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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

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The current issue of *Teaching English with Technology – A Journal for Teachers of English* closes the third year of its existence. During that time, the Journal has hosted a variety of authors dealing with a plethora of topics related to different aspects of Computer-Assisted Language Learning, Computer-Assisted Teaching, Computer-Based Testing, Computer-Managed Instruction, Computer-Mediated Communication, to name just a few. It seems that over these years we have seen the development of contributions from spontaneous applications in particular contexts to more systematic and well-thought-out approaches dealing with successful implementations of technology.

I would like to start this editorial with thanking the members of the editorial board, Jozsef Horvath, Maria Jose Luzon Marco and Guo Shesen, for their work of reviewing manuscripts and writing contributions, especially taking into account doing that on the voluntary basis.

Equally great thanks go to all the contributors of the Journal, especially those who have regularly devoted their time and effort to sharing their expertise with our readers from all over the world: Maria Jose Luzon Marco; Marcin Jonik; Hee-Jung Jung; Guo Shesen; Wlodzimierz Sobkowiak; Pawel Topol; Rachel Ellis; Katalin Fazekas; Shiao-Chuan Kung; Peiya Gu; Fang Ying; Jolanta Czarniakowska-Filipek and Miroslawa Podgorska. I would like to express our gratitude for understanding and cooperation during the publication process, which is necessary to maintain the high quality of the Journal.

The Journal, published by IATEFL Poland Computer Special Interest Group, acknowledges the great help of the Group, and especially the one of Wojciech Korput, the Group Webmaster, giving the final shape to the Journal issues on the Web at http://www.iatefl.org.pl/call/callnl.htm, and Ela Gajek, the Group Coordinator, encouraging us to continue the work. It is to be hoped that in the future the support of group members will be unfading.

The current, January, issue of *Teaching English with Technology* opens with the article "Computer-

Mediated Communication: Practice, Projects and Purposes" by Caroline Mei Lin Ho, who reviews the field of computer-mediated communication (CMC) with a focus on work in instructional settings, considering English speaker contexts with attention given to work in Asia.

The Internet Lesson Plans section contains three activities that highlight different aspects of technology-enhanced instruction: "Film Scripts Online" by Marcin Jonik joins in one lesson listening comprehension work while watching DVD video and vocabulary practice by using subtitles. "Nosy Neighbours" by Shiao-Chuan Kung shows the effective application of online chatrooms in language instruction, while Rachel Ellis and Felicity McCardle, in their contribution "Instant Lessons – Both In and Out of the Classroom", demonstrate the possibilities of constructing Internet-assisted lessons using Reuters news stories.

Another contribution in the Internet English section, "Cookies and Coldfusion" by Katalin Fazekas, is another passage from an IT English Reader compiled by the author, which aims at increasing IT students' knowledge of specific vocabulary and improving their reading skills.

The Software section contains two articles – one being "Screen Recording Software – A Comparative Review" by Stan Bogdanov, a detailed comparison of different programs that can be used by teachers and teacher trainers to demonstrate instructions interactively. The other, "From Chatting to Oral Fluency – Using Chat to Improve Self-confidence and Increase Willingness to Communicate" by Lily Compton, describes how a synchronous chat freeware can be utilized to increase learners' self-confidence, and, in consequence, their willingness to communicate orally in a language class.

Finally, Mary Papayianni, in her contribution "The Web, Concordance and Virtual Reality in Studying Literature", focuses on the use of the three tools in the process of teaching and learning of literary and cultural studies. It is the author's purpose to demonstrate how literature students can be provided with a new perspective of stories, the ability to observe things in a different way, and the way of maintaining their interest in literature.

As demonstrated above, the current issue of *Teaching English with Technology* offers an extremely broad array of ideas and methods for implementing different aspects of technology in teaching EFL/ESL. It is hoped that the readers will find some of the issues applicable to their own teaching situations.

I wish you good reading.

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ARTICLES

COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION: PRACTICE, PROJECTS AND PURPOSES

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Abstract
This paper reviews the field of computer-mediated communication (CMC) with a focus on work in instructional settings. Studies from native English speaker and non-native English speaker contexts are considered with attention given to work in Asia, and specifically Singapore. It is hoped that the review will provide an overview of existing studies in the field and offer a framework within which the dynamics of CMC can be better understood, with pedagogical implications for classroom practitioners to consider.

1. Introduction

This paper reviews the field of computer-mediated communication (CMC) with specific attention given to work in instructional settings. The range of studies from a broad spectrum of different perspectives essentially comprises three categories: participation behaviour, discourse-based studies and educational CMC in instructional settings. Native English speaker, first language contexts as well as non-native, ESL or EFL contexts are considered in the review. It is hoped that the review will provide an overview of existing studies in the field and offer a framework within which the dynamics of CMC can be better understood with practical considerations for the language teacher.

1.1 Computer-mediated communication

CMC can be broadly defined as "human communication via computer" (Higgins, 1991). It involves interaction between humans using computers to connect to each other and generally refers to "any communication pattern mediated through the computer" (Metz, 1994: 32). What is significant is that the communication takes place "*through* a computer between human beings, instead of *to* an already

determined computer system" (Ferrara et al, 1991: 31). Today, the technology for CMC has advanced to incorporating aural and visual input into text. In this paper, studies on text-only asynchronous CMC will be reviewed.

CMC was originally, in the 1960s, associated with communication in the defence and academic domains for military research purposes (Hiltz and Turoff, 1993). Over time, technological advancement enabled greater and more extensive use of CMC for commercial purposes, and encouraged the exponential spread and development of commercial networking on the global Internet scenario. Electronic mail (email) is recognized as the most popular application of CMC where it is more widely used than other services of the Net (Anderson, 1987; Blackwell, 1987; Weisband, 1987). Today, a total of 498 million people have Internet access from home (Nielsen NetRatings, 2002).

2. Review of previous research in the field

CMC research, as stated earlier, could be broadly classified into three areas. The first involves participation issues, namely, aspects of student participation or non- participation, attitudes and participation styles of students and teachers. The second area comprises discourse-based studies which determine characteristic linguistic features representing the discourse generated. The studies also extend to examining structural features and patterns of discourse organisation. The third area focuses on educational CMC in instructional settings through information communication technology (ICT)-based projects with a focus on teaching and learning concerns including curricular matters and overall effectiveness for educational purposes (Romiszowski and Mason, 1996). Each area identified will now be considered in the following sections.

2.1 Participation-centred studies

Research on the social dynamics of computer use have essentially focused on participation concerns in terms of who communicates with whom and how much in CMC. The interest has basically centred on the following areas: the degree of participation in computer-mediated interaction compared to classrooms, and the extent of democracy and equality in CMC participation (McConnell, 1988; Chun, 1994).

Earlier studies on the degree of participation among students and instructors in CMC set-ups showed a democratic representation of participation (McConnell, 1988) with equal opportunity for participants to express their opinions that would have been impossible in face-to-face sessions, and an even higher percentage of student-student compared to student-teacher interaction (Chun, 1994) due to the "emancipatory medium" (McConnell, 1988: 160) of computer conferencing. Students' improved

writing in computer-networked classrooms was a contrast to traditional classroom work, confirming findings from earlier studies (Hartman et al, 1991; Mabrito, 1991: 1992) where electronic discussions resulted in qualitative improvement in writing. The potential for deeper, more thoughtful classroom interaction is increased as participants reflect on or look up information before responding (Romiszowski and de Haas, 1989). In addition, discussion transcripts offer a permanent writing record which is not possible in oral discussion. Studies in the social psychological domain of CMC have, on the whole, shown the impact of group communication dynamics on the learning process in promoting democratic participation, and in enhancing the social presence and level of awareness of other participants.

CMC studies on participation behaviour generally showed a higher degree of participation with equal opportunities provided for the expression of opinions. Student participation, specifically among otherwise passive and reticent students, was greater in CMC than oral discussions. There was more openness in electronic discussions compared to face-to-face interaction, with electronic discussions seen as a highly participatory and democratic medium of communication "equalizing" participation. This may be due to CMC being perceived as less threatening than face-to-face interaction, thus encouraging risk-taking and a more adventurous spirit in language use (Kern, 1995; Kelm, 1995; Warschauer, 1996). According to Sproull and Kiesler (1991: 48-49),

> People interacting on a computer are isolated from social cues and feel safe from surveillance and criticism. This feeling of privacy makes them feel less inhibited with others. It also makes it easy for them to disagree with, confront, or take exception to others' opinions.

However, participation-type studies in CMC focus largely on the quantification of the frequency of participation and/or the length and number of turn-taking without adequately taking into account the complexities and intricacies associated with the dynamics of an evolving form of multi-party communication. Further, it is not tenable to suggest that learning benefits to participants could be assessed through statistical measures of participation rates and the frequency of individual contributions alone. The specific effects of the computer medium on the dialoguing process of participants in an online environment have not been as extensively and systematically researched. Further research into this would prove enlightening where the dynamics of participant interaction through the computer messaging system are concerned, and may offer insights for the effective management and control of learning through computer-mediated interactions.

2.2 Discourse-centred studies

Studies in CMC discourse are generally aimed at determining the nature of discourse generated,

namely, how the discourse differs from other types (oral and/or written) and the extent to which written or spoken English features are evident. Discourse focus in CMC also allows for examining the structuring of computer-mediated messages. Attention is given to sequential organisation of messages in an online environment. The resulting "style" which characterises the discourse is also of interest in this area.

2.2.1 Linguistic features of computer-mediated discourse

Studies on the nature of electronic discourse involve both L1 (Murray, 1985, 1988, 1991; Ferrara et al, 1991; Collot and Bellmore, 1993; Davis and Brewer, 1997; Slaouti, 1998; Gruber, 2000; Matthews, 2000) and L2 contexts (Kern, 1993; Chun, 1994; Kitade, 2000). Murray's (1985, 1988, 1991) work showed computer "conversation" discourse to be interactive, displaying both oral and written discourse features. The former is characterised by "active voice and personal pronouns; emotive and informal diction; hedging and vagueness; paralinguistic cues; and direct quotations" (Murray, 1985: 217) and forms of fragmentation, in particular, ellipsis and contractions. The latter comprised more formal pronoun use, highly technical language and definiteness (Murray, 1991a:36), and integration through "nominalisation and attributive adjectives; participles and complement and relative clauses" (Murray, 1985: 220). Computer conversation did not have "a static place on the oral/written continuum" but rather moved "back and forth between writer-style and talker-style, as interactants change voice" (ibid: 224).

The notion of an "emergent" form of discourse is further reinforced in studies (Davis and Brewer, 1997; Slaouti, 1998; Gruber, 2000) of students' electronic discussions where texts feature a combination of written and oral features, reflective of a "writing talking" (ibid: 165) type with "hybrid" characteristics of the two modes. Finer interaction type distinctions surfaced in studies (Matthews, 2000) which showed general discussions with more transactional dialogue and abstract-centred ones having more interactional dialogue.

The studies examined are generally agreed upon the "hybrid" nature of electronic discourse with both oral and written discourse features, and varying degrees of detailed specification with regard to specific features. The discourse is termed "interactive" or "emergent" where features do not remain fixed but vary according to functions in contexts where they occur. The approach remains very much at the level of classifying features into one mode of discourse or another, or quantitative in statistically tabulating and cataloguing lists of features identified. The specifics of how discourse features and linguistic devices function to fulfil particular roles within specific contexts in the dynamic, interactive environment of online communication, however, do not appear to have received comparable attention.

2.2.2 Structural features and sequential organization of discourse

Interest in the spoken-written discourse relation has also extended to examining sequential structures of electronic messages in the form of comparative studies (Black et al, 1983; Severinson, 1986) of computer-mediated communication with oral discourse. Black et al's (1983) study indicated that strict sequentiality was not universal. In computer-mediated discussions, several topics were simultaneously pursued through "multiple threads of discourse" rather than one at a time in face-to-face interactions. Secondly, the sequential organization was a simplified two-part Initiation-Reply instead of a three-part Initiation-Reply-Feedback structure (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). Thirdly, a longer lag time between Initiation-Reply components was evident compared to face-to-face interactions. These findings were also reinforced in Severinson's (1986) study which revealed the simultaneous management of several topics, a prototypical two-part question-answer exchange instead of three-part and the absence of independent feedback moves.

Severinson's empirical study, like Black et al's (1983), however, did not allow for various initiation types, and topic maintenance and development to be further pursued. Investigation into these issues would fill the gap in an area critical to an understanding of effective electronic dialoguing. While the selected comparative studies suggest that electronic communication differs linguistically from traditional written and spoken discourse, there is still room for further research to identify specific discourse features and linguistic devices which impact on participant interaction, and which account for the specifics of multiple threading of discourse that enable the online construction of coherent "conversation" in a discussion forum.

Discourse-centred studies have identified specific linguistic features characterising electronic discourse as recognisable text types which may share similarities or differences with oral and/or written modes of discourse. The terms "spoken" and "written" have been replaced with other terms for the ends of the discourse spectrum, such as "interactive versus edited text" (Biber, 1986: 395) or "spontaneous" versus "self-monitored" discourse (Halliday, 1978: 69). Computer-mediated discourse is also usually placed at the oral end of the continuum (Schafer, 1981; Scribner and Cole, 1981; Chafe, 1985).

