Contents:

Editor's Message by Jarek Krajka, Editor-in-Chief

Article:

On the Web:

Internet Lesson Ideas:

A Word from a Techie:

FROM THE EDITOR

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The world of educational technology is experiencing never-ending progress, with new technological opportunities triggering the development of tools for possible implementation in the language teaching and learning process. A look at the profiles of articles from the early years of Teaching English with Technology, which started at the end of the year 2000, shows how much the understanding of technology in foreign language education has become more sophisticated, specialised and focused.

On the one hand, it is interesting to note that even despite that, there are still CALL approaches, techniques and tasks which constantly draw researchers' attention into new applications. In the present issue, this is the case with the well-known format of WebQuests, formulated by Bernie Dodge and Tom March around 1995 and well-researched ever since. However, even despite extensive literature on WebQuests (as well as their FLT mutation of "Language Quests"), there are still studies displaying novel uses of the activity in various settings. This is exemplified in the article "LanguageQuests in an off-line course management system" by Marta Navarro-Coy and Carlos Periñán-Pascual from Universidad Católica San Antonio, Murcia, Spain. The authors show the integration of the LanguageQuest idea and a custom-made course management system CALL Workbench, to enable more effective learning also in the off-line mode with a greater amount of teacher control.

Similarly, the area of Web-based language teaching, with Internet lesson ideas for face-to-face teaching popular in the early stages of Internet use (see for instance Gitsaki and Taylor's Internet English coursebook, Oxford University Press, 2000), continues to find its relevance in teaching English. This is especially true in case of English for Specific Purposes, with rather marginal target groups without ample provision of teaching materials. Thus, in this movement we already had Internet-based teaching of English to priests (volume 7, issue 2), while in this issue Laura Kozieł from Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland, shows the practical activities used in her research into Web-based teaching of students of psychology. The future might well see further specific areas catered in a similar way.

On the other hand, the new developments in the area of Information Technology, and especially the notable shift from Web 1.0 (the Read-Web) to Web 2.0 (the Read-Write Web), culminating in treating the Web and its devices as a global platform of reusable data, stimulates language educators to reflect on possible applications of Web 2.0 tools. Thus, in this issue's "A Word from a Techie", Ferit Kilickaya from Middle East Technical University Ankara, Turkey, provides a tutorial in the use of a wiki, an increasingly popular Web 2.0 publishing tool.

Finally, the search for true gems among the ELT websites on the Web is always welcome, which is what has been undertaken by our co-editor, Christopher Alexander from the University of Nicosia, Cyprus, who has contributed an extensive review of Andy Gillet's UEfAP.com site (Using English for Academic Purposes — A Guide for Students in Higher Education). UEfAP.com is an immense repository of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) materials that undoubtedly represents years of dedicated work, thus, it is essential to evaluate it according to objectively set criteria.

I wish you good reading!

LANGUAGEQUESTS IN AN OFF-LINE COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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Abstract:

The Internet has become an extremely powerful tool which has pervaded every corner of our lives, including the foreign language classroom. However, we should not forget that in certain situations this tool cannot be easily implemented in the FL classroom, because of either pedagogical or financial reasons. This paper presents CALL Workbench, a course management system which is flexible enough to be adapted to two stand-alone computer-based EFL learning settings: with or without access to the Internet but provided with electronic communication tools. A WebQuest has been designed and implemented through CALL Workbench in order to illustrate some of the advantages and disadvantages that both settings can present as compared to those found in a traditional Web-based environment.

Keywords: LanguageQuest; Course management system; Computer-mediated communication.

Introduction

Nowadays, it is relatively easy to find people supporting the use of computers for learning an FL. In fact, for a long time both researchers and teachers have been showing and talking about the advantages of incorporating new technologies in the language classroom. Among those advantages, we can highlight the following: an increase in learners and teachers' motivation (LeLoup & Ponterio, 1997), the availability of a wide variety of multimedia resources (text, video, image, etc.) or the possibility to communicate worldwide through tools such as e-mail, chat or forum. In fact, those situations allowing real communication are currently widely dealt with in the research on the use of new technologies in foreign language learning, and, indeed, working with the Internet in the FL classroom has become an extremely popular activity (see Warschauer, 1996).

If the use of the Internet has become so popular among language teachers and learners, would it sound contradictory to talk about the benefits of working in non-Web computer-based environments? It goes without saying that a tool such as the Internet can be said to play a key role because it presents a wide variety of learning possibilities which, in turn, have proven beneficial in promoting language learning and acquisition (see Aydin, 2007). However, we have to be cautious and consider not only the benefits but also the problems that can arise from working in a medium about which it is not unusual to find linguistic and semiotic analyses of the texts it contains with no reference to pedagogical implications. As Kasper (2002) indicates, while hypertext can promote the development of students' literacy skills, without instruction in how to navigate the hypertext effectively students may become lost in a sea of information, potentially experiencing cognitive overload (Rouet and Levonen 1996).

In this paper, we try to show the advantages (together with some of the problems) that a non-Web computer-based environment can offer to the EFL classroom.[1] With that purpose in mind, we show the implementation of a standard WebQuest in CALL Workbench (CALLWB) — a course management system which is presented in the next section. More specifically, the WebQuest we are presenting is given the name of LanguageQuest because the task has been specifically designed for language learning (see Koenraad & Westhoff, 2003).

CALL Workbench

An overview

CALLWB is a stand-alone multimedia course management system (CMS) for the implementation of courseware in the EFL classroom.[2] Firstly, CALLWB is a stand-alone application, i.e. it is not Web-based.[3] Indeed, CALLWB runs in a Microsoft Windows environment, preferably version 2000 or higher. Secondly, the courseware designed by CALLWB can be multimedia, because the user-computer interaction can be based on textual, graphical and/or audiovisual material.[4] A sample of multimedia resources integrated in a CALLWB course is shown in Figure 1:
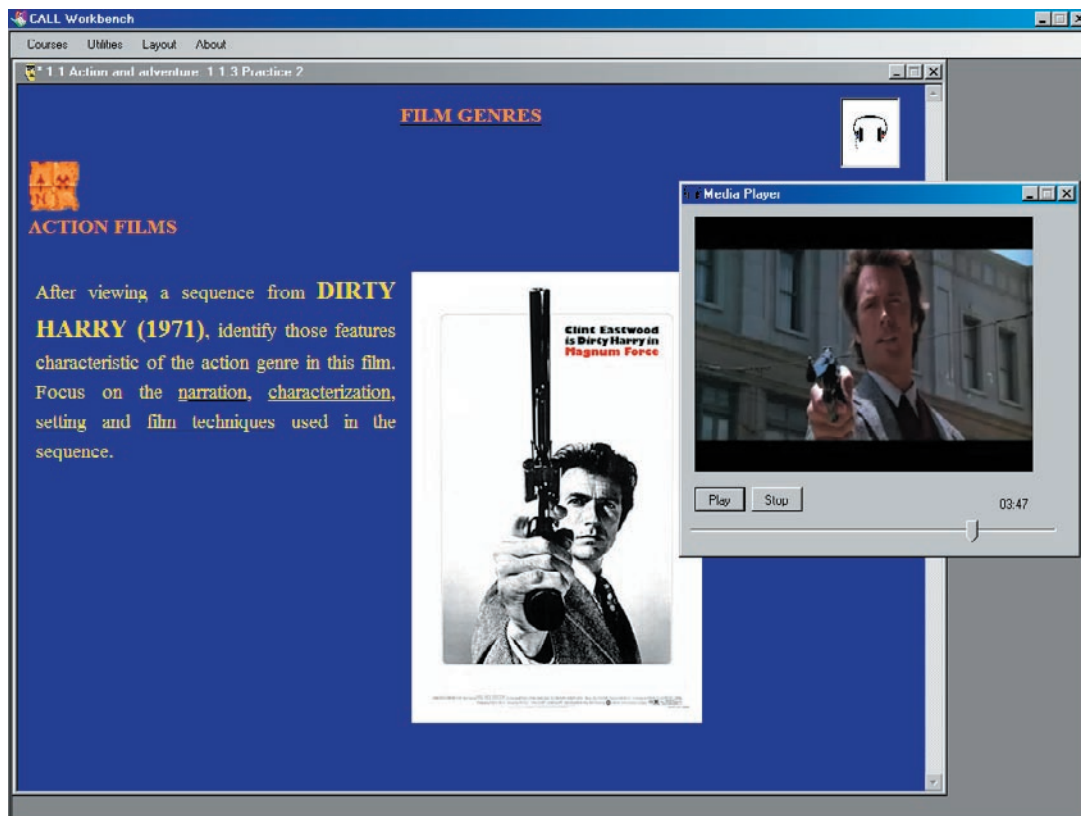
Figure 1. Multimedia resources in CALLWB.

Thirdly, CALLWB is a CMS because the teacher works in a platform in which different elements of a course are integrated in a controlled way. CALLWB allows teachers to design and implement the units and tasks which make up their own courseware, thus creating computer-based materials more closely related to specific syllabus objectives.

Furthermore, CALLWB is provided with several fully-integrated utilities, which have been classified into three categories according to their functionality: searching utilities (e.g. Database Searcher and Web Browser), CMC utilities (e.g. E-mail and LAN Chat), and graphical and audiovisual utilities (e.g. Media Player and NotePad). As shown in Table 1, some of these CALLWB tools require Internet connection, and some others do not; among all of them, the most outstanding is LAN Chat, because students can be provided with one of the most important synchronous multi-user CMC tools but in an off-line computer-based setting.

Table 1. CALLWB tools.

Function	Name	On-line access
Searching utilities	Database Searcher	no
	Web Browser	yes
CMC utilities	E-mail	yes
	LAN Chat	no
Graphical & audiovisual utilities	Media Player	no
	Notepad	no

Course management systems and CALL Workbench

CALL programs can be created by means of programming software, which comprehends both authoring programs and programming languages (Periñán-Pascual, 2007). In the last decades, there has been a proliferation of authoring programs, which allow teachers with very little computing knowledge to build exercises in an extremely quick and easy way. Authoring programs contain various preconfigured activity templates which teachers fill out in order to create CALL material, thus saving teachers' time and energy considerably.

CMSs (e.g. WebCT, Blackboard, Moodle or Sakai) constitute a subtype of authoring programs, which allow teachers not only to develop a whole course, but also to deliver it. Therefore, and from a functional point of view, any CMS should be at least both a content management system and a content delivery system. To illustrate, Moodle is described as follows:

> Moodle is an open source course management system used by universities, community colleges, K-12 schools, businesses, and even individual instructors to add web technology to their courses. (Cole & Foster, 2005, p. xiii)

Moreover, applications such as Moodle or WebCT are also learning management systems:

> Learning management systems differ from exclusive course management systems because they allow to present information to learners in small units, assess what they have learned, and based on the quality of their achievement branch out into additional review of material or move to the next level. (Brandl, 2005, p. 19)

Here lies one of the differences between CALLWB and other CMSs: CALLWB is simply a content delivery system which can be managed by both teachers and students, but the application does not guide students through their learning process. Although not suitable for distance learning, CALLWB can be ideally used as an adjunct to face-to-face courses conducted in computer labs.

The other main difference is related to the technological issue. Nowadays, most CMSs develop their courseware to be published on the Web, where course content is displayed as template-based Web pages which are supported by facilities such as computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools. Since these applications are Web-based, they run on a server and therefore some computer training is required if you are engaged in a one-man do-it-yourself undertaking. For example, the "publication" of a Moodle course involves some hardware and software requirements on the server machine.[5] The computer must have installed an HTTP server (e.g. Apache for Linux or Internet Information Server for Microsoft Windows), the PHP scripting language and a database server (e.g. MySQL or PostgreSQL). Moodle should be set up and configured on a machine which the administrator can access, without forgetting to maintain both the Web site and the server securely. It is recommended to buy a dedicated server that handles Moodle and nothing else, because when there is a high number of concurrent users, "you may soon find yourself running into slowdowns or freeze-

ups" (Robb, 2004). Therefore, without the assistance of technical support, teachers can be overwhelmed by problems resulting from a wrong configuration of the server, not to mention the human and economical[6] effort this likely scenario implies.

On the contrary, CALLWB facilitates the economical and immediate implementation of CALL courses, mainly because neither the container software nor the courseware require Web publication. Moreover, the management workload is greatly reduced. CALLWB courseware consists of (i) the course content, which is stored as off-line Web pages and audiovisual files, and (ii) the course structure, which is stored in an XML file. As shown in Figure 2, any user can easily manage the course content and structure through the Course Editor.
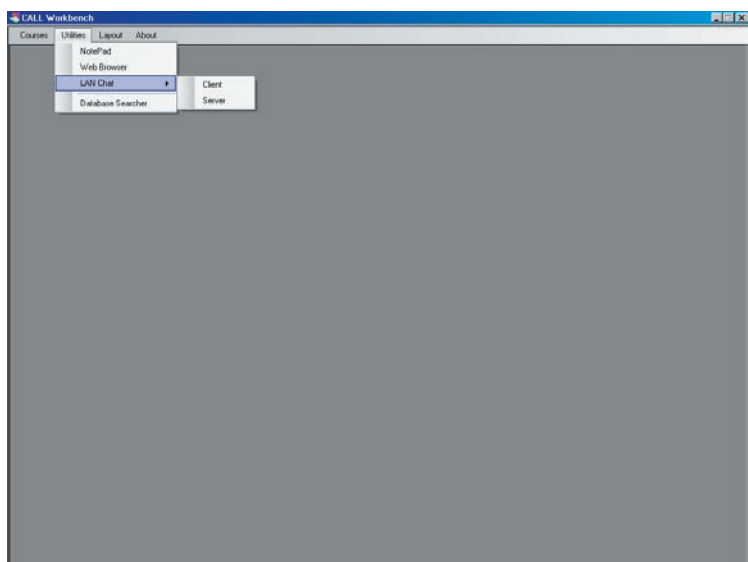
Figure 2. The Course Editor in CALLWB.

LAN Chat

LAN Chat is a synchronous CMC tool which lets members of a discussion group exchange messages through a local-area network (LAN). Therefore, this tool must be implemented in a computer lab. As shown in Figure 3, LAN Chat comprises two subprograms: Chat Server and Chat Client.
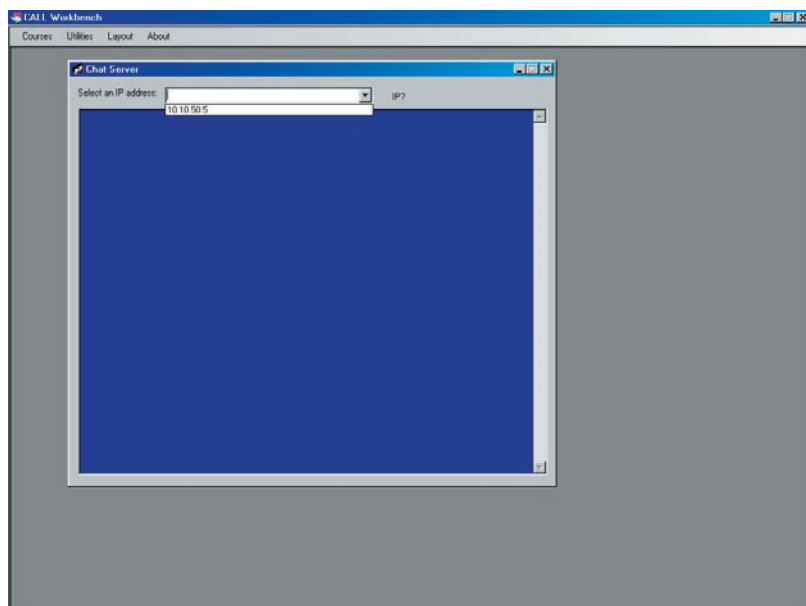
Figure 3. Opening LAN Chat.

