Exploring e-Learning and Communication Tools for Improving Children's Language Usage in Social Interactions: EChoeS

Minutes for Kickoff meeting, 13th October 2006, Edinburgh

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[Material from slides needs to be cut and pasted in]

Session 1 Introduction

Everyone's interests:

KASKA: Cognitive and research aspects. Also technology interests: What way can we develop skills? How can we tap into intentionality?

OLIVER: all aspects of building dialogue systems, speech recognition, design, managing conversations. Ranges from flight booking to robots, mixture of speech and touch screen interactions. Main goal is to stop working on toy systems e.g. in-car dialogue – want to make something that could be of real benefit. Main worries are what is practical to do with kids, speech recognition - usually systems are built for adults.

JUDITH: most work recently has been on having children create own games for other children to play. Interested in some of the in-depth aspects of game playing, empowerment. Also work on learner centred-design for children, developed framework for this. Interest in project: by taking part in virtual environment, can try out 'being other' than in real life. Are children able to take on these roles? Worries are scope of the project. All coming from different environments and have a lot to bring together – may be difficult. Also concerns about scope and age range, and from the technology point of view: current techniques will work with 10 year olds but not whether they will work with younger children.

WENDY: main role has been in lecturing on design. Previously worked in TV and animation. Recently, developed Reactive Colours, using computation in expressive mode. Can learning and communication be accelerated through removing anxiety and fear of failure? So interested in modes of play, currently working with children on autism spectrum. Have a passion for finding out about how children communicate and in particular working in autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) community in relation to reactive colours. Started from standpoint of 'what if', and then moved to something very lively. Interest is direct relationship between language and play; seen some spontaneous use of language. What excites me is methodology for working with children who may not use language: have found a mechanism for working with children and continuing with that. Also echo Judith's concerns. Have been finding out about others' research. Has experience of working with children. Interest in difference with working with

children who can communicate, and those who have difficulties. Now think of everyone as autistic to some degree – variety of level.

ANNALU: I am a lecturer in Applied Computing in Dundee. We have a history of taking toys and trying to apply them within the disability area. Even in the early days, speech recognition worked for a small range of vocalisations, people with severe communication disorders. So history of taking high tech and making it work. Specific interest in AAC – using high or low technology to engage with children and adults who do not communicate primarily through speech. Range from cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, to acquired disabilities such as dysphasia, etc. Several projects working mainly with children with cerebral palsy and dyspraxia, touched on ASD over years. Excited because dabbled in autism (honours projects) – expressing emotion, recently getting children to be able to say why they didn't want to play cricket, or do other things. Concerns, as Judith and Wendy, trying to decide what we are looking at, what group of children – autism is huge spectrum (there is a sister school to the one currently withking with in Cosford that have such complex communication needs it would take 30 years to cover). So need to decide what the discrete population is. Good also to hear Wendy is clinically on the ground and working with children. But perhaps need to pull in someone else in therapeutic area or psychiatry, or with knowledge of underpinning disorders. Work in User centred design - getting non-speaking children to generate jokes. Child said best thing about project was being asked at end what they thought about the software. So best thing when children see themselves as part of the research community.

HELEN: Artificial Intelligence and education. Interests: both developing tools that support learners and researchers. A common theme: aspects of communication and language. PhD work: children with dyslexia, and other aspects of disability. Just coming out of the project using user-centred design, working with groups of children and parents. Project (STANDUP): how can language play be facilitated by technolology. The huge amount of work that is involved in designing such technology is overwhelming. This project: How typically developing (TD) acquire language and comparison children with ASD. Keen on the idea of taking children as designers, developing tools for play, etc. Worries: ambitious project, we need to focus and constrain it. We currently lack knowledge of certain aspects.

KASKA: lucky to have the opportunity to explore and spend time on writing the larger proposal.

Remember the goal: to establish foundation in this project for language learning

[Kaska - insert materials from your slides]

[Also add in subheaders for different parts of the day]

Main goal for this project, come up with large-scale proposal. To come up with an environment that children with different communicative abilities can use to

explore language. Also provide researchers with tool to explore relationship between social and communication skills (take from slides)

Overall goals – take from slides.