Studies of CMC discourse have, for the most part, seen more quantitative measures (number of participants, number of messages, number and length of conferences, etc). The volume of messages is taken as an implicit measure of the efficiency and effectiveness of online exchange. Participation is measured by the number of messages transmitted, the number of server accesses, the duration of consultations and even the number of lines of text transmitted (Hiltz, 1986). These need to be balanced with a focus on discourse features and strategic linguistic devices in relation to the nature of

interactivity and electronic development of topics across messages.

One such attempt is Ho's (2002) study of asynchronous communication in an electronic discussion forum, largely influenced by conversational and discourse analyses, and multi-party online communication. The analysis of the nature and structuring of discourse determines how messages are recognised linguistically to fulfil specific functional roles in the forum. Emphasis is placed on the mechanisms underlying the dynamics of participant interaction and the extent to which participants constitute an identifiable discourse community which regulates and helps to establish conventions in the forum. Except for Ho (2002), there remains a dearth of local in-depth studies which relate the examination of specific discourse features and linguistic strategies to the construction of interaction and topic within a community with a recognisable identity.

2.3 Education-centred studies

Studies on CMC in instructional settings are usually project-based, involving online collaborative exchange using computer networks. These are commonly observed in the language arts for local and global linking of classrooms, group problem-solving at the primary and secondary levels, and as a means of group interaction in distance and higher education (Higgins, 1991). The asynchronicity of CMC and its independence of place supporting participants anywhere in the world have made it notably advantageous as a form of communication in educational delivery and interaction promoting collaborative learning among participants (Turoff, 1990: ix).

Online projects of ESL university students in international, cross-cultural collaboration (Tella, 1991 and 1992; Bellman et al, 1993; Vilmi, 1994; Shamoon, 1998; Yu and Yu, 2002) generally yield positive language learning results. The BESTNET project indicated that students' anonymous identities were a "valuable pedagogical resource for initiating the discussion, and in sustaining and promoting the strong assertive remarks" (Bellman et al, 1993: 241). Other benefits (ibid: 241-242) ranged from facilitating off-campus or distance education to promoting active learning and participation among learners, and encouraging overall gains in literacy and critical thinking development. Similar positive results were noted in other studies: greater student collaboration, authenticity and high motivation in technical writing as well as increased enthusiasm, increased and improved writing quality through peer feedback and reflection (Vilmi, 1994; Shamoon,1998; Yu and Yu, 2002).

University-level CMC projects have generally supplemented existing modes of instruction, and extended students' learning tasks and activities at various levels. The learning process is enhanced through what is seen as a novel approach which develops communication skills and provides exposure to resources and global viewpoints through active collaboration. Students' engagement with each other

enables the cultural aspects of target languages to be learnt in a more dynamic way than if teachers only were to provide the input. In schools, CMC is seen as a means of "extending the boundaries of an environment, regardless of actual physical location" (Tille and Hall, 1998:118), and encouraging information gathering from local and global sources (Brush, 1998; Tille and Hall, 1998; Grimes and Owens, 1998; Shulman, 2001).

Brush's (1998) novice-expert computer networking among elementary students and senior citizens facilitated the electronic sharing of information and a wide range of perspectives and viewpoints regarding historical, social and political issues. Tille and Hall's (1998) project of students' online interviews and correspondence revealed CMC as a useful tool which "enhances the writing process, augments collaboration, develops new and valuable communication skills, and provides exposure to new resources and global viewpoints" (Berge and Collins, 1998: 10). Grimes and Owens' (1998) study of students' email involved an information exchange and research-correspondence which provided students a "challenging and rejuvenating learning experience" (ibid: 127) for both students and teachers with quantitative and qualitative improvements from increased message length to students' overall positive attitude and enthusiasm. Collaborative, cross-cultural Internet projects (Shulman, 2001) integrated classroom learning with online experiences and enhanced students' reading and writing skills, expanding their cross-cultural skills and sharpening their technological abilities. The collaboration resulted in positive benefits which included a review of traditional classroom practices, development of alternative styles of learning, accelerated learning of reading and writing skills, greater student participation and the building of a community of learners where students feel they are "part of a social process rather than learning in isolation" (ibid: paragraph 13).

The overall "empowerment and emancipation effects" (Higgins, 1991) of CMC is widely acknowledged in the educational context, given its accessibility, economical and inexpensive use relative to other technologies (Turoff, 1990: ix). Students learn to negotiate ideas about what is learnt among themselves and to collaboratively construct new knowledge. This leads to positive results in language learning, ranging from improved writing skills; overall positive attitude and enthusiasm towards the use of the computer for communication; to personal gains through a more diverse outlook and perspective, and finally to heightened cross-cultural self-awareness.

While these are overall positive gains, education-centred studies remain essentially project reports detailing concrete and observable instructional objectives realised in terms of specific learning outcomes and the stages of implementation to achieve those goals. The nature of CMC use in the classroom context is very much informed and directed by the goals set out in these projects. While

these project-based studies may serve specific educational learning goals for which the projects are planned, they are not, in themselves, research studies grounded in systematic, rigorous inquiry aimed at developing discourse-based models of investigation on specific aspects of CMC. Neither does the use of CMC in such contexts represent the use of technology in generating a spontaneous and naturally-occurring form of discourse in an informal context. The studies remain within the confines of a purely educational setting, framed by pre-determined instructional concerns.

There is room for further research in examining CMC guided by specific theoretical constructs and underlying principles to facilitate a more informed approach to investigating naturally-occurring computer-mediated interaction. According to Harasim (1989: 50), adhering strictly to the traditional perspective of CMC in the educational context, namely as "a variant of distance education or as an extension of classroom activities", may lead to a limited understanding and appreciation of the "full potential of this new medium".

Further, it has been noted that while positive language learning generally results in the technology-enhanced classroom, it is the "communicative facilities of the Net rather than the resources offered" (Ho, 1997: 24) that are actively tapped by teachers and students. It is thus reasonable to assume that given the implementation of CMC in the classroom, the value of computer-mediated networking must extend beyond mere information dissemination to the integration of response to opinions and reactive feedback given, and the construction and management of diverse opinions and perspectives in online discussions. This is an area worth looking into which has not been given comparable attention in the field.

2.4 Singapore-based research

Studies in Singapore can be broadly categorised into two main groups, namely educational application as in students' computer networking through cross-cultural, international projects, and the study of language use through computer-mediated discussions, including Internet newsgroups or Internet Relay Chat (IRC). A third more recent area involves the use of different forms of technology in CMC for online discussions.

The first category of studies (Soh and Soon, 1991; Ho, 2000) which focuses on the computer as a communicative and learning tool yielded generally positive benefits for students, namely, in communication skills and personal enrichment of their lives through heightened cultural awareness.

The second set of studies (Tan, 1995; Foo, 1996; Tse, 1999) focusing on the type of language resulting from the specific form of CMC used, revealed insights into students' cultural and national identity, and the extent to which the variety of English used characterises CMC.

Tan's (1995) investigation of language use in an Internet Relay Chat (IRC) programme focused on the "country-specific" and "non-country specific" channels; the latter further categorised between topic-focused and non-topic focused channels. English was regarded as having greater "international utility" as a lingua franca compared to other languages used in IRC for communicating across national or ethnic groups. Foo's (1996) study of Singaporean Internet participants in an Internet newsgroup "soc.culture.singapore" showed the development of "Internet English", with a distinct set of lexis and syntactic structures and Singaporeans' adaptability in their ability to merge both types of discourses together.

A third area of growing research interest focuses on online discussions using various forms of technology recently introduced in Singapore (Lim et al, 2002). Lim et al (ibid) examined the use of Wireless Application Protocol (WAP), General Packet Radio Service (GPRS) and 3G (Third Generation) technologies in supporting electronic discussions in learning communities. These different forms of technology are additional tools that allow students and tutors access to the Internet, anywhere and anytime, via the micro browser-equipped wireless phone. The project explored their opportunities and limitations through a classroom case study with implementation concerns and benefits to students dominating the focus.

The available Singapore-based studies have been primarily concerned with collaborative computer-networking of students with their overseas peers. These have led to general improvements in students' command of English, and their personal development and awareness of themselves as members of a global community. The remaining isolated studies on newsgroups and the Internet Relay Chat mainly by students and undergraduates have attempted to characterise the type of English used by Singaporean participants through which a distinctive identity among participants is evident. However, the data size of these studies is often too limited to enable conclusive generalisations to be made. Recent attempts at examining different forms of technology focused on issues relating to implementation concerns and general positive gains to students.

3. Implications

Product-focused versus process-centred

There is an overemphasis in projects on the final products generated from CMC tasks/activities involving participants in various settings and contexts. This needs to be balanced against attention to the processes involved, namely, with regard to the nature of interactivity and the dynamics involved in participating in an online environment. To what extent are participants involved in CMC adequately

equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to engage effectively in interacting in a medium which is unlike a traditionally oral and/or written mode?

Personal recounts versus objective analyses

Many CMC studies feature participants' narrating their personal experiences or specific encounters within particular contexts. There is a detailing of procedural steps involved and highlighting of problems faced without necessarily considering the possible outcomes or recommendations which can be generalized and applied to wider contexts Often, investigators' reported case studies of their experiences with and observations of those involved are emphasized over empirical research involving detailed transcript analysis and processing of textual data which would offer useful insights to both researchers and practitioners alike.

Quantitative versus qualitative aspects of computer-mediated communication

Statistical, quantitative data analyses drawn from CMC projects involve enumerating or quantifying the number (frequency) and duration of specific aspects of interaction in computer-mediated environments. The concern is with how much or how often as opposed to how well or fully developed, expressed or adequate are participants engaged in the interaction. Specific discourse features, central linguistic resources and adaptive participant strategies which characterise the interactivity of computer-mediated discussion are not given as much attention.

Optional extra versus optimal integration

CMC studies may come across as a supplement to teaching where they are realised as additional tasks or optional extras rather than as well-integrated practices which have been fully infused into the curriculum with specific learning outcomes made clear to both teachers and students. The danger is to see these computer-mediated tasks and activities as supplements remaining on the periphery of classroom practice, or worse, as "showy" presentations or school projects, and not practices worthy of study and implementation in their own right.

4. Conclusion

The studies reviewed provide a background framework with which to understand the number of earlier studies as well as ongoing growing interest and developments in CMC. Substantial proportion of studies, however, are noted to explore the potential of CMC for educational purposes in the form of investigators' case studies rather than empirical research involving detailed analysis and processes involved in participant interaction. There is still room within the area of content analysis to examine specific discourse features and strategies drawn from electronic messages generated through CMC in

relation to the process of interactivity and the dynamics involved in a community of online participants. Findings from most of the studies in CMC can be broadly categorised into the following main areas: democratic student participation with more participation from otherwise passive or reticent students; and positive effects including heightened cross-cultural awareness, gains in general language learning and the affective domain with an overall positive attitude towards computer use for communication. Previous studies of CMC have also focused on psychological factors affecting attitude and participation or on the perceived attributes of the medium, often using small and specific data sets. There is considerable room for further research as a large number of earlier studies have not been widely extensive.

Existing studies generally point to the linguistic differences of electronic discourse from both traditional written and oral discourse. What is less evident are participants' specific strategies as they engage in interaction, given the demands placed on them through CMC. Specific discourse features, central linguistic resources and adaptive participant strategies which characterise the interactivity of computer-mediated discussion have yet to be adequately examined. According to Kelm (1992: 445), the "interactive quality" of discourse frequently associated with this form of communication has been likened to real conversation, but generally along what has been recognised to be impressionistic lines. Further, as Ortega (1997: 87) noted, "the discoursal status of language produced in electronic interactions seem(ed) difficult to determine", and appears not to have been given comparable attention as project-based studies.

The general picture which emerges is that until now studies involving CMC have been approached from largely the educational context through projects at both school and university levels; and taken the form of discourse-based studies primarily aimed at highlighting similarities and differences in oral and/or written language, and participation-centred studies using largely quantitative measures of participation. A large number of studies have been anecdotal or isolated projects directed by specific educational outcomes which largely determine their implementation and focus on a tangible, concrete product. These studies are not necessarily influenced by methods of inquiry with the potential of developing an integrated approach to examining discourse which is naturally occurring, organic and dynamic in its nature and development. As electronic discourse differs from print texts, the approach taken, whether in research or classroom implementation, needs to give due consideration to the electronic communication generated and the community which supports its practice as discourse unique in themselves. A need remains to re-focus text-based asynchronous communication as extended stretches of discourse which cohere, and contribute to meaningful and coherent discourse, and which

characterise individual participants as members of a distinct community.

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INTERNET LESSON PLANS

FILM SCRIPTS ONLINE

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Introduction

It goes without saying that the English language we teach by means of textbooks and their components is largely an idealised form of the language. When it comes to real life encounters, it transpires, English is not that 'well-structured'. Grammatical rules 'collapse', accents become 'unfamiliar and funny', vocabulary seems far less 'innocent'. Confronted with native English speakers in their environment, students suddenly come to realise that this is not exactly the type of English they have been taught in school. In order to save students from such shocks, teachers cannot rely solely on textbooks. Students should be exposed to real-life language, such as the one found in songs or films, full of verbal extremes, where archaism occurs alongside new coinage, formality next door to slang, etc. Famous masterpieces like 'Braveheart', 'Gangs of New York', 'Pearl Harbour', 'A Beautiful Mind' 'Elizabeth I', 'Shakespeare in Love', '8 Mile', 'Ali G Indahouse', etc. bristle with all kinds of accents and dialects, archaic vocabulary, scientific language, and specialised military expressions. And, most importantly, they feature slang binding together members of a subculture.

