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CALL FOR PAPERS

Call for papers for a special issue on Big Data in Language Education and Research

About This Special Issue

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The staggering increase in both types and amount of data in recent years is starting to impact many aspects of our lives, from politics to insurance and from self-driving cars to the monitoring of our health. It is also changing the way we carry out research. As Halfpenny and Procter (2015) predict, "It is possible that it will promote the use of new computational social science methods in place of more traditional quantitative and qualitative research methods" (p. 18). In language education research, the availability of large sets of data (from corpora to social media posts, and from attendance data to the ways and frequency with which learners interact with online resources) presents intriguing opportunities. If we can track large groups of learners over long periods of time, could we identify common patterns, facilitative and inhibitory variables, and possibly even predict future performance? Could we identify possible problems more easily and intervene more quickly? Could we observe what our learners do beyond the classroom—even after their course finishes? And could we then provide ongoing support for genuine life-long learning (Thomas, Reinders, & Gelan, 2017)?

These questions may seem broad, even far-fetched, but they are starting to become relevant even in regular classrooms where teachers now have access to learners' data beyond what is observable in class, from grade point averages across school subjects, to comparisons in performance between classes, courses, and teachers (Lan, Chen, & Sung, 2017). The availability and often considerable transparency of the data are providing teachers and administrators alike with unprecedented opportunities.

These opportunities come with significant challenges. Data is meaningless unless it can serve a pedagogic purpose, unless it can be mined, and unless it can be validated and interpreted. This may require a rethinking of the role of teachers—as well as everyone else who works in education, from researchers to managers. Researchers are likely to need to develop new skills (Godwin-Jones, 2017). New big data analytical techniques must be adopted to deal with the five Vs characteristic of big data (i.e. volume, velocity, variety, veracity, and value; see Gandomi & Haider, 2015). All of this is challenging enough, and then there are considerable privacy, security, and ethical concerns. Who owns the data? Who should have access to them? Who safeguards them?

This special issue aims to provide a platform for discussing these and other questions. We are eager to initiate a dialogue on such questions as the following: What is the impact of big data on language education? How will language education (need to) change? What are the implications for policy and for teacher professional development? We invite contributions in these and related areas and that deal with topics such as (but not limited to) the below:

- Learning analytics for language teachers
- The impact of providing data to language learners
- Language teacher education for big data
- New research methodologies and skills for working with big data
- The potential for early intervention in the language learning process
- Ethical and other concerns relating to big data
- Sources of big data for language education and research

- Monitoring, explaining, and predicting FL learners' learning
- Recording and supporting learning beyond the classroom

Guidelines for Authors

Articles should be no longer than 8,500 words (including references, but not appendices). For specific guidelines, refer to the *LLT* submission guidelines. Please note that articles containing only descriptions of software or pedagogical procedures without presenting in-depth empirical data and analysis on language learning processes or pragmatic outcomes will not be considered.

To be considered for this special issue, please send a title and a 300-word abstract in a Word document by June 1, 2019 to llt@hawaii.edu.

Publication Schedule

June 1, 2019:	Submission deadline for abstracts
June 15, 2019:	Invitation for authors to submit manuscripts
November 1, 2019:	Submission deadline for first drafts of manuscripts
August 1, 2020:	Submission deadline for revised manuscripts
October 23, 2020:	Submission deadline for final drafts of manuscripts
February 1, 2021:	Publication of special issue

For Further Information

Please contact the Managing Editor at llt@hawaii.edu.

References

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Halfpenny, P., & Procter, R. (Eds.). (2015). *Innovations in digital research methods*. London, UK: Sage.

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