Research questions: take form slides

Main one is impact of language use in collaborative tasks on children's learning, and on development of social skills. Relationship between ability to recognise intentions of others and their development.

Main thing is to find out, as Oliver says, what tools are currently out there, particularly for young children with a variety of difficulties.

Specific goals – see slide.

Need in particular to look at evaluation methodologies to assess what we are doing.

Proposed Organisation of work – see slides

We have a lot to do. Oliver suggested we should limit this - but Annalu suggested that there is a lot of technology in use by children with ASD – but lot of tools are very superficial with no computational power behind them – we want to create a language-cognitive prosthesis that underpins tools that children use – rather than those with underlying knowledge. KASKA: there may be less for TD children. OLIVER: there may be less speech based tools. KASKA: for large proposal, want to bring in different modalities. OLIVER: big question: can we do anything with speech recognition with children? ANNALU– also we can constrain it. KASKA: it is definitely one of the major issues.

Tasks: establish web presence. Identify domain experts – as soon as possible. This is important also for studies. KASKA– in practical terms this is task 1.

ANNALU: any time anyone looks at area like this, it is daunting – it is so interdisciplinary. There are many parameters.

KASKA: reviewers indicated that considering this in relation to all children is very big. We want two groups for comparison, and for interest. As Wendy says it can be considered as a spectrum.

ANNALU: what worries me is that even within the range of Asperger's Syndrome, there is a completely different group to those with no speech, no communication, hard to approach. So we have to decide what group we are working with.

KASKA: there is a tension between research and practicalities. From a research point of view if would be interesting to look at TD children's ability to recognise affect.

ANNALU: look at one group of ASD and ND children.

HELEN: we may need to set a lower limit of access skills that we will assume – even if it means that we limit it.

JUDITH: yes, 4 to 10 is massive – but if cannot do all, need to narrow it down, what is an instance of particular interest and why. So narrow down.

HELEN: should we get equivalent developmental age between two groups?

KASKA:also consider what is optimal age for this? What is target age in both groups.

OLIVER: need to decide what phenomena we are interested in and focus on when children develop this.

KASKA:perhaps about age of 5 is age where children start to distinguish between desires and intentions of others.

JUDITH: hard for adults…

KASKA:have to research further to see.

JUDITH: is this just flagging that we need a developmental Psychologist on board.

HELEN: Shaaron suggested 3 year olds as they were just prior to developing these skills.

May be that their vocab is more limited.

WENDY: social environments much wider at age 5/6 than earlier.

KASKA: may be easier to access - JUDITH: but may be easier to get to non-school

ANNALU: under 5 you need extra insurance and ethical issues.

WENDY: also 5 and above can link it to the curriculum; QCA

KASKA: research indicates that children from age of 5 are able to make distinctions between others desires and intentions as referenced through language.

Decision:

Session 2:

Kaska: (get slides)

Very general framework that relates to theory of mind – but some people do not believe in theory of mind – so should flag this. So not wed ourselves to any one framework.

ANNALU: What is striking is that ASD kids are stuck in (1) dyadic engagement.

WENDY: also theory of mind, lot of people would disagree with that theory; agree that ASD children do not progress.

KASKA: tap in to possibility to opening up the progression – if it is feasible

WENDY: it is feasible and a lot of things need to be considered that could help this – sensory issues, tunnelling, scarce attention – identifying attention 'tunnel' permits movement to next level.

WENDY:

Video – fairly early on in finding out how children get enjoyment from physical movement. Most do not use verbal language unless prompted. But some spontaneous use of language 'oh dear'. Evidence of concentrating. Others are watching what children are dong. Also evidence of imitation. Also further saying words not prompted. Little bit of interaction and turn taking. Thy are just experimenting – it responds to what they do. Use of some words – they would sometimes say words or name colours. When they go on to bubbles – now use describing language – 'catch bubble'. Started on just circling and tapping – working on comfortable movements. Found more spontaneous with abstract forms.

