

# **ESL Student Blogs: An application of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in English language learning with low-tech requirements.**

## BACKGROUND

2001 : Brisbane North Institute

Research & Innovation Group

ELICOS Centre - online - WebCT

- ? Centre Information

- ? Vocab & Grammar drills (from CALL)

- ? no CMCL

C A L L			<i>Literature Review of CMCL</i>		
	<b>CMCL</b>		<b>Blog</b>		
	<b><i>Creation</i> discourse</b>		? <b>text-based</b> ? <b>asynchronous</b> ? <b>group-focused</b>		
	<b><i>Usage</i> discourse</b>				
	<b><i>Evaluation</i> discourse</b>				
	<b><i>eFutures</i> discourse</b>				

## Create corpus : “*Blogs in ESL Learning*”

- previous corpora for CALL & CMCL:

1. Zhao (2003) 14 (*practitioner only*)

2. Jung (2005) 5,301

3. Lamy & Hampel (2007)

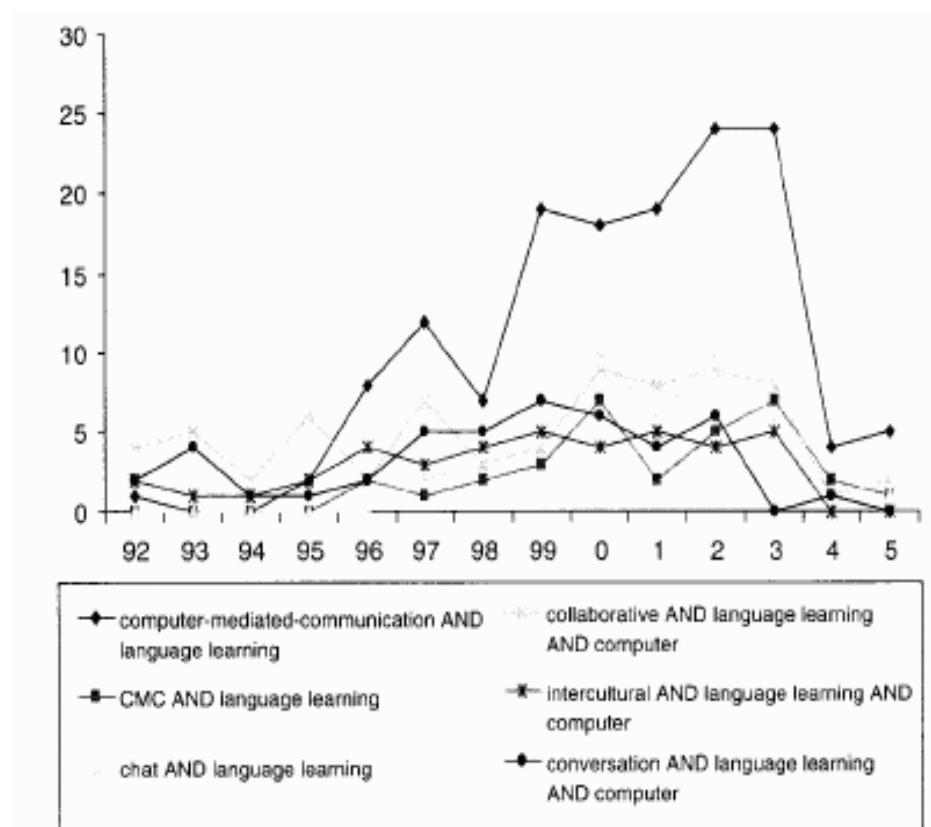


Figure 1.1 A view of the history of CMCL

## **Weblog (Blog) history**

- first weblog - 1997 Jorn Berger
  - “Infosift” listed 23 weblogs in 1999.
- 
- create Blog corpus for period **1998 to 2008**

# Advanced Google Scholar search engine

*search terms:*

( “blog” AND ( “tesol” OR “esl” OR “efl” ) )

- English language only;
- for each year 1998 to 2008;



[Web](#) [Images](#) [Video](#) [News](#) [Maps](#) [more »](#)

blog tesol OR esl OR efl -ingenta

2007

- 2007

Search

[Advanced Scholar Search](#)

[Scholar Preferences](#)

[Scholar Help](#)

**Scholar** All articles - [Recent articles](#) Results 1 - 50 of about 90 English pages for [blog tesol](#) OR [esl](#) OR [efl](#) -ingenta, (0.19 seconds)

[CITATION] How do you keep up-to-date?

