

CALL Course Book



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About the CALL Course Book

Originally compiled: 2002 – 2004, BP-BLTM project teams

First update: 2005 – 2007, POOLS project

Second update: 2010, POOLS-2 project

- The main content was updated and more content added in 2010 by team members from POOLS-2, which is a Transfer of Innovation project based on the first POOLS project. The content of the manual will be used by another ToI project POOLS-M, which works with language teaching methods, therefore one of the POOLS-M teams. The University of Applied Sciences of Southern Switzerland (SUPSI) has worked on language and content (editing) and has given advice to the POOLS-2 project teams.

Third update: 2014, POOLS METHODS project

- The main content was updated to coincide with changes in existing technology. Some items were removed due to their age and lack of use/availability.

Additions have been made in light of developments taking place after the 2010 version.

The Executive Training Institute (ETI) Malta was responsible for both the content adaptation and language editing of this version of the course book.

Introduction to Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) is often considered a language teaching method, but this is not really the case. In traditional CALL the methodology was often claimed to be based on a behaviouristic approach as in “programmable teaching”, where the computer checked the student input and gave feedback and moved on to an appropriate activity exercise. In modern CALL, the emphasis is on communication and tasks.

More recently, the term Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL) has surfaced. Under this umbrella term, we find educational technologies, technology-enhanced classrooms (hardware), or ICT in classroom teaching. TEL can also mean learning with technology (with cognitive tools) as opposed to learning by/through technology. Another aspect of TEL is e-Learning, which can be described as “leveraging technology to maximize learning within an environment of sound course design that can offer students the options of time, place and pace, and emphasizes different learning styles”

(TEL Committee, University of Texas: p. 6)

https://www.utexas.edu/provost/research/TEL_Report_2004.pdf

In recent years the rapid development of mobile computing devices has seen technology enter the classroom in ways that 20 years ago we would never have dreamt possible. The role of the Computer in CALL has shifted fundamentally from ‘input – control – feedback’ to the management of communication through text, audio and video. It is important to remember that the term ‘Computer’ is not limited to PC, MAC or LINUX but rather all electronic devices which can now be carried in our pockets.

A question that arises in the study of CALL tools is ‘How do we use CALL for teaching the less widely used and taught languages?’ What is vital to remember is that CALL is not intended as a replacement of existing teaching practices. Students should not sit at a computer to learn a language, but they should learn a language which occasionally requires them sit at a computer as a compliment to their communicative development. Therefore, CALL is a tool and not a method which facilitates learning.

When planning to use CALL, it is important to understand how a language is learnt. Language learning is a cognitive process, the result of the student’s own processing of language input. It is not the explanations that define the bulk of what is learnt, but rather the process. Form and meaning can be provided by a teacher and by a computer, which will lead to understanding of the form and meaning – but language use and language acquisition is attained through the context of the topic being studied. Based on the existing knowledge of the topic, the student processes the input and fits it into the language systems in his/her possession. Language knowledge is not just recorded, but rather constructed by the student – thus facilitating language acquisition. Computers do not feed back, but facilitate by providing a medium.

One of the worst fears when dealing with CALL and distance / online learning has always been the social aspect. It has been believed that the computer- mediated community

would imply -a lack of social relations. However, several presentations at EUROCALL conferences have revealed that distance learning classes using audio conferencing actually developed a strong sense of social community. (eg “The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Teacher: The Role of Social Presence in the Online Classroom.” by Tammelin Maija from the Helsinki School of Economics, Helsinki, Finland and another presentation “Fostering (pro)active language learning through MOO” by Lesley Shield, Open University, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom).

Web 2.0 has also made its mark on the world today. Throughout Europe it is very difficult to find students who are not members of a social networking site. Computer-mediated communication is now no longer a lonely task, as online communities are continually on the rise.

Social networking has indeed become a way of life for learners today who are used to online communities. CALL therefore engages learners in a way familiar to them. This can lead to higher levels of motivation, as learning is no longer the old-fashioned paper-and-pen learning, but encompasses a variety of technology tools which are part of their everyday life.