ASD an play – mind map of relations and experience in project
Sensory motor, exploratory – where most ASD children lie
Physical play – use bodies in ways that are more unusual (i.e. do not usually feel their bodies in same way as TD children. E.g. use shadows in interactive white board – they played with their shadows – with shadow they recognise that they are there – tap selves, and seem more aware of own body – so they could feel they were part of the experience. Child who saw own hair – started to play with shadow of own hair – important to deal with physical issues.

Social relationships and connections – evidence that ASD children lack empathy, also if look at focussed and tunnelled view – lack of empathy though can also mean that you can be very productive, focussed, able.

Pretended, Symbolic play

Start: with naming, then requesting actions, actions, then requesting – where goes next; then respond to each other, then to interacting with each other.

KASKA: Did you try the tool with ND children?

WENDY: found that they just do it – developing PDA versions – looking also at transitional model – move from interactive whiteboard (very inclusive) to then move to smaller environments, then can possibly other skills can be gained.

WENDY: ND v ASD – only comparison is with desktop computer - because whatever you type something will happen – all groups start trying to see 'what happens if I do X' – and also get imitation – no comparative study. But move to deeper level of inquiry, and to possible use of computer.

OLIVER: what example of interacting with each other. Debate of interaction with others – on computer is one thing. What about if really need to collaborate on shared task?

WENDY: so leads to shared areas of interest rather than shared tasks. How can you share interest systems – focused deep (monotropic interest) interest – but if I am focussed, I may not notice what you are doing. ASD not aware of others – no need if doing fine on own. May not see the point of sharing, - but may need to motivate this, getting wider experience by seeing what others do.

OLIVER: ND kids can collaborate on shared task (K/J – not always easy)

WENDY: have tried shared mice. On whiteboard can have more interaction – but around sharing interest rather than sharing task.

WENDY: once they share also get some extension of language – if set context they will share.

KASKA: clarify – use ND children? WENDY: no, usually use ASD children.

KASKA: do they have the same opportunity to share on the laptop?

WENDY: children who are interested in exploring tactile and mechanisms. Put laptop in room – not clear if shared or parallel - but they do watch and there is laughter – approach is very exploratory – shared interest.

KASKA: interesting to see how two groups compare on same task. And what happens if take away some of spontaneity – will it suppress shared interest.

WENDY: teachers now saying that they do need to move on to some tasks. Focus initially was to ensure success and avoid failure. Not saying would solve problem, but starting point to get round fear of failure.

KASKA: relates to Judith's interest in empowerment.

ANNALU: some of ASD children are very sensitive

WENDY: early videos managing sensory issues (so heightened in ASD) some children find some sounds painful, or do not like blue or yellow – so have to be customisable – sound on/off, own sounds, colours, etc. Set speed

ANNALU: video showed amazing interactions – but mentioned that some children did not talk spontaneously

WENDY: children on video in lowering level groups for language.

KASKA: really like idea of transitional model – moving from one type of technology to next

WENDY: what we found is that if you can enable transition between different environments with different people and different tools – child's family important, have parents that are pleased that they could also do at home – this has context of support at home – parents and immediate family have real role to play

KASKA: also have questions about how children use the technology

OLIVER: loads of ideas

KASKA: collaboration outside and within the system

HELEN: lots of CSCL environments are not high AI but more to facilitate interaction

Judith:

Worked with children who are older and not children with ASD (only indirectly).

Play as it relates to games
Game based learning.

What J is not interested in: Big thing at the moment educational games; there is a lot to be get out of games, but example of bad educational games, e.g. bbc games. No real interaction in the games. It's nice, it's fine, but also disposable. Lack of doubt. This is not what J is interested in. The primitive games: memorisation, claustrophobic social model, drill and kill, motivational wrapper, exogenous.

What J is interested in: setting up a world in which you as are a character in that game. Children creating their own games as there is a lot of narrative issues which are of fundamental importance. It helps children tell a story, with consequences, problems, etc. Social context within and outside the game, issue of task: you have to collaboration, you have to do it because it's in your interest. There is a whole perception of learning which goes beyond pretty wrappers. Issue of identity which must be tied up with intentionality in the indogenous aspect.   See Squire, 2004.