Suppose that the teacher divides the class in several discussion groups, and each one of these groups wants to have their own separate chat room. Firstly, one member in the group must activate Chat Server by entering the IP address[7] of his/her computer (Figure 4).
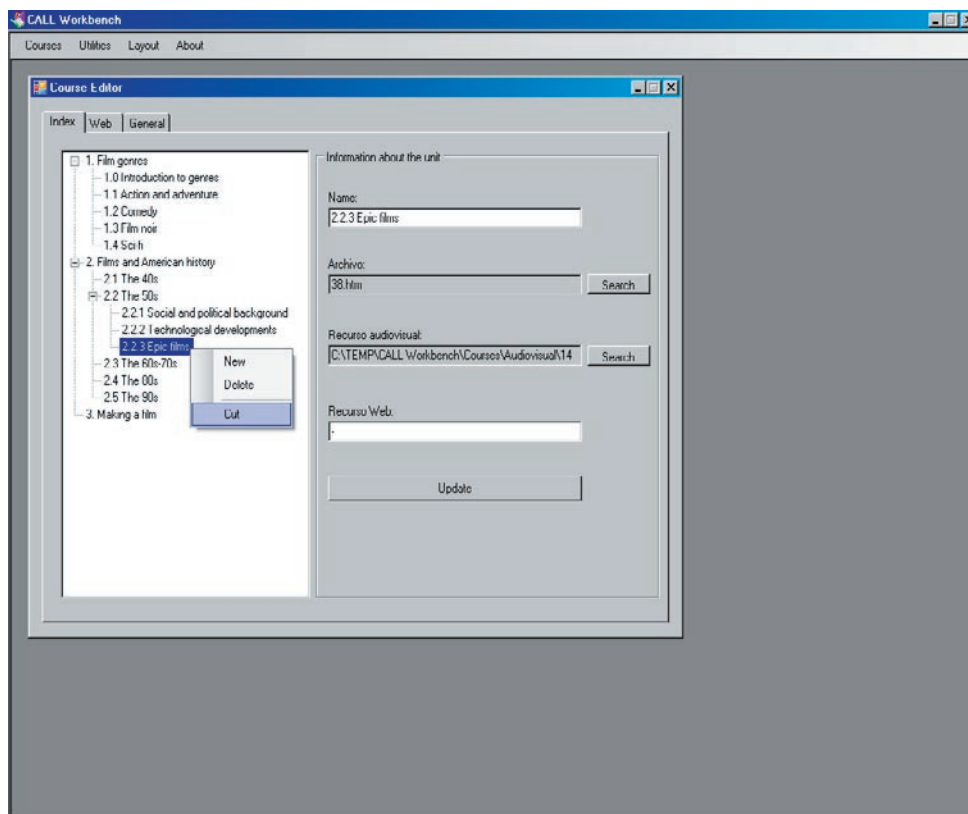

Figure 4. Activating Chat Server.

Secondly, in order to enter the chat room, all the members of the discussion group open their LAN Client subprograms and type their (nick)name as well as the IP address of the computer where Chat Server is running (Figure 5).
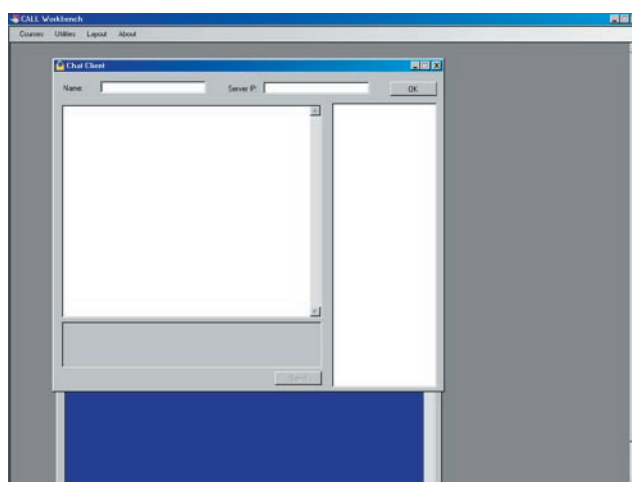
Figure 5. Activating Chat Client.

A message typed through Chat Client by any member of the discussion group is sent to Chat Server and then automatically rebroadcast to all participants in that chat room, i.e. to all Chat Clients connected to Chat Server. In Chat Client, all participants in the chat room are listed on the right side of the screen,

and all messages are chronologically displayed on the left side. Likewise, the whole conversation within the discussion group is displayed in Chat Server (Figure 6).
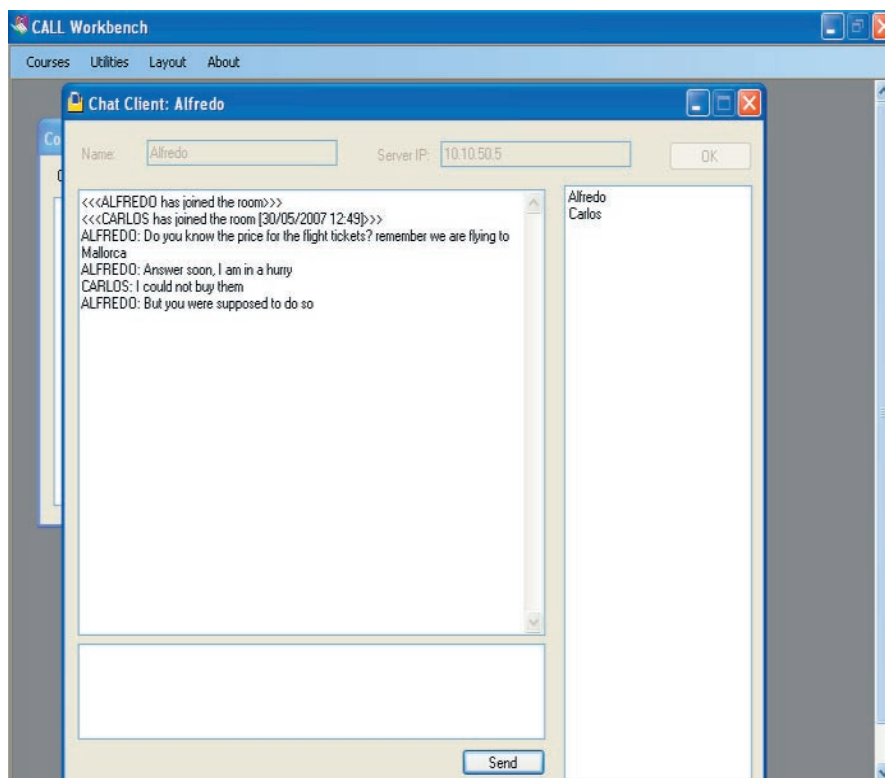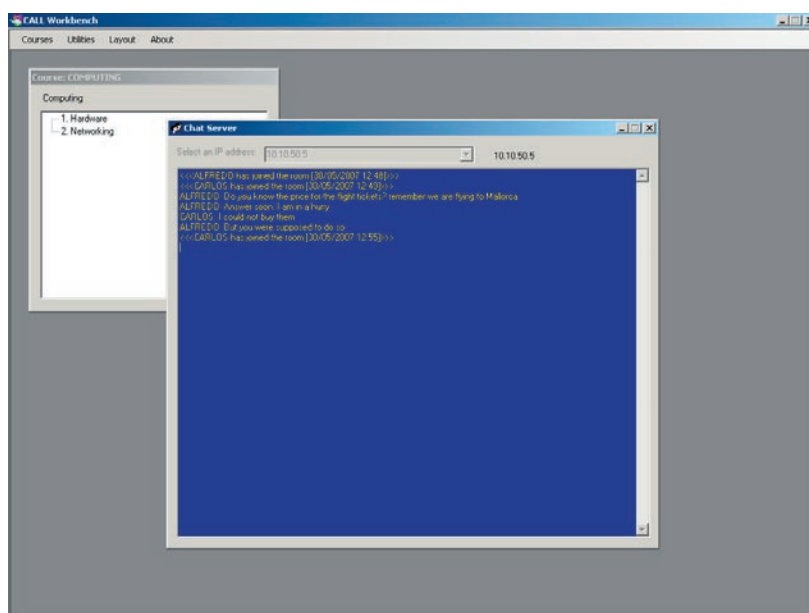

Figure 6. Communication between Chat Client and Chat Server.

Since these conversations can be saved as text-based log files, their post hoc analysis can provide useful data about the kind of interaction that takes place among language learners, how they respond to the medium or how their interaction is constructed and maintained, among others (González-Lloret, 2007, p. 225).

Special importance is given to the fact that Chat Client has a built-in spell checker for English. Before a message is sent, CALLWB checks the spelling of the text automatically; if a spell error is found, then a word list of possible solutions is presented. This tool is not only conceived to improve users' English spelling, but also to prevent them from sending messages written in their own language.

To illustrate how LAN Chat can be used in a computer lab, Figure 7 presents the hypothetical case where ten students are "virtually" arranged in three groups of two, three and five students. As you can see,

those students who have Chat Server running on their computers must also have Chat Client activated if they want to send messages.
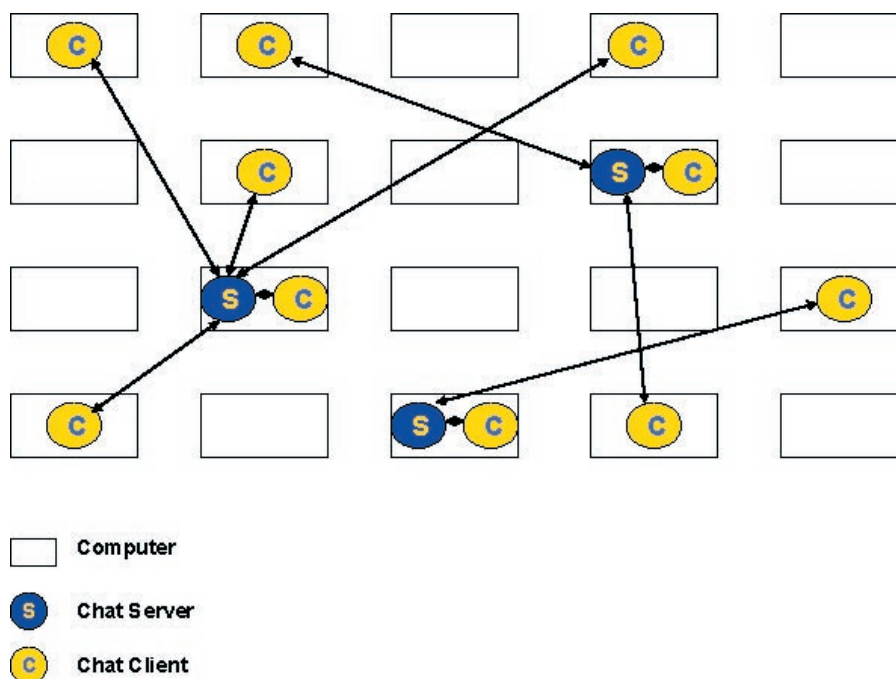

Figure 7. LAN Chat in a computer lab.

Unlike synchronous communication tools built into CMSs which are usually implemented in online courses, LAN Chat has been exclusively designed for face-to-face courses taking place in computer labs. The question is whether this feature of LAN Chat helps teachers and students to use this type of electronic communication more effectively.

Most CMSs require that teachers need to create and manage chat rooms for their students: typically, one chat room for the whole class (i.e. class chat), or a separate chat room for each group of 3-6 students (i.e. group chat). In the case of class chats, electronic communication has sometimes proved not to be so effective when multiple conversations occur simultaneously:

> Course management systems such as Blackboard continue to develop increasingly sophisticated tools that provide greater control over chat sessions. However, these controls require the instructor to grant or deny access repeatedly for each individual as he or she signals the desire to participate. As a result, instructors typically spend much of their time acting as traffic cop […] (Smith, 2006)

Then, a key issue for successful class chat sessions is moderation (Cole & Foster, 2007). But apart from the use of CMS moderation tools, which may become burdensome, another approach is to set some rules of courtesy and respect, also known as "chatiquette" in the Internet community. For instance, Smith (2006) has developed a protocol that his students must comply with when chatting; one of his guidelines is presented as follows:

> When participants have a comment or question, they should type "!" for a comment or "?" for a question.

Thus, some shortcomings of chat communication in e-learning can be overcome by students' self-monitoring, however, this demands further initial chat training and practice under supervision. In the case of group chat, teachers' workload dramatically increases before the class, without dismissing the possibility that some of the above problems can also appear if groups are not very small.

A different scenario occurs with a non-Web-based CMC tool such as LAN Chat: the computer lab becomes a controlled language learning setting, so there is no need for the teacher to set up chat sessions for their students, because they do it themselves. Therefore, this tool can be even used as a "pair chat", i.e. unmoderated but monitored chat sessions where two students can spontaneously "speak" at any time. In conclusion, although LAN Chat's functionality is very basic, it allows EFL teachers to use technology more productively.

Standard LanguageQuests in CALL Workbench

The key of success in the incorporation of technology into the FL classroom is primarily based on neither the hardware nor the software but on humanware, i.e. our human ability to plan, design and implement educational activities efficiently (Warschauer & Meskill, 2000). Instead of trying to automate everything, computers should be used to humanize the educational process by fostering creativity, exploration, construction and collaboration. A type of activity which best embodies all these features when being accomplished is the WebQuest. WebQuests have become very popular in the recent years with thousands of teachers using them in their classrooms and, in fact, this kind of activity offers a variety of attractive advantages for the learning process (see Fiedler, 2002 and Dunnagan et al., 2002). Bernie Dodge — one of the creators of the WebQuest — defines it as "an inquiry-oriented activity in which most or all of the information used by learners is drawn from the Web" (Dodge, 1995). A WebQuest is usually considered as an activity taking the form of a problem to solve or a project to complete in which students use their critical-thinking skills by analysing a variety of Web resources in order to derive solutions to the problem or accomplish the project. Although WebQuests were not originally conceived as a task for language learning, several researchers have explored their potential for this purpose (Koenraad, 2002; Luzón, 2002; Richards, 2005) and indeed, there are studies (Koenraad & Westhoff, 2003) trying to establish the specific features WebQuests should present when they are designed for learning a FL. In such cases, WebQuests are sometimes given the name of LanguageQuests. Obviously the term "WebQuest" suggests that you have to search for something on the Web — an idea reinforced by classical definitions such as Dodge's. However, this same definition is broadened to highlight that WebQuests are designed to "focus on using information rather than looking for it, and to support learners' thinking at the levels of analysis, synthesis and evaluation" (Dodge, 1995). To this respect, we would rather use "LanguageQuest" for the sake of coherence with the content of our work, since it could be a paradox to talk about implementing WebQuests in a non-Web-based setting.

