Chapter 1
Revisiting Gaps in the CALL Literature

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ABSTRACT

The body of research on CALL tasks and topics grows daily; however, a number of areas remain under-represented in the literature. While there are many gaps in the CALL research to address, this chapter

updates an earlier focus on 8 gaps, chosen because of their perceived importance in language teaching and learning. In presenting the gaps, each section in this chapter: 1) provides a rationale for exploring the topic, 2) briefly reviews studies that typify the extant research in the focal area, and 3) provides recommendations for future research. This chapter encourages all stakeholders in CALL to join in the rigorous and multi-perspective exploration of these and other under-addressed areas and strengthen the use of CALL for language learning and teaching.

INTRODUCTION

As of 2018, the computer-assisted language learning (CALL) topic areas that are the focus of this chapter were those that the authors found meaningful but for which they previously found a lack of research (see Egbert, et al., 2018). Upon further review, this dearth has been substantiated. Although the research literature on CALL is growing quickly, still "the body of empirical evidence, compared to other subject areas, is small" (Leakey, 2011, p. 60). This is particularly true around some practices that are common in classrooms but which the research has yet to address in any depth. Gaps in the CALL literature do not only arise from unexamined topics, however; they may also be caused by methodological and other study limitations in the extant literature. The lack of research from different perspectives, for example, both theoretical and methodological, means that we do not know as much as we could about using CALL with English language learners (ELLs).

Effective pedagogy can be supported by sound evidence. While there are many gaps in the CALL research to address, this chapter specifically emphasizes eight foci chosen by the authors because of their perceived importance in language teaching and learning and the increased potential for student learning when supported with technology use. The authors, all CALL researchers, come from 7 different countries across 5 continents and from diverse educational backgrounds and contexts. Because no one topic is more important than the others, they are not presented in any specific order. In presenting the gaps, each section in this chapter: 1) provides a rationale for exploring the topic, 2) briefly reviews studies that typify the extant research in the focal area, and 3) provides recommendations for future research. The purpose of this chapter is to encourage researchers, teachers, and students to join in the rigorous and multi-perspective exploration of these and other under-addressed areas and strengthen the use of CALL for language learning and teaching.

MORPHOLOGY

The first focus of this chapter is the gap in the CALL research on the topic of morphology (the study of word parts and word formation).

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