Not that we are going to get children create their own games.

Gee (2003): learning principles involved in commercial games.

Annalu: Annalu's approach fits in with Judith's. Enabling children with disability to engage in narrative creation.

Annalu: One of the issues with children that A deals with is that they are severely disabled physically. There a lots of ways in which technology can be used to facilitate interaction. Technology has proven to be very successful in some aspects of disability.

Because of the disabilities communication is really slow. There are word prediction is very useful, it makes it easier for able bodied people. Lack of literacy. Reading and writing is a complex skill. Using pictures to work with. Picture Exchange Communications (PECs?). The biggest problem is pre-stored communication, children stuck with words that are given to them by others, so Annalu would like to see in this project children' vocabulary being enabled rather than forced upon them.

Portability: technology that children can use throughout the day that provides them with structure throughout the day. Visual systems which enable language production (?).

One of the biggest problems is that the systems have to be trained which means that the cognitive effort is put on the child and not on the computer: essentially the computer does not provide any support.

Vocabulary Management: needs programming expertise and literacy which is not desirable.

What we need to come up with has to be really simple.

Language develops through using it, experiencing it and making mistakes. We don't allowed disabled kids to develop their language because we provide them with tools that have language pre-stored.

BlissWord: used with ASD kids as young as 3, but also 4/5. Bliss has disappeared because it's easier to give kids a picture. But there is no language there.

SctipTalker….

We want get beyond controlling kids language. We want to enable them, empower them and give them control.

Communication which is story based instead of being transactional.

The Write Talk Project: one discovery was the kids were very monologue, they did not care what the adults said.

STANDUP.

Session 3: Research Methodologies

ECHOES: Some thoughts on methodology (Kaska, Helen)

We are all much on the same page in terms of methodology.

Evaluation questions (see Helen's slide!)

Potential users and participants:

Young school children 4-10 (may need to restrict this)

Children with Asperger syndrome

Researchers, practitioners, carers, SLTs, teachers and parents, expert end-users (i.e. adults with AS). The latter are able to verbalise some of the problems they encountered previously, and this is useful.

General methodology:

User centred design/PCM
Empirical methodology will consist of:
- Focus groups (example of standup project whereas the researchers assumed users would be literate
- Observation (important since work is very exploratory, how can users interact with different sorts of tools)
- Video capture of users and screen (used not be be analysed in detail, but as a record if needed, having both views is useful)
- Tasks checklists (although need to ensure that they can be used: experimenter may be busy with other things, e.g. interaction, may well need two bodies)

- Talking mats
- Semi-structured interviews (where possible)
- May need to adapt data collection methods with users

Two exploratory studies:
- 3-4 ND children (aged 5-10, but may be restricted) engaging in communication tasks conducted through 2-3 example tool
- 2 children with AS, one example tool
- Pre-specified tasks

Annalu mentions that we need to be very specific about why we are going to go for a qualitative methodology: reviewers not always sympathetic to this.

When we look at tasks, need to ensure that they are relevant, and make sense in the context.

Research questions:
We need to decided what questions we are asking in these studies (which will determine the types of tasks we go for)?
What questions will we address in the larger project (need to look at effectiveness: even if not quantitative measures, need some sort of descriptors).
Could take something from functional communication profiling (can look at the effectiveness of communication by the number of times someone initiates a conversation, responds, etc.).
What existing measurement tools are available? (credit project may have existing tools)
What further tools are needed?

Wendy looked at off-the-shelf tools for evaluation which are very much assessing the chil and his/her abilities rather than whether the software was satisfying.
Need to listen to what teacher has to say about child's general profile. No two children are alike: they have different sensory/behavioural characteristics. Need to ensure we are evaluating the software, not the child.
Judith:
Cognitive limit to what we can take in today!