Let's face the truth, this is the real-life English to be taught. Otherwise, our best students will never be able to understand English lyrics or go to the cinema and watch English films without having to read subtitles. And sadly enough, they will have difficulty communicating in English speaking countries.

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Level: Pre-intermediate ('A Beautiful Mind'- based activity)

Advanced/Proficiency ('Shakespeare In Love' - based activity)

Time: 45 minutes or more (depending on the number of activities covered)

Aims:

- to make students aware of the learning potential of the Internet
- to make students aware of film being an extremely powerful language learning tool encompassing infinite libraries of authentic spoken English in the form that can hardly be met in textbooks or elsewhere
- to present ways of finding film transcripts for educational purposes
- to introduce new expressions (contextualised in films)

Technical requirements: One computer per student or two students, connected to the Internet

Other resources used: Overhead projector, websites, television set, video player, video, cassettes with the original versions of the films 'A Beautiful Mind' and 'Shakespeare In Love'

Knowledge: Students should be skilled at typing the URLs, using search engines, downloading text files as well as opening them; they may have to be able to extract files in order to read them

Necessary preparation: Teacher must make sure that all the computers are correctly networked and have access to the Internet. It is highly advisable that the computers have software to decompress *.rar, and *zip packed files. The free software can be easily downloaded from Internet at, e.g: http://www.underpl.org

Possible problems:

Teacher should control and facilitate the searching process. Some students may have problems defining the relevant search criteria as well as extracting and opening the downloaded files. Pre-intermediate students are more than likely to have difficulty in understanding technical instructions in English; thus their mother tongue is preferable at some stages of the lesson.

Procedure:

Pre-stage (offline)

1. Teacher asks students if they watched the film 'A Beautiful Mind' and what they can remember about its storyline, characters, etc.

2. Teacher tells students they are going to watch a five-minute extract [01:35:15 - 01:40:49] from that film, involving Russell Crowe (as *John Nash*), Jennifer Connelly (as *Alicia Nash*) and Christopher Plummer (as *Dr Rosen*).

In order to check how well students understood the piece, teacher may ask simple questions, e.g.: *Why did John stop taking his medicine?* or *What can John do best?*

The full list of questions prepared by the teacher should preferably be displayed with an overhead

projector. Most students are likely to be able to answer suchlike questions after the first watching. It is expected, however, that they will have problems with more detailed understanding of the scene. When it comes to more difficult questions, they might not be able to answer, e.g.: *What kind of therapy does Dr Rosen suggest? What does he say about schizophrenia? According to Dr Rosen, how can you not treat schizophrenia?*

At this point, such questions should stay unanswered until later in the lesson.

3. As students watch the scene again (and yet again, if needed), they will be asked to complete the missing sentences in the following piece, the copies of which are distributed:

[01:35:15 - 01:40:49]
Rosen: You see them now?
John: Yes.
Rosen: Why did you stop your meds?
John: ..... I couldn't help with the baby. I couldn't... I couldn't respond to my wife. You think that's better than being crazy?
Rosen: We'll need to start you on a higher run of insulin shocks and a new medication.
John: No. There has to be another way.
Rosen: Schizophrenia is degenerative. ..... But over time, you are getting worse.
John: It's a problem. That's all it is. It's a problem with no solution. ..... I solve problems. That's what I do best.
Rosen: This isn't math. You can't come up with a formula to change the way you experience the world.
John: All I have to do is apply my mind.
Rosen: There's no theorem, no proof. You can't reason your way out of this.
John: Why not? Why can't l?
Rosen: .....
John: I can do this. I can work it out. ..... . Is that the baby?
Alicia: The baby's at my mother's, John.
Rosen: .....
Alicia: You almost ready? Rosen's waiting outside.
John: ..... I won't come home.
Alicia: He said that if you said that, he has commitment papers for me to sign.
John: Well, maybe you won't sign them. ..... I will try to figure this out. Whatever you do, Rosen is right about one thing. You shouldn't be here. .....
Alicia: Would you have hurt me, John?
John: ..... Maybe you should let Dr. Rosen drive you to your mother's.
Alicia: Rosen said to call if you try and kill me or anything. You want to know what's real? This. This. This. ..... . Maybe the part that knows the waking from the dream, maybe it isn't here. Maybe it's here. .....
.....

While-stage (online)

3. Teacher suggests self-checking. The following list of web sites is put forward: http://dvd.box.sk; http://divxstation.com/subtitles.asp; http://hot.ee/subland; http://divxsubtitles.net; http://subtitles.cz

Note! These are some of the largest sites devised to find subtitles for DivX, DVD and VCD movies. They offer free downloading (and uploading) of thousands of subtitles in all the world's languages, which are recorded as text files (*.txt; *.sub; *srt). Files of the foregoing extensions can easily be opened by means of word processors such as Microsoft Word, as well as other popular software, e.g. Windows Notepad, Windows Commander, Total Commander, etc. Although watching films in the form of DivX's is a very popular type of entertainment with students, they are highly unlikely to look for English transcripts of the films they watch. Therefore, it is advisable the teacher lead the students through the search process to give them example.

Teacher asks students to enter the first of the presented sites and type '*beautiful mind'* in its search engine. On finding the relevant files, the search should be narrowed down to '*English'*. From among the list of files found, it is recommended students should download the one contributed by *ALXEMI*. (Note: You need to be selective when it comes to picking out files with film subtitles. Some files may provide inaccurate subtitles; thus it is advisable to check them out before use). After unpacking it, we will receive the following text file: *ingles.srt*, with the subtitles in request. In order to check their exercise, students should find the fragment of the given the time frame (01:35:15 - 01:40:49). Here's part of the extract they need:

1239
01:35:15,800 --> 01:35:17,319
You see them now?
1240
01:35:26,199 --> 01:35:27,840
Yes.
1241
01:35:30,039 --> 01:35:32,239
Why did you stop your meds?
1242
01:35 :34,399 --> 01:35 :36,640
Because I couldn't do my work.
1243
01:35 :36,720 --> 01:35 :38,560
I couldn't help with the baby.
1244
01:35 :38,640 --> 01:35 :40,319
I couldn't-
1245
01:35 :41,760 --> 01:35 :43,880

I couldn't respond to my wife.
(.....)
1285
01:39 :34,840 --> 01:39 :38,199
Rosen said to call if you try and kill me or anything.
1286
01:39 :53,880 --> 01:39 :56,079
You want to know what's real?
1287
01:40:01,319 --> 01:40:03,199
This.
1288
01:40:10,199 --> 01:40:12,079
This.
1289
01:40:17,159 --> 01:40:19,000
This.
1290
01:40:20,359 --> 01:40:22,439
This is real.
1291
01:40:25,640 --> 01:40:27,920
Maybe the part...
1292
01:40:28,000 --> 01:40:30,279
that knows the waking from the dream,
1293
01:40:31,640 --> 01:40 :33,479
maybe it isn't here.
1294
01:40 :37,199 --> 01:40 :39,560
Maybe it's here.
1295
01:40 :44,039 --> 01:40 :46,279
I need to believe...
1296
01:40 :46,359 --> 01:40 :49,640
that something extraordinary is possible.

Note! After the students compared their completed sentences with the above script, they may want to watch this emotional scene again.

4. For better understanding of the scene, students are encouraged to check out the expressions they may not understand, e.g. *meds, respond to (someone), a run of insulin shocks, degenerative, come up with a formula, apply your mind, theorem, work it out, commitment papers, figure out, know the waking from the dream*, etc. Online dictionaries might be of some help here. They can be found at the following sites: www.translate.pl, www.slownik.angielski.edu.pl (English-Polish ones), www.dictionary.com, http://dictionary.cambridge.org (English-only). Alternatively, students can download a file with Polish subtitles for 'A Beautiful Mind' and check out the translation of the scene in question. The largest

databases with film subtitles in Polish can be found at: www.napisy.info, www.napisy.org

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Post-stage (offline)

5. Given the transcript and its translations, it will be far easier for students to answer the detailed questions which were posed just after the first watching (see off-line pre-stage, point 2). A class of advanced students may be assigned a more difficult task to do, such as the one presented below.

Procedure:

Pre-stage (offline)

1. Teacher asks students what they can remember about the film 'Shakespeare in Love', a romantic comedy, which won Academy Awards for Best Actress, Best Supporting Actress, Best Picture, Best Art Direction, Best Costume Design, Best Score and Best Original Screenplay. Alternatively, as an introduction to the film itself, students may be asked some true/false questions about the famous playwright, William Shakespeare, e.g.

1. Shakespeare was born in London .
2. His famous words 'To be or not to be' come from 'Macbeth'.
3. He was 18 when he got married and his wife was 25.
4. He spent about 25 years in London .
5. He died at the age of 52 on his birthday.
6. William had seven brothers and sisters.
7. Shakespeare's parents were poor.
8. Shakespeare built his theatre, the Globe, which could hold 3,000 people.

1. No, Stratford-upon-Avon
2. No, Hamlet
3. Yes
4. Yes
5. Yes
6. Yes
7. No, they were rich.
8. Yes.

For comfort, the quiz could be displayed with an overhead projector. Students can be divided into two teams and given a time limit of 3 minutes for answers.

2. Teacher tells students they are going to watch a three-minute extract (00:36:15 - 00:39:04) from the film 'Shakespeare in Love' involving Gwyneth Paltrow (as *Viola De Lesseps*), Colin Firth (as *Lord Wessex*) and Imelda Staunton (as *Nurse*). As they watch the scene, they are asked to complete the missing expressions in the following transcript, the copies of which are distributed:

[00:36:15 - 00:39:04]
(....) For Lady Viola De Lesseps, by the hand of Thomas Kent.
Viola (reading a poem): Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
..... more lovely and more temperate.
Rough winds do shake the ..... of May
Lord Wessex (interrupting): Two hours at prayer!

Nurse: Lady Viola is ..... , my lord.
Wessex : ..... is for Sunday! And two hours of prayer is not piety, it is .....
Nurse: It would be better that you return tomorrow, my lord.
Wessex: It would be better if you'd tell her to ..... and show some ..... to her six-day lord and master!
Viola: Mmmph!
Wessex: My lady Viola.
Viola: Lord Wessex. You've been waiting.
Wessex: I am aware of it. But it is beauty's privilege.
Viola: You flatter, my lord.
Wessex: No. I have spoken to the queen. Her Majesty's consent is ..... when a Wessex takes a wife, and once given, her consent is her command.
Viola: Do you intend to marry, my lord?
Wessex: Your father should keep you better informed. He has bought me for you. He returns from his ..... to see us married two weeks from Saturday. You are allowed to show your pleasure.
Viola: But I do not love you, my lord.
Wessex: How ..... Your father was a shopkeeper. Your children will bear .... and I will recover my fortune. That is the only matter under discussion today. You will like Virginia.
Viola: Virginia ?
Wessex: Oh, yes. My fortune lies in my plantations. The ..... I need 4,000 pounds to .... and put my investments to work. ..... tobacco has a future. We will not stay there long. Three or four years.
Viola: But why me?
Wessex: It was your eyes. No, your lips. Will you ..... your father and your queen?
Viola: The queen has .....?
Wessex: She wants to inspect you. At Greenwich , ...
Be ..... , modest, grateful and brief.
Viola: I will do my duty, my lord.

(reading out her letter): Master Will, poet dearest to my heart,
I ..... you
..... me from yours.
I am to marry Lord Wessex.
A daughter's duty and the queen's command.

It is purposefully expected that students will find it difficult to complete all the gaps correctly as the missing phrases include such advanced expressions as *civility, beseech, requisite, buds, piety*, etc.

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<u>While-stage (on-line)</u>

3. Teacher informs students that when they watch non-dubbed/subtitled films in their original versions, they are likely to find them difficult to understand. In order to clarify things, they can take advantage of the scripts available on the Net, for almost any film wanted.

Following the same procedure as presented for the scene from 'A Beautiful Mind' (see: online stage, point 3 above), students should enter http://dvd.box.sk and download a recommended text file contributed by SYMBOLMAN. (Note: Files contributed by other authors might contain inaccurate subtitles. If you decide to use other subtitles files, make sure they are right). On opening the file

(Shakespeare in love_ENG.srt) they will easily find the extract they need (time frame: 00:36:15 - 00:39:04), which will look like this:

533
00:36:15,994 --> 00:36:18,554
For Lady Viola De Lesseps,
534
00:36:18,634 --> 00:36:22,388
by the hand of Thomas Kent.
535
00:36:22,474 --> 00:36:25,113
"Shall l compare thee
to a summer's day ?
536
00:36:25,194 --> 00:36:28,504
Thou art more lovely
and more temperate.
537
00:36:31,154 --> 00:36 :33,952
Rough winds do shake
the **darling buds** of May--"

(.....)

