



LIBERATED LEARNING

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WELCOME

Featured Project:

Universal Liberated Learning

- A new direction for Liberated Learning funded by Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

CURA

The Community University Research Alliances

- An SSHRC research program Our focus: Disability/Accessibility Technology and Research

Events:

2006 Canadian Hard of Hearing Conference in P.E.I

- "A Bridge to Hear" brought CHHA members from across the country to Charlottetown in June. Liberated Learning was there to demonstrate the LL concept.

2006 Consortium Meeting

- Consortium partners met to plan 2006/07 research directions.

Partners:

Liberated Learning in China

- Special Education College, Beijing Union University began its work with a training session.

eJournal August 2006

Welcome to the first edition of the Liberated Learning online eJournal. This newsletter highlights Liberated Learning projects under way and on the drawing board. With 14 partner universities there's always a story to be told.

Featured Project

Universal Liberated Learning is a project supported by

a contribution agreement from the Social Development Partnerships Program, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, with the mandate of introducing the Liberated Learning concept to Canadian national disability organizations (NDOs). The project is funded from December 2005 for one year.

Liberated Learning has been developed primarily within the university classroom setting. But realistically, university students are not the only learners in society, nor is learning confined solely to the university classroom.

Three Liberated Learning Consortium members are part of the project team: Saint Mary's University, Nova Scotia, Trent University, Ontario, and the T.J. Watson IBM Research Center, New York. The Project Manager and Project Coordinator are based at Saint Mary's while the knowledge audit team works out of the Disability Services Office at Trent University in Ontario. Both groups work closely with IBM Research to coordinate technology development generated by NDO specific needs analysis.

The spring of 2006 was a busy time for the ULL team, as introductory visits were made to a number of NDOs:

Liberated Learning In China: A New Partnership

Heather Martin, Training and Support Coordinator for Liberated Learning, recently spent 4 days in China, meeting with IBM China Software Development Lab (CSDL) and the Special Educational College of Beijing Union University.



The trip was very representative of the way in which the Consortium fills a unique role as the common agent between the worlds of software engineering and academia.

Heather met with 3 representatives of the CSDL in conjunction with a representative from the IBM China Human Ability and Accessibility Centre. This meeting focused on the technical infrastructure needed to support SECBUU as they integrate ViaScribe™ speech recognition technology into their pioneering special education programs. Discussion points included communication protocols between CSDL and SECBUU and SMU.

The next stage of the visit entailed a three day train-the-trainer session at SECBUU.

There were 14 participants forming a nucleus of educators who will cooperate with SECBUU as a hub for the dissemination of speech recognition technology in China. Learners included instructors from SECBUU, observers from the Special Education School of Chongqing Normal University and observers from the No 2 Deaf School of Beijing. This last school focuses on elementary and high school education for Deaf students.



<http://www.buu.edu.cn/home/indexe/e00abuu.htm>

- Easter Seals Canada
- The Canadian Paraplegic Association
- The Canadian Hearing Society
- The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association
- The Neil Squire Society
- The National Educational Association of Disabled Students
- The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

CHHA 2006 CONFERENCE

Liberated Learning made a well-received presentation to the CHHA board of directors as well as to a general session. In addition LL hosted an exhibit at the trade show.

<http://www.chha.ca/conference>

Several organizations have entered into Memoranda of Collaboration with Liberated Learning as an indication of the desire to investigate further ways in which the two groups might work together to mutual benefit. The intent is to develop pilot projects and attract further funding with the goal of introducing speech recognition technology into the disabled Canadian community beyond the post secondary arena.

For more information about SDC visit: www.sdc.gc.ca/en/cs/comm/sd/about_us.shtml

Community University Research Alliances (CURA):

A new approach to accessibility

Research teams are funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to foster interaction between the academic research community and the virtual and physical communities with which they interact. CURA grants focus on conducting research **with** the community rather than research **on** the community.

Liberated Learning recently submitted a Letter of Intent , in May 2006, for a CURA entitled: “**Achieving Inclusive Communities - A Collaborative Approach to Researching How Speech Recognition Improves Accessibility**”. This project proposes that the disability community become direct partners in Liberated Learning, actively involved in shaping the direction and growth of this accessibility application.

This letter of intent brought together 26 collaborators and co-applicants. These include Canadian and international universities, national disability organizations, federal and provincial governments and world renowned researchers from IBM research. These participants embody the CURA multi-disciplinary spirit.

If the Letter of Intent is successful, the next stage is the development of a full fledged proposal for a five year funding period.

http://www.sshrc.ca/web/apply/program_descriptions/cura_e.asp



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2006 Annual Meeting: Hosted by the University of Southampton and IBM

The 2006 Liberated Learning Consortium meeting was held at IBM Research Park, Hursley, UK from June 29th to July 1st. Each year the Consortium assesses its portfolio of Strategic Initiatives, evaluating progress to date and setting direction for the year ahead. The annual meeting is an opportunity for this virtual community to meet in person and also for new consortium partners to participate in the overall planning process for the first time. A public symposium was also held.

The consortium follows a business model that provides a framework for the individual project execution that goes on at each LL site. The model itself comes in for re-examination and the opportunity is taken to assess its relevance and function as a tool to facilitate collaboration among partners.

Issues tackled on the development side included definition of core vs. extension technology development, client server interaction, multi speaker ViaScribe, multi language ViaScribe, and improved enrollment and training methodologies.

The Consortium welcomed 2 new partners, Hiroshima University (Japan) and the Università di Bologna (Italy) to their first meeting. The 2007 meeting will be hosted by the University of Hiroshima.

<http://www.liberatedlearning.com/news/proceedings.html>