CALL offers the language teacher and learner a number of tools and activities that, when carefully planned as part of the pedagogical classroom, will assist in the language learning process.

eLearning Courses For Teachers

CALL provides teachers the potential to make language classes livelier and more engaging, but in order to do so the teachers need to have a strong level of computing literacy. Many young teachers are effectively digital natives but some older teachers have never had the opportunity to study technology – it is also very possible that some older teachers have studied computing but, given the speed that technology evolves, are unable to use their knowledge. At the 1993 CALICO Annual Symposium, which took place on the campus of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, the Provost welcomed the participants with the words: “Computers shall never replace teachers, but teachers using computers shall replace those that don’t.” Therefore it is important that teachers who were not brought up using computers make the effort to become digital immigrants.

Below you can find some of the many institutions that offer teachers help in gaining computer literacy:

ECDL (European Computer Driving License)

www.ecdl.org

“ECDL Foundation is the certifying authority of the leading international computer skills certification programme – ECDL / ICDL. The quality and reputation of our certification programmes are built on over a decade of experience in successfully delivering ICT certification programmes to millions of people in various languages around the world.”ⁱ

ECDL is an organisation that is ready for anyone’s needs. If you are a complete novice or if you just want to brush up on your core skills, ECDL has courses that can accommodate.

ECDL also offers courses aimed at Teachers and Students. For teachers, it aims to increase confidence, provide time saving techniques, improve teaching practices and increase computer mediated communication skills.

ICT4LT (Information & Communication Technology for Language Teachers)

www.ict4lt.org

“The main aim of the ICT4LT project was to provide Web-based training materials in ICT for teachers of Modern Foreign Languages, including English as a Foreign Language.”ⁱⁱ

ICT4LT provides 4 modules aimed at different needs of language teachers who are planning to, or already use ICT with their language learners.

Module 1 focuses on basic knowledge and skills, introduces users to the new technologies, their advantages for language learning and teaching, computer hardware and software which the language teacher has to be familiar with, text tools and how to use them, Internet and CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning).

Module 2 (intermediate level) provides information on CALL methodology (how to use multimedia and online and offline resources) and gives an introduction to concordance programmes in modern foreign language classrooms.

Module 3 covers such aspects as CALL software design, creation of websites, human language technology, and giving the possibility to develop specific management skills needed for managing a multimedia language centre.

Module 4 – Computer Aided Assessment (CAA) – is both a challenge and a great possibility to make the teacher's life easier and more interesting.

Executive Training Institute Malta (ETI Malta)

<http://www.etimalta.com>

ETI Malta provides 2 ICT driven courses aimed at teachers – Empowerment in ICT Skills and Technology Enhanced Learning.

Empowerment in ICT Skills - 1 week

Technology Enhanced Learning – 2 weeks:

These two courses are based on the results from previous POOLS courses, and cover most of the tools mentioned in this CALL handbook. The highly practical courses are designed to help empower teachers who might feel overwhelmed by technology today, or who want to integrate ICT in their classrooms.

Interactive Activities

Adventure Games or Interactive Online Mazes

Adventure games are computer-managed role plays where users are presented with situations involving decision-making that they have to deal with. Users choose what to do and input the result as text, speech (speech recognition software), or by clicking on options. Based on the input, the program branches out to resulting situations/gives feed-back.

Interactive mazes aren't as common as now as they used to be but they still provide an engaging experience. The downside with Interactive mazes (like Quandary) is that they can take a while to set up. The biggest plus is that once it is set up, there's no more input required from the teacher. Furthermore, mazes can be set up to never actually end – users just remain 'lost' in the maze solving problems and answering questions.

