CALICO

Graduate Student SIG

Edited by Fabrizio Fornara and Farhana Ahmed

A Message from the Graduate Student SIG Chair

By Nadia Jaramillo Cherrez

It is again that time of the year when computer-assisted language learning researchers, teachers, language educators, students gather to share their work and seek opportunities for networking. It is also the 2nd anniversary of the Graduate Student SIG and its newsletter, edited this year again by Fabrizio Fornara and Farhana Ahmed. The newsletter features a section with advice and insights from highly recognized scholars in CALL, Shannon Sauro, our CALICO president, Carol Chapelle, Hayo Reinders, Randall Sadler, and Mathias Schulze. Alongside, the newsletter showcases the merits and accomplishments of graduate students.

We continue our efforts to grow as a graduate student SIG seeking and promoting opportunities for networking, collaboration, and professional growth within CALICO and other organizations. We have initiated a collaboration with the graduate student SIG at EUROCALL and we are currently exploring avenues to strengthen it. This has been possible with the support of our liaison at EUROCALL, Sahar Alzahrani, whose dedicated efforts made possible that we could meet virtually with the representatives of the EUROCALL student SIG. We encourage all graduate student members at CALICO to join our SIG; we are a great group of people, CALL enthusiasts, innovators, and hardworking!

Lastly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Philip Hubbard, Shannon Sauro and Esther Horn for their tremendous support of our work in the SIG. Also, my deepest gratitude to Fabrizio, Farhana, and Sahar for walking beside me in this wonderful adventure as a chair of the student SIG. I will be stepping down as the chair of the SIG this year, and I want to thank you all for your support and keen interest in the continued growth of the CALICO Graduate Student SIG.

Words of Wisdom

This year, we asked one question to some of our CALL heroes:

What advice can you provide to graduate students and young scholars pursuing a career in CALL?

Carol Chapelle, Hayo Reinders, Randall Sadler, Shannon Sauro, and Mathias Schulze have been so kind to reply to our question. Whether you are a graduate student or an expert in the field, we are sure that you will enjoy their thoughtful and inspiring words.

Carol A. Chapelle

Carol A. Chapelle is Distinguished Professor of TESL/Applied Linguistics at Iowa State University. She is co-editor of the *Cambridge Applied Linguistics* series and has published widely on issues in computer technology and applied linguistics. She is past president of the American Association for Applied Linguistics (2006–7) and former editor of *TESOL Quarterly* (1999–2004).

Graduate Study in CALL: Making the Best of a Great Opportunity

Graduate school opens doors to a whole range of opportunities! With so many opportunities for students studying CALL, it can be difficult to decide what is most important for you. I would offer the following suggestions to help you make the most out of your experience in studying CALL in graduate school.

1. Learn the history of our field. Your academic path has been charted and paved to some extent by the developers, teachers, and researchers that came before you. When you study CALL you are joining a larger community whose work you should become familiar with. Knowledge of the field will help you to develop your own projects, communicate about your contributions to the field, and nurture your own identity as a professional in the field.

2. Dig in deep. Graduate school is the time and place to learn. Most graduates go on to a job where they are producing, helping others, planning, teaching and engaging in many other forms of activity. All of these workplace activities involve various types of learning, but the type of learning you do in graduate school is different. For most students, graduate school is their one opportunity in life to dig into a topic deeply, develop expertise, and become a professional. Use this opportunity wisely.

3. Make a plan. The most successful graduate students take responsibility for their own learning. They are deeply interested and motivated in the study of technology for language learning, and they want to learn. Such productive engagement with learning in the field is fueled by students' active, ongoing planning about their own teaching and research. Even

before you start your graduate program you should be reading, experimenting with technologies, and planning to create your own projects that will help focus and use what you are learning throughout graduate school.

4. Ask for advice, observe and listen. An important way of learning is to communicate with others in the field about the field. Students who are well connected with faculty and other students in the program seem to make the best decisions about their own studies. They are best informed.

5. Present your work at CALICO and another conference. The profession is much more diverse than what you experience in your own graduate program. I recommend that students at least attend, and try to present, at CALICO as well as another conference in the field.

Remember graduate school presents opportunities for developing your own unique professional identity. It is not a prescribed path to conformity, so you need to take responsibility to learn, plan, and share your ideas with others in the profession.

Hayo Reinders

Hayo Reinders is Director of the Anaheim University Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in TESOL Program and Professor of Education and Head of Department at Unitec in Auckland, New Zealand. He is editor of the journal *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching* as well as the book series on *New Language Learning and Teaching Environments* for Palgrave Macmillan. His interests are in technology in education, learner autonomy, and out-of-class learning. His most recent books are on teacher autonomy, teaching methodologies, and second language acquisition.

