

## **Preface**

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This book is one of the outcomes of a Working Conference on the topic of 'ICT and the Teacher of the Future', which took place in Melbourne, Australia, in January 2003. The conference was held under the auspices of the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP). Technical Committee 3 (TC3) of IFIP, through the activities of its seven Working Groups, focuses on different aspects of the impact of Information and Communication Technologies on Education. The conference that was the impetus for this publication was organised jointly by Working Group 3.1 (Secondary Education) and Working Group 3.3 (Research).

In addition to the text of the papers delivered by the three keynote speakers, the book comprises a selection of the papers presented by delegates at the conference, along with reports of the discussions of Focus Groups working in each topic area.

All of the papers presented at the conference were reviewed by members of the International Programme Committee and the National Organising Committee. Those selected for publication as chapters in this book have subsequently undergone an additional process of collaborative editing before qualifying for inclusion. It is our belief that these papers collectively present a very comprehensive overview of the concerns and developments in the use of Information and Communication Technologies that are currently of relevance to educators and educational policy makers across the globe. While the papers in one sense incorporate wide-ranging perspectives

deriving from varying national contexts, their grouping within topic areas reveals more commonalities of concern than differences.

The first topic area, *The Teacher of the Future as a Professional*, focuses on the changing requirements for both the initial preparation and the continuing professional education of teachers. These concerns are often expressed, particularly by educators in the field, in terms of the constant and seemingly increasing pressure to simply keep up with new technological developments of relevance to education. The deeper issues, however, as reflected in the selected papers, relate not merely to the acquisition of technological competencies, but rather to gaining and maintaining an understanding of the relationship between the capabilities of the technology and pedagogical theory and practice. It is this very complex requirement that can be seen as mounting the greatest challenge to the professionalism of the teacher of the future.

The second area, *Classroom Roles of the Teacher of the Future* is concerned more specifically with the way in which developments in Information and Communication Technologies are changing the way in which teachers interact with students. Even within the more traditionally organised, basically face-to-face classroom, both the capabilities of the technology and the expectations raised by it are creating subtle but important shifts in the perceived role of the teacher. Within electronic environments, these effects are far more obvious. The papers that make up this section of the book explore different aspects of this issue.

Finally, the section *Teaching and Learning Environments of the Future* examines a range of pedagogical scenarios in differing stages of development and implementation, each of which provides a special insight into how the 'classroom of the future' might function. It is worth noting that, while this topic area was designated at the conference itself as 'teaching environments of the future', the emphases and terminology of the papers themselves appeared to favour a clearer emphasis on 'learning', as reflected in the wording used in this book.

The Focus Group Reports that complete each section of the book represent an important component of the professional interactions that are part of an IFIP Working Conference. The opportunity for delegates to meet together in a structured context for significant amounts of time to discuss and debate the material presented in the papers related to each topic area is invaluable in terms of synthesising the key issues and of identifying themes for further research and development.

As editors of this book we have enjoyed and have benefited significantly from the privilege of interacting closely, both face-to-face and through the medium of ICT, with innovative educational theoreticians and practitioners from many different countries. One of the key attributes of Information and

Communication Technologies is the ability to dissolve a number of the practical barriers to interaction between people, including teachers and students, of different nationalities and different degrees of geographical separation. We are pleased that this book reflects, albeit in microcosm, the types of benefit that derive from such global interaction.

Information and Communication Technology and the  
Teacher of the Future

IFIP TC3 / WG3.1 & WG3.3 Working Conference on ICT  
and the Teacher of the Future January 27-31, 2003,  
Melbourne, Australia

Dowling, C.; Kwok-Wing Lai (Eds.)

2003, XVI, 312 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-1-4020-7604-6