

COMPUTERS IN ELT: TRENDS, ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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The role of computers in language teaching and learning has increased significantly in recent years and there now is a huge body of literature surrounding the subject matter. At the theoretical end are investigations into the effectiveness of computers and discussions on appropriate research paradigms (Cameron, 1999; Chapelle, 2000; Debski and Levy, 1999; Edbert, and Hanson-Smith, 1999; Warchauer and Kern 2000). At the more practical end of the spectrum are a range of resource publications full of ideas for using technology in the classroom and beyond (Dudeney, 2000; Teeler, 2000; Windeatt et. al 2000).

Despite a rapidly evolving field, clear trends can be identified, and these in turn raise a number of issues and challenges. My paper begins by providing an historical overview of developments in the field and a framework for understanding changes. The paper will move on to consider some of the issues and challenges that arise out of computer applications in ELT.