Preface

Welcome to the first issue of 2007. I hope you will find the papers in this year's issue to be interesting. The first paper, "Supporting Collaborative Learning With An Intelligent Web-Based System" builds on the work by McManus and Aiken in the mid 1990s. This work contributed to the interest at that time in the use of "sentence openers" in interfaces. Now, Judith Israel and Robert Aiken have produced a new intelligent collaborative support system (ICSS) that supports group work with an emphasis on helping students to work together. Amongst several improvements is the use of "sentence closers".

The second paper, "An Experimental Evaluation of *Logiocando*, an Intelligent Tutoring Hypermedia System" looks carefully at the potential benefits of intelligent hypermedia environments for school use. This work by Rosa Lanzilotti and Teresa Roselli is best read in conjunction with the last issue of the Journal – 16(4) – which focused on learner centred design. The papers in that issue provided a number of views on the problem of constructing effective intelligent systems. The paper on *Logiocando* complements the work on the construction of intelligent systems by providing an empirical evaluation of the difference between using an intelligent hypermedia system, and traditional classroom teaching. In particular, the results suggest the importance of managing aspects of the children's attitudes and expectations prior to use of the system.

The third paper is part of a continuing, strong tradition of work in AI-ED – that of providing systems for real world training and education. The paper by Vasco Furtado and Eurico Vasconcelos on "Geosimulation in Education: A System for Teaching Police Resource Allocation" provides an interesting exemplar of what can be accomplished through the combination of a number of technologies. In this case, the system utilizes a Geographic Information System together with a multi-agent system and a pedagogical agent. The ExpertCop system uses a pedagogical agent to help the learner comprehend the factors underlying the simulation of criminal activity in a specific locality. The evaluation of the system suggests that the approach is potentially very fruitful.

In the next two issues after this one, we expect to publish a number of papers on open learner models. These promise to be of great interest to the AI-ED community.

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