



## Classroom innovation with audio technologies - Overview

**audio and voice technologies in the classroom**

**ACE providers:**  
PRACE, Carlton,  
Glenroy, Moreland &  
Coonara

**can you hear us?**

<http://snipr.com/hearus>

Figure 1) screengrab of the final slideshare presentation: with voiceover!

# can you hear us?

### Case Study

» our integration of audio technologies in the classroom

**A project supporting strategies to address the specific needs of learner groups.**

From the Adult Community Education (ACE) project

- » **Can You Hear Us?** at
- » <http://canuhearus.acfe.vic.edu.au/>
- » Or [snipr.com/hearus](http://snipr.com/hearus)



## BACKGROUND: WHY AUDIO?

Language and literacy skills underpin delivery of VET courses:

- » these skills drive basic equity and access in the community
- » language and literacy learners need access to audio texts, because listening is one of the four major skills.

However, many teachers need to update the technologies they use to bring audio into classrooms.



Figure 2) artist Karl O'Brien at flickr

Larger organisations often have greater resources, including "language laboratories", while smaller ACE providers need to rely on a combination of

- » affordable and portable devices,
- » free software and
- » web-based social applications (aka Web2).

According to the Access ACE research report (ACFE 2007), awareness and support for e-learning has increased significantly in the last three years. ACE providers have upgraded their infrastructure, and now many teachers and learners have reasonable access to networked computers, word processors, internet, and language-learning software.

*To further integrate e-learning approaches into teaching and learning in our organisations:*

***We have researched and implemented innovative approaches within our classrooms, in an attempt to expand levels of confidence with audio technologies, and bring more powerful strategies within the grasp of teachers and learners.***



## LEARNERS AND CONTEXT

Learners across Adult Community Education (ACE) often have very limited experience with education, and the ACE environment can provide strong and supportive pathways into employment and further education. Learners on this project included:



Figure 3) artist: Deiru @ flickr

- » Adult literacy learners (ALBE)
- » Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), and English as a second language (ESL)
- » Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)
- » Other learners in the community, including people with limited prior education
- » VET students, including information technology and accounting.

## SAMPLE TECHNOLOGIES

| Example Learning Activity  | Technology          | Sample "brand"                          |
|--|---------------------|---|
| Add audio to blended learning  | Audio on the web    | Wikispaces                              |
| Engage learners in identity work   | Avatar              | Voki                                    |
| Flexible access to learning materials                                      | Wiki, Screencast    | (ACFE) wikispaces, Jing, camstudio      |
| Inter-group collaboration  | Internet phone      | Skype                                   |
| Listening for language development   | Podcasts            | Breaking News English                   |
| Record conversations in class  | Portable mp3 player | iRiver, iPod                            |
| Student story-telling, broadcast   | Digital story       | Voicethread, iMovie, powerpoint         |
| Video and multimedia to engage learners and explore a different text types | Online video        | How Stuff Works, You Tube, Teacher Tube |



## ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASSROOM

Teachers and learners don't always realise how much they have collectively achieved. As a whole group, we have achieved these things:

### *Student conversation as learning resource*

- » Record conversations for feedback and assessment
- » Explore cultural diversity through responding to questions about images via Voicethread
- » Record student presentations and assessment pieces for documentation
- » Record vox-pops with VCAL learners as they explored Syn-fm radio station on an excursion
- » Interview VCAL learners on the subject of healthy eating, upload audio to wikispace and invite comment from other learners



Figure 4) artist: Grant Neufeld at flickr

### *Improving access to printed text*

- » Record easy-to-read books and other texts for language-learning:
- » Record student stories using a range of recording devices: laptop with audacity, iRiver mp3 recorder, and a Nokia mobile phone. Students then have option to listen back to their own story.



Figure 5) artist: neagu stefan at flickr

### *Audio text as learning material*

- » Listen to podcasts on the web, including audio from abc.net.au, simple English news, Breaking News English
- » Engage ESL learners with Protea Textware, including International Picture Dictionary and Issues in English, with built-in grammar and vocabulary exercises



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### ***Engage learners through audio and multimedia***

- » Students embed their own audio-enabled avatars in a classroom wiki
- » Make personalised "Ringtones" to engage learners
- » Students create Christmas cards in powerpoint .. with voiceover for stronger connection
- » Watch You Tube videos via laptop and projector while studying literacy, cultural history and current affairs, eg Waltzing Matilda, The Nutty Professor; also Behind the News video class (abc TV) with transcript for reading and listening
- » Use videos at How Stuff Works for studying instructional language in a literacy class
- » Record "Screencasts" of software demonstrations in class

### ***Collaboration and communication between groups of learners***

- » Run Live Sessions between different classrooms, using skype, speakers and a microphone with a long cable
- » Set up an inter-class project, where VCAL interviewed ESL learners about their life stories, edit this into a series of digital stories.

