

## A Closer Look at the LLC: Spring 2005

### How the LLC Serves the Language Departments

The LLC offers a wide variety of technological resources, language tools, lab facilities, and development services. Every language department on campus has its own unique needs for LLC services and resources. Some departments rely on us for high-quality audio access to textbook support materials. Others enjoy exploring new technological possibilities for enhancing language learning and instruction. In this section, we share a sampling of how the Staff Associates supported the LLC and their language departments this Winter quarter.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

**SA: Yu-jung Chang**  
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Yu-jung updated the English section of the LLC website to make new learning resources available for instructors and students, including three sets of audio materials (Pronouncing American English 2nd Edition, More Grammar Plus, and Longman's Complete TOEFL). She also prepared Pronouncing American English for students to request for duplication at the LLC (free of charge). One new audio program, Northstar Intermediate, was added to the LLC's in-house offerings so students can listen to them in the self-study labs at the LLC. In April Yu-jung participated in the English language Programs in-service by training instructors how to make Listening/Speaking classes more effective with the help of technology, including the Soloist/Virtuoso networked classroom software at the LLC and Audacity, a free audio processing program.

### NEAR EAST

**SA: Didem Havlioglu**  
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Didem finished the first lesson of the Web Enhanced Conversational Turkish Moodle course. She shot and edited video dialogues and incorporated them into the online course. This project is designed to be a multimedia supplement to classroom instruction which can be an example for the other Near Eastern languages to incorporate technology into language instruction. She also recorded Turkish vocabulary as an audio supplement for the current Turkish classes and published them online.

### ROMANCE

**SA: Patrick Blaine**  
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The Spring Quarter has been a very active one for Patrick, as he has continued to work on the Moodle project for the Division of Spanish and Portuguese, as well as helping other departments with theirs on a frequent basis. He has also continued to work with the Division of French and Italian as they develop extensive audio resources for their own classes, as well as Distance Learning. Other activities this quarter have included helping to set up a live webcast of a Computational Linguistics presentation with Lesley Carmichael and some continuing work on the LLC departmental website. This summer, Patrick will be hard at work preparing the new Moodle server for production in the fall, as well as finishing the development of Spanish 103 Web and Spanish 210 Web, among many other tasks.

### GERMANICS

**SA: Geoffrey Cox**  
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Geoff is continuing to work on the Web-Enhanced Foreign Language Instruction (WEFLI) project for Germanics and Japanese, building a variety of different Flash interactions to introduce and test vocabulary and grammar. Vocablador program, Geoff has localized the interactions to more specialized interactions to fit into the pedagogical goals of the German language program. He is also preparing video and audio for web-based streaming.

## Computational Linguistics: New Master's Degree Program at the UW

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Learning and understanding a language involves computing the properties of language. Dr. Emily Bender, the director of the UW Computational Linguistics program, explains that the process "relies on a wealth of intricate grammatical knowledge... supported by an even greater wealth of world knowledge." How could syntactic structures and semantic relations be computed from spoken language? How could these computational skills be acquired? "Information stored in natural language requires a complex set of keys to access," says Dr. Bender. "Computational linguists aim to build the keys that will allow machines to access and process that information." Sources such as the Web, newspapers, and archives contain a vast amount of information in the form of natural language.



**Dr. Emily Bender**

### Meet the Computational Linguistics Faculty

The program director is Dr. Emily Bender, an assistant professor in the UW Linguistics department who joined the UW faculty in 2003. Her primary research interests include grammar engineering, natural language processing, syntax, and the study of variation. She currently works on the LinGO

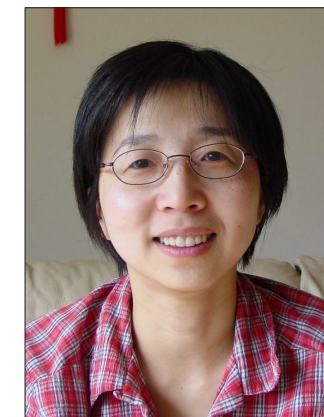
grammar matrix, an open-source toolkit for the development of broad-coverage, precision, implemented grammars for diverse languages.

Two new computational linguists have also joined the department. Dr. William Lewis comes to the UW from California State University (Fresno), where he worked on defining an ontology of linguistics. His research interests include corpus



**Dr. William Lewis**

linguistics, language processing, morphosyntax and typology. Dr. Fei Xia taught in the Computer Science Department of the University of Pennsylvania and was a research staff member at the IBM T. Watson Research Center before joining the UW Linguistics department. Her research focuses on machine translation, grammar generation, computer interaction and information extraction.



**Dr. Fei Xia**

### Digital Media Storage: Bigger than DVD

Toshiba and Sony have developed next-generation digital storage formats that hold upwards of 45 gigabytes of data—that's the equivalent of more than 9 regular DVDs, or a trilogy of high definition movies. Sony had previously announced the development of its Blu-Ray technology, a double-layered disc that holds 25 GB of data on

each layer. At this month's Media-Tech Expo 2005 in Las Vegas, Toshiba unveiled its response to Blu-Ray, the 45 GB HD-DVD. As soon as 2006, it is possible that one will be a household name. Talks between Sony and Toshiba, aimed at devising a unification strategy between the two technologies, were deadlocked at press time. If an agreement is

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## DVD Technology: Region Codes

Many DVDs now include region code information to prevent them from being played in particular geographical areas. Eight region codes exist: six are used for the geographical division of the planet (see map graphic for details), and the other two are reserved for special venues (such as airplanes and cruise ships) and as-yet-unspecified purposes. A DVD player is coded for the region in which it is sold, and won't play discs that are not coded for its region.