580
00:38 :47,554 --> 00:38 :52,105
"Master Will, poet dearest to my heart,
581
00:38 :52,194 --> 00:38 :55,948
l **beseech** you
banish me from yours.
582
00:38 :56,034 --> 00:38 :59,151
l am to marry Lord Wessex .
583
00:39:00,194 --> 00:39:02,503
A daughter's duty...
584
00:39:02,594 --> 00:39:04,903
and the queen's command."

Given the file, students can check out the missing phrases in their transcripts. It is recommended that the unknown phrases be explained. At this stage students may want to watch the scene again to get the new expressions contextualised.

Apart from the 'subtitles servers', such as http://dvd.box.sk, there are also special 'scripts servers', which store full film scripts to be used for educational purposes. Some of the largest selections can be found at: http://www.freemoviescripts.com; http://www.moviefreak.com/scripts/index.htm; http://www.rosebud.com.br/scripts.htm; http://www.script-o-rama.com/filmtranscripts.shtml;

http://www.simplyscripts.com/movie.html; http://www.joblo.com/moviescripts.htm; http://www.movie-page.com/movie_scripts.htm. There you will find a variety of movie scripts, ranging from old to recent movies. Advanced students can have fun reading them aloud or acting them out in drama classes.

The Internet is also an ocean of 'film review sites', recommended for students with a good command of English, where they can find all kinds of information about the films they are interested in. Below are listed some of the best 'film web pages' in English:

http://www.culturevulture.net/Movies/MovieIndex.htm; http://www.crazy4cinema.com/Review/review.html; http://www.dvdverdict.com/reviews; http://www.filmhead.com/reviews/index.html; http://www.filmthreat.com/Reviews.asp; http://www.iofilm.co.uk; http://www.rinkworks.com/movies/search.shtml; http://www.screenit.com/search_movies.html; http://www.thezreview.co.uk/reviews.htm; http://www.tiscali.co.uk/entertainment/film/reviews.

Conclusion

As can see seen, the World Wide Web offers databases with transcripts of virtually any film in English. The scripts are there to be used for all kinds of purposes, including educational. Without doubt, 'film analysis' is a great combination of entertainment and learning. The video courses available for EFL students will never be as attractive and authentic as films such as 'A Beautiful Mind' or 'Shakespeare in Love'. Since ELT publishers cannot afford the copyrights of films like that, they are looking for cheaper productions. However, what cannot be escaped is that with so many students having Internet-connected computers at home, the popularity of DivX's is growing fast. In point of actual fact, DivX's have become as popular as MP3 music, and students watch thousands of films on their computers, most of them being in English. Why not make them aware of the educational opportunities it creates? There is so much new language to be picked up through this medium, the language which is not exactly as ideal as the one in coursebooks from which they are taught.

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NOSY NEIGHBORS: A COLLABORATIVE CHATROOM ACTIVITY

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Introduction

Participating in online chatrooms has increasingly become part of the experience of our computer-literate students. Such synchronous electronic discussions have been advocated for foreign language instruction because they have affective, linguistic, and cognitive advantages (Beauvois, 1997). The various benefits they can provide for foreign language learners were summarized by Kern (1995) as: more frequent opportunity for students to express their ideas than in oral discussions, greater amount of target language production, more time to develop and refine comments - possibly leading to greater precision and sophistication of expression, encouragement of a collaborative spirit, enhanced motivation for language practice, reduction of anxiety in communicating orally in a foreign language, and positive effects on student's writing ability.

On the other hand, there have been some adverse effects of chatroom discussions reported. These include decentering the authority of the teacher's power, lesser attention to grammatical accuracy, less clear coherence and continuity of discussions (Kern, 1995). Other drawbacks are that the text under discussion is not explored in the same way as teacher-driven discussions, and some students experience frustration at having to communicate through a computer, a keyboard, and a screen (Beauvois, 1997). Even though chatrooms allow for the possibility of interaction, the students who cannot type as fast as the rest of the teammates and the ones who are shy and less confident do not necessarily increase their participation. To address this difficulty, teachers can design collaborative activities with clear objectives, unambiguous instructions, and a task that cannot be accomplished without everyone's participation.

This information-gap exercise is such an activity. It places the students in the role of nosy residents of an apartment building. A very quiet young woman named Ms. Taylor recently moved in and the neighbors get together to gossip about her. Each neighbor knows something about her routines and shares his or her observations with the other members of the class.

Level: intermediate or higher

Time: 2 hours

Materials: networked computers with access to online chatrooms.

Preparation

Prepare the lesson by becoming familiar with the chatroom software available at your institution. If necessary, create groups or chatrooms using the chatting software and assign students to a particular group. Decide how many students to assign to a chatroom and assemble enough cards for each member of the class. While seven roles are proposed below, I recommend placing only four or five students in a chatting group. Make arrangements to hold class in a language or computer lab with computers.

Procedure

1. Distribute role-play cards to each member of the class making sure that no two people in a team share the same card. It would be preferable if members of the same team were not seated next to each other. Each card should contain the instructions (figure 1) and the role (selected from figure 2) that they have been assigned.
2. Go over vocabulary words that may be new to the students of the class or culture-specific knowledge that students may not have such as what a grocery bagger and an owner of a coffee stand does.
3. Review the instructions with the class making sure that students understand the make-believe scenario that they are in and the two tasks (i.e. chatroom discussion and letter-writing) that they will have.
4. Ask the students to create three questions that they could ask their classmates to find out more about Ms. Taylor. If necessary, offer example questions such as "What does she do in the afternoons?" and "Does anyone know where she works?"
5. Circulate around the classroom as the students are silently chatting. Make sure that everyone can access the chatroom he or she has been assigned to.
6. Stop the chatroom discussions after approximately 45 minutes.
7. Review the form and the uses of modal auxiliaries with the entire class.
8. Briefly discuss the format of an informal letter. Suggest appropriate salutations and closings and allow students to write.
9. At the end of class or in the following class, ask students to share their letters with a partner and orally discuss the differences in their letters and their interpretations of who Ms. Taylor is and what

she does.

10. To reinforce the grammar point and promote self-awareness and error-correction, ask students to print the transcript of their chatroom discussions and review it checking for errors that were made while they were chatting.

Instructions: All of the students in your group live in an apartment building in New York City. You recently noticed a new neighbor in your building. She moved in a month ago but she remains a mystery woman because no one knows who she is, where she comes from and what she does for a living. You are all very curious about her background, personality and habits. You have seen her at different times doing different things. In other words, you all have pieces of information about her. In the chatroom, you are going to have 45 minutes to ask each other questions. Try to find out what your classmates/neighbors know about Ms. Taylor and share information that you know. Ask and answer questions, but do NOT type the sentences exactly as they appear on your card. With what you find out, write a letter to your sister Ann describing Ms. Taylor to her. You can reach your own conclusions and even make up some details, but for the most part, your description needs to be based on information that you and your classmates were given. Use expressions with *could, should, must, may, might*, and *probably*.

Figure 1. Instructions

Postman

You are the local postman. You have been delivering mail in this neighborhood for almost fifteen years. You know that Ms. Taylor doesn't get too much mail. Last week, you delivered five letters, a bill and two magazines. Three of the letters came from the same sender. They were from a B. Taylor in California. Of the other two letters, one came from Helsinki and one from Chicago. The bill was from a company that provides Internet services. The magazines that Ms. Taylor got were *PC World* and *Women's Fitness*.

Businessman living on floor above

You are a businessman living on the floor above Ms. Taylor's apartment. She has one habit you like and one that annoys you terribly. On weekends, she makes coffee and eggs for breakfast. You can smell them from your apartment. You enjoy sleeping in on weekends but since Ms. Taylor moved in, you are awakened by loud noises. On Sunday mornings, she listens to heavy metal music while running the vacuum cleaner.

Single mother living next door

You are a single mother living next door to Ms. Taylor. You are a waitress at a café nearby. One afternoon, a young lady knocked on your door by mistake looking for Ms. Taylor. She said that she was Ms. Taylor's sister, Belinda. Later that evening, you saw the two of them having a light dinner at the café where you work.

Young mother living down the hall

You take your baby out to Riverside Park for a walk every afternoon. Two or three times a week, you see Ms. Taylor doing stretching exercises and running in the park. You wanted to talk to her but she always wears headphones. She seems to love animals because she stops and pats every dog that she comes across.

Owner of coffee stand

You see Ms. Taylor every morning. She always buys a copy of *The New York Times* and a cup of coffee with two spoonfuls of sugar from you. She always brings exact change. Sometimes she even brings her own brown paper bag. You have noticed that she has beautiful hands but does not wear a wedding ring.

Teenage boy

You are 15 years old and very rebellious. Your dye your hair blue and wear a nose ring. You always see Ms. Taylor at the bus stop in the morning. The two of you once talked briefly about computers and heavy metal music. You were quite surprised that she seemed to know a lot about these topics, so you asked her why she knew so much about them. She told you that she works with middle and high school students.

Grocery bagger

You work at the grocery store where Ms. Taylor shops. She usually comes to the store on Monday and Thursday evenings. Since your job is to put groceries in a bag, you always know what people buy. You have noticed Ms. Taylor because she never buys meat or fish. She drinks soy bean milk and eats all kinds of fruits and vegetables.

Figure 2. Roles to Play in the Chatroom

Conclusion

At the conclusion of this lesson, the students would have completed a chatroom discussion that engaged every member of the group. They exchanged information and interacted online by asking and answering questions in writing. The discussion acted as a springboard for a review of modal auxiliaries, a lesson on letter formatting and oral practice.

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INSTANT LESSONS – BOTH IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM – Lesson II

by **Rachel Ellis** and **Felicity McCardle**

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Introduction

English-To-Go (http://www.english-to-go.com) is a New Zealand-based Internet publisher of educational materials for use online and in hard copy form. There are two primary web-sites: http://www.english-to-go.com and http://www.selfaccess.com - a self-study site for students. Through English-to-go, photocopiable 'Instant Lessons' based on Reuters news stories, complete with the articles, pre-reading, reading, grammar, post-reading exercises, teachers' notes and answer keys are provided each week. Every lesson has at least nine exercises and most lessons are available in both HTML and Adobe Acrobat format. Each lesson is added to a database of lessons, which can be searched by level, subject or skills. The database currently has more than 700 lessons from elementary level to advanced.

Many of the lessons also have interactive exercises attached to them. These online activities for students are linked directly to the Instant Lessons. Grammar points are either extended, material recycled or students can practise reading and listening using material on the same topics as those which have been taught in class. Teachers can choose specific exercises for students to do, either in a computer lab or as homework exercises. The activities are fun and rewarding, and teachers are easily able to control the exercises students are to do.

The following link http://www.selfaccess.com/iatefl will take you to a page where photocopiable materials, comprehensive teachers' notes, and answer key and on-line exercises have been provided. Below is an account of how one teacher has used these materials with an Upper-Intermediate General English class.

24-hour plane delay

Level: Upper Intermediate

Time: 90 minutes

Aims:

- to enable students to listen for specific information
- to enable students to scan for specific information
- to practise using adverbials of time
- to practise using the verb "spend" + prepositions
- to elicit information and retell events through dialogue
- to practise first-person narrative writing

Preparation:

Print lesson and photocopy.

Procedure

This lesson was used with a General English class, and related to a unit on travel.

With Pre-Reading Activity A: Dictation**,** students need to understand this first excerpt is an imaginary diary entry written by the young boy in the article who smuggled his pet squirrel onto a plane bound for Cyprus, with disastrous repercussions.

> When I woke up I remembered that tomorrow we're flying to Cyprus for Dad's new job. And today I have to give Nutkin to my cousin because we can't take him to Cyprus. I felt really sad. Mum and Dad have promised that I can get a new pet when I get there but I want Nutkin.
>
> I was about to put him in his cage and take him over to my cousin's place when I suddenly decided to take Nutkin to Cyprus. I thought for a long time about how to hide him and finally I came up with a plan.

The dictation exercise is a form of introduction to the main reading. Students were given the word "Cyprus" before they wrote down the short text that was read out three times at normal speed. Learners were later asked if knew any further information on Cyprus. The following link may be of help: http://www.geographyiq.com/countries/cy/Cyprus_map_flag_geography.htm.

The following links may also be useful. In the second exercise, Pre-Reading Activity B: 'Have a Guess', students are asked "Who or what is Nutkin?" The name was taken from a story "The Tale Of Squirrel Nutkin" by Beatrix Potter- http://wiredforbooks.org/kids/beatrix/sn1.htm. The reading activities required students to be clear about what a squirrel is and the following links have clear pictures: http://hotcakencyclopedia.com/Animals/image.Squirrel.photo.jpeg or http://www.naturalsciences.org/funstuff/ncsymbols/mammal.html.

The Reading Activities required students to extract specific information from a newspaper article to complete the gaps in a diary entry, and a number of comprehension questions. Students also worked in pairs to discuss the meaning of phrases from the article and completed some language activities using

adverbial phrases of time.

To finish this part of the lesson, learners worked in pairs to complete Post Reading Activity A and write and perform dialogues in pairs, referring back to the article for ideas and vocabulary.

Boy: Dad, there's something I have to tell you.

Parent: What is it? What's wrong?

Boy: You know how I wanted to bring Nutkin to Cyprus with us and you wouldn't let me?

Parent: Yes? Well? I'm sorry about that but we explained to you why we couldn't bring him with us.

Boy: Yes, I know. But I decided I really wanted to bring Nutkin with me so

I .....

Parent: What?