Refer to Judith's paper.
Participatory design with children.
Users; use final product
Testers: test out prototype
Informants: opinion's used
Design Partners;

WKB notes on this also

Druin 1999

CARR
Context
Activities
Roles
Stakeholders
Skills

Can be used as a metric to frame up the design process, by asking questions from each category

Lydia suggested that Echoes partners should attend TLRP. (day 2 – policy making). It has its own culture – get a feel. Attend seminars. Capacity building – Lydia presenting. The themes represent the key things that were missing from the first lot of proposals.

Helen suggested that 2nd meeting could coincide with TLRP.

Add conference/meeting agenda to web pages.

Wendy

Based on Alison Druin's work. Includes children as researchers who can see the value of their work.

Inspired by Eric Dishman's work on the elderly.

Research Model (this is a cyclical model):

Inspire – Show and Tell – children showed Wendy what they loved doing, and vice versa. Also a way of bonding and being accepted by the community. Discovered toys that they like. Children inspired by what things are made of rather than what they do.

Listen – interviews, questionnaires, video

Develop – prototypes. Very crude. Even if buggy allows children to say what is going wrong. Also acts as a communication aid.

Evaluate – looked at motivation, attention and interest.

Build – confidence and satisfaction.

Annalu: need to be specific about how we're going to go about the methodology, even if we have to be flexible.

HELEN: have already identified the basis of a shared methodology. We need to make this explicit in the proposal.

Session 4: Technology state of the art

JUDITH: talk about play with technology rather than tech overall

(went over slides from this morning)

Using Never winter nights - contructing games

HELEN: in Wolverhampton suggestion was that we could use children in game design as well as role play.

JUDITH: Jim Gee (2003) book on what video games can teach us about learning and literacy (36 principles essential in good play)

What is it about these environments that is desirable that we might want to replicate. Games where you take ona role.charater in virtual world.

Semiotic principle: relations across symbols (copy slide)

Semiotic Domains principle - goes beyond this to participation

Metalevel thinking about semiotic domain – learning about active and critical thinking about the relationship of the sem domain being learned to other sem domains

Dispersed principle: meaning/knowledge is dispersed in the sense that the learner shares it with outside of the game – not artificial sharing – with learner they may not see face-to-face.

Affinity group principle – a group bonds primarily hrough shard goals, praactics – not shared race, gender etc

Committed learning principle – participation in extended engagement (lots of effort and practice) – as a commitment to identity

Identity principle – interacting by taking on and playing with identities in such a way that the learner has real choices and opportunity to mediate on the relationship between ol and new ones – and possible interaction with autonomous agents.

Issues:

fostering engagement in real authentic task

promoting true collaboration

how to promote taking on and experimenting with idenities

Wendy:

ASD and computers – lots of projects, lost of interest in VR and gaming since 1990's

Lot of gaming and internet successful projects – lot so fevidence of success of commncation and imagination in such immersive gaming envirnemnts – though not in real life

Observations:
Rule-governed – contained within an environment – to foster idea of creativity and imagination – early version were just exploration – but teachers expected more structure to the experience. Do ned to provide some structure to enable confidence to lead to actions and goals – so need rules and containment

Context-free – need to be able to use in different context – and avoids confusion – in particular if 'all channels are open' or 'only one channel open' wit ASD, so good to be able to customise this with technology. With ASD when interacting they may not be focussing on the channels you think in human-human interaction – but limited with technooogy

Predictable, reduced stimuli: - technology helps eliminate some oft the environemntsl distractions

Customisable – to learning styles and preferences – very important

Joint attention: interest systems – align interest systems so that they are visible to others

(W take from reactive colours)

WENDY: lot of VR stuff looking at social skills, to encourage sentence construction; robotics (aurora project) can drop the gestures and spontaneous to reduce the stimuli in conversation for ASD children.

Tech and Autism conference in Coventry – some dire – some really interesting

e.g. good stuff on music; VR degrees of success, issue of generalisation – not lot of evidence of success

ANNALU: links to social stories work??

WENDY: good practical mechanism for children that they do to feel difference, have onw pda, need to have own social stories; good to be able to use mobile phne for prompting – divide into assistive and adaptive tech v. learning development. Video – ok but not interative – but useful for sequencing (important).