Suppose that your students are going to work with the LanguageQuest "A week in London",[8] whose introduction is as follows:

> You and three of your friends have won the equivalent to 3,100 pounds in a TV contest and you have decided to spend it on a one-week trip to London. Now it's time for planning and making decisions in order to make the most of this special city. However, you are not living in the same city this year and therefore you have to communicate through LAN Chat. Remember that you have to spend a minimum of 2,900 pounds and in no case more than 3,100.

This LanguageQuest is structured in six parts, following Dodge's guidelines (1998):

The Introduction of a LanguageQuest is the scenario for the project, including the central question around which the LanguageQuest revolves. The objective of the introduction makes learners work with a goal in mind, what helps to develop an important autonomous skill, since autonomous learners are able to manage their own learning (Holec, 1981, p. 3) and that includes the setting of objectives.

The Task consists of a description of the final product of the students' work and in this sense March (1998) highlights the increase of students' motivation when faced with LanguageQuests, where "realistic tasks" are presented by using "real life" resources.

The Process can be described as a step-by-step guide about how students will accomplish their task. It is important to mention that a LanguageQuest should be a task providing students with the opportunity "to do things" with the information and not just to find answers to specific questions or copy the information on the screen: "copy and paste and print are the worst enemies of understanding" (Adell, 2004, p. 2). This matches perfectly with our sample, where one student will look for information concerning flights and accommodation, two students will be in charge of sightseeing, and the other student will collect information about full-day tours in order to create a well-organised travel plan.

The section Resources usually contains a selection of useful web sites to help learners find relevant information.

The Evaluation consists of a description about how students' performance will be evaluated. In our sample, the two main aspects that will be taken into account are the final travel plan and the messages exchanged through LAN Chat. At the same time, learners should be encouraged to carry out a process of self-evaluation that will activate the use of metacognitive strategies (see O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) when they analyse and evaluate the process and the result of the task performed.

The Conclusion in a LanguageQuest usually includes a final statement that sums up the project and reviews what the students have learned.

These last three sections, i.e. task, process and resources, are likely to activate a series of cognitive, socioaffective and communicative strategies (see Oxford, 1990). For example, having to plan the project, learners have to organize the information and set a working plan and a methodology. In the same way, they have to negotiate certain aspects of the work being carried out such as the distribution of tasks and roles. Consequently, LanguageQuests can be said to promote the use of learning strategies and autonomous skills.

As you can see in Figure 8, each part of the LanguageQuest can be linked to a question to which learners should be able to find an answer when reading the indications given in such parts.
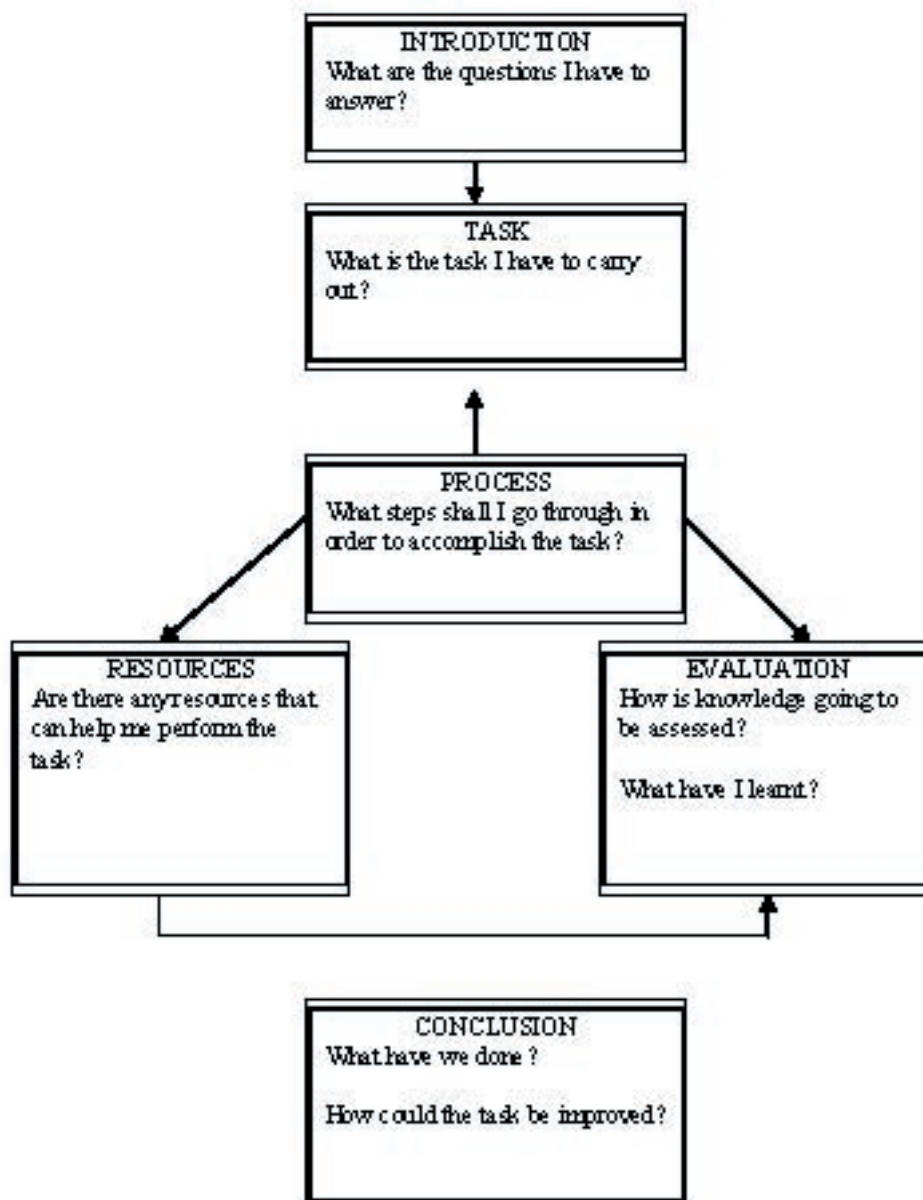
Figure 8. The structure of LanguageQuests.

As we have just seen, the different parts of a LanguageQuest are very likely to trigger a strategic behaviour which could be dealt with from a socioconstructivist[9] and autonomising perspective. As Pérez (2006) indicates, LanguageQuests:

(a)   allow students to construct knowledge from the resources offered and from their own previous knowledge,

(b)   promote a learner-centred learning,

(c)   activate reflection, analysis, synthesis and evaluation processes,

(d)   promote interaction, and

(e)   involve collaboration and cooperation among students and/or the adoption of different roles.

In general, good LanguageQuests provoke high-level cognitive processes which can be developed by learners with the help of the scaffolding learning structure this task presents.

As far as implementation is concerned, a CMS can be regarded as an ideal setting to include LanguageQuests, since it is important to link them to previous and subsequent activities, so that the LanguageQuest is not an isolated experience disconnected from the rest of the syllabus. To illustrate, Figure 9 shows how the various sections of our LanguageQuest can be easily located within a CALLWB course:
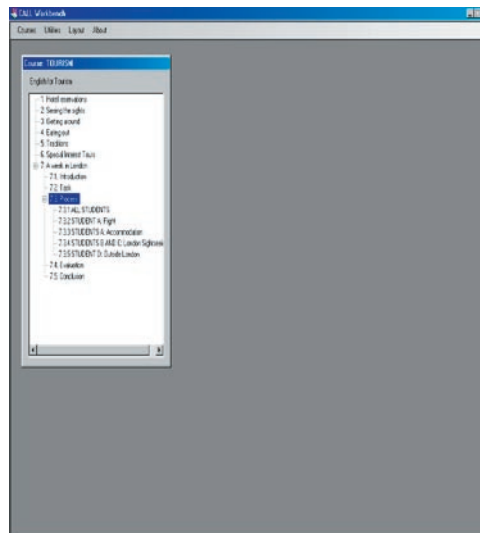
Figure 9. Searching the LanguageQuest A week in London.

As you can see in Figure 9, the CALLWB course is structured like a textbook, i.e. a hierarchical list of chapters (e.g. "7. A week in London"), sections (e.g. "7.1 Introduction", "7.2 Task", "7.3 Process", etc.) and activities (e.g. "7.3.1 ALL STUDENTS", "7.3.2 STUDENT A: Flight", etc.). To illustrate the interface of this LanguageQuest, Figure 10 shows one of the activities in the Process section.
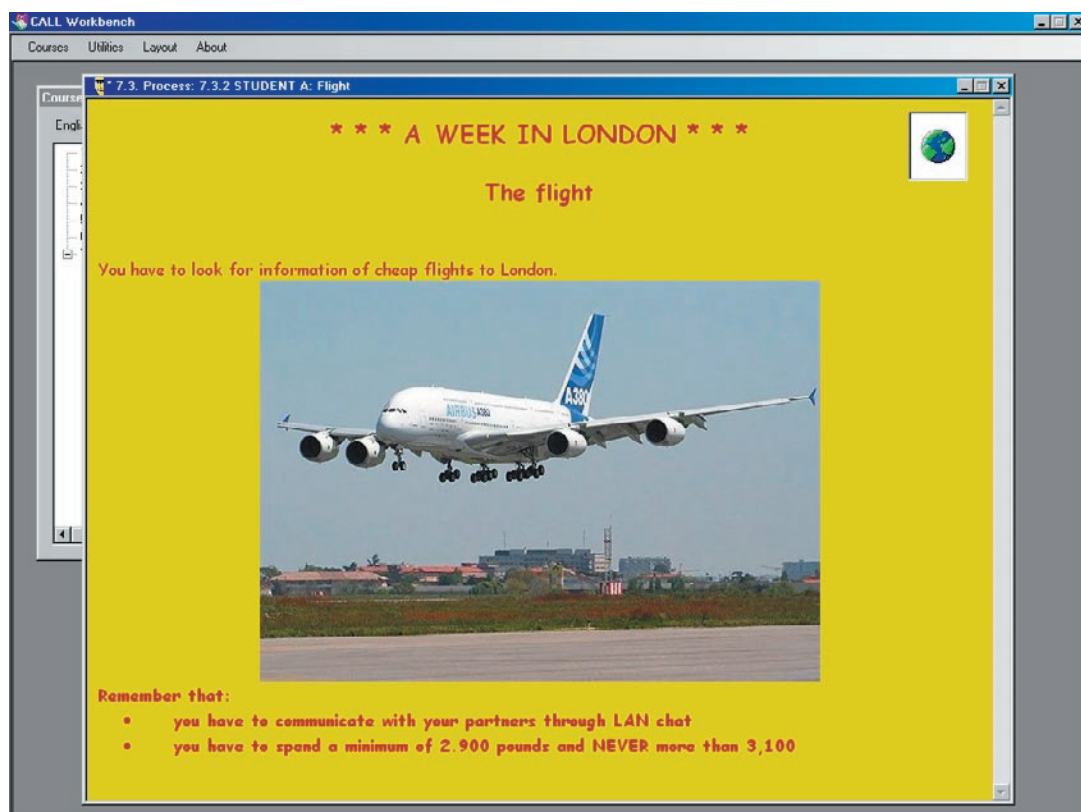
Figure 10. Inside the LanguageQuest.

In the upper right corner of this window, the icon gives access to the website previously linked by the teacher to facilitate students' work — in this case, a low-cost airline website. When the button is clicked, students can immediately view the website through CALLWB Web browser (Figure 11).
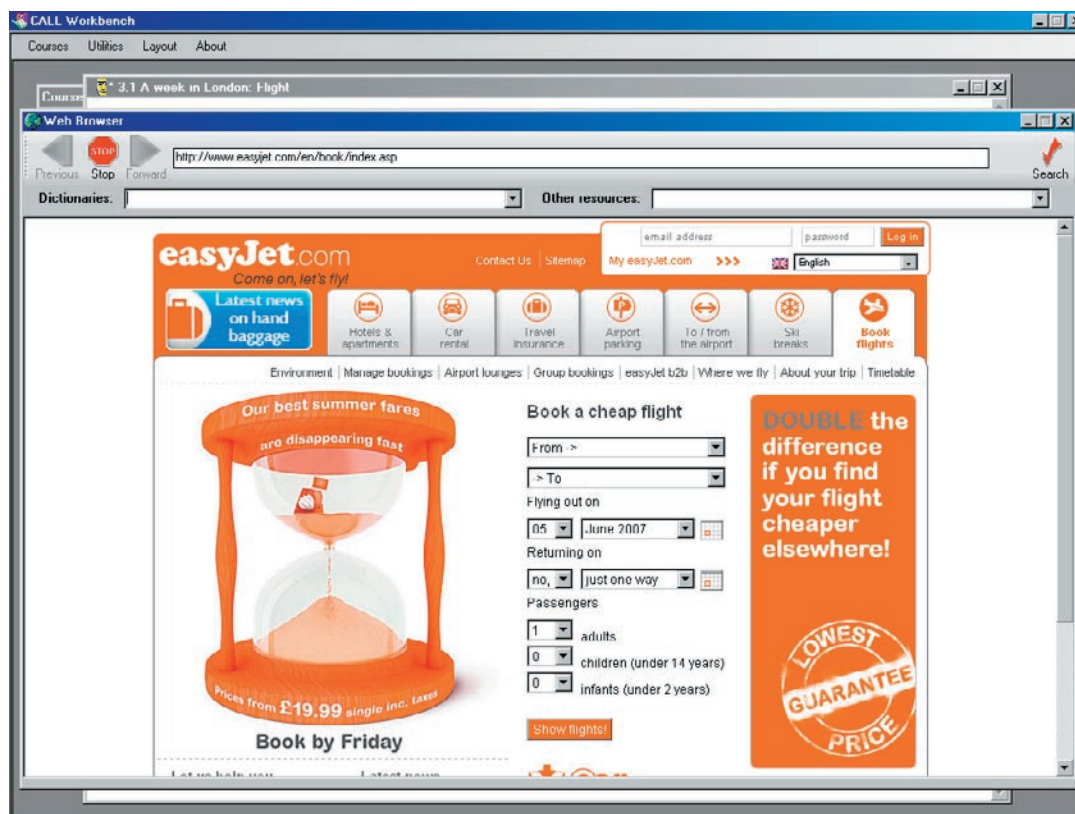
Figure 11. Web browser in CALL Workbench.

Taking advantage of the Internet-based utilities shown in Table 1, students are expected to use four CALLWB tools to carry out this LanguageQuest successfully: Web Browser, NotePad, LAN Chat and E-mail. Firstly, the Web Browser is intensively used in the process section, where students are provided with the set of websites necessary for the inquiry task. Secondly, the NotePad is used for two main roles: note taking and travel-plan writing. Thirdly, students form discussion groups to share relevant information through LAN Chat; they have to reach an agreement concerning the different aspects of the trip in order to design a well-organised travel plan. Finally, the students e-mail their teacher the travel plan and the conversation in LAN Chat — both of them for evaluation.

In this section, we have demonstrated how standard LanguageQuests can be perfectly reproduced in an off-line computer-based setting. Next section presents a comparative analysis for three different learning scenarios where LanguageQuests can be implemented through the computer, pinpointing strengths and weaknesses in each one of them.