D Eastment - *ELT Journal*, 2007 - Oxford Univ Press

... to the enthusiast is Graham Stanley's **BLOG-EFL**, packed with ... comprehensive set of links to **EFL** and technical ... the regularly updated links to **ESL**-related websites ...

[Web Search](#) - [BL Direct](#)

[PDF] ► [Rethinking Blog-Integrated EFL Curricula: A Reflection on Participation and Learning](#)

M Liang - 2007 - [editlib.org](#)

... Considering textual interaction, **blog** pedagogy should encourage **EFL** learners' continuous ... a fixed categorization of language activities in **ESL** websites ...

[Related articles](#) - [View as HTML](#) - [Web Search](#) - [All 2 versions](#)

[PDF] ► [... Process and Writing Outcomes: The implementation of Blog and Wiki in the EFL Writing Class in ...](#)

Y Chao, C Huang - 2007 - [editlib.org](#)

... effectiveness of **blog/wiki** on enhancing writing outcomes ... Word processing in the **EFL** classroom: Effects on ... of Online Learning on Struggling **ESL** College Writers. ...

[Related articles](#) - [View as HTML](#) - [Web Search](#) - [All 2 versions](#)

[L2 Digital Literacy: Korean EFL Students use their Cell Phone Videocams to Make an L2 English Video ...](#)

E Courses, T Surveys - *Intelligent Pervasive Computing*, 2007. IPC. The 2007 ..., 2007 - [ieeexplore.ieee.org](#)

... Ideally, an English language vblog (video **blog**) with easy - hopefully bilingual - navigation ... [cyworld.com/](#) does offer particular benefits to Korean **EFL** students ...

[Web Search](#)

[HTML] ► [Roger Nunn Senior Associate Editor Asian EFL Journal](#)

N Coe, M Harrison, K Patterson, J Eastwood... - *Asian EFL Journal*, 2007 - [asian-efl-journal.com](#)

... Chinese-speaking **ESL** learners at a Vocational Education Institute in Hong Kong Article 6, Nuray Alagozlu. Critical Thinking and Voice in **EFL** Writing Article 7 ...

[Cached](#) - [Web Search](#)

C A L L		<i>Literature Analysis from corpus</i>
	C M C L	Blog
	<i>Creation</i> discourse	? text-based ? asynchronous ? group-focused
	<i>Usage</i> discourse	- emphasis in <i>Usage</i> discourse  - classified by “interaction pattern of participants”
	<i>Evaluation</i> discourse	
	<i>eFutures</i> discourse	



## Interaction patterns of Blog participants

Campbell (2003) - three ESL Blog types:

“Tutor”, “Learner”, “Class”  
< --- *same* ? --- >

Based on literature, propose four types:

- 1. Tutor**
- 2. Class**
- 3. Mentor**
- 4. World**

## Example ESL Blog:

*Kyoto Sangyo University 2<sup>nd</sup> Year EFL class 2004.*

*["http://thenewtanuki.blogspot.com"](http://thenewtanuki.blogspot.com)*

- Type 4 : "World"
- 20 entries over 5 months; 2 follow ups a year later; contain comments & feedback from teacher and world users;
- capture as pdf files; clean & store for processing;

## Simple assessment of Blog entries using text and vocabulary analysis:

- (1) Preliminary processing : “Wordle” word-clouds from IBM
- (2) Advanced Text Analysis : from *UsingEnglish.com*
  - word distributions; readability indices; phrase distributions; non-graphic word-clouds;
- (3) Graded Text Analyser : 14 BNC levels from Paul Nation

I kicked off my visit to the JALT 2005 conference yesterday in Shizuoka, Japan, with a group discussion on blogging in EFL, led by Jamie Hall of Iwate University. Jamie shared with a group of about fifteen participants his “successes and failures” with a blogging project he carried out with his English teacher training students earlier this year. We then discussed informally the various issues that arose when using blogs in the EFL classroom, touching upon such topics as how to increase reader participation, student access issues, the nature of a blog post, perception of audience, group versus individual student blogs, blogs versus discussion lists, and the ethics of having students write in public, amongst others. Overall, it was stimulating to sit in a circle of colleagues and share our stories, knowledge, and feelings with one another on a topic of interest, and Jamie did an excellent job as facilitator.