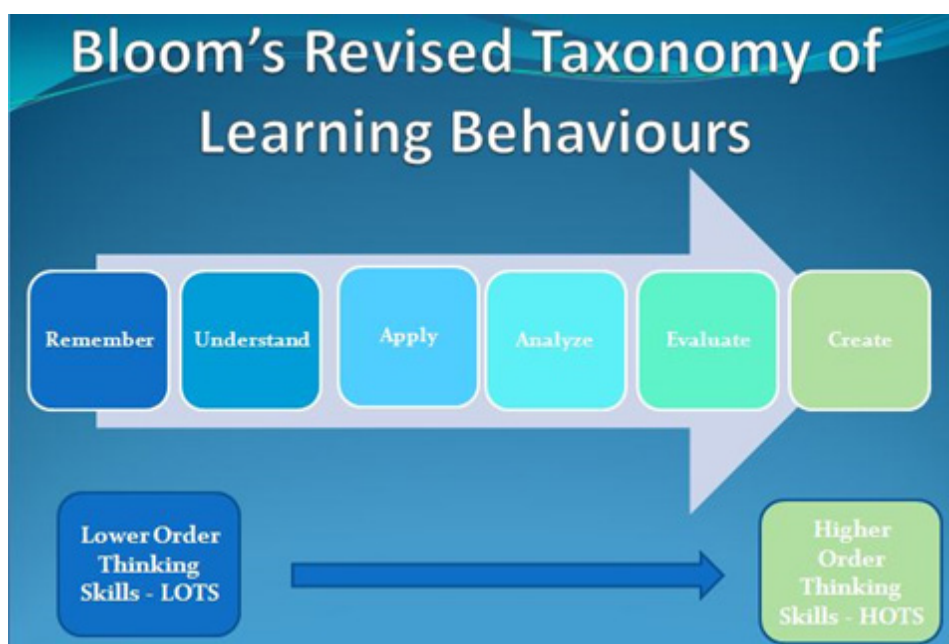
Adventure games can be very entertaining when constructed for language learners, but unfortunately only very few have been designed for the less taught languages.

An entertaining Portuguese example, Uma Aventura na União Europeia, by Mrs Teresa Pacheco, a teacher in the ESES - Escola Superior de Educação de Santarém can be found here: <http://nonio.eses.pt/asp/europa/index.htm>

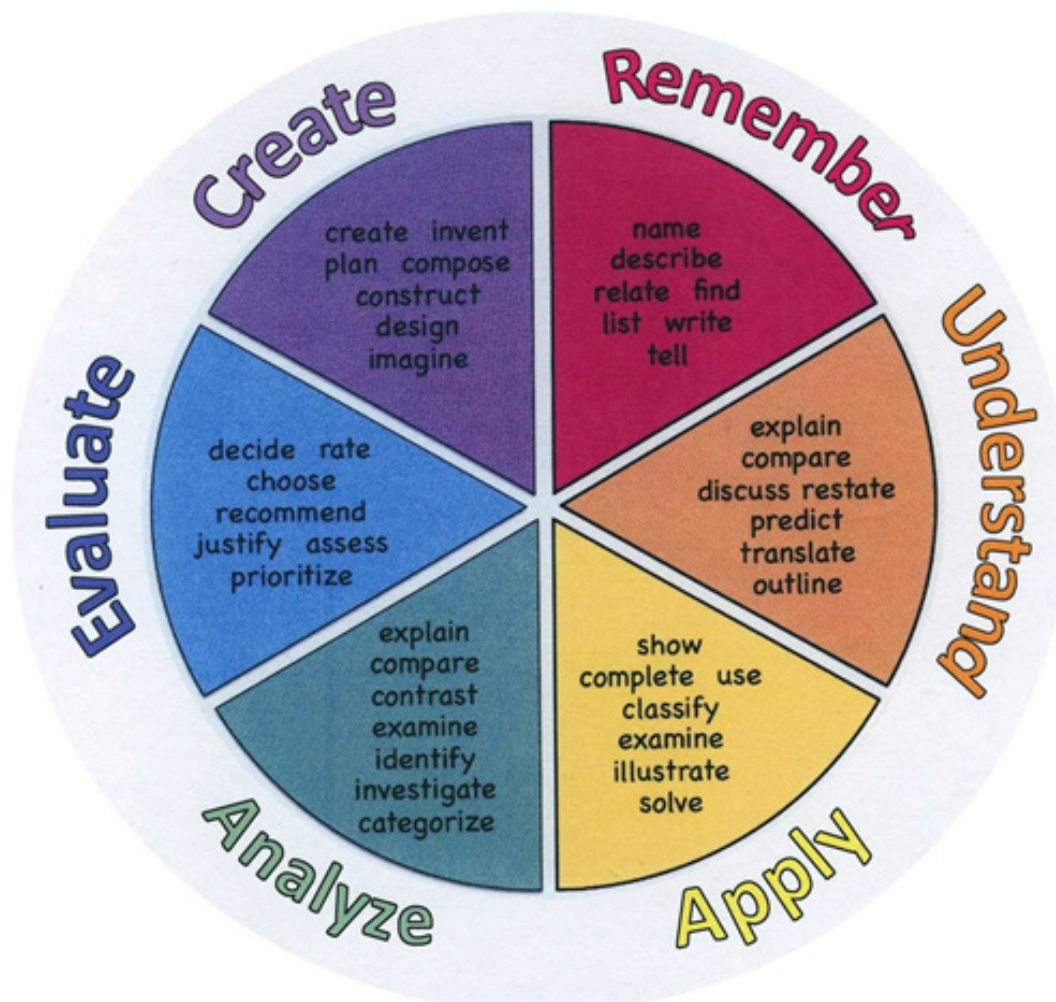
Check out: Quandary - <http://www.halfbakedsoftware.com/quandary.php>