Boy: Yes, and I brought him onto the plane.

Parent: And where is he now?

Boy: He's .....

Parent: Is that why .....?

Boy: Yes, they're all looking for him at the moment.

Parent: You mean .....

Boy: Yes, a flight attendant saw him running away.

Parent: O.K. If they realize you did it, they'll be .....Now I want you to pretend that

you ..... Do you understand?

Boy: Yes .....

After finishing the dialogues, the class moved on to a computer lab. Students logged on to this site, http://www.instantworkbook.com, using a username and password that was valid for five days. This password allowed students to view only those exercises selected by the teacher – in this instance the 8 exercises linked to the "24-hour-hour Plane Delay" lesson.

Online Activities

Students were first asked to complete two listening activities – a short-answer exercise and an open cloze. This particular listening was the dictation text students had first heard as an introduction in the classroom. However, this time, the students were exposed to a different speaker, a young boy. Students had control over how many times they heard the text. In the first exercise, students also had clues for the answers. (For example, if they clicked on the [?] button for the first question, a clue "The day after today." appeared.)

In the second exercise, students were presented with 4 possible answers for each gap and had to listen for specific items. Many students felt more confident after recycling the listening in this way, as

dictation exercises can prove challenging for some. A third vocabulary exercise was also completed. Students were placed in pairs and asked to look back at Activity E: Grammar from the lesson they had done in class which focused on the verb "spend" and collocations; *"we spent the next 24 hours looking for it".* This was quickly completed and checked with plenary feedback. Students remained in their pairs and each pair worked together at one computer. This was done to increase peer interaction and led to much discussion before choices were selected. Students then competed the 5-word ordering exercises that used the grammar point from the language section, the verb "spend" and collocations.
For the remainder of the session and homework, students wrote a diary entry for the young boy after he had collected 'Nutkin'. The written work was printed and saved onto a disk to allow for peer correction the following day.

Conclusion

The diary entry, writing and dialogue activities in this lesson worked very well. As many of the ideas were recycled throughout the lesson, the less able students demonstrated that they were capable of confidently producing some very pleasing results. Students really enjoyed the opportunity to work with the listening text again in the computer lab and seemed delighted when they found that the recording was of a young boy.

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INTERNET ENGLISH

COOKIES AND COLDFUSION

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The following passage has been taken from an IT English Reader compiled by Katalin Fazekas and published in Hungary in 2001 by Szamalk Publisher. The IT Reader comprises low intermediate and intermediate passages downloaded and revised with an introduction on general IT terms and the main fields of IT studies (What is a computer, What is a network, Hardware/Software, Data security etc.). The book's main objectives are to increase IT students' knowledge of specific vocabulary and to improve their reading skills.

Nowadays, cookies have become almost as commonplace on the Web as images or tables. And they do all kinds of stuff: they help Web designers manage user information (by storing it between site visits) and decrease the amount of overhead necessary to keep track of user information, like usernames, encrypted passwords, form variables, and shopping cart information. And they also make things easier on users by eliminating the need to log on to a site every time they visit, or making it easy to personalize content on sites. (One man's trash is another man's treasure, and now neither of them need see the other one's useless drivel.)

Because cookies are so ubiquitous, they've become an essential tool; any Web developer must be able to use them. So you probably have a good working background on cookies already, especially since you've surely read Webmonkey's "That's the Way the Cookie Crumbles" and "Cookies Revisited" (the Web Developer's On-line Resource, http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey). And doubtlessly, you know how to implement cookies with PHP (a widely-used general purpose scripting language) or JavaScript (an object-based scripting language).

Basically, cookies are simply strings of text. Nothing more, nothing less. But even so, differences in browsers and browser settings can be a nightmare for developers who depend on cookies to make their site run smoothly.

Another problem with cookies is that you're limited in the amount of information you can store in each

one. Both Netscape and IE (MS Internet Explorer) have maximum size restrictions for the data that can actually fit into a cookie as well as the number of cookies that can be stored. (For more information on these restrictions, check out one of Thau's overviews - a well-known programmer in JavaScript, who has written several tutorials on how to use this software. There are 67.500 hits for his name in Google.) So it's a good rule to use cookies to store only information that's absolutely necessary, and then store additional information elsewhere.

Vocabulary (expressions in bold are IT vocabulary):

Stuff (n)	things, operations
Decrease (v)	opposite of increase, make less
Overhead (n)	**expenses per capita**
Amount (n)	**sum**
Eliminate (v)	**cancel, get rid of, remove**
Trash (n)	garbage, waste
Nightmare (n)	bad dream
Smoothly (adv)	without problems
Restriction (n)	**limitation**

Match the half sentences so that two of them make sense:

1. Cookies are good for all kinds of stuff like
2. For developers who depend on cookies ……
3. Since the amount of info you can have in a cookie is limited …..
4. If a Web developer reads Cookies Revisited …..

a. you have to store info that is absolutely necessary
b. they will know how to use a cookie
c. managing user info, decreasing the amount of everhead, remembering usernames etc.
d. browsers can be a nuisance.

Topics to discuss:

1. Have you ever come across a cookie? If you have, what was it like?
2. When you hear the word „overhead", what kind of expenses do you think of?

3. Try to find more data on cookie restrictions!

4. Find more information on cookies by going to one of Google's 7,500,000 hits!

SOFTWARE

SCREEN RECORDING SOFWARE - A COMPARATIVE REVIEW

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Introduction

One of the most useful methods for developing training materials for learning specific software is the use of screen capturing and recording software. Such programs have been available for some time but have become more sophisticated. This review compares some widely available MS Windows screen recording applications and discusses their pedagogical implications.

Overview: Screen Capturing vs. Screen Recording

Screen capturing software allows you to save anything visible on screen in a wide variety of image file formats to create a screenshot. These, however, are still images. Screen capture utilities may come with built-in image editors as to be able to add annotations to the saved images and enable you to create a printable or online tutorial. If you need to add more interactivity, though, you would go for screen recording.

Screen recording is full-motion real-time recorded activity from your Windows Desktop. With such applications an instructor can move through successive steps in using an application and have all those steps recorded in a movie of the screen, usually AVI format. The utility captures the screen, or window (even if you drag it around the screen), or a region with fixed location, or cursor area. When capturing cursor area, the capture area's size is defined by the user but it always follows the cursor. The output to AVI files usually offers choices of video codec with quality setting, including Cinepak, Indeo 3, 4, 5,

Microsoft Video 1, MS RLE, or Motion JPEG. Some programs offer audio recording as add-on which are purchased separately, while others allow for real-time sound recording. The option to capture audio with customizable audio coded settings makes these products the ideal tool for making demonstration, tutorial and training videos. The recording runs in the background and is almost undetectable on modern PCs.

Four widely available applications have been tested and compared.

Name	RiverPast Screenrecorder 2.0.5	Camtasia Studio 2	BB FlashBack 1.2	Hero Screenrecorder 2.0.1
Publisher	River Past Corporation	TechSmith Corporation	Blueberry Consultants Ltd UK	Century Herosoft Computer Technology Co., Ltd. China
Product type	Screen recorder	Screen capture/recorder	Screen capture/recorder	Screen capture/recorder, video capture
Language	English	English	English	English, Chinese
OS authoring requirements	Win 98SE/ME/NT/2000/XP	Win 2000/XP	Win 2000/XP	Win XP
Availability	Shareware (30 days)	Commercial	Shareware (15 days)	Shareware
Price	49,95 USD	299,00 USD single user license	100,00 USD	29,95 USD
Output media format	AVI, MPEG (video codec Cinepack, Indeo 3,4,5, Microsoft Video 1, MS RLE, Motion JPEG)	SWF (Flash), AVI, FLV, WMV, RM, EXE, Animated GIF	AVI, SWF (Flash)	AVI, EXE, GIF, HSR (its own player)
Audio capture	Customizable, variety of audio codec, from any audio source – line-in, microphone, speakers, and a combination of these – **'What U hear'** – means that you can play music/sound and still can record from the microphone as you talk through the movie	Yes	Via microphone	Yes - choice what voice to record with a variety of audio codecs
Hardware: Authoring requirements				
RAM minimum	64 MB (works with 32 ok)	64 MB (128 recommended)	128 at least	64 MB
CPU speed	500 MHz (works at lower Hz but with limited video codec)	500 MHz (1 GHz recommended)	600 MHz	Pentium 133 MMX
Free disc space	3.7 MB	30 MB	--?--	6.60 MB
File size	1.7 MB	22.39 MB	4.77 MB	2.06 MB
Other software needed	Wave playback, DirectX 8.0	DirectX 8.1 and over	DirectX 7.0	DirectX 8.0
Extra(s)	Link to DirectShow free download Warns of missing codec and prompts for its download	Recording Wizard; Integration with Macromedia Director, Flash MX, Adobe Premiere, Final Cut Pro-these are needed for the image editing	Built-in editor to annotate movies with text and record a spoken commentary as voiceover	Show/Hide, Use custom cursor, floating toolbar,
Limitations	Watermark is placed in the movie – logo and URL of publisher	single frames for still image AVI slideshow		Free demo – either records up to 15 seconds or doesn't save the file, custom cursors don't work

Table 1: Features overview

As seen, most programs are demanding on resources for authoring, the least demanding being RiverPast Screenrecorder. It also has excellent choice of audio recording source options. Moreover, it can run on most Windows OS, while BB FlashBack cannot be installed. When installed on 'non-XP', Hero Screenrecorder's custom cursors do not work.

The file size varies due to the extras offered with the main application: Camtasia Studio is 22.39 Mb offering integration with third party software needed for image editing. This is also reflected in the price – 299,00 USD. In comparison, RiverPast Screenrecorder is 1.7 Mb. In addition, RiverPast's program is shareware, uses the least disc space, and its limitations after the 30-day trial are not distracting a lot – a watermark of 10x60 px, the logo and URL of publisher, is placed at the bottom in the centre of the recorded movie. In comparison, Hero Screenrecorder offers an unlimited trial period, but records movies of only up to 15-20 seconds.

Audio capture can be from a variety of sources – line-in, microphone, speakers – and RiverPast makes use of a combination of all of these into the 'What U hear' option. This allows you to play music in the background and still record your voice through the microphone as you talk through the movie, and have both recorded in real time. While RiverPast allows for real-time sound recording, BB FlashBack audio recording utility is actually an add-on.

Some of the software features, found appropriate, have been compared and presented in Table 2.

Legend: poor (--) not bad (-) ok (+) very good (++)

	RiverPast Screenrecorder 2.0.5	Camtasia Studio 2	BB FlashBack 1.2	Hero Screenrecorder 2.0.1
Price	+	- -	- -	++
Least hardware authoring requirements	++	- -	- -	++
Smallest file size	++	- -	+	+
Least free disc space	++	- -		+
Output formats	+	++	+	+
Best capture options from audio source	++	+	+	+
Least limitations	++	- -	- -	- -

Table 2: Evaluative comparison

Evaluation

Screen recording products greatly simplify the task of demonstrating interactively an application's options by creating a tutorial, demonstration or training movie for a class with unprecedented speed and flexibility. To use a screen recording tool it is not necessary to have any knowledge of movie authoring in general. As a consequence, instructors with little or no ICT experiences are able to create a great deal of course content in electronic format.

Screen recording can facilitate ICT teachers' and teacher trainers' work:

- In class, as you are no longer stuck at your computer to demonstrate how things are done, but free to play the movie and monitor your students' work;
- For distant education, since a movie can be zipped along with printable worksheets, a list of tasks, a glossary, etc., and made available for download.
- Online, because short videos can be embedded in a web page and uploaded to online platforms on the Web (consider bandwidth) or the local network.

I personally found River Past Screen Recorder the most easy to use and extremely user-friendly and intuitive. It does not require special ICT skills. I have used it for presentations, lectures and tutorials with students, and for demonstrations in ICT in ELT teacher training workshops. A sample movie can be found at http://ict.data.bg/screenrecorder/sample.html or http://rack5.free.evro.net/free2/ict/.

Limitations

The limitations are more of technical rather than of pedagogical nature. The file size is something to consider as movie files (moreover if they include voice) tend to be huge. So do not be tempted to upload a 90-minute movie to your e-learning platform. However, this will not be much of an issue on the local network. The output EXE format can make the file size significantly smaller, followed by SWF and AVI output. The EXE compresion is something that RiverPast Screenrecorder can benefit a lot from. Screenrecording software has huge area of applicability for educational purposes and freeware will be greatly appreciated.

Conclusion

While screen recording software provides significant functions, it is designed for general educational use, not specifically for language learning. However, this has the fortunate by-product of encouraging teachers to try new and creative ways to use ICT.

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FROM CHATTING TO ORAL FLUENCY: USING CHAT TO IMPROVE SELF-CONFIDENCE AND INCREASE WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE

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Abstract

Computer-mediated communication such as synchronous chat can be utilized to promote speaking practice. This paper describes a synchronous chat freeware and how it can be used to increase learners' self-confidence so they will be willing to communicate orally in a language class. Benefits and challenges of using this freeware are identified to guide practitioners in their decision-making.