Benefits of LanguageQuests in off-line computer-based settings

One of the most serious problems that some teachers face with using LanguageQuests is technology, not only regarding the computer-based setting but also their own computer literacy (see Foell, 1983). Technically speaking, two possible scenarios can take place when a LanguageQuest is implemented in a computer room: (a) Internet set-up is adequate, or (b) there is no Internet access, or bandwidth is very low. Obviously, scenario (b) dramatically affects the potential of LanguageQuests in Web-based CMSs. On the contrary, CALLWB allows teachers to design and develop effective LanguageQuests for any of these two learning settings.

You have just been shown a sample LanguageQuest (Figures 9-11) in which Internet connection is required. Now suppose that you want this LanguageQuest to be implemented in CALLWB within scenario

(b). According to Dodge (2001), WebQuests, and hence LanguageQuests, should be designed to fully exploit the medium, i.e. the Web. Not just the selection of Web pages, but audiovisual resources as well as CMC should also play a predominant role. According to Tuzi (1998), the main advantage of using audiovisual resources taken from the Web is that students can listen to real speech (i.e. discourse aimed at native speakers — e.g. a news bulletin) as well as spontaneous speech (i.e. discourse produced without a script — e.g. a chat show). In addition, CMC focuses on some of the most remarkable features of a successful cooperative learning environment, such as positive interdependence, promotive interaction and group processing (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Although being an off-line virtual learning environment, CALLWB is able to simulate a Web-based setting, in which students can resort to Web pages, audiovisual resources and CMC. For example, a repository of relevant off-line Web resources can be stored in the hard disk, or any other type of storage medium, and the functionality of a Web-based search engine is emulated by Database Searcher (Figure 12).
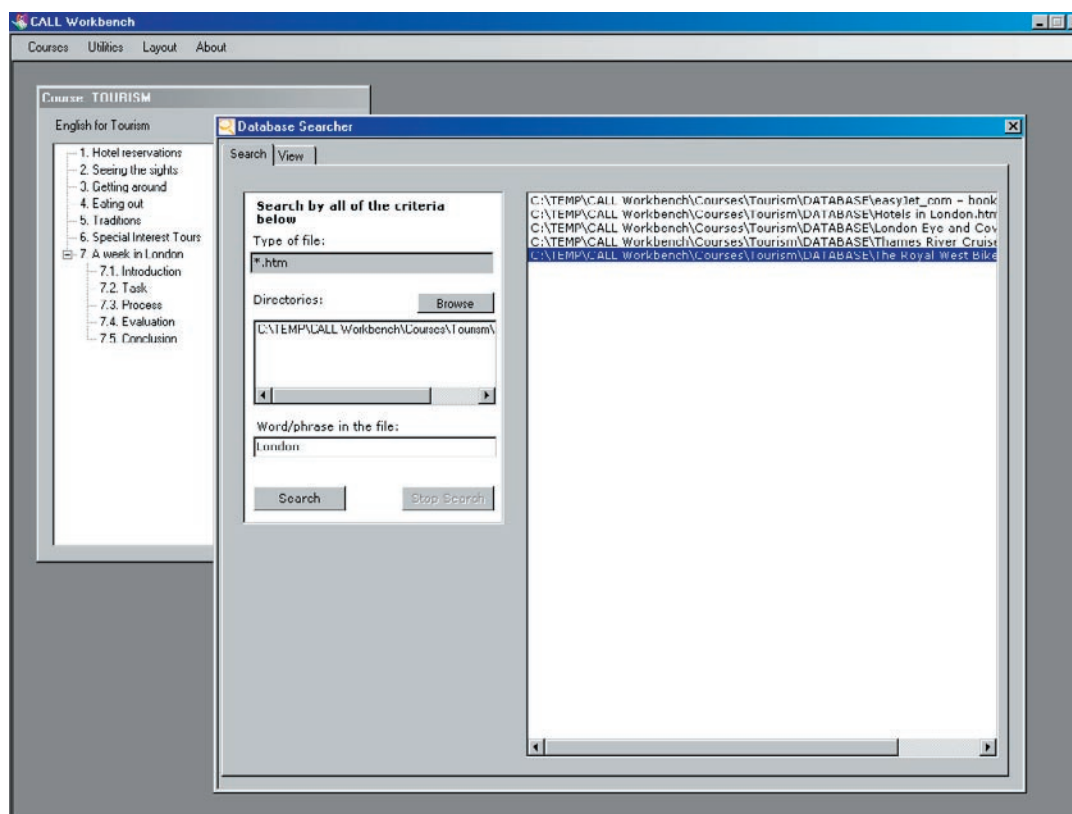
Figure 12. Search tab in Database Searcher.

Indeed, the Search tab in Database Searcher is similar to Microsoft Windows Explorer built-in search utility. The students indicate the folders which are going to be searched and type some keywords in the query textbox. The program searches for words or phrases that are inside HTML files located in the target folders. Search results are displayed in the form of a list of the paths of files containing those keywords. When double-clicking any list item, the program switches automatically to the View tab, where the contents of the target file are displayed (Figure 13).
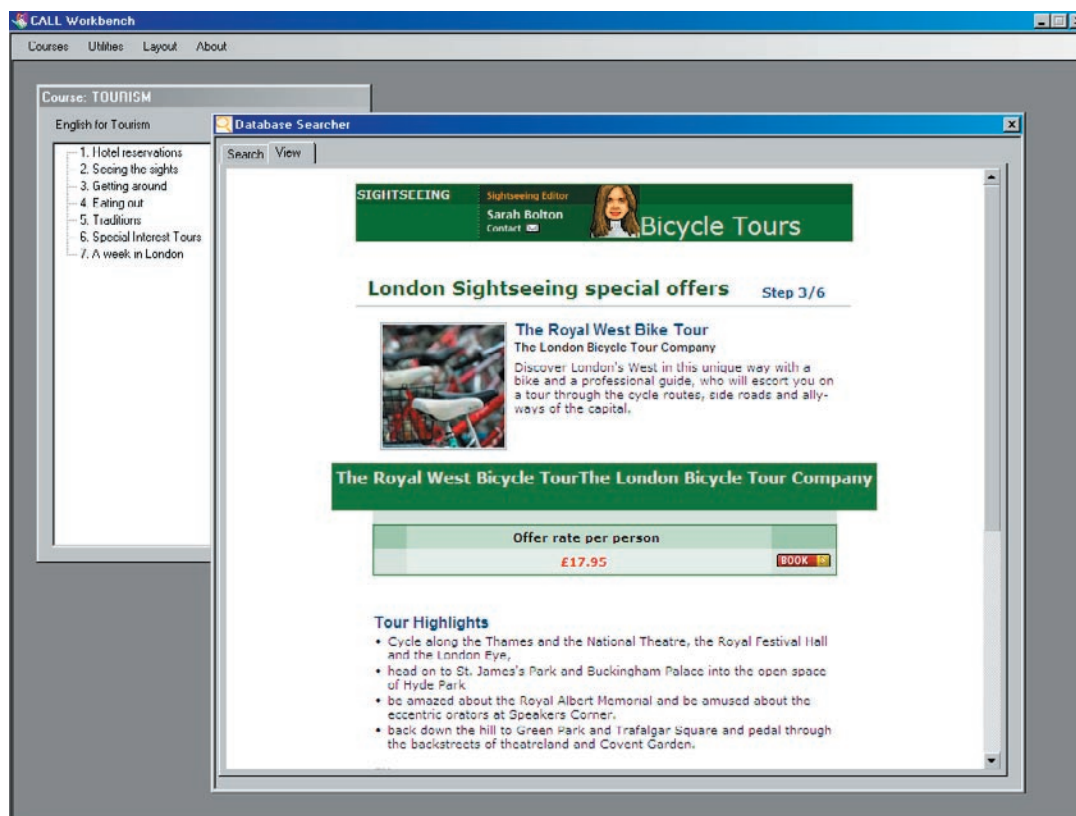
Figure 13. View tab in Database Searcher.

A question may arise from this panorama: which computer-based setting turns out to be more beneficial for LanguageQuests? In an attempt to offer an answer to this question, we have selected ten criteria we consider highly relevant for our purpose. In the next sections, those criteria will be dealt with in detail and reference to three different computer-based settings will be made. We do not intend to present an exhaustive inventory of descriptors, but those we consider sufficiently representative so as to achieve relevant results in this comparative analysis. The representativeness of our criteria is justified in view of the fact that they focus on the main components of the computer implementation in the classroom: the courseware (e.g. resource availability, accessibility and suitability), the application (e.g. CMC, Web publication, monitoring, usability and portability) and the teacher (e.g. dedicated computer/FL training).

Resource availability

Web-based applications provide learners with a substantial amount of resources. However, as there is much more information available in the Web than learners really need, they should be guided towards what to read, leading to an implicit delimitation of Internet navigation. As Kasper (2002) states, "controlled hypertext provides students with guided practice that takes them step-by-step through a hypertext document and helps to facilitate their acquisition of the cognitive strategies necessary to navigate and comprehend nonlinear texts". On the other hand, handling off-line Web resources overcomes one of the inherent problems of the Web as a repository of information, i.e. the inactivity of relevant hyperlinks for the inquiry task.

Resource accessibility

Materials are more easily and quickly accessible when they are stored on a hard disk, or on any other type of storage medium. This is particularly advantageous when learners interact with an audiovisual resource, whose size usually increases download time dramatically. For example, video streaming allows users to access large audiovisual files without saturating the buffer memory and to browse the resource in just a few seconds instead

of having to wait for the complete download; however, interruptions in the streaming because of "traffic jams" and sluggish computers become the major inconvenience. In short, the interaction of students with computer-based teaching materials can be easier in CALLWB than in Web-based applications, since you can enhance both the availability of and accessibility to the courseware by combining effectively the benefits of different learning settings.

Resource suitability

When learners get access to the Internet, three typical problems can arise concerning the suitability of resources to the LanguageQuest:

(i)   Learners can unexpectedly find some web sites where a considerable amount of the project's assignment is already done; unfortunately, in these cases most students will succumb to the temptation of plagiarism.

(ii)   Some controversial non-educational materials are not desirable to be available to learners — especially to young ones: e.g. pornography, violence, racism, sexism, etc. Parental-control software such as CyberPatrol[10] allows teachers to monitor and filter the accessibility to websites of some particular domain, but the problem is that this type of program also "blocks out more information than may be intended in the first place" (Hargittai, 1998), besides the fact that "filtering software installed is not always foolproof" (BECTA, 2007a, 2007b).

(iii)   There is plenty of information on the Web that is incorrect or out of date, and "students believe that what they read online appears to have as much authority as the printed word" (BECTA, 2007a, 2007b).

These problems are non-existent when learners work with a huge repository of relevant off-line web pages previously selected by the teacher, while they can still display navigation strategies and enjoy the advantages hypertext offers such as the promotion of discovery and explanation through its rhizomatic[11] structure or, again, the promotion of cognitive flexibility to integrate and consolidate knowledge obtained from different sources (Spiro et al., 1992).

Computer-mediated communication

Any of these three learning settings provides students with CMC tools, thus enhancing learner's performance on individual tasks or fostering positive group dynamics in collaborative projects. However, in spite of the advantages of LAN Chat over standard chat utilities, a deficiency is found in an offline setting: learners cannot communicate with other learners outside the classroom, losing the chance to get in contact with peer native speakers as well as their cultural diversity.

Web publication

Web publication of learners' final assignment (or some part of it), in the form of a web page or a message posted in a forum or blog, may improve the quality of the assignment itself, since learners are aware that their work is going to be made public to the whole world, giving also a sense of reality to the work carried out in the classroom. This sense of reality can be said to be part of the main objective of the so-called integrative CALL. Such an objective is what some authors have called "Agency", which has been defined as "the satisfying power to take meaningful action and see the results of our decisions and choices" (Murray, 1997) or "the power to construct a representation of reality, a writing of history, and to impose reception of it by others" (Kramsch et al., 2000). Agency is really what makes students so excited about using computers in the classroom: the

computer provides them a powerful means to make their stamp on the world (Warschauer, 2000).

Monitoring

In general, the more controlled the learning setting, the easier the monitoring in the classroom. We are aware that the word "control" used in a learning context usually has a negative connotation but in this case the setting we are referring to is the one in which both teachers and learners have access to all the steps that are being taken throughout the learning process, which can then be assessed from a qualitative perspective. In this sense, it is very relevant to have the opportunity to follow learners' navigation process in order to have a close idea of their Web literacy skills. Teachers should then be encouraged to facilitate the development of learners' linguistic, semiotic and (meta)cognitive skills, which help them become more efficient Web users. On the other hand, teachers and learners can also "analyse" the written language that has been used while communicating with LAN chat. In this case, the possibilities are endless, since such analysis can be done from a wide variety of perspectives useful for research purposes. In conclusion, monitoring can be carried out by both teachers and learners but the latter should be especially encouraged in order to start gaining confidence and thus become more independent language learners.

Usability

Web-based applications are dramatically less interactive than stand-alone applications, which are usually provided with a richer user interface and direct manipulation capabilities. More particularly, in stand-alone applications more attention can be paid to some cognitive features of the interface design, which can be articulated on three different levels: structural, constructive and dynamic (Zaccagnini, 1994). Firstly, the structural level deals with the visual composition of the interface, i.e. the distribution of information on the screens and the type of objects used to display that information. The aim is to facilitate legibility and content understanding, so features such as consistency of screens and density of information are very important. On the one hand, it is fundamental that the design of all screens should look like very similar, since the lack of continuity in the interface can make learners lose their way. On the other hand, if controls are suitably spaced and positioned in the interface, the application can become more user-friendly. Indeed, the "spacing effect" is a key factor in the effectiveness of educational applications (Bennett, 1999). The immediate consequence of this theory is that the screen should only display information strictly relevant to the successful accomplishment of the task users are carrying out, but with complementary information ready to be retrieved when learners request (McCarthy, 1993). Secondly, the constructive level refers to the criteria with which meaning is assigned to the information displayed to users. The aim is to make this information available at the right moment, so that it can help learners in their next actions. Features such as error messages or help items are better taken care of in desktop applications. Thirdly, the dynamic level deals with the way in which the system navigation is designed. Windows-based controls such as buttons and menus facilitate learners' movements through the application.

Portability

In general, web-based applications are much more portable than stand-alone applications. HTML pages are viewable in any web-browser, regardless of the underlying operating system or hardware. However, differences are evident between browsers and their different versions when running more complex content (Mikkonen & Taivalsaari, 2007). On the other hand, CALLWB requires Microsoft Windows to run properly.

Dedicated computer training

Typically FL teachers use Web editors such as Microsoft FrontPage or Dreamweaver, or authoring programs such as InstantWebQuest[12] or PHPWebQuest,[13] in order to create a WebQuest[14] or even to modify an existing one. In case that teachers want to create web pages beyond simple text documents with limited interactive capabilities, then dynamic web programming is required, demanding the mastery of some scripting language (e.g. Javascript). Moreover, WebQuests usually require to be published on the Web when included in CMSs.[15] The root of this technological problem lies in the fact that governments invest a lot of money in setting up Internet connection in classrooms but few funds are allocated to teachers' computer training.