Webquests

A WebQuest is an activity where the student answers questions and/or compiles information from resources mostly found on the web. The learner is guided towards a set list of online resources. This means the teacher/creator provides the student with the required links. WebQuests are designed to focus on using and analysing information rather than looking for it. A WebQuest is designed to target both higher order and lower order thinking skills, based on Bloom's taxonomy.



This is done by setting the learners tasks using certain question words which require particular thinking skills to perform.



Bloom's Wheel taken from: <http://morethanenglish.edublogs.org>

The WebQuest model was developed in early 1995 at San Diego State University by Bernie Dodge and Tom March, and was then outlined in Some Thoughts About WebQuests.

When creating WebQuests, it is important to remember that there is a set structure to follow:

1. Introduction – Introduce the WebQuest to the students, but don't go into too much detail. A quick summary will suffice.
2. Task – Explain the task to the students in detail.
3. Process – How are the students going to complete the task? Where are the students going to find the information they need in order to complete the task? It's important to limit the number of websites as the teacher should know what the student is looking at.

4. Evaluation – An explanation of the criteria for assessment.
5. Conclusion – The conclusion has a dual role. First, it closes the task. Second, it involves further study if merited.

The main problem with using the WebQuest method for the less taught languages is the language level of the websites (usually very high), and also that for some languages, there might still be limited content available.

Check out:

Webquest.org <http://webquest.org/index.php> to learn more about WebQuests and access the WebQuest archive.

Zunal WebQuest Maker <http://zunal.com/> – a free web based WebQuest maker.

Audio/Video

Listening Activities

Listening activities are undoubtedly a necessity in the language classroom. Over time, the computer has replaced the tape recorder completely and almost removed the need for a CD player. It is also easier to 'rewind' to a certain spot by using the track bar as opposed to holding down the rewind button.

Podcasts

Podcasts are online audio files which can be streamed directly from the internet or downloaded to any mobile device which supports audio playback. Using 'RSS', 'Atom' or "Yahoo" feeds, listeners have the option of subscribing to podcasting channels which will inform users of any new podcasts available for download. The "dashboards" or "readers" used to channel the podcast information to the user is often called a podcatcher. Some podcatchers will even download the podcast automatically.

Check out these recorders:

- www.podomatic.com – record directly onto the internet and listen through an embeddable player
- www.audacity.org – record onto your computer for distributing online or offline.

Example Podcast Sites (Scottish Gaelic):

- http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/alba/foghlam/learngaelic/an_litir_bheag/index.shtml
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/alba/foghlam/learngaelic/litir/index.shtml>

Check out these Podcatchers:

- <https://www.apple.com/itunes/>
- <http://www.getmiro.com/>

Some links to Podcasts can be found on the POOLS website www.languages.dk or on the POOLS blog <http://pools3.wordpress.com/>

Mobile Phone – Embedding Audio

Many language teachers and learners appreciate teaching materials that incorporate both written and spoken language. However, the creation of sound files has always been more complex than the creation of text files. In recent times a number of attempts have been made to harness digital telephone technology for the purpose. One example is provided by www.ipadio.com.

With Ipadio, you can use a landline or mobile phone to record an audio message, just as you might leave a voicemail on an answer phone. This message is then instantaneously rendered as a soundfile on the Internet with its own unique URL. A further feature is an automatic transcription, which gives you a written version of the message in English (with a warning attached that there are likely to be some imperfections in the transcription).