Region codes were implemented to control the release of media in the marketplace. For example, movies are released for home viewing in the United States at about the same time they're just hitting the theater in Europe. As a result, motion picture producers want to control the ability for people to view home movie DVDs around the globe.

A producer of a DVD is not required to include a region code on the disc. DVDs without region codes will play on any player. Furthermore, "region-free" DVD players exist, which will play DVDs encoded for any region (but note that differences between NTSC and PAL TV systems persist in DVD media).

In response to the proliferation of region-free players and instructions for hacking the region code system, proponents of region codes developed Region Code Enhancement (RCE) technol-

ogy. RCE checks for the proper region setting in the DVD player. Discs with RCE won't play on region-free players (those that are set for all regions), but they will play on manual code-switchable players (those that allow the user to change the player's region to match the DVD) and they play on some auto-switching players (those that recognize and match the DVD's region code).

In general, region codes don't apply to recordable DVDs. A DVD that you make on a PC with a DVD burner or in a home DVD video recorder will play in all regions. Region codes do not apply to DVD-Audio. They do apply to DVD-ROM computers when a DVD-Video disc is used (but not a DVD-ROM disc containing computer software). Computers check for regional codes before playing

movies from a DVD-Video that is protected by CSS (Content Scramble System, a data encryption and authentication scheme intended to prevent copying video files directly from DVD-Video discs). All DVD-ROM drives manufactured since 1/1/2000 are "RPC2" (Region Protection Control) drives, and they permit you to change the region code five times, at which point the region code of the drive is fixed (unless it is reset by the drive's vendor or manufacturer).

**DVD Region Codes**



Region 1: U.S., Canada, U.S. Territories  
 Region 2: Japan, Europe, South Africa, Middle East  
 Region 3: Southeast Asia and East Asia  
 Region 4: Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Islands, Central America, Mexico, South America, Caribbean  
 Region 5: Eastern Europe, Indian subcontinent, Africa, North Korea, Mongolia  
 Region 6: China  
 Region 7: Reserved  
 Region 8: Special international venues (e.g., airplanes)

**Good news! The LLC is purchasing two region-free DVD players to improve access to foreign language materials for language instructors and students.**

**One player will be installed in an LLC classroom and one will be available to students using the video booths in the CALL lab.**

## Copyright Issues in the Digital Age

DVDs have rapidly replaced VCR tapes as the standard way to deliver movies and other multimedia, including materials that are useful for educational purposes such as language instruction. The benefits are clear: excellent picture and sound quality, speedy navigation, and lots of extras such as the "bonus" interviews, scenes and surprises that are now a standard part of movie-making. But the DVD razzle-dazzle is tarnished by changes in copyright and distribution language that have come with it.

In 1998, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) was signed into law. The DMCA is a controversial law which criminalizes the production and dissemination of technology that can circumvent measures taken to protect copyright (not merely the infringement of

copyright itself). As a result, accessing digital media for educational purposes is not only difficult due to the various encryption schemes and playback devices specially designed to tightly control access and distribution—it is downright illegal. Section 1201 of the DMCA impedes the lawful access to and use of copyrighted materials for scholarship as allowed under Fair Use.

The Digital Media Consumers Rights Act (DMCRA, also known as H.R.107, a bill sent to Congress just this month) reaffirms the value of fair use and decriminalizes the circumvention of technological protection measures for traditionally non-infringing uses. H.R.107 would allow people to bypass DRM systems to make copies for personal use, and would also let academics do the same for research purposes.

## Podcasting: New, Hip and... Educational?!

**Get more exposure to your new language - using your mp3 player!**

We've all seen students walking around campus with the iconic white earphones, listening to something or other, prompting the issue of how to project language learning into the daily lives of students, especially outside of the classroom. In keeping up with recent developments in technology, the LLC has assembled a portal for German language podcasts. Podcasting (a lexical blending of "iPod" and "broadcasting") is a way for people to distribute audio content via the internet as mp3 files, which can then be downloaded to computers or mp3 players (such as, but not limited to, Apple's ubiquitous iPod). Students can select from a

variety of audio material by native speakers, ranging from entertainment news to audio blogs. After downloading an aggregator program, students can subscribe to the different offerings and have them automatically updated to the latest content.

You can find the LLC's portal for German podcasts at [http://depts.washington.edu/llc/olr/german/GER\\_012/index.php](http://depts.washington.edu/llc/olr/german/GER_012/index.php).

Partners in Excellence, an organization dedicated to supporting language education in regions of the United Kingdom, began a new weekly podcast focused on language learning and teaching in April. Check out their PiECASTs at <http://www.pie.org.uk/>.



**Check out the LLC's German Podcast Portal:  
[http://depts.washington.edu/llc/olr/german/GER\\_012/index.php](http://depts.washington.edu/llc/olr/german/GER_012/index.php)**