On the other hand, you can succeed in developing a CALLWB activity with just working knowledge on Microsoft Word. Therefore, regardless of the two possible scenarios where WebQuests can be implemented in CALLWB, no dedicated computer training from teachers is required in our program, so they can feel more comfortable working in a stand-alone setting.

Dedicated FL training

Reading hypertext cannot be compared with reading traditional printed text mainly due to the huge amount of possibilities opened by the non-linear and rhizomatic structure of the former. Indeed we cannot expect our students to make good use of the Web, which can be considered unexplored from a pedagogical perspective. Training becomes necessary to promote learners' critical thinking regarding Web pages so that they develop reasonable criteria to examine and evaluate online information. It is true that in the three settings we are dealing with, learners are able to carry out navigation processes and we don't need to mention the advantages of having access to the Internet, such as a wide variety of multimodal material available. However, a more reduced environment like the one CALLWB can offer without access to the Internet is a "safer" start for learners, especially for those with a low level of metacognition, who "tend to become disoriented in the web-based learning environment" and so "they are likely to forget what they have to do and where they need to go for their next tasks" (Lee & Baylor, 2006, p. 345).

Once these ten criteria have been carefully dealt with, Table 2 can be useful to have a quick representation of the comparative analysis that has been carried out, where the last two columns correspond to CALLWB.

Table 2. Comparative analysis of computer-based learning settings.

	Web-based	Stand-alone	
- …………………… control on the setting …………………..+			
		with Internet access	without Internet access
1. Resource availability	**	***	**
2. Resource accessibility	**	**	***
3. Resource suitability	*	*	***
4. Computer-mediated communication	***	***	**
5. Web publication	***	***	*
6. Monitoring	*	**	***
7. Usability	*	***	***
8. Portability	**	*	*
9. Dedicated computer training	**	*	*
10. Dedicated FL training	***	***	**

***: high   **: medium   *: low

Conclusions

The ideal environment for the implementation of WebQuests is that which benefits from the advantageous of different computer-based settings. Taking into account the results of Table 2, the following main conclusions have been reached concerning the implementation of LanguageQuests through CALLWB:

(i)   Teachers should keep in mind the most convenient allocation of the courseware. Some resources are displayed by the Web Browser, i.e. on-line lookup (e.g. those in which information is regularly being updated: price lists, catalogues, etc.). Other resources are located by the Database Searcher — i.e. off-line lookup (e.g. those which are presented as finished work: articles, book chapters, etc.). Moreover, if graphical or audiovisual materials are to be used, they should be stored in the learner's computer or in media such as CDs or DVDs.

(ii)   If there is the slightest possibility that students could end up browsing websites which could negatively affect their educational experience, then the Database Searcher should be used instead of the Web Browser.

(iii)   LAN Chat has been suitably devised for information exchange among the members of a discussion group within the classroom, but Web-based electronic tools can also give learners the opportunity to communicate with native speakers outside the classroom.

In conclusion, technical features in CALLWB bring many pedagogical benefits to the language learning process by combining the best of Web-based applications with the best of stand-alone ones.

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(Footnotes)

[1] Although this version of CALLWB has been primarily developed for the teaching of English, the program is being currently

modified so as to allow students change the language of the interface; more importantly, this choice will also determine the language of the spell-checker built into LAN Chat.

[2] This program is freely accessible by getting in contact with the author (Carlos Periñán) via e-mail: jcperinan @ pdi.ucam.edu

[3] The term "stand-alone" is often used to refer to those downloadable software applications which run in some particular operating system(s); therefore, and unlike Web-based applications, stand-alone software is platform-dependent.

[4] Concerning audiovisual resources, CALLWB is provided with Media Player, a built-in player for various audio and video formats, such as asf, avi, mpeg, mp3, ogg, wav, wma and wmv.

[5] Detailed information on how to install Moodle can be found at http://docs.moodle.org/en/Installing_Moodle

[6] Costs are even higher when implementing online commercial CMSs, which are licensed annually. For example, the Humboldt State University pays approximately $8,600 each year on Blackboard licenses (Bos et al., 2005).

[7] Every computer attached to a network must have a unique IP address, which consists of four sets of numbers separated by dots, where each set contains any value between 0 and 255 (e.g. 127.0.0.1). In our case, the IP address is used to locate the computer running as the server within a discussion group on a local-area network (LAN).

[8] This LanguageQuest was designed for second-degree students in Tourism in Universidad Católica San Antonio, Spain.

[9] Socioconstructivism refers to the importance that should be placed on the social aspect of language (see Vygotsky, 1978). In this sense, it is necessary to learn or acquire a language not only in context but also in interaction with others.

[10] http://www.cyberpatrol.com

[11] The term "rhizome" is used to describe theory and research that allows for multiple, non-hierarchical   entry and exit points in data representation and interpretation.

[12] http://www.instantprojects.org/webquest/main.php

[13] http://eduforge.org/projects/phpwebquest/

[14] Moreover, WebQuests can be created from a template or from scratch.

[15] This is the reason why you are not recommended to create Web pages using Microsoft Word, since resulting HTML files would contain a lot of unnecessary code that could probably increase the size of these files as well as causing incompatibilities with browsers other than Internet Explorer.

A REVIEW OF UEFAP.COM

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Abstract

This paper provides a review of Andy Gillet's UEfAP.com site (Using English for Academic Purposes — A Guide for Students in Higher Education). UEfAP.com is an immense repository of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) materials that undoubtedly represents years of dedicated work. It is a well-organised, wide-ranging, easy-to-navigate (well-signposted) and reliable site. Thus this manifestly 'extensive' review attempts to describe this 'extensive' and noteworthy Internet EAP resource. A key recommendation is that these materials, which may have been designed for self-access use, also be utilised in a modern language-lab teaching classroom.

1.   General Description

The publisher of UEfAP.com is Andy Gillet (The School of Combined Studies at the University of Hertfordshire in the UK). The author states on the Home Page that the materials are a guide for students in higher education.

All the instructions on the site are in English. The web page is frequently updated and at the time of writing this review had last been updated on 9 February 2008. A vast range of EAP language practice materials are available and the central language skills catered for on the site are general grammar, listening, reading, speaking, vocabulary and writing.

The British Association of Lecturers for Academic Purposes (BALEAP), a professional organisation whose members are providers of English for academic purposes in higher education institutions, has a direct link to UEfAP.com on its English for Academic Purposes (EAP) materials website.

In this paper EAP may be further subdivided into two further acronyms: EGAP and ESAP. English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) will refer to general academic skills such as listening, note-taking, academic writing, reading, reference skills, speaking, proficiency in language use, whereas English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) will pertain to specialised study such as medicine, engineering or economics (Jordan 2000: 3).

2. Detailed description of the webpage

In this section a detailed description of the key features and capabilities of the site's eleven subsections will provided. These subsections are: Accuracy, Assessment, Background, Contact, Links, Listening, Materials, Reading, Speaking, Vocabulary, Writing. Some of these subsections are particularly intricate with a plethora of related links. Nearly all the above subsections have a separate references link. Figure 1 provides a screenshot of the UEfAP. com Home Page.
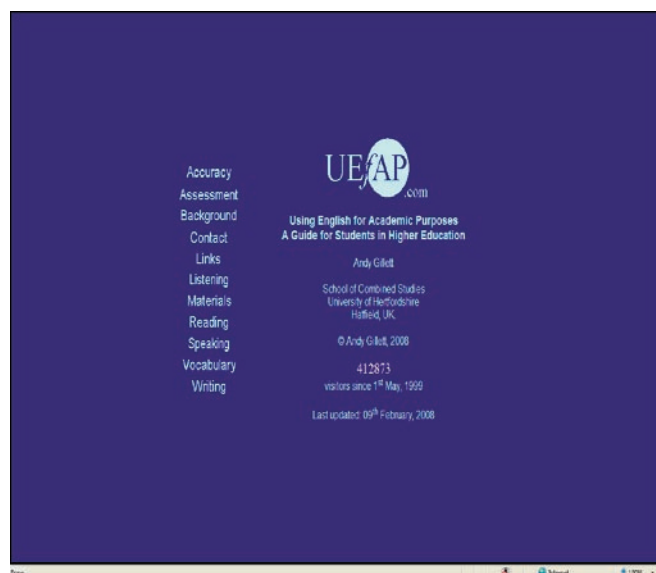
Figure 1 – Home Page of UEfAP.com

2.1. The Accuracy Link

The Accuracy Link comprises four subsections: Introduction, Check, Proof-reading, Exercises. The Proof-reading subsection offers the most choice of activities in the Accuracy subsection. Figure 2 indicates the range of exercises available; there are 12 sections to the Proof-Reading subsection: Introduction, Verbs, Prepositions, Word Order, Nouns, Adjectives and Adverbs, Articles, Spelling, Punctuation, Correct Word Form, Exercises and Test

Figure 2 – Range of exercises available in the Proof-Reading subsection of the Accuracy Link.

The Exercises section is the last link in the intricate Accuracy Link subsection. It offers a vast assortment of interactive text exercises that have been sorted into business, law, science and technology, and general ESAP/ EGAP categories.

2.2 The Assessment Link

A comprehensive description of English qualifications accepted at British Universities for study by non-UK students is presented in this section. Moreover information is also provided regarding hours of pre-university English study and English language support while at university. Therefore there is an in-depth analysis of the

IELTS test and other recognized tests. An interpretation section endeavours to elucidate the implication of mean IELTS scores for pre-sessional and in-sessional linguistically demanding courses, normal university courses and less linguistically demanding courses. The examinations link describes mainstream English language examinations and the summary section positions all these exams in one table. Figure 3 contains a screenshot of this highly informative table.

Figure 3 – Summary of English language examinations and recommended periods of tuition before starting an academic course.

2.3 The Background Link, Materials Link and the Contact Link

A broad alphabetic-order background reading EAP bibliography has been incorporated into this site, being Applied-Linguistic/TESOL in nature. These reference links appear to have been further sectioned into thematic categories in the EAP Materials Link. The thematic sections of the Materials Link consist of 5 further reference sections: writing, reading, speaking, listening, and history. The writing, reading, speaking and listening sections are subdivided into specific corresponding areas and each of these specific areas has a Hyperlink to a references' source. The history section provides a history of some EAP publications from 1967 to 1999. Sections of nearly all of these publications appear to have been scanned and are available for viewing. Figure 4 presents a screenshot of the history section.

Figure 4 – some EAP publications available for viewing in the history section of the Materials Link

The Contact Link is a single page with the contact details of Andy Gillet.

2.4   The EAP 'Links' Link

This section has a number of subsections each containing a miscellany of external (non-UEfAP.com) Internet links. There are 8 discrete sub-sections to the EAP Links: these subsections are Introduction, Language (sites dealing with language), Skills (language skills), Courses (EAP courses), Tests, News, Reference (useful reference sites), Materials (materials for EAP students), and Resources for EAP teachers/lecturers). However, some of the external links at the time of writing this paper did not appear to work.

2.5 The Listening Link

The Listening Link is a 'colossal' general and EAP listening resource and has 6 parts: Introduction, Advice, Note-taking, Structure, Reference and Exercises. The Introduction link offers initial advice in bullet-point form about what EAP listening skills should be practised; there are also 20-recorded, mainly non-EAP, text-tasks available for online listening for users to do. Users are invited to comment on text-type, say whether they like the texts (opinion), identify the purpose of the text and state the usual purpose for listening to such a text. Figure 5 provides a screenshot of the Exercises in the Introduction subsection of the Listening Link and Figure 6 indicates what the answer key for these exercises looks like.

Figure 5 - a screenshot of the Exercises in the Introduction subsection of the Listening Link.

Figure 6 –a screenshot of the answer key for the exercises in Figure 5

The Note-taking section is very elaborate; as Introduction, Summarising, Taking notes, Exercises and Test are the 5 parts that comprise this section. The brief Introduction link, which gives some rudimentary guidelines to listening techniques, is followed by the Summary link. This EGAP section is more 'meaty' and contains several elaborated examples and interactive exercises of summary writing; there are also some related forward-links to the Writing- Link and Reading-Link sections. In this section the author also draws attention to the importance of aspects of listening for academic study and the need to make use of other people's 'ideas and findings in your own way'. This Summary section is also repeated in the Reading Link and has no actual listening exercises, rather, there are reading cum writing exercises. The Taking notes section in contrast does have listening activities, but it is also repeated in the Reading Link. Examples 5 and 6 currently have no available recordings, and so only reading texts are given. Figure 7 provides a screenshot of a Note-taking 'listening' example from this section.
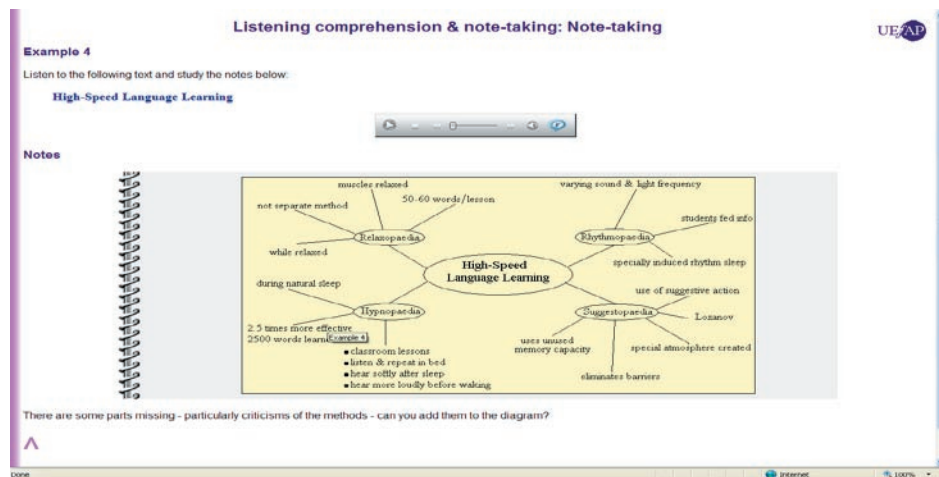
Figure 7 - an example from the Taking-notes section in the Note-taking part of the Listening Link

An array of EGAP and ESAP, Real-Player and Windows-Media-Player listening comprehension and note-taking exercises are found in the Exercises link in this section. These exercises are subdivided according to mainly EGAP short talks and longer ESAP lectures; the interactive exercises that are used are mainly gap-fill or text-reconstruction. Also, further lecture listening resources, which have been adapted from McDonough (1978) Listening to Lectures series, are available as well. The references to McDonough (1978) however appear incomplete. Figure 8 presents a screenshot of the exercises on this page with examples of the two main types of interactive activities it uses.
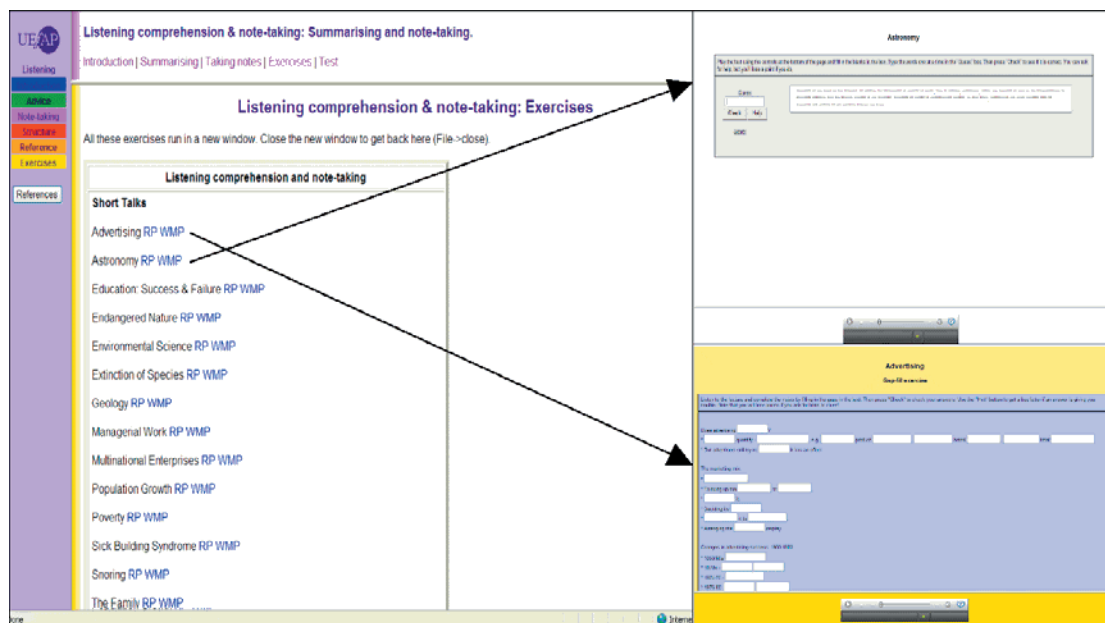
Figure 8 – listening comprehension and note-taking exercises with examples of exercise format

In the Structure section a set of tables is presented in fourteen separate sections with recorded examples of the structures displayed in the tables. The tables, which draw on Leech & Svartvik (1975), present some of the most common signals used in lectures to indicate structure. A screenshot of this multifaceted page is presented in Figure 9. There is also a well-developed Exercises area on this page which comprises three thematic sections: Listening Purpose, Recognising Lecture Structure and Understanding Reference.

