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LAJM Bibliography: Computers and Composition

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Describes recordkeeping system and system for delivering instructor's comments to students.


Overview of the field, including warnings on social, economic, and sexist implications of computer use.


Discusses use of CAI in technical writing course. Program has dictionary, format facilities, and memory for later revision.


Designed for teachers and students, novices and advanced students. Covers philosophical issues, computer literacy, grading, software, research, and other topics.


Short article on how computer-assisted instruction can change revision process.

Bell, K. 1980. The computer and the English classroom. English Journal 69 (Dec.).

Provides names of teachers to contact at schools involved. Compares Radio Shack TRS-80 Model I and the Apple II.


Program which scans journalistic essays for key words and emphasis.


Discusses why computer market will continue to expand in the 80s through use of personal computers in home, business, and educational environments.

Borque, J. 1983. *Understanding and evaluating: The humanist as a computer specialist.* College English 45 (Jan.).

Argues for greater recognition of English professors who write software and establishes criteria for evaluating programs.

Bradley, V. 1982. *Improving students' writing with microcomputers.* Language Arts 59 (October).

Aimed at elementary school teachers. Compares three word processing approaches in two studies (storytelling and sentence combining).


Covers current programs and research in college composition and implications for the future.


Describes an experiment with freshman composition classes. Positive findings in terms of number, sophistication, and refinement of ideas.


Provides a sample computer-student interaction on Theodore Dreiser. Interesting for literary-type skeptics.


Designed for software writers. Offers advice for writing effective programs that allow user control and employ graphics, color, reinforcement, etc.
Cherry, L. 1982. Writing tools. IEEE Transactions on Communications 30 (Jan.).

Describes a series of programs designed to improve writing by analyzing readability, sentence length, editing, spelling, punctuation, etc. Aimed at business uses.


Discusses experiment and reports positive findings (increase in number and complexity of revision operations) and negative ones (no overall quality change). Notes problems to be solved.


Reports on the effects of word processing on the revision strategies of four writers; changes tended to involve lower-level features with few major changes in the texts.


An author's account of how a word processor made her task easier and the final product better.


Discusses composition theory in the light of computer feedback. Emphasizes physical and psychological constraints and processes.


A detailed description of a basic writing course using CAI. Includes both the classroom and the laboratory components. Emphasis on editing.

Estes, T. 1983. A commentary on Reading and understanding: Teaching from the perspective of artificial intelligence. The Reading Teacher 36.

Reviews this Roger Schank book, pointing out the inadequacies of the writer's model of the computer as compared with the human mind. Cites implications for teaching children to read.

An enthusiastic article in favor of word processors in schools. Briefly explains the process, the advantages, and some stumbling blocks.


Reports how mature writers took longer in their writing when using text editors. Discusses "fun factor" of using computers.


Lists the challenges to teachers resulting from technological changes. Suggests how these challenges can be met in the classroom.


Briefly points out some advantages and misconceptions in using CAI for elementary school composition.


Early study done on computer grading of compositions by searching for key words that indicate vagueness, opinionation, etc. Discusses the problems raised.


Describes program that helps students recognize clause structures.


 Discusses why humanists need to get involved in use of computers in teaching and the uses of computers in literature instruction.


Aimed at present and future English teachers. Discusses methodology in language, literature, and composition and how CAI can augment it.

Urges the use of Writer's Workbench for freshman composition students. Reports research on teaching editing skills and on affective changes.


A study to determine whether sequence (e.g., rule-examples-practice vs. examples-rule-practice) results in differences in performance. No significant differences found. Concludes that learner control may have advantages.


A case study of one child's introduction to computer composition.

Leibowicz, J. 1982. *CAI In English*. English Education 14 (Dec.).

Provides a good overview of the state of CAI, including drill and practice, tutorial, dialogue, and text analysis and editing systems.


Describes a system incorporating programs discussed in Cherry's "Writing Tools" (see above). Programs will proofread, comment on style, provide reference information.


A short breakdown of different uses faculty members have for their computers.


Composing a poem as a computer game, with conclusions about the advantages and limitations of the technique.


Mullins compares dedicated word processors and personal computers. Personal paean to the wonders of the machines for writers.

Nold, E. 1975. Fear and trembling: The humanist approaches the computer. College Composition and Communication 26 (Oct.).

Attempts to debunk humanist fears about CAI by providing examples of creative, stimulating programs. Urges English teachers to get involved.


Page's classic early study in the field. Raises philosophical questions and practical considerations in an enthusiastic endorsement of this alternative method of grading.


A discussion of ZOG, a system designed for communication between people and computers. Aimed at the computer specialist.


Rubin argues that programs should move towards a more sophisticated view of language.


Describes SEEN, a program to assist character analysis in literature. Concludes that the invention aspect is highly beneficial, the feedback still clumsy.

Schwartz. 1982. Monsters and mentors: Computer applications for humanistic education. College English 44 (Feb.).

Discusses different types of programs (text feedback, drill and practice, simulations, tutorials). Provides sources for obtaining software and criteria for choosing.

Asserts the advantages of CAI in the writing process -- notably how the greater ease of recopying aids the revision process.


Discusses Wordsworth II, a program designed for various assignments including narration, persuasion, etc.

Southwell, M. 1983. *Computer-assisted instruction in composition at York College/CUNY: Composition for basic writing students.* The Writing Instructor 2 (Summer).

Discusses the use of computers for grammar drill and practice in remedial writing programs.

Wall and Taylor. 1982. *Using interactive computer programs in teaching higher conceptual skills: An approach to instruction in writing.* Educational Technology 22 (Feb.).

Describes a CAI model for teaching narrative writing and a study involving mathematics instruction of handicapped children.

Wilson, K. 1981. *English teachers: Key to computer literacy.* English Journal 70 (Sept.).

Encourages English teachers as those most adept at communications skills, to become computer literate.

Categorizes feedback as abstract or specific; positive, negative, or corrective; and task related or unrelated. Suggests that selective task-related feedback from peers may be the most effective.

Wresch, W. 1982. *Computers in English class: Finally beyond grammar and drills.* College English 44 (Sept.).

Discusses tutorial and dialogue software, pointing out the advances made since the linear drill programs like PLATO.


Describes four programs: one for prewriting, one showing how prewriting information can be structured in an essay, and two for editing.