# Preface

Salomi Papadima-Sophocleous[1]

With EUROCALL reaching its 23rd year, it has truly earned its status as an innovative conference with a mind of its own – a thought-provoking scientific gathering with high aspirations for the future. This is what we have tried to reflect in this volume of selected short papers. Short papers are an ideal forum for work in progress and late breaking results. As such, this volume captures exactly what *CALL Communities and Culture* represent: papers that are all trying to say something new and different, whether at a theoretical and practical level or in terms of research carried out in non-traditional areas or using novel methodologies.

The 23rd EUROCALL conference was organised by the Cyprus University of Technology Language Centre – the first time that EUROCALL has been held in Cyprus. More than 260 delegates representing 37 different countries attended the conference held between 24th and 27th August 2016.

The theme of the conference this year was *CALL Communities and Culture*. It offered a unique opportunity to hear from real-world CALL practitioners on how they practise CALL in their communities, and how the CALL culture has developed in local and global contexts. CALL has moved from traditional drill-and-practice programmes in the 1960s and 1970s to more recent manifestations of CALL, such as the use of interactive whiteboards, corpora and concordances, computer-mediated communication as well as the applications used in virtual learning environments and e-learning, virtual worlds, gaming and mobile-assisted language learning. Keeping an eye on the latest changes and on the future and being well informed are critical success factors for the CALL community.

Over 135 presentations were delivered and 27 posters were presented on topics related specifically to the theme and more general CALL topics. 84 of these appear in this volume.

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Our keynote speakers, who came from both within and outside the sphere of CALL, contributed greatly to fostering a greater understanding of how we might conceptualise CALL Communities and Culture, that is, the different angles we can view communities and culture within CALL practice and research. Looking into different CALL communities and cultures, building new ones and exploring their possibilities, looking into interdisciplinary communities and cultures that CALL can benefit from, these are some of the issues that our keynote speakers presented, explored and questioned.

The Graham Davies keynote speaker, Mark Pegrum, presented the possibilities of mobile learning in its various forms and the implications of this kind of learning for language learning across the various cultures. This new learning methodology adopts 21st century skills, assists in the construction of new communities and allows the various cultures to develop within their own spectrum of abilities and possibilities. Understanding how mobile learning works around the globe allows us to also develop our own learning contexts and provide the optimal kinds of mobile learning that will be beneficial for our own learners in our specific academic environments.

Panayiotis Zaphiris presented an empirical study of an online learning community that worked closely with the course design team under the participatory design process. This design process was implemented for a large online course of English speakers learning Greek and included four stages: establishing bridges with the proposed learner, identifying user needs and implementing suggestions, developing prototypes and finally providing feedback. The progress of the learners was constantly monitored and analysed throughout all stages. This participatory design methodology was based on the constructionism pedagogical theory.

Leila Kajee analysed the influence of digital technology on our everyday lives. Societies in developed countries are exposed to a massive amount of information which is available in many forms: video, text, image and audio. Even more so in the children's world, where, in their spare time they have the opportunity to retrieve information in the form of images, stories and so on. To prove her argument she presented three case studies which clearly indicate the construction of digital identity and how students engage in social networking practices. Leila Kajee used new literacy studies as a framework to provide a theory of literacy practices and the work of Hall among others to theorise identity. She also presented further implications of digital identity construction regarding teaching and learning.

Recordings of these keynote addresses, as well as the full programme and session abstracts may be found at the conference website (http://eurocall2016.org/).

We thank all of the participants of the EUROCALL 2016 conference and the presenters.

All submissions for this volume have been rigorously reviewed: submissions received an average of two external reviews and were then subjected to further meta-reviewing.

Producing this volume has been a joint effort of authors, reviewers, category co-chairs and the entire organising committee who contributed much time and effort. We would like to thank all contributors who reflect the enormous variety of topics which were addressed at this exciting event and the quality of the presentations. Without you this conference could not have taken place. We hope you will enjoy reading the volume as much as we have – the editors –, during its preparation. We hope that the essence of the EUROCALL2016 conference has been communicated to you through this volume.

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Καλή Ανάγνωση! (Enjoy reading these papers!)
Salomi Papadima-Sophocleous
Conference chair of EUROCALL2016

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