### ***Create multimedia for presentation and publication***

- » Teachers record students' presentations to mp3 and convert into digital story (communication skills)
- » Work with images and sound to create digital stories from learners' language and experience
- » Students make their own digital stories, on topics including Football Clubs, The Big Issue, and "CNLC - the place to be". One student embeds the digital story into a MySpace page for social networking.
- » Students make videos including PRACE News (mild parody style) editing audio in Audacity, before re-mixing audio and video in movie Maker (Windows)



Figure 6) artist: pablosanz at flickr



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### ***Teachers develop their own skills along the way***

- » Edit audio files with Audacity, the open source audio editing software;
- » Explore a range of portable iRiver mp3 player / recorders;
- » Teachers interview each other about our impressions on audio technologies;
- » Brainstorm ideas around how to use audio / voice technologies in class;
- » Explore other people's podcasts,
- » Upload our own conversations to wikispaces and other podcasting services;
- » Explore other technologies such as Voki and Voicethread
- » Learn more about digital storytelling, using software including Movie Maker, PhotoStory and iMovie (apple mac)
- » Record a series of Page Turners to mp3 format (thanks to Decibels recording studios for the sound-proof room);

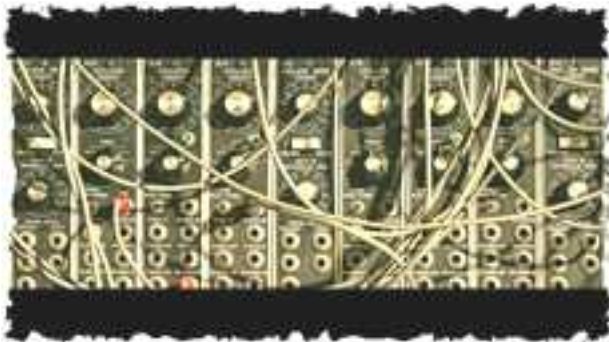


Figure 7) artist: zyphichore at flickr

## ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

- » Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education (PRACE) - lead agent
- » Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre
- » Glenroy Neighbourhood Learning Centre
- » Moreland Adult Education
- » Coonara Community House



## THE FRAMEWORK CONNECTIONS

During the project, teachers drew on a range of events and prior studies, including:

- » The 2008 innovations blog
- » Network online conferences and e-Gems presentations
- » Different Voices Different Spaces - (DVDS) a national project
- » Beyond Text - one of the three projects in DVDS
- » Engage-me - a project from NSW, working originally with young people
- » Media on the Move, a 2006 project looking at broadcasting multi-media
- » Guide to Social e-learning.
- » Victorian ACFE e-mentors professional development network sessions (not strictly Framework, but involving key people from the Framework)

**Australian Flexible Learning Framework**  
supporting e-learning opportunities

## CREDITS

- » Thanks to the brilliant and creative teacher-researchers involved in the project:  
*Chris Malakar, David Gregg, Eleanor Morgan, Franca Majoor, Georgia McRae, Iris Ralph, Jan Harbrow, Janeen Gronbeck, Jill Koppel, Jyothi Suresh, Lauren Ireland, Lisa Decheim, Lisa Fernandez, Lynne Gibb, Panayota Miller, Rohan Kioney & Tina Vlahos.*
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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**PRACE**

**For more information on this project:**

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## Australian Flexible Learning Framework

supporting e-learning opportunities

**For more information on the Australian Flexible Learning Framework:**

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Website: [flexiblelearning.net.au](http://flexiblelearning.net.au)

Post: GPO Box 1326, Brisbane QLD 4001

## KNOWLEDGE SHARING

**Find out the whole story via our project wiki:**

» <http://canuhearus.acfe.vic.edu.au/>

» Or [SNIPR.COM/HEARUS](http://SNIPR.COM/HEARUS)

Links to other projects, help files, ideas for your own research, sound files, interviews, freebies and presentations, complete lesson plans from teachers and more.