One of the most poignant issues for me that arose in the discussion involved motivation and evaluation. We spoke about two fundamental approaches to classroom blogging. The first approach to getting students to blog is through extrinsic factors of quantitative evaluation and accountability. Students are given blogging assignments at consistent intervals, and the teacher tracks the quantity of student posts and comments, considers the quality of writing and effort, and finally assigns points or grades accordingly. This ‘crack the whip’ method coerces students to post to their blogs, read other posts, and comment on them. In doing so, students will read, write, and post; and if they don’t, they either receive a lower grade or, depending on the assigned value of blogging in the curriculum, fail altogether. In the end, students will have most likely improved their reading and writing skills, gotten some insightful feedback from others to consider, and have even exercised their reflective and critical skills. Whether or not students will enjoy blogging, see the potential value of it, and continue blogging on their own after the course is finished is secondary to the pedagogical goals set by the teacher.

The second approach involves drawing upon the factors of motivation intrinsic to each student. In this case, the teacher takes a qualitative approach to getting students to blog, encouraging them to write about their interests, use social networking tools to meet new people, post photos and sound files, etc. An important aspect of this approach is to see the act of blogging as something fun, expressive, enjoyable, conversational, and poetic. The blog can and should be anything the student wants it to be. The teacher sees herself as a facilitator of a process of creation, not as an enforcer of behavior. She makes no demands on quantity and does everything she can to inspire her students to blog through her own examples, stories, enthusiasm, and passion. Qualitative and reflective self and peer evaluation are both encouraged and valued; and students are given considerable, if not complete, control over the pace, content, and direction of their blogging activities. Whether or not students will enjoy blogging, see the potential value of it, and continue blogging on their own after the course is finished is the primary consideration.

I am certain that few teachers adhere to either one of these two approaches exclusively; most, rather, are striving to find some sort of middle ground that works for their particular situations. In my own practice, for example, although I resonate with the qualitative approach philosophically, I can see that certain elements of the ‘crack the whip’ approach, like structured homework assignments, are necessary to induce my learners into the blogging process, positioning them in such a way that makes the second approach possible. After twelve years of being exposed to authoritative methods of heavy testing, rote memorization, and deference to superiors, it is virtually impossible for most of my students to view the act of blogging as .....





# Advanced Text Analyser:

## Summary Statistics

### General:

	Overall	Sampled
Characters (all):	5,674	724
Characters (words only):	4,622	593
Words:	925	116
Different Words:	407	84
Sentences:	30	3
Syllables:	1,465	185

### Averages:

	Overall	Sampled
Characters per Word:	5.00	5.11
Syllables per Word:	1.58	1.59
Words per Sentence:	30.83	38.67

## Readability:

	Overall	Sampled	Calculated Grading
<u>Hard Words:</u>	119	10	
Long Words:	276	33	
Lexical Density:	44.00 %	72.41 %	
Gunning Fog Index:	17.48	18.91	Hard
Coleman-Liau Grade:	20.33	14.31	14th Grade
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level:	15.12	18.31	18th Grade (13 years)
Flesch Reading Ease:	41.55	32.67	Difficult: High School or Some College
ARI (Automated Readability Index):	22.88	21.98	21st Grade
SMOG:	13.91	13.00	13 Years (Some college)
LIX (Laesbarhedsindex):	60.67	67.11	Very difficult

## Advanced Text Analyser – Word-cloud

Word frequency cloud:

anything approach approaches arose  
assignments being blog bloggers **blogging**  
**blogs** classroom comments content crack discussion  
efl enjoy etc evaluation facilitator factors finished  
getting given ideas interests issues jamie learners  
learning likely linking makes motivation network  
networking others photos **posts** potential qualitative  
quantity reading reflective skills social stories  
**students** teacher tools topic upon using versus  
whip writing



# Graded Text Analyser - BNC level = 1

Percent within level: 64.26%

## KEY:

Word : in level      Word : not in dictionary  
Word : out of level      Word : stopword  
Word : not in lexicon

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## Graded Text Analyser - BNC level = 7

Percent within level: 80.48%

### KEY:

Word : in level      Word : not in dictionary  
Word : out of level      Word : stopword  
Word : not in lexicon

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## Graded Text Analyser - BNC level = 9

Percent within level: 90.39%

### KEY:

Word : in level      Word : not in dictionary  
Word : out of level      Word : stopword  
Word : not in lexicon

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## Graded Text Analyser - BNC level = 12

Percent within level: 95.20%

### KEY:

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Word : out of level      Word : stopword  
Word : not in lexicon

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# FINAL INTEGRATION:

- plot levels for the example ESL Blog for the sample period;
- discuss outcomes in terms of Blogs as an example of CMCL in the *Usage* discourse;
- relate to material in the literature for the *Evaluation* and *eFutures* discourses.