But little to show how it was showing successful communication on child's terms. Big debate about working with autistic children as developers. Sara Parsons –

VR gmes and autism – was asked why aspergers kids, and not linguistically less able kids – she said needed basic skills. WENDY: feels can involve linguistically less able kids.

Conference – Awares – online conference at present – wealth of good papers but some of discussion varies. Good as gives access to those adults with ASD, and their experiences. Demonstrates that given he right tech environment, computer is agent for communication change.

OLIVER: Dialogue systems and TEL

Multimodal dialogue systems – why?
Advantage: co-operation on shared tasks; various direct and indirect techniques; shared linguistic conventions – how do children develop these skills and how to support htat?

Need to learn how to use conversations – to get new information; to get what we want – changing beliefs of others, expressing own beliefs

What are they? What kinds of applications?

Spoken dialogue systems: speech out and in – focus mainly on dialogue management; eg
travel information systems – how do I get from X to Y – collaborate with system to plan travel.

Talking diary – collaborative time management to build diary

Music player; set criteria

talking house – can have conversations about what food yo have and recipes…

Make information and form filling; command and control; tutorial dialogue systems; believable agents – chatbots; customer service etc. – bit like a human

Eg WITAS – talk to robot helicopter and have to collaborate to achieve certain things; tested with c 30 people, felt bit like palying a game; limited set of commands, quite complicated dialogues

BMW – driving along - talk about town 'need hotel and double room, need Italian restaurant'

These are egs f what can build in 6 months

Tutorial dialoge systems:

NICE project – virtual character from Hans Christian Anderson – talk to it, used 3 d graphics (telia)

BEETLE and LeAM – both typed dialogue

Pittsburgh – IT-spoke physics

Stanford – shipboard damage control

Note: Most use text; mouse, etc control; tightly controlled domains; do not really require collaboration; 'teacher' is in control; evaluated on learning gain in domain

What is hard?

Speecg recognition for kids is difficult; deep understanding fof what people are doing with utterances; wide-coverage dialogue; producing good intonation in speech synthesis; modelling negotiatvie and collaborative dialogues – e.g. shared plans, activity trees, etc. HELEN: lot in CSCL on the latter

Easy?
Text based systems (beware spelling); chatbots; some types of multimodality; shallow interpretation of utterances; limited domain; form-filling dialogue systems (not interesting)

Questions for Echoes:
What can we design and buil that is actually practical (robust), enaging, enables social skills, negotiation

What resources do we need (corpora collected through WOZ)

What types of interaction – speech, graphics? 3d? write imaginary examples of dialogues

What types of collaborative dialoges?
How do we evaluate the interactions?

WENDY: can we add accessibility and inclusion to this – some tech is not easily o access

ANNALU: came across at conference in ISAACS conference Germany:

Gave speech engine example – is at top of AAC list

OLIVER: we can definitely do better than that…..

(so expectations are not high)

ANNALU: theory of mind and task based issues – lot of work on task based transcational conversation – more difficult is interactional conversation – would like to do more on interactional conversation (less on task oriented, where tech curretly works better).

Also dialogue systems make think of social stories – provide templates, gives prompts on what to do next, so dialogue systems could work there

OLIVER: yes, there is a process, end steps

ANNALU: currently very static and script based – but little divergence and ways of deadling with that – could extend to permit contingency for change

OLIVER: try to make systems more open ended and flexible, with difereing orders, lots of variation – but do not permit interruption

KASKA: Cassell – engagement in small talk to engage users, following template

ANNALU: in interactive conversation – phatic conversation is fairly scripted – then free flowing converationsal narrative which is much harder; story teling free narrative is very collaborative activity, even though you have a tructure can go on totally different path depending on other contributions of partner. Makes hrd for AAC users to interact in this. How do we build in non-static type of flow.

WENDY: ASD do not do chatting – they do not do improvised conversations – they have to learn the conventions and rules – may look meaningful but could be practiced. If you interrupt it it can break down. If introduce anything unexpected it can spool things.

ANNALU: have been working on this with non-speaking kids – even tough they have the access to voacb they do not have free flow conversation experience. When they were provided with software to turn take and interrupt and bring in new stories – topic based words can link into providing predictive interaction but only picks up salient topic words – so hard to go of on tangents.