Introduction

Research on computer-mediated communication (CMC) have shown that using CMC can help to improve student participation of minority groups (Cummins and Sayers, 1990) and women (Selfe, 1990; Flores, 1990), develop writing skills through increased practice (DiMatteo, 1990, 1991), collaboration (Schultz, 2000) and peer editing (Boiarsky, 1990; Moran, 1991; Mabrito, 1992), facilitate social learning (Barker and Kemp, 1990) and enhance student motivation (Warschauer, 1996). In the field of second language acquisition, CMC has been found to be helpful in inducing a great deal of negotiation of meaning between native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs), which in turns facilitates learning when learners modify and restructure their messages through repetitions, confirmations, comprehension checks and so on (Long, 1996; Blake, 2000), and improves grammatical competence (Pellettieri, 2000). There is also an assumption from some studies that synchronous CMC, particularly chatting, is likely to improve one's speaking ability due to the strong resemblance between chatting and speaking. Chun (1994) hopes that the strong resemblance between the sentences in a text chat and utterances in a spoken conversation could promote the transfer of "the written competence gained from CACD "[Computer-Assisted Classroom Discourse]…to the students' speaking competence." (p. 29)

Similarly, Pellettieri (2000: 59) says that,

> because synchronous NBC [Network-based Communication], such as chatting, bears a striking resemblance to oral interaction, it seems logical to assume that the language practice through NBC will reap some of the benefits for second language development as practice through oral interaction.

Unfortunately, as Lee (1999) points out, "little has been discussed specifically concerning why and how text-based CMC can be used to help language learners improve spoken fluency and how CMC technology needs to be shaped and adapted to meet the goal of communicative language learning." This paper describes the use of a synchronous chat freeware and how it can be used to facilitate oral practice in an ESL classroom. A sample lesson plan is provided to illustrate the incorporation of this chat freeware in a speaking lesson. Benefits and challenges of using chat freeware are identified to guide practitioners in their decision-making.

Using ICQ to Improve Spoken Fluency

Software

ICQ, a synchronous chat software was selected for this study because it is a freeware and is easily available. This freeware can be downloaded from http://web.icq.com/ for both PC and Mac computers as well as handheld and wireless platforms. The latest version for PCs, ICQ Pro 2003a beta build 3800 is about 3.79MB in size. In addition, users can now download the software in various languages such as Arabic, Swedish, Dutch, French, Chinese and Spanish. Unlike other synchronous chat freeware such as MSN Messenger (http://messenger.msn.com/) or Yahoo Instant Messenger (http://messenger.yahoo.com/) which only allow users to view the final version of their partners' composed utterances, ICQ presents the user with a split screen where they view their own messages in the top box as each letter is typed as well as each letter in their partners' composed utterances in the bottom box as they are typed. Therefore, turn-taking is not restricted by the mode of communication and speakers can choose to co-construct the discourse, resulting in a closer resemblance to oral conversation. ICQ also allows more than two speakers to chat at the same time. Each speaker in the chat session will have their own box and their user name at the top of the box. Figure 1 shows the chat screens for two chat partners.

Figure 1. Chat screen for two users. (http://www.public.iastate.edu/~nkerli/chat.html)

A sample lesson plan for an ESL classroom

The minimum requirements needed to carry out a lesson with ICQ involve access to computers with Internet access (preferably one computer per student), approximately 4MB of disc space and a text editor such as Notepad. The ICQ software should be pre-installed and the teacher should set up accounts for each student prior to the class activity in order to save class time. Once these accounts and passwords have been set up, the teacher can give the students the user names and passwords so they can log-on during any session without the teacher's assistance. In addition, it is necessary to pair up the students' accounts so each student has at least a chat partner listed in the ICQ chat list. Before a chat session, the teacher also needs to provide students with a task so they have a purpose to chat (see Appendix 1 for an example). Once students have understood their task, they set off on the chat session for 20 minutes. Upon completion of their chat task, they can save the chat session which can be printed out in Notepad for future reference or self-analysis. Till this point, ICQ has only been helping students with the brainstorming and organization of their discussion points. Thus, in order to help students with their speaking skills, the teacher should follow-up with a report session where students either take turns to report their discussion points or an open session where students are given opportunities to share what they shared with their chat partners.

Starting a chat session and printing the saved chat session

1. Click on the **Start Menu** at the bottom left corner of the screen and launch the ICQ program.
2. Enter user password.
3. If the user is assigned to send the **Chat Request**, click the left button of the mouse next to the partner's name. The partner will receive a request which he/she must accept in order to begin the chat session.
4. Once the chat boxes appear on the screen, the users may begin the chat session.
5. After the session has been completed, users can click to close the chat box. A pop-up menu then prompts them to save the chat session. Learners do so by clicking "**OK.**"
6. Save the chat session on the desktop or in a folder where it can be easily located later.
7. In order to print the saved file, open a text editor such as Notepad. Then open the saved file from its current location and click "**Print**."

Benefits of using ICQ

In a simple lesson plan as described above, ICQ can help ESL learners, particularly adult learners, improve their oral proficiency in at least two ways. First of all, a study by Compton (2002) found that

chatting helped some students, particularly those with lower level of oral proficiency, to feel more prepared to speak up in class. Journal entries by these students show that chatting helped them to develop and organize their ideas and sentence constructions as well as familiarize themselves with the required vocabulary thereby increasing their perception of their speaking competence and their confidence.

Studies by Cheng, Horwitz and Schallert (1999), Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), and MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) have found that second language classroom anxiety has a strong speaking anxiety element. It is therefore necessary to help second language (SL) learners to feel more confident so they will be willing to take risks and use the given opportunities to practice speaking in class. Compton (2002) claimed that participants who exchanged constructive input with their partners during the chat session took more turns to speak in an open discussion and produced more words than those who were not on-task during the chat activity. One student reported that he was more willing to communicate because he felt more prepared to speak after chatting. He stated in his journal entry, "*It is an excellent form for us to speak. Because we have already write down the words. We can also easily to speak it out."* (Compton, 2002:64). Therefore, by helping to improve the learners' self-confidence, they are then more willing to take risks to speak in the L2, which in turn will provide the practice they need to improve their speaking skills. As they continue to see improvement in their speaking ability, they will feel more confident and more willing to seek out communication opportunities, thus reinforcing a positive cycle.

In addition, the chat session can be a beneficial aspect to the lesson as learners are able to see their thoughts as well as their partners' thoughts in print before having to speak in front of their classmates. Compton's study (2002) also revealed that there is a significant transfer of language from the written mode (chatting) to the spoken mode (oral report). Her study showed that learners transfer lexical phrases through direct transfer, substitution/ellipsis and paraphrasing. Here, she defines a direct transfer as "identical or almost identical lexical phrases that appear in both chat and oral transcripts" (Compton, 2002: 73) while substitution/ellipsis involves a slight substitution of pronouns, synonyms (nouns, verbs or adjectives), expressions or omission of one or more non-content words. Finally, paraphrasing from chat mode to oral communication maintains ideas but differ in word choice, sentence structure and organization. She pointed out that learners who have lower proficiency depended more on direct transfer and substitution/ellipsis compared to those who have higher proficiency. In addition, she also found out that learners not only transferred their own language, they also transferred their partners' utterances.

Challenges of using ICQ

Essentially, the technology itself will not be the chief driving force in improving the learners' speaking skills. In this case, ICQ is merely the tool which the instructor may utilize to address the affective state of the learners. If applied successfully, the instructor may help to decrease the fear of learners, especially adult learners who perceive themselves to be socially adept individuals in their first language. This will encourage them to take the risk in speaking up in class despite having to grapple with the target language.

In order to ensure successful application, the instructor needs to keep all participants on task. If learners did not receive adequate constructive input from the chat session, they will likely feel unprepared to share their ideas in class. In addition, the instructor needs to provide an authentic need to communicate so learners will see the need to chat. Jig-saw tasks and information-gap tasks in which each learner is given partial information have been shown to promote more negotiation. (Pica, Kanagy, and Falodun, 1993). Finally, learners need to be paired up carefully. If learners do indeed transfer their partners' language, the instructor should consider the following issues:

- Will pairing a low-ability learner with a high-ability learner be beneficial to both parties or will it be detrimental to the learning of the high-ability learner?
- How will it impact the learning process if one learner does not participate at the level expected by the instructor?
- Will pairing students of the same-ability level be better than students with different abilities?

Equally important to the lesson plan is the opportunity for learners to speak in class. Providing learners the opportunity to chat online alone will not guarantee improvement in spoken proficiency. Learners need to transfer the experience to real oral communication. Despite the assumptions that the strong resemblance between chat and oral communication will transfer from written to spoken, learners still need the opportunities to practice speaking. ICQ will only provide the resource for learners to be more prepared and be less anxious when speaking up in class.

Making the most of ICQ

Since ICQ is an open chat channel, users can receive messages and chat invitations from users who are not on their list. Therefore, it is necessary to advise students to put themselves in the *Invisible Mode* once they have successfully established a chat screen with their partners to avoid any interruption. Other than that, ICQ can be downloaded in different languages. Instructors of other languages such as Arabic, Dutch, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese, French, Hebrew, Japanese, Russian and

Swedish may consider utilizing ICQ for a similar class activity by downloading to translate the ICQ interface into these languages. (Find out more about Lingoware at http://www.icq.com/download/pro_languages.html)

In addition, ICQ also provides voice, ICQphone and video functions which could enhance the chat session. Instructors who wish to utilize these features should bear in mind that other hardware may be required and learners may find it difficult to concentrate on two different modes at any one time, for instance text chatting and voice chatting within one given task.

Another way of reaping the benefits of ICQ is to have an authentic collaboration with people outside the classroom. Instructors who can plan a chat session with another class of learners may consider the option of having their class of non-native speakers chat with a class of native speakers. As Lee (1999) pointed out, CMC has an advantage over face-to-face verbal interaction as "CMC is an interactive text-based medium" which can "make the texturalization of the linguistic intuition of native speakers available on the screen" allowing learners to notice the structure of the communication and target specific linguistic features. However, in this situation, it is important to keep in mind that the stakes should be similar, i.e. the native speakers should have some authentic need to communicate with the non-native speakers. If the stakes are not similar, the group of students with lower stakes may not take the activity seriously causing the learning exchange to be less constructive for the other group.

Finally, ICQ allows chat sessions to be saved and printed out in text editors such as Notepad. Instructors may consider letting students use these print-outs as references or self-evaluations after the chat session. Learners may then utilize the print-outs for noticing and analyzing the language structures either at the discourse level, or structural level or any other levels for "reinforcement so it [sic] they can be used in later, different linguistic situations" (Lee, 1999).

Conclusion

As Lee (1999) points out, "no single instruction method can ensure the mastery of spoken skills of TL." Online chatting is not a replacement for face-to-face interactions. It is an alternative instructional method that could be used to promote oral proficiency by increasing ESL learners' willingness to take risks through visual preparation, i.e. seeing and organizing their ideas in print and reducing their anxiety level. This paper presents a possible lesson plan and the incorporation of a chat activity to address the affective state of ESL learners in hope that CMC can have a positive impact. Finally, alternative uses of chat activities have been suggested and other pedagogical issues have been raised to highlight the need for more experimentation and empirical researches to fully "harness" the features of

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APPENDIX

Career Requirement: Experience vs. Paper Qualification

A communicative task using computer-mediated communication

(modified after Compton , 2002:101)

Instructions for Student A

Task Situation

In today's modern society, career is a big part of people's lives. However, in order to secure a good job, one has to fulfill certain requirements. You believe that a person with working experience can build a better career in a shorter amount of time. You need to present **three** arguments for the importance of work experience over paper qualification. On the other hand, your partner will present three arguments for the importance of paper qualification.

Instructions for Student B

Task Situation

In today's modern society, career is a big part of people's lives. However, in order to secure a good job, one has to fulfill certain requirements. You believe that a person with paper qualifications can build a better career in a shorter amount of time. You need to present **three** arguments for the importance of paper qualification over working experience. On the other hand, your partner will present three arguments for the importance of working experience.

What you need to do

1. Click on the **Start Menu** at the bottom left corner of the screen to start the **ICQ** program.
2. Enter your password.
3. If you are assigned as **Student A**, send a **Chat Request** by clicking the left button of the mouse next to your partner's

name. If you have been assigned as Student B, you may skip this step.

4. When you are in chat mode, share and discuss the arguments for the importance of work experience.
5. Your partner will present you with three arguments for the importance of paper qualification. Try to persuade him to change his mind.
6. After you and your partner have completed the task, click to end the chat session and a pop-up menu will ask if you want to save the chat. Click "**Save Chat**".
7. Save the chat on the **Desktop** under the file name **Chat**.
8. You have 20 minutes to complete the task.

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ON THE WEB

THE WEB, CONCORDANCE, AND VIRTUAL REALITY IN STUDYING LITERATURE

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Abstract

This paper focuses on three modern technological tools and examines their use in the teaching and learning of literary and cultural studies. The Web's rich resources and information, the concordance's astounding potential in stylistic and linguistic research, and Virtual Reality's motivating and appealing effect, all contribute to providing literature students with a new perspective of stories, the ability to observe things in a different way, and maintain their interest in literature like never before.