In order to use this service, a user needs to create an account with Ipadio. There is no cost for individual consumers apart from phone costs, though Ipadio also offers a business service. Details are available on the website. When you create an account you need to give Ipadio some details, including two telephone numbers you will want to use. In return, you get a PIN number to use whenever you call to make a recording. The whole procedure is very simple, and includes a “delete” option if you are not satisfied with your recording. Here are some examples, created by Gordon Wells. Gordon’s collected recordings (his “phlog” – phone log) are available on the Ipadio site itself: <http://www.ipadio.com/phlogs.asp?section=2&phlog=17959&itemtype=phlog> If you click on “more” in any of the phonecasts listed, you get additional information, including an English transcription in some cases.

There is also space for comments. For example:

<http://www.ipadio.com/phlogs/GordonWells/2010/02/19/Gordons-phlog-Talking-to-Archie-Campbell>

It should be noted that the transcription in the above phonecast has been tidied up, using the edit function. Here is an example of an unedited machine transcription: <http://www.ipadio.com/phlogs/GordonWells/2010/02/09/Gordons-phlog-3rd-phone-cast>

In a language teaching context, care is obviously required with this facility – but even correcting the mistakes could be a learning experience! Sound quality is also an important issue, and largely depends on the quality of the telephone connection. However, it should be noted that, in addition to the phonecast function, there is a “traditional” MP3 upload option as well. So, if you already have pre-recorded soundfiles on your computer, you can still use these with Ipadio.

Lastly, there is also a valuable cross-posting function which enables you to upload or embed your phonecasts to other Social Media such as Facebook, Twitter, or any blogs you may run. This is particularly useful for language teachers, as it enables you to create your own multimedia web-based materials in a format of your own choosing. For example, Gordon has started incorporating both audio (Ipadio) and video (YouTube) in the Island Voices project blog - <http://guthan.wordpress.com>.

Webcam/Vodcast

Video podcast (sometimes shortened to vidcast or vodcast) is a term used for the online delivery of on demand video clip content via Atom or RSS enclosures. The term is a specialized evolution for video. It comes from the generally audio-based podcast and refers to the distribution of video where the RSS feed is used as a non-linear TV channel to which consumers can subscribe using a PC, TV, set-top box, media centre or mobile multimedia device.

Check out:

- <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-live/movie-maker> - free windows movie editing software that allows users to record direct from their webcam

- <https://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/> - free Mac software that allows users to record direct from their webcam

From a web server, a video podcast can be distributed as a file or as a stream. Both methods have their advantages and disadvantages. Downloading complete video podcasts in advance gives the user the ability to play the video podcasts offline on, for example, on a portable media player. Streaming allows seeking (skipping portions of the file) without downloading the full video podcast, better statistics and lower bandwidth costs for the servers; however, users may encounter pauses in playback caused by slow transfer speeds.

- <http://www.youtube.com> – Online host for streaming vodcasts
- <http://www.dropbox.com> – Online cloud storage which allows peer downloading

Interactive Exercises

Interactive exercises are a great way for learners to practise without the need to have a teacher present. Teachers can design a variety of exercises which are directly related to their teaching, and convert these into an html format, to be accessed from any cloud storage such as Dropbox.

Grammar Exercises

There are only a few grammar programs for the less taught languages and often they simply transfer book style exercises to a computer, with similar lack of success. However, there is at present one grammar website that can be recommended: the VISL site <http://visl.sdu.dk/>. VISL stands for “Visual Interactive Syntax Learning” and is a research and development project at the Institute of Language and Communication (ISK), University of Southern Denmark (SDU) - Odense Campus. Staff and students at ISK have been designing and implementing Internet-based grammar tools for education and research since September 1996.

At the start of the project, four languages were involved: English, French, German, and Portuguese. Many additional languages have since joined the project - as seen by the growing number of entries on the language list.

The following “tools” are available on the VISL:

- Grammatical Analyses (pre-analyzed sentences and automatic machine parsing)
- Games & Quizzes (testing of word classes and other grammatical topics)
- Corpus Search (access to the BNC and other language corpora)
- Machine Translation

Cloze Exercises

Cloze exercises are fill in the blank exercises. The student is presented with a text that has some words missing. The aim is for the student to complete the passage.

Check out:

- Hot Potatoes – JCloze (See Appendix)
- The Language Menu (See Appendix)

Crosswords

Crosswords are often very popular with students and, when created from the vocabulary that the students have just been working on, they can be a good tool for post-task exercises.

