<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>V. 32 - 2006</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Reflects articles only; excludes book reviews and research reports
** Acceptance rates reflect the proportion of submitted articles already through the review process

An attempt has been made to report accurate submission, publication and rejection rates for 2007. However, it must be acknowledged that several of the articles published in Volume 33 were "carry-over" submissions from 2006 (a banner year for CJLT). Any manuscript submitted after the Fall issue is set can only appear, if accepted, in a subsequent year's issue (and would thus be reflected in that year's acceptance rate).

Editing an Academic Journal

The steady number of submissions (i.e., in 2007, average one manuscript per week, or 4.5 per month) that are managed through the Editorial and Peer Review process represents a considerable amount of work. In the following sections, the tasks and activities required to support CJLT are summarized.

The Editor / Editorial team manages several tasks: (i) receive and acknowledge manuscripts, (ii) complete an editorial review, (iii) decide to reject or peer review, (iv) send manuscript to 2–3 peer reviewers, (v) manage peer review process, (vi) communicate with authors, (vii) select manuscripts for inclusion, (viii) create a table of contents and article order, (ix) write an editorial, and (x) manage the revision and final layout stages with the copyeditor. A final version of each manuscript (in .doc or .rtf form) is sent to the copyeditor for final revision and journal layout. Abstracts are sent via email to be translated into either French or English, as required.

The PDF files are sent to the printer, a proof is created, and the editor approves the proof. The entire printing process can take two weeks. The former AMTEC / current CNIE membership coordinator provides mail-out labels / inserts for current members and subscribers, and the Editorial Team sends a copy of the journal to each author as a small thank-you for their scholarly contribution to the journal. Journals and inserts are hand-stuffed in plastic bags and distributed from the University of Calgary. CJLT is published in both a print and an online version; the final version of each print issue is sent to the web publishers for online distribution four months after print distribution.

Editorial Review

An editorial review is conducted to judge a manuscript's suitability, contribution, accuracy, and potential interest to the educational technology community. The editor, or designate, also assesses whether the format adheres to the journal's publishing guidelines. If the editorial review identifies concerns that preclude a peer review, the author is notified with an explanatory letter as soon as that process is complete. An editorial review takes anywhere from 15 minutes (excellent paper) up to two hours (reject paper) depending upon the quality of the paper and the type of explanatory letter prepared for the author(s). The decision to reject a manuscript as unsuitable for CJLT peer review is based on topic and interest. In most cases, the decision to reject a manuscript prior to peer review is based on a lack of clarity or logic in argumentation, vagueness about the manuscript category, or lack of adherence to our length and style guidelines (i.e., too short, too long, sloppy referencing, poor grammar and structure, unsubstantiated claims). A concerted effort is made to explain the main reasons for rejection in each letter to authors.

Peer Review

The second step in the review process is a blind, peer review. Ideally, a blinded paper is sent to two or three educational technology scholars. Reviewers are asked to comment on the suitability, quality and contribution of the paper and to provide a recommendation with regard to publication. Reviewers are also asked to comment on the manuscript's major strengths and, if needed, to provide feedback on minor and major revisions. Manuscripts are sent to at least one scholar, and preferably two, who are expert in the paper's topic area, and at least one reviewer
who is an expert in a different topic area. Once the peer reviews are received, then a publication decision is made
and a letter is prepared for the author(s). The peer reviews are compiled and shared with the author as information
to accompany the letter that outlines the publication decision.

The peer review and editorial process is not a strict numbers or voting process – a publication decision about a
manuscript is informed by the reviews, not merely determined by a majority vote. Instead, a number of qualitative
and logistical variables also tend to influence whether a manuscript is accepted for publication. The following are
some of the variables that tend to impact a publication decision: (1) the quality and suitability of a manuscript, (2)
the relevance and contribution to the field, (3) feedback and recommendations from reviewers within the topic
area, and from reviewers beyond the topic area, (4) the experience and expertise of peer reviewers and the
Editorial Board, and (5) space in the upcoming issue of the journal.

Peer review, by its very nature and, some would argue, by necessity, is anonymous. A journal maintains its
scholarly integrity by employing a valid and reliable peer review process. CJLT has become known by educational
technology researchers for its extensive and in-depth peer review process. Many CJLT authors, even those the
journal has been unable to publish, have acknowledged and expressed appreciation for the extensive and helpful
feedback provided by CJLT’s peer reviewers. To all of the editorial board members and peer reviewers who give of
their time and expertise in providing high quality peer reviews, I thank you.