First of all, I would say that you have definitely made the right choice to become involved in CALL. Just check out the job adverts on Linguistlist; the majority these days are related to technology. Having said that, the field is going to change beyond all recognition within the next 5 to 10 years. Machine learning, artificial intelligence, deep learning and a range of other sciences are now reaching a point of maturity, and more importantly, are increasingly able to draw on each other. This means that improvements in some areas are now occurring exponentially rather than linearly. (There are also many unexpected developments - only last month a research report observed that bots had - autonomously - developed their own way of communicating with each other! http://bit.ly/2mxtEN6). What the implications are for education is anyone's guess, but I'll stick my neck out and say it is clear that many of the jobs that we currently recognise are going to be replaced. This includes a great deal of current forms of language teaching; not in the least because the need for language learning will decrease in many domains as more and more communication takes place between machines and as machine translation becomes more sophisticated (and yes, the Babelfish is real and coming your way in a few months: http://www.waverlylabs.com/.) We need people like you, who are well-versed in the language sciences and who also understand and love technology, so that we can take control all of the developments around us, and shape our own future rather than bowing to our new overlords; technology before pedagogy

My first piece of advice to new scholars in CALL is simple—attend the CALICO conference! I've attended many conferences related to CALL, TESOL, Linguistics, Foreign Language Teaching, and Education over the last 25+ years, and I can say without hesitation that CALICO is the friendliest and most collegial conference I've attended. I met a number of people at the first CALICO conference I attended that I am still in contact with today, and I've engaged in research with a number of them. It is very easy to meet the "big names" in the field and people are consistently helpful. While you are at CALICO, make sure that you attend the Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings for any areas you are interested in (this goes for any conference you attend). CALICO currently has eight SIGs, ranging from Gaming to Teacher Education and this is where you can engage in really detailed discussions with scholars who focus in that area. This is also a perfect place for networking. Meet other scholars (ranging from new to experienced), get to know them, talk with them about your interests, and ensure that they will remember you! This can lead to future research collaborations, invitations to submit your work for book chapters, etc.

A second piece of advice that is related to the first: make distance connections. We live in a research area where it is now easily possible to collaborate with colleagues from across the world. When I started in my Assistant Professor position at the University of Illinois over thirteen years ago I searched for someone to do telecollaboration with. Through a series of connections I found Dr. Melinda Dooly, who is a Professor at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). Thirteen plus years later we are still engaged in telecollaboration and have engaged in many research projects leading to publications. She is also a very good friend and the research trips to Barcelona have been an added plus!

In short, get involved! Doing this will lead you to connections, new ideas, research possibilities, publications, and—one hopes—a great career in the field.

Randall Sadler

Randall Sadler is Associate Professor of Linguistics, Assistant Professor of Second Language Acquisition and Teacher Education, Associate Professor of LAS Global Studies, and Director of the MATESL and ESL Programs at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His areas of interests include the role of Task-Based Language Teaching in the virtual world (VW) Second Life, the role of VWs in the language learning/teaching process, a wide variety of education applications in VWs. He is the developer of the CALICO headquarters* in Second Life. For more on his current research interests, visit: http://www.eslweb.org/research.htm

Shannon Sauro

Shannon Sauro is Associate Professor at the Malmö University, Sweden, and the current CALICO president. Her areas of research include computer-mediated second language acquisition, task-based language teaching in online environments, and the intersection of online media fandoms, and language learning. Her current line of research explores the use of collaborative fanfiction writing to bridge language and literary learning for advanced L2 learners of English. For more information, check out her personal website at: http://www.ssauro.info/

Take advantage of the social side of academia. Being a member of the CALL community is not just about teaching, research, and service but is also about forming relationships with others. I find that the best time to form these relationships is during the down time at academic events. Instead of only focusing on your next paper, or that talk that you're giving next week, or the stack of papers that need grading, make time to socialize and meet others.

Attend conference receptions and socials, fit in time to drop by the new student/new faculty welcoming parties in your department, join colleagues and classmates for dinner at conferences. These are the moments to make connections with the humans behind the words we read and to share the parts of our personalities and background that color our work.

Keep in mind also that forming relationships is not just about what other people can do for you, but also what you can do for others. You have something unique and valuable to contribute to the field of CALL that goes beyond your publications and teaching. Don't be afraid to share this with others.

Mathias Schulze

Mathias Schulze is Professor of German and Director of the Waterloo Centre for German Studies at the University of Waterloo, Canada. Together with Bryan Smith (Arizona State University) is the editor of the *CALICO Journal*. His areas of interest include Intelligent Computer-Assisted Language Learning (ICALL), online language learning, and bilingualism.

My first piece of advice would be do not just listen to one person for advice. They might be right; they might be wrong—I might be right; I might be wrong. Seek out opportunities like a conference to talk to many people. Find out what they are doing, and, more importantly, find out why they are doing it. Be open and reason carefully about what you have heard. And always: read a lot. Read mindfully, purposefully, and critically. Mindfully: pay attention to details, follow the authors' steps, let them take you by the hand and guide you. Purposefully: when you have a question or face a problem, start digging, keep reading, looking, listening until you found the answer or can address the problem. Critically: Don't criticize them; that can come much, much later and is often unnecessary. Check with everything you read: does it help me? does it apply to my context? does it address my questions and how so? is it fit for my project?