Session 5

Needs for collaborations: developmental psychologist

We need to find out what is currently available – experts? Types of tech .

ReacTickles demo :

Initially using cyclic movements
Showing structure and rule through buttons/icons
e.g. Kids try to fill the whole screen together
All based on advanced cause and effect, some "gravity", elasticity, bouncing, etc
-- joint activities
Flying kite, controlled by keyboard etc. Mic control is via amplitude, music playing
etc.

Kids invent their own rules – emergent games.
Provide an environment and kids will invent / interact within it.

Possible Partners:
Dr Diana Murray – autism and technology
Cardiff Uni psychology – criticised anecdotal approach

Advisory group: for large project;
              Cognitive/developmental psych, Nicola Yuill of Sussex ?
              Birmingham? Tech and autism, Rita Jordan, Karen Goldberg
(education)
              School of Education input needed (English and Scottish and
Welsh ??)

Lydia: we barely used the word "learning"
        Keep it focussed – this is a teaching and learning program!!
         Mantra: demonstrate that learning has happened
          TLRP is broad
           Where is the learning?
             How do we describe/measure the outcomes?
             Forms of assessment already used – e.g. by speech and language
therapists
                 What do practitioners already do? Start with this.
          e.g. IEP

Annalu: STANDUP project had a baseline.

HELEN: Wolverhampton meeting – talk about transfer from computers to real
interactions

Annalu: psychiatrist?

KASKA: social linguist or psycholinguist ? Learning and dev of social skills is the
core idea of the project. Child language acquisition specialist?

Annalu: Janice Murray? Manchester Metropolitan

Wendy: ICT advisors to schools, Sally Paverly (?) in England – "Advisory Unit". Imogen Wedgewood, London; Synergy , Uni Wales game tech.

Lydia: don't have too many partners, have advisory board. Also pay consultants. Co-applicants need an academic track record, but consultants don't.

HELEN: Inst. of Education ?

Kaska : child lang acquisition

Annalu: Juliet Goldbart

Lydia: we need a management strategy using consultants.

Wendy: children as partners!

HELEN: Nottingham ASD VR group.

Kaska summary: 2 gaps 1) child lang acquisition 2) educational contacts

Lydia: we are focussed on the large bid, but there's no call for proposals yet!!! Be careful what you do with your time. Call will not exist until maybe march 2007. Unlikely that there will be funding for a similar project if one was already funded in first call – be careful. Networking is important. What we need is an even balance – contribute to our understanding of learning- what do we learn about learning? – needs to be bigger than the technology / system.   What insights into learning/education can we gain from this project?

KASKA: we have dual function – explore learning via our tools and use the tools for real kids.

Lydia: TLRP mantra – "warrant". How can you justify the claims you make in your research? Subheading "the warrant" in our report: these are our claims, this is what they are based on, this is how we have confidence in them. E.g. testimony of teachers.
"Where is the warrant?"
 - we are at quite big advantage: learning to do things TLRP style.
 - don't mention learning styles
Teacher/researchers ??

ACTIONS:

 Wendy contact Karen

Kaska contact a linguist/lang / devel psych at Edin

Annalu talk to Juliet ?
JUDITH: Nicola Yuill

Current project: small study

How will we get access to children?
Annalu possible link in Dundee.

Focus on social language use.

Some aspberger kids with v good language use but no good social skills. E.g. group work. Some sensory issues and repetitive behaviour etc .

How to decide on age group?
It's not the age but developmental stage….. good language skills but bad social skills: 5/6 year olds??? We need to talk to teachers.

TIMETABLE:

OL to talk to Leo Harding

Teachers and speech and lang therapists focus group

Scotland units for ASD

Studies in January
OL look for EU partners in Helsinki IST

Find out EU meetings in disability area

Next meeting?:
                        November 20th, Glasgow?

Issue of Kaska moving to London – get new RA??

ACTION: Annalu produce document for NHS – Ethics Committee thing

ACTION: Helen disclosure issues