Figure 9 – identifying signals in Structure section of the Listening Link

The Understanding Reference is the next subsection in Listening Link; it has the following options Introduction, Reference, Substitution & ellipsis, Conjunction, Lexical cohesion and Exercises. The final section (Exercises) offers numerous noteworthy activities grouped into Introduction, Listening comprehension & note-taking, General listening, Listening skills and Listening test. Figure 10 provides a screenshot of the vast listening resource in the General listening.

Figure 10 – the vast listening resource activity in the General listening section of the Exercises page

2.6. The Reading Link

The Reading Link offers a 'mammoth' range of academic reading materials and a great deal of reading strategy advice. There are 8 subsections: Introduction, Advice, Efficient, Understanding, Note-taking, Strategies, Critical, Exercises. The Introduction subsection draws attention to ways of dealing with the large quantity of reading students need to get through 'studying at a UK university'. This subsection also has a substantial range of reading text activities with an answer key; users are invited to comment on (1) text-type, (2) whether they like reading the text, (3) the purpose of the text, (4) the method of reading the text. However, some of the 30 texts in this Reading Skills for Academic Study section could be classified as general reading texts; Figure 11 presents a screenshot of this subsection.

Figure 11 – the reading resource in the Introduction

The Advice subsection is a very short one that emphasises the need to read efficiently. However the Efficient subsection is significantly more developed. It comprises the following parts: Introduction, Scanning, Survey, Using Title, Skimming, Exercises, and Test. Parts of what appear in the next major subsection (Understanding) have been repeated in earlier sections, or cover the same areas as earlier sections. For instance the Introduction section here is the same as the Introduction section of Efficient. The Reference section provides more examples of Cohesion, which was also covered earlier in the Listening Link (Lexical cohesion); there are 11 cohesion-related exercises in this part (NB the answer key to exercise 11 presently appears incomplete). The 6 exercises in Structure, which very briefly looks at text structure and organisation, appear more like examples. The Meaning part currently has one exercise with an incomplete answer key. The main advice in this section pertains to increasing speed of reading and comprehension by recognising rhetorical functions that the writer uses. The Difficult language provides some advice on dealing with difficult words; there are also 6 non-interactive/interactive general English and EAP-related exercises with answer keys.

There is some repetition in the Taking notes subsection which repeats the materials presented in Note-taking subsection of the Listening Link (Taking notes). However the exercises in the Taking notes and the Test link in this subsection are reading based whereas the exercises in the Listening Link, which are the same, are listening orientated. Figure 12 provides a screenshot of exercise 2 from the Note-taking section of the Listening Link and the Reading Link. The Exercises link in the Note-taking subsection of the Reading Link offers a vast range of 44 interactive and non-interactive mainly general-English reading exercises; nearly all of which, however, are duplicated later on in the Writing Link Exercises of Reporting section. There is no key for the 4 exercises in the Test link.
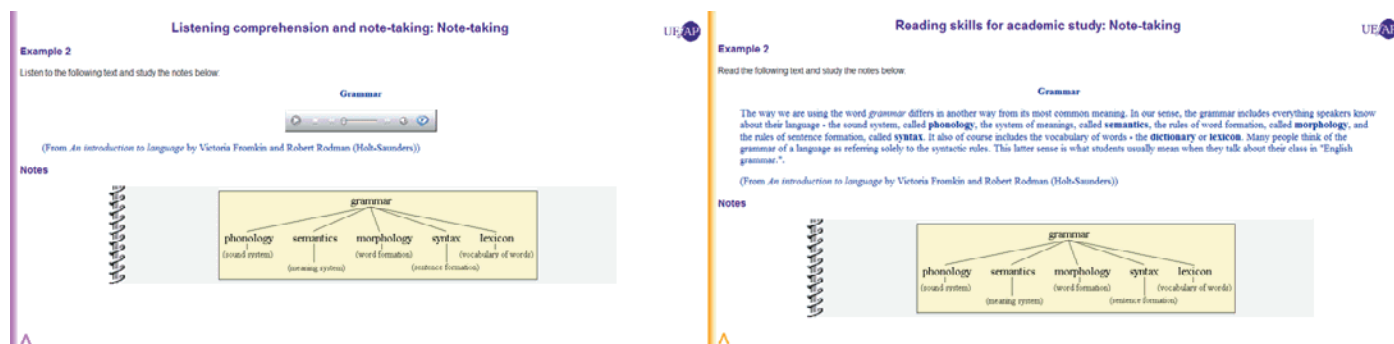
Figure 12 – exercise 2 from the Note-taking section of the Listening Link and the Reading Link.

The Strategies section provides pre/while/post reading advice and its Exercises sub-link contains a wide range of ESAP reading-text exercises; however no answer keys or additional feedback are/is available for these exercises.

2.7 The Speaking Link

The Speaking Link aims to improve seminar and group-activity language skills; it has 9 key subsections: Introduction, Presentation, Pronunciation, Features, Symbols, Functions, Groupwork, Checklist and Exercises. The brief introduction, which provides an overview of the aims of the Speaking Link, is followed by Presentation, which focuses on the language of presenting a seminar paper. The Language sub-link of the Presentation link has some useful examples of individual and group academic presentation language and the Using notes link looks at how to use notes for a seminar presentation. The Exercises part only has a non-interactive seminar-evaluation sheet.

The British-English Pronunciation sub-link, which does not have actual recordings of English consonants and vowels presented, introduces the IPA - International Phonetic Association so as to enable students to make the best use of dictionaries. Gimson (1981) is referred to in the introduction to English sounds section.

Common pronunciations of mathematical and scientific symbols are given in the Symbols sub-link and the Exercises sub-link provides a range of exercises which could even be useful for students of Phonetics/ Phonology. Figure 13 provides a screenshot of a taxing transcription listening exercise which might require considerable 'stamina' from the 'self-accessing' learner. There is also a lengthy transcription exercise in the Test sub-link, however no answer key has been provided.
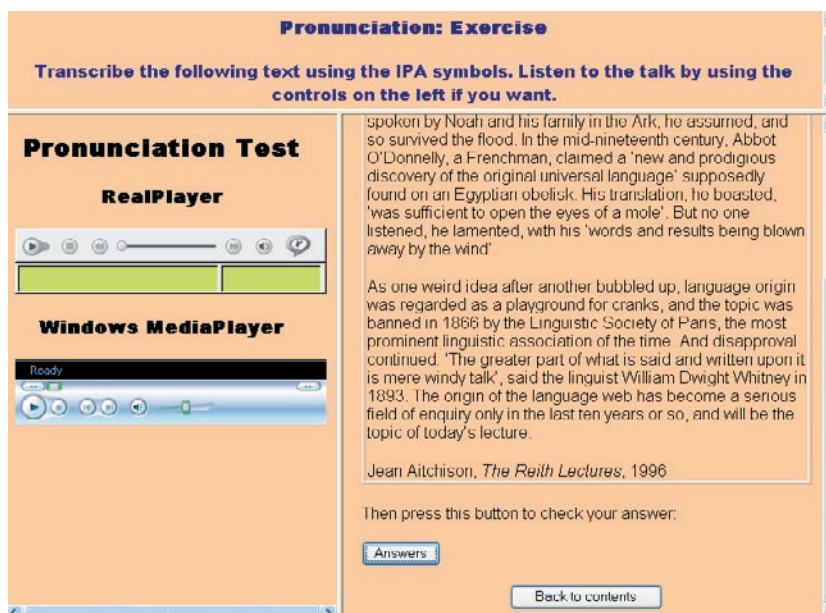
Figure 13 – a transcription listening exercise in the Pronunciation sub-link

The next main subsection in the Speaking Link is Features. The Introduction sub-link, which touches on the need to be formal, explicit, hedged, and responsible in Academic spoken style, could be improved with more examples. The theoretical Complexity sub-link briefly describes some different features of spoken language and the scant Formality and Objectivity sub-links do not provide enough detailed examples of formal spoken English. The Test sub-link has no answer key for non-Gillet students. The Symbols subsection, which is the next key subsection of the Speaking Link, presents common pronunciations of mathematical and scientific symbols. Its 9 sub-links (Symbols, Greek, Roman, Fractions, Prefixes, Numbers, Chemicals, Exercises, Test); actual recordings of these symbols presented might assist students. There is also no answer key for the Test sub-link.

The vast Functions subsection of the Speaking Link looks at 15 typical rhetorical functions used in academic speaking; these 15 function links seem to complement the activities in the Structure subsection of the Listening Link and a direct connection between the two pages might help users. The Tests sub-link of Functions is currently incomplete. Groupwork, the next major sub-section in the Speaking Link, offers substantial examples of 'useful' group-work language which are grouped into over 60 categories; in this section, Gillet draws on Belbin (1981, 1993). The Exercises section offers a range of information-exchange pair-work and group-work activities; there are also two discussion activities. It is not however clear how the group-work language presented in this section can be fully utilized in these activities using a computer, moreover these exercises seem more like traditional classroom resources rather than self-access learner resources.

The Checklist subsection contains some points to check before giving a presentation and the Exercises comprise a listing of all the exercises presented in this section.

2.8   The Vocabulary Link

The Vocabulary Link comprises 5 key subsections: Introduction, Selection, Building, Learning and Exercises. The most developed part of this link is the Exercises subsection which presents a list of the 'huge treasure-trove' of interactive EAP materials available in this section. The Introduction which briefly emphasises the importance of vocabulary in EAP is followed by the Selection subsection, which has 7 key sub-links (i.e.) Introduction, GSL, AWL, Specific subjects, Less frequent and Exercises. The short Introduction, which introduces the key site word-list literature, is followed by a presentation of a 5500-word adapted version West's (1953) General Service List of

English Words; moreover, Cambridge Learner's Dictionary online definitions are provided for each word. Figure 14 presents a screenshot of this page.

Figure 14. 5500-word general word list that is held to comprise 80% of words in EAP texts (Coxhead 2000)

The academic-word list section AWL presents a 3000-word listing of the most frequent words used in Academic English, it draws on Coxhead (2000); a Cambridge Learner's Dictionary online definition is also provided for each key word in the list. The Specific subjects sub-link contains 8 subject-specific ESAP word-lists Gillet maintains that this list utilizes Paul Nation's computer program Range to take subject specific texts and make a list of words in the text that are not in GSL or AWL. The Less frequent sub-link is very short and only provides advice, however the Exercises sub-link is very developed and contains a wide range of interactive exercises grouped into the following categories: Academic Word List, Individual Words, Word Search, Hangman, Jumble and Discover the Word. There are 56 principally Open-Cloze exercises in the Academic Word List EGAP section; each one of these 56 exercises comprises a fairly lengthy text example and between mainly 1 to 4 sub-tasks. The Individual Words sub-link is another immense interactive resource which currently appears to be in the process of further expansion. The Word Search practises the AWL and the GSL vocabulary by offering countless find-the-word grid exercises. Further extensive academic word-list vocabulary practice is also available in Hangman, Jumble and Discover the Word.

The next key subsection of the Vocabulary Link is the relatively theoretical Building section. This section looks at affixes and affix-formation on one page split into Introduction, Affixes & roots and Word formation; there are also some related interactive exercise options for these sections. The Exercises section provides a listing of the exercises in the Building section.

The final major subsection of the Vocabulary Link is Learning; it also contains a wide-ranging selection of materials and advice regarding/tactics for learning new words. The interactive and non-interactive materials are spread over 4 sections: Dictionary use, Dealing with meaning, Recording and Unknown words. As in the Building section before, the Exercises sub-link provides a convenient summary of all the activities in this subsection. The Dealing with meaning with meaning section appears theoretical and may be more suited to students of Applied Linguistics/TESOL.

2.9   The Writing Link

The Writing Link is a highly intricate resource section; it offers a 'colossal' range of EAP activities that are spread over 16 separate detailed sub-sections. Figure 15 provides a screenshot of the Writing Link homepage.

Figure 15 – The 16 separate detailed sub-sections of the Writing Link

The Introduction subsection looks at the basic structure of EAP essays and reports, and the Process sub-section details 12 procedures for consideration when writing an extended essay or assignment. The Questions subsection draws attention to the need to read and understand examination questions whereas the Research
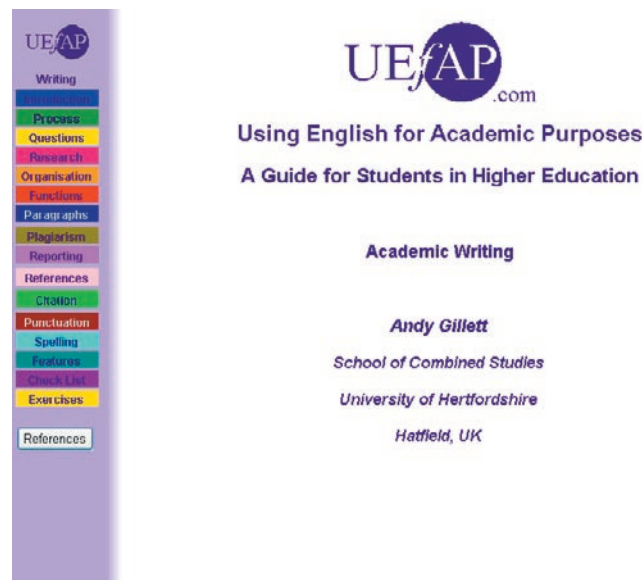
provides advice on how to research an essay. This section mainly includes advice on: (1) learning how to source bibliographical items (Sources); (2) using the library-book call numbers of the Dewey Decimal System (Dewey); (3) general academic reading/note-taking; (4) being able to evaluate sources (Evaluation); (5) selecting sources (Selection). The Reading and Note-taking in this section are not new materials however, and come from the Reading Link. There are currently no tests in the Test sub-link.