Check out:

- Hot Potatoes - JCross (See Appendix)
- The Language Menu (See Appendix)

Find the right sequence (or jumbled sentences)

In this activity a sentence or a story is cut into pieces that the user has to reorder in order to reconstruct the sentence or the story.

Check out:

- Hot Potatoes - JMix (See Appendix)
- The Language Menu (See Appendix)

Matching words, sentences, or pictures

This activity can be very useful for several purposes even, for vocabulary training, where a student drags words to corresponding pictures. JMatch can also create flashcards for vocabulary practice.

Check out:

Hot Potatoes - JMatch (See Appendix)

The Language Menu (See Appendix)

Multiple Choice

This type of exercise is very useful for a quick check of a student's understanding of the content of information given through audio, text, video etc.

Check out:

- Hot Potatoes - JQuiz (See Appendix)
- The Language Menu (See Appendix)

Word Search

Word searches are very popular with students and can be a good consolidation exercise.

Check out: The Language Menu (See Appendix)

Board Games

Can be done as a pair activity or in small groups. Board games can be created around any context and be customized for any language point.

Check out: The Language Menu (See Appendix)

Split Words

A good tool for teaching/consolidating prefixes and suffixes.

Check out: The Language Menu (See Appendix)

Mindomo

Mindomo <http://www.mindomo.com/> is a free mind-mapping tool that allows users to create, view and share detailed mind-maps in their web browsers. Mind-maps are a very useful tool for use in brainstorming, planning and other things. Due to the obvious visual aspect of mind-maps, they are an essential tool when working with the visual learner.

An interesting aspect of Mindomo is that they can also incorporate multimedia. For example, in a mindmap about animals, the teacher can link a video about lions, or add an audioclip, or even add text to a topic or subtopic. There is also the facility to show relationships between subtopics.

Clilstore

An easy way of making a webpage with video, graphics and texts where all the words are linked to online dictionaries is to use the online application Clilstore.

"Clilstore uses Wordlink, a WWW based facility which links arbitrary webpages automatically, word by word with online dictionaries. And Wordlink (see P22) in turn uses Multidict (see P22), a multiple dictionary look-up facility which makes use of freely available online dictionaries. Both Wordlink and Multidict were developed as part of the European funded POOLS-T project (2008-2010) and their development is continuing as part of the present TOOLS project." ⁱⁱⁱ

The software is free (CopyLeft) and on the website you can watch step by step instruction videos on how to prepare a webpage and put it online using a cloud storage service called Dropbox which gives users two Gigabytes of free web space, enough for hundreds of CALL units produced in Clilstore.

Clilstore can link to further exercises (for example, Hot Potatoes – see below) which can also be stored online in cloud storage.

Clilstore can be found at – www.multidict.net/clilstore

Computer Mediated Communication

Blogs (weB LOGS)

The term **blog** is derived from **weblog** and refers to a website that is regularly updated with new posts arranged in reverse chronological order so that the newest post is always at the top of the blog. People who make use of blogs are called **bloggers**, and writing for blogs is referred to as **blogging**.

Blogs have a number of typical features that make online publishing extremely effective and versatile. They can be created in just a few steps by following the provider's instructions and you can decide whether there will be single or multiple authoring, as for example, in a shared class blog.

Each post has a title and a time stamp so that the reader gets an idea of what it is about and when exactly it was posted. It is also automatically archived. Retrieval is possible through the search feature or by browsing through the archives. Publishing is easy as blogs provide templates which do not require any technical skills from the blogger. By clicking on the word 'comment' below the post, the reader can type their opinion on a post into another template.

Although the main feature of a blog is its front page, with posts in reverse chronological order, the blog can also contain stand-alone pages, accessed through a sidebar or top tabs. This makes it very useful for a teacher who wants to supply other more "static" information for the class, eg extra practice, school calendar, a class photo page, Best of the week, etc.

Blogs are not only about text files. They may contain virtually all kinds of data such as hyperlinks, graphics, presentations, spreadsheets and audio and video files – which makes them especially interesting for language teachers, as they provide multi-media.

If the RSS feature is made available, readers can subscribe to a blog, and will therefore be automatically notified whenever a change has been made.

All these features illustrate the usefulness of blogs in a language teaching environment as a medium that develops reading, writing and communication skills.