Introduction

> *So you may ask what is the use of studying the world of imagination where anything is possible and anything can be assumed, where there are no rights or wrongs and all arguments are equally good.*
>
> (Frye, 1964, p. 77)

Porter (1999) proves that, while the general perception in higher education is that technology has little to contribute to the study of literature, "technology *can* make a contribution to the teaching of literary and cultural studies, given sufficient time and resources." Although the arguments against incorporating literature in ELT have been convincingly made (Brumfit, 1983; Widdowson, 1984), the equally convincing arguments in favor of using it outnumber them (Brumfit and Carter, 1986; Gajdusek, 1988; Lazar, 1993; Marckwardt, 1978; Marquardt, 1967; Marshall, 1979; McKay, 1982; Oster, 1985; Povey, 1972, 1979; Rosenblatt, 1970; Short, 1989; Spack, 1985; Widdowson, 1984). In brief, what most of these authors agree upon is that, in spite of the complex and sometimes obscure use

of language in literary works, which can be a language learning hindering factor (for an intriguing - and rather amusing - address of the subject, see Widdowson, 1984: 160-173), using literature in the ESL class has important "pedagogic, linguistic, humanistic, and cultural" benefits (Oster, 1989: 89) in the following respects:

- it provides valuable authentic language input (Lazar, 1993);
- it expands language awareness and enhances (imaginative/creative) writing and reading skills;
- it "enlarges students' vision and fosters critical thinking" (Oster, 1989: 85);
- teaches culture;
- helps seeing one's own lack of cultural understanding when comparing literary interpretations with others (Brumfit and Carter, 1986; Maley, 1986; Rosenblatt, 1970);
- "educates the whole person" (Lazar, 1993: 19).

There are various methods of teaching literature and various resource books and guides for teachers which suggest them. As Collie and Slater (1987: 7-8) correctly point out, although language teaching has, in recent years, become guided by communicative approaches, when it comes to introducing literature in the EFL classroom, "this communicative ideal too often vanishes." Observational studies have proved that teacher talk dominates the classroom when teaching literature, thus distancing the learners from their own response and "causing them to undervalue it" (Collie and Slater, 1987: 8). The questions a tutor might ask in order to challenge the learners' response, are often not so open-ended, again resulting in creating very little room for the learners' development of their own opinions. Although these teacher-centred approaches may be successful in making the students familiar with the literary work, they fail to encourage students to explore the texts alone and make them their own. As I aim to show in this paper, apart from diving into piles of books on criticism, the Web, concordance, and Virtual Reality can prove highly challenging means of exploring texts and forming one's own response.

The Web

More than a decade ago, Philips (1987: 176) argued that compared to language teaching, literature teaching with computers had not attracted much attention and pointed out ways in which literature can be 'manipulated' with computers. With the evolution of the Internet nowadays, the increase in the number of computer users, and applications like concordancers, literature teaching and learning has earned its place in Computer-Assisted Learning: an increasing number of services, particularly electronic texts, are available on the Web to humanities scholars (Lunsford, 1995: 297). As Danahay

puts it (1997: 277), the amount of material available for the teaching of Victorian literature, in particular, has been increasing expotentially and in his own teaching he has gradually increased the amount of time spent online "to the point where [his] current Victorian course is taught 50% online". Danahay is but one of great many teachers to implement the Web in their courses; Boulter (2000), for example, has also used Web materials to supplement his tutorials in Critical Theory.

The Internet exhibits various attempts of people at times to create series of webpages by which to provide guidance and material for literary study. Some only differ from existing printed study guides in that they are provided free of charge, while others do offer considerably more and/or intriguing material. This section looks at some of the most representational appearances of such attempts on the Web and discusses their usefulness, as well as where they may fall short:

The Victorian Web (http://landow.stg.brown.edu/victorian/victov.html)

Created by Landow in 1987 as part of 'a large multi-million dollar hypertext project' (Landow, 2000, personal communication), to be followed by the commercially available *The Dickens Web* three years later, *The Victorian Web* is considered today as one of the most significant literary resources on the Net. Recommended by various big organizations such as the BBC, NEH, the French and Irish Ministries of Education, and receiving millions of hits per month, *The Victorian Web* is an elaborate website consisting of about nine thousand documents, almost a dozen books, parts of other books, and other contributions from all over the world. To quote Danahay, it is "an impressive online resource containing literary, biographical, historical, and social information on a wide range of Victorian authors" (Danahay, 1997: 279). A criticism that could be made of *The Victorian Web* is that it is not interactive; it is a collection of static pages providing raw texts (however rich and impressive) but the users cannot interact with any of the information.

Literature Online (http://lion.chadwyck.co.uk/)

Literature Online is a massive database of English and American literature launched in 1996 which requires annual subscription to be accessed. It is one of the largest commercial websites yet established and, according to Hall (1998: 298), "is highly innovative in its approach to bringing together existing and newly-created full-text databases, reference works and web resources." It gives access to more than 260,000 works of poetry, prose, and drama, covering a time span of fourteen centuries. In addition, it includes a dictionary and a master index of websites related to English literature, along with extensive biographical and bibliographical information and search facilities. Undoubtedly, *Literature Online* can prove extremely useful to researchers and university students, as they are provided with a rich source of information and links to further resources. Although, for me, its major shortcoming is its

commerciality, *Literature Online* does provide two valuable free services: one is *Lionheart*, a database of a thousand love poems attracting up to 50,000 users per day in its first two weeks (Hall, 1998: 297), and the other is *Writer-in-Residence*, which has a different author running online tutorials and giving advice in reading and writing poetry for six months. In additon, noticeboards are available for users to comment and discuss on the issues raised.

PinkMonkey.com (http://www.pinkmonkey.com)

Purporting to be America's premier online study site, *PinkMonkey.com* is a Texas-based free site which offers notes and study materials for literature and other subjects, aiming to help students with their homework. Their 'MonkeyNotes' and 'Barron's Booknotes' consist of hundreds of literature titles, each featuring summaries, themes, characters, criticism, and the original text.

Although *PinkMonkey.com* is a free service, it still requires the user to have a membership. It is totally supported by advertising, which is more than blatant on the site: it is packed with advertisements and pop-up windows asking the user to pay their sponsors a visit, for *PinkMonkey.com* to 'survive and continue to provide you with the ever-expanding library of quality resources you need'. What is more, despite the company stating in the FAQ that 'If you steal from us, we will find you and it will cost you. Our success rate is 100%. Don't do it', they admit elsewhere on the site that students are tempted to copy and paste the material in their homework and it is feared that they very often opt for this easy way.

The Picture of Dorian Gray (http://www.saikk.net/doriangray)

This series of webpages has been specifically created as part of the present author's MSc CALL project, in an attempt to incorporate the aforementioned websites' positive features while excluding any shortcomings. It provides the visitor with the full text, the author's biographical information, the social and historical context of the work, questions and notes to trigger individual responses. Meanwhile, to deter users from copying and pasting material from the site, two DHTML features have been used to work against thieving: disabling the mouse's right click function, the one which normally brings up the menu with the cut, copy, and paste options, and 'tooltips', which are pop-up boxes loaded with information and appear only when the cursor is held over a certain term or word; moving the cursor away from the word causes the tooltip to vanish so the user cannot touch the text inside. However, the major innovation of the website is the provision of a full-word concordance of the text, allowing the user to closely examine the use of each and every word in the text, its context, collocations, frequency, and so forth.

The concordance

Characterised as emancipatory applications (Kemmis, 1977, in Higgins and Johns, 1984) the concordances, such as Tim Johns' MicroConcord and Higgins' Findword, form an important aspect of CALL and CBL in general. They are computer-based programs which treat a string of characters as input to then provide us with a list of that string's occurrences in a pre-specified corpus. This output involves displaying the defined string of characters (e.g. word or phrase) within its surrounding context, as found in the corpus of texts, and the capability of the user to isolate these instances, save them, sort them, examine them more closely, and so forth. Concordances can prove very useful for investigating word frequencies - which have determined the contents of the much-celebrated Cobuild course (Willis, 1990) - word associations, certain morphological characteristics, and even the grammatical class of the words (Biber et al., 1998: 254), thus making an essential tool for linguists, lexicographers, grammarians, and other language specialists.

With the birth of stylistics literary studies have become more focused on linguistics and drifted away from plain aesthetic appreciation. Corpora and concordances can be used for a range of purposes; in ELT, translation, stylistics, literary linguistics, the study of 'literary language' (for an argument on whether there is such a thing as literary language, see Brumfit and Carter, 1986: 2-10). Knowles and Malmkjær (1996) utilise the concordancer to realise some very intriguing ideas concerning literature teaching, especially of Oscar Wilde's fairy tales (1996: 189-202). In this case, the concordancer is used for text analysis and language use in literary works. What I personally find highly intriguing, however demanding, is to have the learners carry out certain tasks using the concordancer and relevant texts: they, alone, are to search for words and, alone, decide on their usage, with the teacher being just an inspector and supervisor. What Knowles and Malmkjær (1996) suggest is that examining concordance lines from an author's work allows us to discern his/her writing style, imagery, symbolism, and so forth. For example, learners can carry out concordances on several Oscar Wilde stories, for any words they should deem appropriate, in order to gather information about Wilde's usage of precious stones and metals. Ideally, they could search for words or groups of words, such as *ruby*, *amber*, *porphyry*, *gold*, *silver*, *sapphire*, and so on, and even note their collocations (e.g. *red rubies*, *bright porphyry*, *fine pearls*, *tissued gold*, etc.). Knowles and Malmkjær already provide us with such processed data, but this does not mean that it would not be fascinating for the learners to do it themselves: categorize the various uses of these words and recognise the significance laid on them.

Virtual Reality

Though considered a cutting-edge technology by most, Virtual Reality has been enabling literature

students at Haywood Community College in North Carolina (http://potemkin.haywood.cc.nc.us/hitec/vr) to become immersed in the stories they read since 1994. Virtual Reality is the technology which allows its users to dive into a computer-generated virtual world. In other words, virtual world systems are the most sophisticated integrated educational environments, embedding all course material as objects within a physical space simulation that class participants navigate within. After reading Flannery O'Conner's "A Good Man is Hard to Find," the students at HCC 'donned a head-mounted display and stepped into a virtual world based on the final scene of the story' (http://potemkin.haywood.cc.nc.us/hitec/vr/page2.html). There they found the "tall, dark, and deep" woods; the ill-fated car; the Misfit's glasses; the grandmother's basket; the cat that caused the accident; the newspaper with the Misfit's picture on the front page, along with some misleading items that were strewn around the scene'. Their simple yet fascinating task was to walk around, observe the surroundings, and identify the elements of the virtual world that did not appear in the story (a task betraying any who haven't read it!). More substantial assignments include students creating their own worlds based on their understanding of the stories and then presenting them to their classmates, assuming the roles of instructor and co-creator of the work, roles similar to a director or producer of a film. In giving these presentations, students will have had to analyze a story's significant elements: setting, characters, tone and mood, images and symbols, point-of-view. In working closely with a literary text, they will gain a new appreciation of how writers use words, images, and setting to set a story's tone and mood and to underscore the story's theme. But most importantly, they will become engaged with a literary work on a level none of them have done before.

For the most part, the students reacted enthusiastically, and talked about gaining a new perspective and better understanding of the story. The results of this initial 'experiment' were so good, with the students being more motivated than ever, that an entire class was developed and taught blending literature with virtual reality, appropriately named 'Exploring Literature Through Virtual Reality'.

Conclusion

As is the case with most newly-introduced CALL and technological tools, the concordancer and Virtual Reality in the classroom carry implications about the teacher's role in it. These implications are whether the teacher would be rendered obsolete or, on the contrary, be assigned a harder task. Working with concordance on the materials for *should*, Johns (1991) had come up with over 800 citations; leaving the task of concordancing to the students "might have produced some interesting results, but would also have been a task of considerable difficulty: it might make the work more manageable if [he]

sorted the data into some basic categories in advance" (Johns, 1991: 6). In this light, the teacher would be far from obsolete, as he/she would put considerable effort in preparing the materials. When it comes to literary and cultural studies, however, be it with concordance or VR, the load on the students' shoulders can be heavier, should the educator decide to let the learners "act as researchers" (Wichman et al., 1997: 83).

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ANNOUNCEMENTS OF FUTURE EVENTS

3RD NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS "CHALLENGING YOUNG MINDS"

Pulawy , Poland

March 26-28, 2004

The focus of this conference will be on the presentation of current theory and practice in the teaching of English to young learners. The conference is organized by The British Council, Poland , as part of the Young Learners Project. Plenary speakers to be announced.

Topic areas will include: Development in approaches to teaching young learners; Approaches to the training of teachers of young learners; Current issues and trends in the young learner classroom; Teaching foreign languages to children in grades 1-3; Language across the young learner curriculum; ICT in the YL classroom; Bringing cultural awareness to children; Skills and creativity in the YL classroom; Assessing young learners; New materials for teaching young learners.