The Organisation subsection outlines how to plan different kinds of essays and the Functions subsection is a huge resource of example texts and language grouped into 23 language functions; there are also numerous Exercises however, the Test sub-link has no answer keys.

The Paragraphs subsection presents some advice on paragraph writing. This advice includes: (1) a look at topic sentences (Topic); (2) the need to consider the logical flow of information between sentences (Flow); (3) a detailed section on signalling words (Signalling); (4) a summary of Cohesion. There are a wide range of interactive and non-interactive EGAP/ESAP Exercises in this subsection. Plagiarism is discussed in the next subsection and this section is complemented by Reporting, which looks at the skill of how to report on a source. This subsection also offers numerous exercises.

The References subsection provides a range of detailed APA referencing materials and exercises, and the Citation subsection presents information on how to cite other people's works. Both subsections have varied exercises and test sub-links with no answer keys. The Punctuation subsection looks at basic punctuation usage; it has accompanying non-interactive exercises with answer keys. The Spelling subsection is a more detailed forward link of the Spelling section described in the Accuracy Link; however the mainly-homophone spelling exercise sub-link is the same in both sections. The last major subsection in the Writing Link is Features, which looks at the relevance of Complexity, Formality, Objectivity, Explicitness, Hedging and Responsibility in academic-

writing. The accompanying Exercises are both interactive and non-interactive and the Test has no answer key for non-Gillet students.

3. Evaluation

In the previous section I drew attention to most of features of UEfAP.com; in this section I will suggest some areas where improvement or clarification is required.

3.1 For whom is the site?

The author states on the Home Page that the materials are a guide for students in higher education, and so it is likely that the author's 'principal' intended purpose of the materials is for student self-access resourcing and not as a language-lab teaching resource. Moreover, this assertion may be accurate in light of Gillet's (2005) paper on Designing a Web-Site for English for Academic Purposes. He holds (2005: 44) that some non-native English speaker students studying in the UK, who cannot attend classes regularly or have specific language needs/learning styles, might benefit from self-accessing EAP materials 'whenever they wanted, from wherever they were'.

However, the informative Sitemeter indicated that at the time of writing this paper, there were over 2400 visits per week from around the world, with an average visit length of 2.4 hours; only approximately 13% of the visits originated from the UK. This predominantly non-UK user audience could include EAP teachers who might wish to incorporate elements of this site into lesson plans. However, if this is the case, it may be helpful to have some fundamental bullet-pointed site copyright guidelines. Furthermore, the external EAP teacher web resources in the Resources sub-link in the EAP Links section also suggest EAP instructors use this site.

The comprehensive alphabetic-order 'background reading' EAP bibliography that has been incorporated into this site is Applied-Linguistic/TESOL in nature and therefore appears particularly useful for students, teachers or academics of Applied Linguistics or TESOL.

3.2 Suggested improvements or clarification of some of the Internet materials

The bullet points below comprise a summary of the key suggestions regarding site development.

- The author does not specify the minimum level of English necessary to use the site; however, based on the level of English used in the instructions, I maintain that a student with less than IELTS 5 might have difficulties in understanding some of the instructions.
- Even though UEfAP.com offers an enormous range of activities some of the test and exercise sections are currently fragmentary or have incomplete answer keys; this is particularly prevalent in the test sections of the Writing Link Occasionally no feedback guidance is provided for exercises. For instance, the Strategies section provides pre/while/post reading advice and its Exercises sub-link contains a vast range of ESAP reading-text exercises; however no answer keys or additional feedback are/is available for these exercises. An example of an unfinished answer key can be found in the Meaning part of the Reading Link which currently has one exercise with an incomplete answer key. Sometimes, instead of an answer key, site users receive the following message: Show your answers to someone. If you are in one of my classes, e-mail them to me. For instance such advice appears in the Writing Link Reporting section, which has no answer key for the 4 exercises in the Test link. Bearing in mind the growing international usage of this site, I maintain that answer keys should be provided for such tasks.
- In spite of the huge effort Gillet has put into developing this site, on occasions sections are (currently)

relatively short and could benefit from more detailing. For instance, some of the Proof-reading sub-links are relatively non-descriptive (e.g. Verbs, Spelling, Punctuation, Correct Word Form, Adjectives and Adverbs). Another example is the short Scanning section in the Reading Link which presents a laconic definition of the technique of scanning in reading. It is held that scanning is directed and purposeful and should be extremely fast. Other Internet sites appear to provide more information on scanning reading techniques (e.g. http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/words/reading/). Further instances include; (1) the Features subsection in the Speaking Link; (2) the Introduction sub-link, which touches on the need to be formal, explicit, hedged, and responsible in Academic spoken style, could benefit from more examples; (3) the theoretical Complexity sub-link briefly describes some different features of spoken language and the scant Formality and Objectivity sub-links do not provide enough detailed examples of formal spoken English.

- Some of the additional external links in the Language sub-section at the time of writing this paper did not appear to work. Moreover, the News subsection, which contains mainly UK and American newspapers, could benefit from links to International newspapers in English such as The Internet Public Library or onlinenewspapers.com.

- Nearly all the above subsections have a separate references link, however no information is provided as to what these references actually are, or why they differ slightly from the references presented in the Background Link. It is likely that they refer to recommended reading or sources to which the author had referred.

- There appears to be some section repetition. For instance, parts of what appear in the Reference link of the Understanding subsection in the Reading Link have been repeated or cover the same areas in the Reference link of Listening Link. Repetition is not necessarily bad in itself as there will be some inevitable overlap between language skills, however it might be helpful to signal that materials have been repeated elsewhere.

- Some exercises could be too lengthy and difficult. For example, in the General listening section in the Listening Link, some of the 14 text reconstruction activities (which arguably are also demanding writing/spelling tasks) appear far more challenging than the activities in the other parts of this section. Another example, presented in Figure 13, is the taxing transcription Test in the Speaking Link; this task might even be onerous for a student of Phonetics and Phonology.

- Occasionally tasks seem more suitable as classroom activities. For instance, in the Listening Link, the Introduction subsection has 20-recorded mainly non-EAP text-tasks. Part of the exercise involves asking the user to comment on whether they 'like' the texts (there is a 'subjective' answer key to this Exercise). This subjective task might be more fruitfully undertaken as traditional classroom interaction. A second example is found in the Using Title link in the Reading Link. Gillet holds that titles, sub-titles and section headings 'can help you formulate questions to keep you interacting'. However the pre-reading advice of trying 'to actively remember what you know, and do not know, about the subject and then formulate questions based on the information you have' might be better tested with a teacher in a structured pre-reading class activity. The third example is the Exercises section (in the Speaking Link) which offers a range of information-exchange pair-work and group-work activities (Working in groups); these exercises seem more like traditional classroom resources rather than self-access learner resources. The fourth example of where a task might be better suited as a classroom activity is in the Organisation subsection (Writing Link) which outlines how to plan different kinds of essays. In its Test sub-link task, the testee is asked 'to find some old examination papers in the library and write plans for some of the questions and show the answers to someone'. The final example is the Writing Link, which on the whole only presents basic EAP paragraph and Essay structures; a good EAP textbook under teacher direction should provide more

detailed explanations. However additional self-access external writing links have been provided in the Writing section of the EAP Links' Link.

- The British-English Pronunciation and Symbols sub-links do not have actual recordings of the English consonants, vowels and symbols presented; moreover the 3 accompanying interactive exercises (Exercise 1, Exercise 2, Exercise 3) would benefit from some recordings of the actual transcriptions.

- It would be helpful for quick reference to have a separate and full listing of all the exercises and tests with and without answer keys in UEfAP.com. Providing such an answer-key option could be useful for teachers planning an Internet lesson who may not want to give students 'autonomous answer access' to lesson tasks.

4.   Recommendation

I thoroughly recommend that UEfAP.com be used not only as a self-access EAP learning resource, but also as a language-lab teaching resource. I also maintain that the advice presented in Alexander (2007, 2008) regarding Internet pedagogy could be particularly helpful in this respect.   Moreover, the countless interactive exercises available in the Listening, Reading, Vocabulary and Writing Links may be of special interest with regard to Internet EAP lesson planning.

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INTERNET LESSON IDEAS

ENGLISH FOR PSYCHOLOGY
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Web-based lesson plan 1 - People

Aims: 1. Describing people (personalities)
2. Working on new vocabulary.
3. Practicing Present Simple in speaking and writing activities.

I.   Pre- Internet Activity - Whole-class revision

What types of people do you recall? Provide a short oral description. (Based on a reading task, coursebook p.10)

II. Internet tasks

1.   Doing a research about 9 Types of personalities.

Work in pairs. Go to a website http://www.9types.com/. Look at the list of types (Reformer, Helper, Motivator, Romantic). Choose five types and prepare a short description of those types using the Present Simple Tense.

(Students receive handouts with the exercises to complete, see the table below)

Instructions:

On the website go to Diagrams and Type Description to find needed information

type: Perfectionist

World view	
Basic desire	
Basic fear	
General characteristic	- - - - - - -

2.   Go to http://www.9types.com/ and find needed information in order to complete this task:

If you want to get along with …(e.g. Thinker)…, you have to/ should:

- be independent, not clingy …

-

-

III. Post-Internet Task

3. Speaking task based on the above research:

Psychologist/ patient interaction.

Students use a chosen above type and talk about it.

Imagine your friend is e.g. a thinker. Tell your psychologist about her/him describing her/his personality. As a psychologist give advise how to get along with a thinker.

IV. Homework

Think about a person that you know (a friend, a family member) and try to "diagnose" her/him as one of 9 Types giving a short description of her/his personality (positive and negative aspects). Feel free to use information found online at http://www.9types.com/ or other websites of your choice to extend your project.

Web-based lesson plan 2 - Traveling

Aims: 1. Vocabulary: practicing and revising vocabulary connected with traveling

2. Speaking: talking about moving abroad and cultural shock

3. Grammar: practicing 1. Conditional

I.   Pre- Internet Activity - Whole-class

1. Students answer question based on the previous coursebook lesson in order to revise some basic ideas:

Why do people travel?

Where do people travel?

1. How do people travel?

2. Whole class discussion about moving abroad.

- What are the positive aspects of moving abroad?
- What are the negative aspects of moving to a foreign country?
- Do you know any people who moved abroad? Why did they move?
- Would you move abroad? Why?

I.   Internet tasks

3. Reading task:

Go to http://www.utmem.edu/international/shock.html, http://www.juliaferguson.com/shock.html or http://www.canuckabroad.com/moving-overseas/how-to-deal-with-culture-shock-when-moving-abroad/

Read the text and try to come up with answers. Make notes.

- When do people experience a culture shock?
- Describe feelings associated with culture shock.
- How to cope with the problem?

Feelings associated with culture shock:	Ways to cope with culture shock:
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	

II. Post-Internet Task

4. Whole-class research presentation.

Teacher asks volunteers or chosen students to present the results of their research.

5. Try to form five first conditional sentences using the table above.

III. Homework

Make a list of do's and don'ts for a person who is going to a foreign country. Use your own ideas, information collected during the class research and feel free to consult other useful websites of your choice at home.

Web-based lesson plan 3 - Food

Aims: 1. Working on vocabulary connected with eating disorders
        2. Researching information
        3. Reading and comprehension

I.   Pre- Internet Activity - Whole-class revision

1. Students revise the material from the previous lesson talking about eating disorders mentioned in the coursebook.

II. Internet tasks

2. Work in pairs. Visit following website(s) in order to list as many symptoms of anorexia as possible. Write down results of your research.

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/anorexia_signs_symptoms_causes_treatment.htm

http://www.something-fishy.org/isf/signssymptoms.php

http://www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/uvahealth/adult_pediatrics/anorexia.cfm

3. Go to http://www.bbc.co.uk/guernsey/content/articles/2007/02/08/anorexia_sufferer_feature.shtml

Work in pairs. Read an anorexic's story of Linda Le Vasseur and answer the questions below:

- Why are eating disorders becoming so common in today's society?
- How long did she suffer from anorexia and bulimia?
- How did it start and progress?
- How did she feel about herself even when she was slim?
- Where did she find inspiration to stop starving herself?
- Who helped her while she was struggling?

4. Go to http://www.edreferral.com/Celebrities_who_died_or_have_Eating_Disorders.htm

From the list of celebrities, choose two people and note key information about their problems with eating disorders.

III. Post-Internet Task

5. Task 1. Teacher provides feedback on the list of anorexia symptoms created by students asking them to present the results of their research.

6. Task 2. Teacher asks students to answer questions, comparing answers.

7. Task 3. Teacher asks several students to provide answer to the third task in a way that the students put themselves in the role of chosen celebrities introducing themselves and describe their eating disorders.

IV. Homework

8. Write a short text answering the following questions:

What treatment options are there for anorexic people? How can a psychologist help?

PBwiki: WEB 2.0 TOOL for COLLABORATION

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We, as language teachers, often assign our students some tasks or activities requiring them to work with a partner or in groups, and naturally, most of the time they complain about not having the opportunity to come together since they live far away from each other or cannot find a place to work together. Unfortunately, I have now the same problem in the course I am teaching this semester and most of the students do not want to deal with activities requiring them to work in pairs or groups. I did not want to tell my students that "this is the way it should be" and I provided a solution to them. The solution was to use the PBWIKI webpage for collaboration if they have difficulty in getting together and providing feedback to each other and not to my surprise, it has been welcomed by many students and they have been very happy to benefit from such a tool.

In this "A word from a techie" article, using non-technical language and being simple as much as possible, basic information will be provided as to setting up a PBwiki page, editing and changing the content, as well as adding Google gadgets. However, before I go into details, I think it will be useful to go over the term "wiki" in general.

Wikis

The term wiki, as it is often used, is "a collaborative web space, consisting of a number of pages that can be edited by any user" (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007, p. 86). The name itself is based on the Hawaiian term, "wiki wiki", which means "quick" or "super-fast" and it, no doubt, deserves to be called as is. The best-known wiki is undoubtedly Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org), which is an online encyclopedia that can be edited by anyone.

The following are some of the main characteristics of a wiki page:

- ➢ Easy-setup (almost no technical knowledge, just a little practice - try the features and see).
- ➢ Dynamic (visitors and/or anyone authorized can change/add/delete content- more than just one author)
- ➢ Like an online word processing (without knowing any HTML or formatting codes - functions are similar to those of word processing software)
- ➢ Non-linear structure (pages that can be linked back or forward)
- ➢ Easy tracking (changes/deletions done by any author)
- ➢ Adding media (pictures, videos etc.)

While going over these features, one can easily notice that wikis have a lot to offer regarding language teaching and especially the writing skill. It is worth noting that wikis are quite better than blogs, which are static web pages and allow only one author to add/change/delete content.