As a language teacher you might want to start a class blog which enables you to:

- provide online reading texts for your students
- provide additional materials like audio or video clips, images, charts etc.
- organise Internet resources for the class by providing useful links
- give instructions, assign tasks
- make the students practice writing (for an audience)
- give teacher feedback
- stimulate student discussion
- encourage peer evaluation and peer support

- carry out project work and make students document their progress
- experiment to find still more uses of blogs...

Check out:

- www.wordpress.com
- www.blogger.com
- www.blog.de

e-Tandem

The best way of learning a foreign language is communication with a native speaker who wants to learn your language. It is a give and take solution, where you are the teacher (of your own language) AND the student (of a foreign language).

Computer-mediated tandem-learning differs from face-to-face learning as it allows for a greater amount of communicative opportunities. Face-to-face tandems can be difficult to arrange and can be costly. CMC removes this obstacle.

Check out:

- <http://www.languages.dk/methods/tandem.html>
- read more about Tandem Learning and watch video examples
- <http://www.slf.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/> - The European Tandem Network
- <http://www.babbel.com/go/friendsabroad> - A vast Tandem Network

Chat online

Chat rooms can be a rewarding experience for the language learner. Chat rooms allow learners to meet and talk with other learners through text. Chat rooms can be created by the learner, but it can be difficult to gain users.

Social Networking sites on a similar scale to Facebook have a chat function built in, however some users may not wish to provide their contact details. A separate chat room can be started using a chat client or an embedded chat widget. For example, mIRC <http://www.mirc.com/> allows users to create chat environments while remaining anonymous to other users. A user name of choice is used after the initial set up. Any members of the chatroom will only see the chosen name, as opposed to the user's real details.

The main problems with chats are the lack of content and the difficulties encountered in organising and arranging chats using the less taught languages. However, when combined with tasks and suitable groups of students (age groups, interests etc), chats can lead to real communication and, when followed by post task work, language learning.

For example, a good chatroom task-based activity is to set up an info-gap activity for learners, who will need real communication in exchanging information to complete the task.

Check out:

- mIRC <http://www.mirc.com/> – a chat client that allows users to join existing rooms or set up their own.
- chatWING chatwing.com – an embeddable chat room that can be added to a blog or a website

One-to-One Chat

Skype

Potentially the most popular program for online chats is Skype www.skype.com. Skype allows one-to-one video communication and multi-user telecommunication.

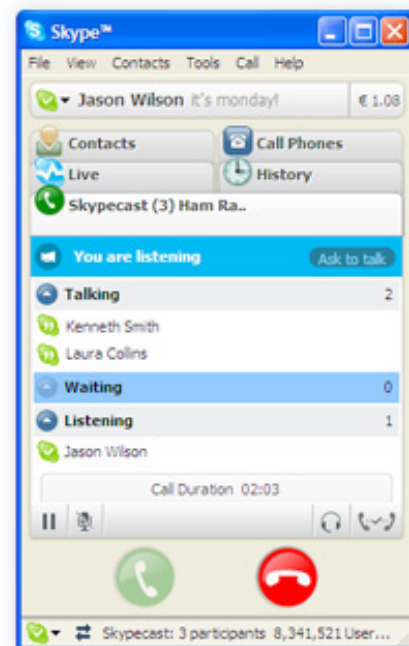
It can also be installed on any mobile device with access to an internet connection.

Other options available:

File sharing

SMS to mobile phones

Clearly structured address book



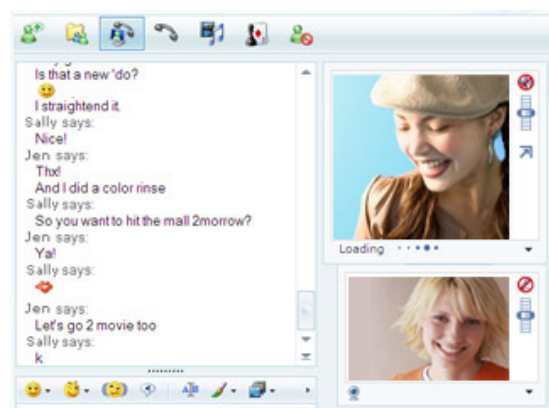
MSN Messenger

Another platform is Microsoft Messenger. To download and read more information, go to:

<http://get.live.com/messenger/overview>

Microsoft Messenger includes many useful features like:

- PC-to-PC Calling
- Video conversations
- Sharing Folders
- Address book



FaceTime

An increasingly popular iPad/Smartphone Video-chat app is FaceTime. This is very similar to Skype.