If you wish to present a paper, please email the conference organizer below for more details:

Malgorzata Tetiurka, British Council Young Learners Project Co-ordinator

mtetiurk@klio.umcs.lublin.pl

c/o Barbara Wloch, The British Council,

Ul. Wislna 2, 31-007 Krakow , Poland

ELEVENTH INTERNATIONAL LITERACY AND EDUCATION RESEARCH NETWORK CONFERENCE ON LEARNING

Cojamar Pedagogical Convention Centre,

Havana, Cuba

June 27-30, 2004

http://www.LearningConference.com

Critical issues to be addressed include education for local and global cultural diversity, the impact of new technologies, changing forms of literacy, and the role of education in social and personal transformation. The conference welcomes presentation proposals addressing a broad range of themes across the humanities and social sciences. Conference papers will be published in print and electronic formats in the peer refereed International Journal of Learning. If you are unable to attend the conference, virtual registrations are also available allowing access to the full text of the electronic edition of the Journal for that year. Virtual registration also allows you to submit a paper - which will appear in the conference program, be included in the refereeing process and, if accepted for publication, be published into the International Journal of Learning as a fully refereed academic journal article.
The first deadline of the call for papers is 30 January 2004.
http://www.LearningConference.com
Professor Mary Kalantzis
Dean, Faculty of Education, Language and Community Services, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia
mary.kalantzis@learningconference.com

ELEVENTH INTERNATIONAL C.A.L.L. CONFERENCE
"CALL & RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES"
Elzenveld, Antwerp , Belgium
September 5-7, 2004
http://www.didascalia.be

In general, the CALL Conferences focus on research topics and issues in CALL Theory, Practice and Engineering. For the 2004 CALL Conference, and as a direct result of growing interest in the field, the focus will be on research methodologies. It will address the following questions:
- Which research methodologies can be adopted in CALL ?
- What are the challenges due to the multidisciplinarity of CALL ?
- To what extent does the choice of methodology depend on CALL-activities such as Analysis, Design,

Development, Implementation and Evaluation?

- What are the views of researchers on dedicated CALL research methodologies?

CALL researchers from all continents and from all CALL-related disciplines are invited to present methodological aspects of their current research projects, demonstrating relevant CALL experience in terms of publications, projects or applications, and to submit a paper which focuses on the conference theme.

There will be three types of sessions:

A. Overview of research methodologies by invited speakers.

B. Selected presentations which should focus on methodological aspects and issues in CALL research projects, applied to typical CALL activities to be classified under Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation. These papers may be published in the CALL Journal after a standard review process.

C. Discussion groups on concrete methodological issues resulting from the applicability of research methodologies to CALL and the need for dedicated CALL methodologies. The conclusions and results will be published in the Forum Section of the CALL Journal.

Submission: Please fill in the form on our website (www.didascalia.be) and send it to the conference secretariat by January 30th 2004. We will keep you informed about the review process.

Organization:

- Organizing Committee: Phil Hubbard (Stanford University , USA), Michael Levy (Griffith University , Australia), Wilfried Decoo (Brigham Young University , USA) and Jozef Colpaert (University of Antwerp , Belgium).
- Scientific Committee: the Editorial Board of the C.A.L.L. Journal.
- Conference Coordinator: Mathea Simons (DIDASCALIA, University of Antwerp)
- Submissions Coordinator: Saskia Van Bueren (DIDASCALIA, University of Antwerp)

Agenda:

First Call for Papers: October 15th; Second Call for Papers: December 15th; Deadline for submission of short abstract: January 30th 2004; Notification of acceptance: March 1st; Deadline for submission of proceedings text: May 1st

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SCI 2004

THE 8TH WORLD MULTI-CONFERENCE ON SYSTEMICS, CYBERNETICS AND INFORMATICS

The Rosen Plaza Hotel,

Orlando , Florida (USA)

July 18-21, 2004,

http://www.iiisci.org/sci2004

MAJOR THEMES: * Information Systems, Technologies and Applications, * Communication and Network Systems, Technologies and Applications, * Control Systems, Technologies and Applications, * Computer Science and Engineering, * Optical Systems, Technologies and Applications, * Image, Acoustic, Speech and Signal Processing, * Applications of Informatics and Cybernetics in Science and Engineering, * Systemics

Participation of both, researchers and practitioners is strongly encouraged. Papers may be submitted on: research in science and engineering, case studies drawn on professional practice and consulting, and position papers based on large and rich experience gained through executive/managerial practices and decision-making. For this reason, the Program Committee is conformed according to the criteria given above.

Extended abstracts or paper drafts should be sent taking into account the following Format:

1. Major theme of the paper should be related to at least one of the major themes given above.
2. Paper title.
3. Extended abstract of 500 to 1500 words and/or paper drafts of 2000 to 5000 words, in English.
4. Author(s) and/or co-author(s) with names, addresses, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses.

Extended abstracts or paper drafts should be sent via the conference web site (http://www.iiisci.org/sci2004/), filling the respective form and uploading the respective paper or extended abstract. If the conference web site is not accessible for you, you can also make your submission by e-mail, attaching it to the following e-mail addresses: sci2004@telcel.net.ve, sci2004@cantv.net and sci2004@iiis.org.

DEADLINES

· December 10th, 2003: Submission of extended abstracts (500-1500 words) or paper drafts (2000-5000 words).

· December 10th, 2003: Invited Sessions proposals. Acceptation of invited session proposals will be

done in about one week of its registration via the respective conference web form, and final approval will be done after the registration of at least five papers in the respective session.

· January 30th, 2004: Acceptance notifications.

· March 31st, 2004: Submission of camera-ready papers: hard copies and electronic versions.

Submitted papers will be sent to reviewers. Accepted papers, which should not exceed six single-spaced typed pages, will be published by means of paper and electronic proceedings. SCI Journal will publish, at least, the best 10% of the papers presented at the conference.

Program Committee Chair: William Lesso

General Chair: Nagib Callaos

Organizing Committee Chair: Belkis Sanchez

EISTA '04

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS: TECHNOLOGIES

AND APPLICATIONS

Orlando , Florida , USA

July 21-25, 2004

http://www.confinf.org/eista04

EISTA '04 Organizing Committee invites authors to submit their original and unpublished works, innovations, ideas based on analogical thinking, problems that require solutions, position papers, case studies, etc., in the fields of Education/Training and Information/Communication Technologies (ICT). ICT researchers are invited to present their research results. Practitioners and consultants are invited to present case study papers and innovative solutions. Corporations are invited to present education/training information systems and software based solutions. Teachers and University professors are invited to present case studies, information systems developed for specific purposes, and innovative ideas and designs. Educational scientists and technologists are invited to present research or position papers on the impact and the future possibilities of ICT in educational systems and training processes and methodologies.

Managers of educational organizations and training consultants are invited to present problems that might be solved by means of ICT, or solutions that might be improved by different approaches and

design in ICT. All are invited to organize panel or invited sessions. Panel sessions with panelists coming from both: ICT researchers/practitioners and teachers/professors.
Submitted papers must describe work not previously published. They must not be submitted concurrently to another conference with refereed proceedings. You can find complete information about the conference in our web page http://www.confinf.org/eista04
CONFERENCE AREAS AND TOPICS: Education and Training Systems and Technologies; Applications of Information and Communication Technologies in Education and Training; Application of Education Technologies
Papers might be submitted via web page: http://www.confinf.org/eista04/WebSite/Submission.asp as extended abstracts (500-1500 words) or as full papers drafts (2000-5000 words). Reviews will be done for both kinds of submissions. Invited Sessions proposals can be done filling the form given in the web page http://www.confinf.org/eista04/InvitedSession/organizer.asp. More information about Invited Sessions Organization could be found at the
http://www.confinf.org/eista04/WebSite/ISOrganization.asp
General Chair: Professor Freddy Malpica
Organizing Committee Chair: Professor Andres Tremante
Organized by the IIIS: The International Institute of Informatics and Systemics

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20TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON DISTANCE TEACHING & LEARNING

University of Wisconsin ,

Madison , USA

August 4-6, 2004

The Annual Conference on Distance Teaching & Learning is recognized as one of the premier events on distance education. The conference gathers educators, trainers, managers, and designers from throughout the world who are involved in the application of technology to the teaching and learning process and in the planning, administration, and management of distance education programs. For complete details for online submission of proposals, see: http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference/
Deadline for proposals: January 31, 2004

TESOL 2004 ELECTRONIC VILLAGE SPECIAL EVENTS

TESOL 2004: "SOARING FAR, CATCHING DREAMS"

Long Beach , California , USA

March 30-April 3, 2004

You are invited to submit a proposal for participation in one or more of these TESOL 2004 CALL Interest Section Special Events, according to the guidelines below. Submit a separate proposal for each demonstration you wish to be considered for. You are welcome to submit proposals to more than one event, and it is possible to have more than one proposal accepted (depending on space availability and quality of the submission). Windows and Macintosh equipment will be available at no charge, along with CD ROM drives, Internet connections, and (for the Showcase only) projection equipment. Plan to bring a minimum of 100 handouts per Fair/Showcase acceptance slot since these are very popular events!

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE FAIRS: Presenters have approximately 20-30 minutes to demonstrate their material. Participants walk around the EV, dropping in and out of demonstrations, thus precluding highly structured presentations. A demonstration may be repeated a second time (an additional 20 to 25 minutes), if interest warrants and space allows.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE MINI-WORKSHOPS: One presenter introduces a topic to a small group of workshop participants. The workshop is "hands-on."

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE SHOWCASE: There is one presenter at a time, demonstrating her/his program. Seating is provided for the audience.

Please submit your proposal(s) for the Internet Fair online at http://www.uoregon.edu/~call/.

INTERNET RESEARCH 5.0: UBIQUITY?

INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF INTERNET RESEARCHERS

University of Sussex , England

September 19-22, 2004

The internet seems to be at once everywhere and invisible but simultaneously it structures only a

fraction of the communications of the total global community. It can facilitate greater interaction, understanding and political activism; being used at the same time to exclude, destroy and exploit. The much cited ubiquity of the internet needs to be examined in both the contexts in which it is accepted and those in which it is contested.

Conference Websites: http://aoir.org/2004 or http://www.sussex.ac.uk/cce/aoir

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INTERNATIONAL ONLINE CONFERENCE ON
SECOND AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH

September 25-26, 2004

The basic aim of this conference is to provide a venue for educators, established scholars and graduate students to present work on a wide variety of pedagogical, theoretical and empirical issues as related to the multi-disciplinary field of second and foreign language teaching and research. On these two days we will gather to share information and capitalize on each others' learnings, experiences and contributions. This conference will also give you an opportunity to make global connections with people in your field. The two days of sessions will be supplemented by keynote speeches delivered by distinguished professionals.

For more information visit: http://www.readingmatrix.com/onlineconference/index.html Abstracts may be submitted online at: http://www.readingmatrix.com/onlineconference/abstract.html

For more information, contact Meena Singhal (msinghal@uci.edu), John Liontas (jliontas@nd.edu) or Adrian Wurr (awurr@uncg.edu).

Editors-The Reading Matrix: An International Online Journal;
http://www.readingmatrix.com/journal.html

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION AND CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

"Teaching English with Technology" (ISSN 1642-1027) is a quarterly electronic journal published by IATEFL Poland Computer Special Interest Group. The Journal deals mainly with issues of using computers, the Internet, computer software in teaching and learning languages.

The editorial board of "Teaching English with Technology":

- Jarek Krajka (Maria Curie-Sklodowska University, Lublin, Poland) – Editor-in-Chief (Articles, Lesson Plans, Software, On the Web)
- Jozsef Horvath (University of Pecs, Pecs, Hungary) – Editor (Articles, Book Reviews)
- Maria Jose Luzon de Marco (University of Zaragoza, Spain) – Editor (The Internet for ESP)
- Guo Shesen (Luoyang University, Henan, P.R China) – Editor (A Word from a Techie)

To subscribe to "Teaching English with Technology," write to: Jarek Krajka, Editor, at jkrajka@batory.plo.lublin.pl. In the Subject line, write: Subscription Request. You can also get the journal from the IATEFL Computer SIG website at this URL: http://www.iatefl.org.pl/call/callnl.htm, where the past issues can also be accessed, downloadable as zipped .html or .pdf file.

The next issue of "Teaching English with Technology" will be published in April 2004. Submission deadline for the next issue is March 1, 2004.

We invite submissions covering the following categories:

- Article: articles describing classroom practice or discussions of work in progress, being of immediate relevance to teachers, or articles presenting case studies or work in progress
- The Internet for ESP: practical discussions of Web-based activities/classroom ideas for the ESP environment
- Lesson plan: plans of lessons done in the Internet or using computers, set in the reality of the education system, detailing the procedure, technical requirements, skills needed by students and teacher, together with URLs used in the lesson and any worksheets/checklists students are asked to complete
- On the Web: discussions of websites having potential for organising Internet lessons around them or relevant in some way to the field of English language teaching and learning
- Software: descriptions, evaluations and recommendations of widely available language learning

software or articles pertaining to the use of software in language learning

- A Word from a Techie: discussions of applications of computer programmes to teaching English, outlining new possibilities given by software to the process of learning and teaching, explanations of technological issues
- Reports from Past Events: brief accounts of conferences, methodological workshops, commercial presentations, courses that relate to the field of using computer technology in teaching English
- Announcements of Future Events: as above, together with contact addresses.

We invite also works published elsewhere, but please give precise reference.

Please forward the following details with each submission:

- author(s) full name(s) including title(s)
- job title(s)
- organization(s) full contact details of all authors including email address, postal address, telephone and fax numbers.

Submissions should be sent by email as attachments to the Editor, Jarek Krajka, at jkrajka@batory.plo.lublin.pl, with the subject being "Journal Submission." Please specify in the letter what word-processing programme you are using, and preferably send .rtf version as well. All submissions undergo the process of blind peer review and are returned to authors with suggestions for changes/corrections.