These apply to any academic discipline, not just CALL. As a grad student, you are doing hard work, you are investing a lot of time and energy. Realistically: no, it does not get any easier. As a successful researcher, you are going to work at least as much, put in at least as much time and

energy. Don't get me wrong, I think this is a good thing. If you decide to pursue this kind of career, you are in it for the long haul. Because you will be able to do more and more, to impact people's understanding of language and learning and of technology, and to make a difference, it becomes more and more enjoyable.

Always remember: behind every article you read, every talk you hear, and every piece of data you observe is at least one human being who tried to give it their best in one way or another. Never forget the person, the whole person.

What is specific to a career in CALL? CALL is immensely multi/inter/trans–disciplinary. If you want to be successful and have your work respected, be well-versed in any of the theories, methods, and approaches you are using. Measure your work in any of these disciplines—sociocultural theory, corpus linguistics, linguistic interaction, …—against the work of the best in that field. Never ever just drop a name or a term in your research paper; always know exactly what you are talking about, know its context, and always know a little bit more than you write down.

What does it take to be a good CALLer? You should have a solid understanding of language and of the languages with which you are working. You should have a good grasp of various (language) learning processes. You need to know how machines tick; what they can and what they can't do. All three—computers, language(s), and learning—are equally important in our endeavors; don't be fooled by discussions whether pedagogy or technology should have first priority. If you always bear in mind for what people you are doing what you are doing, you will know what the most important component in your current project is.

Good luck!

COLLABORATION WITH EUROCALL
by Sahar Alzahrani

This year has witnessed the launch of a strategic collaborative initiatives between the CALICO and the EUROCALL Graduate Student SIGs. The CALICO graduate SIG was established at the 2015 CALICO conference in Boulder, Colorado, while the EUROCALL graduate SIG was born at the 2016 EUROCALL conference in Cyprus. Besides the developmental plans that were running in both SIGs, a strategic collaborative initiative was launched. The collaboration aims to engage all the individuals belonging to the SIGs in the research and developmental activities, both at the individual and at the community level. This collaboration can have many different forms. For example, one of our goal is to organise regular activities that promote the members' self-development and foster their collaboration.

Graduate Student SIG Members' Achievements

Journal Articles

Balaman, U. & Sert, O. (in press). The coordination of online L2 interaction and orientations to task interface for epistemic progression. *Journal of Pragmatics*.

Lawrence, G., **Ahmed, F.** (submitted). Pedagogical insights into hyper-immersive virtual world language learning environments. *Canadian Modern Language Review*.

Ph.D. Dissertations

Alghammas A. (2016). Wiki-based collaborative writing activities in ESL contexts. The University of Memphis.

Alzahrani. S. (2017). Towards enhancement and assessment models and a measuring scale for language learner autonomy in a 21st century blended learning environment in tertiary education: an intervention study in Saudi Arabia. University of Southampton.

Balaman, U. (2016). A conversation analytic study on the development of interactional competence in English in an online task-oriented environment. Hacettepe University.

Conference Presentations

Alzahrani, S. (2017, August). Empowering language learners through the use of a curriculum-integrated information literacy programme: An action research. EUROCALL 2017.

Ahmed, F. (2017, May). Plurilingual Interactions between Avatar Learning, Teaching and *the Self. Association canadienne de linguistique appliquee Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics (ACLA CAAL)*.

Fornara, F. (2016, November). Analyzing peer influence in a L2 daily online practice. 2016 Annual Convention and World Languages Expo (ACTFL),

Awards

Alghammas A. (2016). 2016 Department Service Award and 2016 Applied Linguistics Concentration Award, Department of English, The University of Memphis.

Alzahrani, S. (2016). 2016 Outstanding Graduate Student Award, CALICO.

Fornara F. (2017). Outstanding Doctoral Student Award, Instructional Systems and Learning Technologies, Florida State University.

Professional Achievements

Alghammas A. was appointed Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics at Qassim University, Saudi Arabia.

CALICO Graduate Student SIG Board (continued)

Sahar Alzahrani, Ph.D.
Head of Research, CALICO-EUROCALL Liaison

Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching, *University of Southampton.* Lecturer at *Umm AlQura University*, Saudi Arabia. ***Research interests***: Language learner autonomy, teacher autonomy, educational technologies, innovations in teaching languages, blended learning, and online instructional design.

CALICO Outstanding Graduate Student Award

The CALICO Outstanding Graduate Student Award is an annual award which is held to recognize and reward graduate students who are conducting a CALL-research-related degree and are doing an exceptional contribution to the profession of teaching and to the area of CALL. More details about the award can be found at this link: https://calico.org/page.php?id=507#GraduateStudentAward

Sahar Alzahrani won the award in 2016. Here are a few words from her:

"I am extremely honoured to have received the CALICO's 2016 Outstanding Graduate Student Award. Thanks to the members of the executive board for choosing me. I recommend people interested in CALL, wherever they are, to join this inspirational community and to come to the 2017 conference in Flagstaff. I also recommend graduate students to keep an eye on this annual award and to prepare the required work for their turn to be one of the nominated individuals and to be the winner of the year."

Join us at the CALICO Social Gathering

Thursday, May 18, 7:30-9:30 pm at The MacMillan (four block north of the Drury Inn) https://themcmillan.us/

Organized by *CALICO Journal* and CALICO Graduate Student SIG.

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