PBwiki

PBwiki (http://www.pbwiki.com) provides especially educators with the easiest way to collaborate with their

colleagues or students through the internet. With the help of Pbwiki, unlimited pages and unlimited revisions including Google gadgets, YouTube videos, slideshows, and files (10 MB is free) can be easily published. Setting up a wiki is "as easy as a peanut butter sandwich", which can be prepared in minutes". All required is just a computer with a browser, connection to the Internet and an enthusiastic educator/learner with fresh ideas. PBwiki is currently working on their new version with better features (PBwiki 2.0).

How to set up a wiki page on PBWIKI

Once the browser pointed to the PBWIKI (http://www.pbwiki.com), the following screen (Figure 1) will appear, prompting to give e-mail address and the password. Since this is the first time that the page has been visited, the "Sign up" link will be clicked on to create an account.
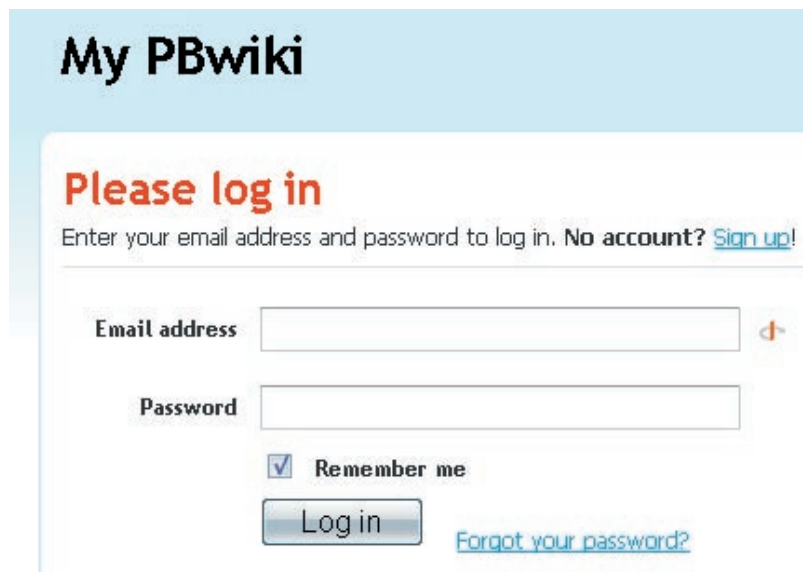
Figure 1

The next step will be filling in the required information for the account (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Once the required fields have been filled in, the e-mail address and password provided will be used to log to the site (Figure 3).

Figure 3

The next screen will be "my PBwiki" including home, profile and e-mail. Information (such as name, location etc.) be changed in the profile section and also the e-mail address in the Email section (Figure-4).

Figure 4

On this screen also is there the link "create a new wiki". Through this link, the wiki will be created (Figure 5).

Figure 5

With the link "Create a new wiki" being clicked on, a new page will appear, asking for the wiki name and its purpose. After the name is chosen (if already used, try a new one), the link "create my wiki" will be clicked on (Figure -6).

Figure 6

A new page will appear, saying that a new wiki is ready. Here, some settings are provided. The first is related to whether the wiki newly created is private or public. If it is intended to be open to anyone (anyone can read the wiki), select the option "yes, make my wiki public", if not, leave it as is (in this way, only people who have the wiki invite key can read and change the wiki). The second is related to the invite key. It is simply a password which allows the people (who have the key) to have write access on the wiki (Figure 7).

Figure 7

After the terms of service have been agreed to and the link "next: choose wiki features" has been clicked on, a new screen will appear, providing the features. Here, if the free version ia used, the link "no thanks, just take me to my wiki" will be clicked on (Figure-8).

Figure 8

The newly created wiki will appear, having the title of the name provided (Figure 9). The next steps, the most important ones, will be editing, changing and adding pages.
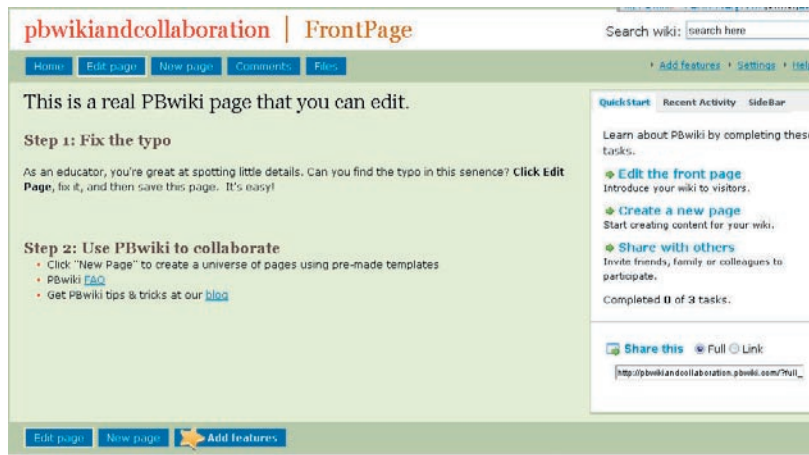
Figure 9

Editing Pages

On the front page, some menu items provided (only to the one who is the owner of the wiki and those who have the write access): home, edit page, new page, comments and files, respectively (Figure 10).
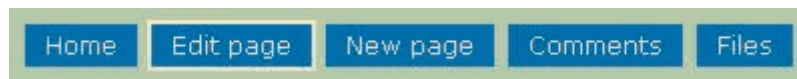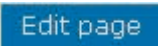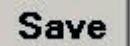

Figure 10

In order to edit the front page, the item "Edit page" is to be clicked on and the following screen (with the word-processing like options and structure) appears (Figure 11). Here, any text can be entered, formatted, made bold/italic without dealing with html codes. Once formatting and adding text is finished, all one needs to do is click on the button "Save" which is towards the end of the page. The same steps will be followed for any new page: Edit page and Save .

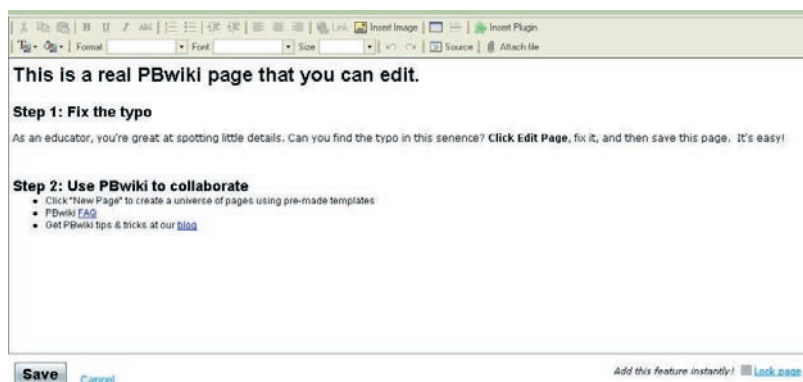

Figure 11

Adding new pages

Adding new pages can be done in two ways. The first one is to click on the "New page" item in the menu above the front page. A pop-up window will appear, asking for the name of the page and the template if it will be used (Figure 12). Once the required information is entered and/or chosen and the link "create new page" is clicked on, the new page will come up, ready to be edited. Using the editor, new content can be inserted to the newly created page.

Figure 12

The second way to create a new page is to use the "link" button while the page is in "edit" mode. The 🌐 Link button is chosen from the editor, which makes the pop-up window appear as in Figure 13. By selecting the "Wiki Page" from the "Link Type" and choosing the "new page" from the "link to wiki page", typing the page name and the link text (the underlined text which will point to the new page), a new page will be created and be ready to edit.

Figure 13

Adding Google gadgets/pictures/videos

While the page is in "edit" mode, clicking on Insert plug-in will make the plug-ins appear (Figure-14).
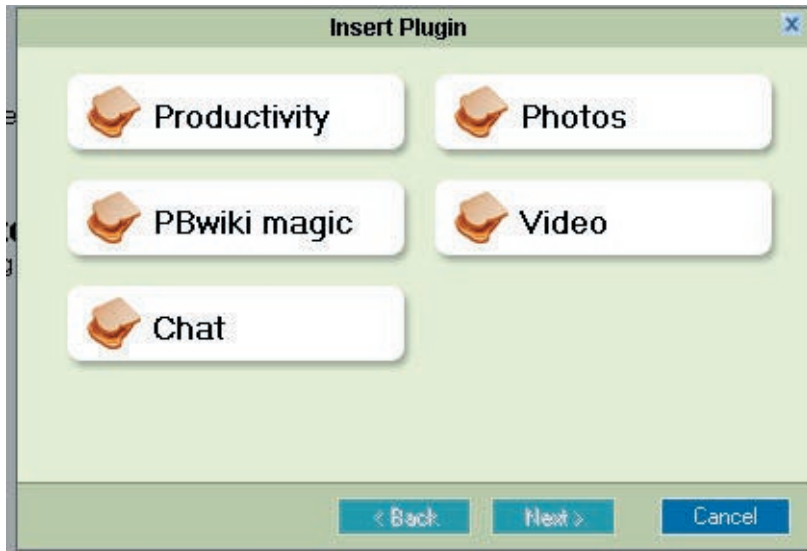
Figure 14

Through these plug-ins, a YouTube video or one's own video, calendar, calendar etc. can be inserted into the place chosen in the page (using a table is always suggested while inserting the plug-in) (Figure-15).
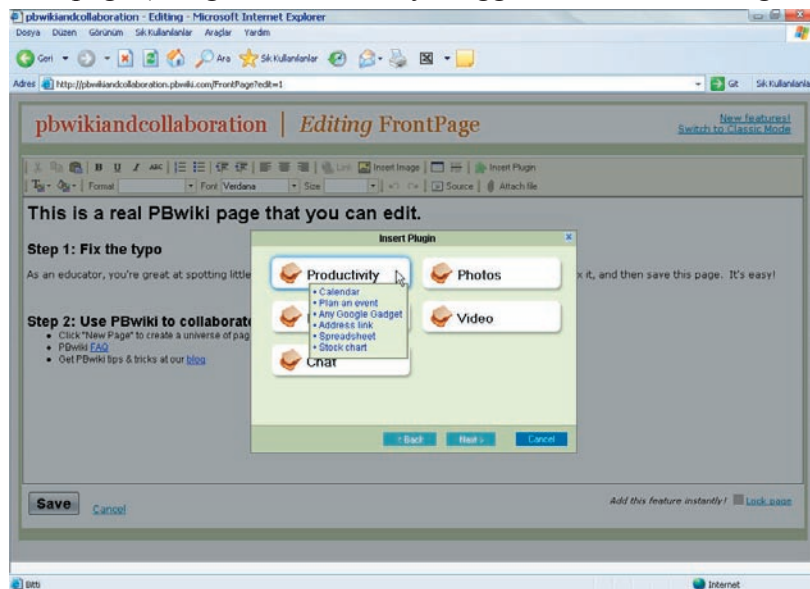

Figure 15

Restoring an earlier version of a page

In order to retrieve an earlier version of a page (any accidental deletion of a page or any version of a page), the "history" link can be clicked on and several versions of the page can be seen and any page can be restored to any previous version (Figures 16 & 17).

Figure 16

Figure 17

Features such as PDF and Slideshows

The wiki page also provides features to create a PDF version of a page or electronic portfolios of the wiki (creating a PDF version or a slideshow of all the pages created). In order to create PDF files, slideshows, and more than these, the links at the bottom of the page (Save page as PDF, Portfolios- Create PDFs, slideshows, more) can be used (Figure 18).

Figure-18

Invitation Key/Public or Private Access

In order to make the wiki public or private and change the Invitation Key, "Settings" link (on the right top of the page) can be used. Also, on the settings page, some other information (editor, skins, templates, time/date, users, sharing etc.) can be changed (Figure 19).
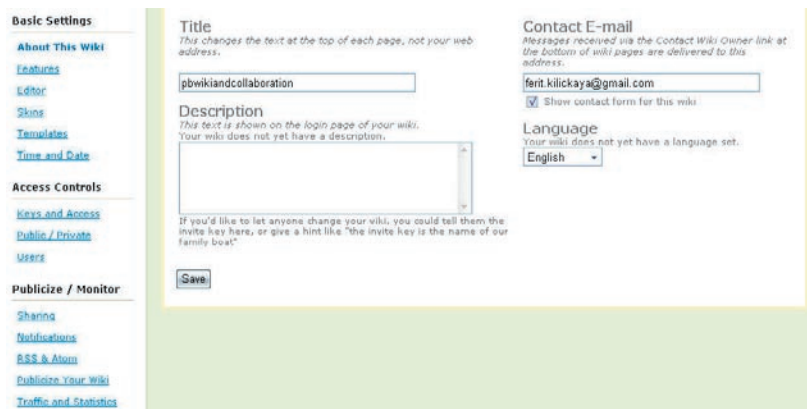

Figure 19

How to use a wiki with your students

The features (more will be added soon) of a wiki can provide us with several ideas to apply to language learning. The following are just examples. The use of wikis, no doubt, depends very much on educators' creativity and enthusiasm.

➢ Building a database of phrasal verbs with meaning and examples (students in pairs or groups can add meaning and examples to the list)

- ➢ A journal of work done in class (Most of the students create invaluable projects and most of the time only the teacher is the one who reads them. Putting them online and getting feedback from other students through comments will help the learners play an active role in class and have the opportunity to see what their classmates are doing, as well.)
- ➢ Writing a joint story (Students in pairs or groups can add new sentences to a story and create their own joint story. Grammatical and/meaning mistakes can be corrected by the students themselves, which will make writing more enjoyable and a game-like activity.
- ➢ Famous people (Students can choose famous people in their country or in the world and write about their life – some can write about his/her early childhood, education, professional work et. The information written can be checked by the other students and any misleading information (this can be also done on purpose) can be checked and corrected by other students.)

PBwiki does really lend itself to collaborative writing and open to any fresh idea. For examples, please refer to Dudeney and Hockly (2007) for a lesson with a wiki page or the web pages in the references section.

References

Dudeney, G. & Hockly, N. (2007). How to Teach English with Technology. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

Selected sites offering free wikis
- PBwiki (http://www.pbwiki.com)
- Wikihost (http://www.wikihost.org)
- MediaWiki (http://www.mediawiki.org)
- Wiki Spaces (http://www.wikispaces.com)

Other resources on what a wiki is and its possible uses in education
- http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI0626.pdf
- http://edwiki.org/mw/index.php/Design_Patterns_for_EduWikis
- http://www.wiki.org/wiki.cgi?WhatIsWiki
- http://teachereducation.org.uk/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=152
- http://wikis.lib.ncsu.edu/index.php/Wikis_in_Writing_Education_Research
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki
- http://educationalwikis.wikispaces.com/space/showimage/Welcome+to+the+world+of+wikis.pdf

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- The Internet for ESP: practical discussions of Web-based activities/classroom ideas for the ESP environment
- Internet lesson ideas: 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/Language lab: descriptions, evaluations and recommendations of widely available language learning software or articles pertaining to the use of software in language learning, also in the CALL lab context
- A Word from a Techie: discussions of applications of computer programs to teaching English, outlining new possibilities given by software to the process of learning and teaching, explanations of technological issues

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.

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