

Australian Journal of Educational Technology

Volume 11, Number 2, Summer 1995. ISSN 0814-673X

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The *Australian Journal of Educational Technology* is published twice a year by AJET Publications. Manuscripts for publication should be sent to Associate Professor John Hedberg, Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong, Northfields Avenue, Wollongong, NSW, Australia, 2522. Enquiries about subscriptions should be sent to the Business Manager, Mr James Steele, AJET Publications, PO Box 772 Belconnen, ACT, Australia, 2616. Subscription rate is \$30 per volume (\$45 foreign). Members of the Australian Society for Educational Technology receive an *AJET* subscription as a part of their membership fees.

Editorial

As education in Australia moves into what many believe are times of uncertain futures, with government changes and the educational community seeking direction and confirmation, this edition of the *Australian Journal of Educational Technology* presents a number of articles which demonstrate ways in which positive approaches to the challenges - and dare we say - exciting futures might be viewed.

These articles illustrate the slowly but surely changing view of technology within education. Whilst the 'glamour and glitter' of the 'latest and greatest' electronic advances may still dominate much of the popular literature, education is now beginning to place the 'human' at the centre of design and development, both at the micro and macro, or system, levels. Although the rhetoric has been with us for a number of years, it can be argued that the actual research and application of such considerations are really only now beginning to be given the emphasis they deserve.

In the first article, Taylor sets the scene in calling for, as he terms it 'on-campus' education to consider more closely the experiences of its distance education counterpart, in improving the quality of 'face to face' instruction and learning through appropriate applications of technology. Oliver and Herrington go on to provide an example of one possible area of consideration which collapses the 'wall' between the two traditional modes of education delivery (on-campus and distance education), that of the hypermedia environment. Underlying the potential of any of these approaches are the tools, such as those of Notetaking templates and PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) described by Harper, Hedberg, Wright and Corderoy, which offer numerous, rich and exciting research and development opportunities. In a similar light (that is research and development potential) Conyer provides a valuable insight into usability evaluation, a factor which is becoming ever more critical in the design, development and implementation of technology based instructional approaches.

Moving beyond exploration of the more traditional educational framework, Noacco provides a glimpse into the industry and business framework of multimedia. The articles by Meek and Moore conclude this issue of AIET by providing insights into those developments, which, while for some characterise imagination, for many could be the way of the immediate and distant future.

Sue McNamara

GUEST EDITOR

[Inside front cover]

Australian Journal of Educational Technology is published twice a year

Editorial Board: John Hedberg, Sue McNamara, James Steele

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ISSN 0814-673X

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Subscription rate (from Vol 11 No 1) \$30 per annum in Australia, \$45 (foreign)

ASET and NSPI Members receive a subscription to the Journal as part of their membership fees

Deadline for the
next issue is
1 September 1996