Babbel

Friends Abroad from Babbel.com is a service that assists language learners in finding other learners to chat with: <http://www.babbel.com/go/friendsabroad> with 17 million people from over 190 countries are learning a language with Babbel (as at 2014).^{iv}

WhatsApp

For mobile and tablet users, WhatsApp is a popular communication tool. With an estimated 190 million monthly users in 2014, this app is fast becoming the most popular form of CMC available. In addition to text messaging, users can send each other images, video, and audio/media messages as well as their location using integrated mapping features.

However, there is an annual fee for using WhatsApp. The first year is completely free, but if you wish to continue then the cost is \$0.99 USD/year (as at 2014).

More information can be found here: <http://www.whatsapp.com/>

Social Networking websites

A **social network** focuses on building and developing social relations among people who share interests and/or activities. A social network service essentially consists of a representation of each user (often a profile), his/her social links, and a variety of additional services. Most social network services are web-based and provide means for users to interact over the internet, such as email and instant messaging. Although online community services are sometimes considered as social network services in a broader sense, social network service usually means an individual-centred service whereas online community services are group-centred. Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, activities, events, and interests within their individual networks.

Some of the largest social networks were founded on the notion of digitizing real world connections. Many other networks focus on categories, ranging from books and music to non-profit business to motherhood, as ways to provide both services and community to individuals with shared interests.

The largest social networks have their own unique traits that allow them to stand out from the rest, for example:

Facebook

It can be safely said that of 2014, Facebook www.facebook.com is the most widely used social network by worldwide monthly active users. Since September 2006, anyone over the age of 13 with a valid email address has been able to become a Facebook user. Users can add friends and send them messages, and update their personal profiles to notify friends about themselves. Additionally, users can join networks organized by workplace, school, or college. The website's name stems from the colloquial name of books given to

students at the start of the academic year by university administrations in the US, with the intention of helping students to get to know each other better.

Facebook is a communicative tool focused on a personal level which can then be used as professional communicative tool. Users have the option to chat to individuals, or open up large group discussions.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site www.linkedin.com mainly used for professional networking. As of 8 April 2010 (2010-04-08)[update], LinkedIn had more than 65 million registered users, spanning more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. The site is available in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

Twitter

Twitter www.twitter.com is a social networking and micro-blogging service that enables users to send and read messages known as tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the author's profile page and delivered to the author's subscribers, who are known as *followers*. Senders can restrict delivery to those in their circle of friends or, by default, allow open access. Since late 2009, users can follow lists of authors instead of following individual authors. All users can send and receive tweets via the Twitter website, Short Message Service (SMS), or external applications (notably including those developed for smartphones). While the service itself costs nothing to use, accessing it through SMS may incur phone service provider fees. The website currently has more than 100 million users worldwide.

Pinterest

Pinterest is a visual discovery tool which users use to collect ideas for projects and interests. Users can create their own lists and share them with other users within Pinterest or externally through other social networking sites.

People collect and share boards (called 'Pins') with their peers. The boards can contain any media – video, pictures...etc...- and is very appealing to the visual user. As of 2011, Pinterest is the third biggest social networking site in America.

More information can be found here: <https://www.pinterest.com/>

Lino

Lino is an interactive corkboard which can be used collaboratively or individually. Users can share media by attaching it to the noticeboard in the same way that people can do at home in their kitchens using a pin or thumbtack. Lino is a great, easy to use tool that can be embedded into a blog/website/wiki.

Check out: en.linoit.com

Cloud Storage

The premise behind cloud storage is simple enough – have access to your files from any computer connected to the internet. The need for cloud storage has increased thanks to the boom in Android/iOS mobile phones and tablets. Tablets are wonderfully useful devices, but they are often lacking in storage capacity.

The initial drive behind cloud storage was simply that – storage. But over time some providers have incorporated other features in order to help them stand out from each other.

Dropbox

Dropbox offers free users a starting package of 2GB with the option of either paying to increase, or increase up to 16GB by inviting users to install.

What makes Dropbox really impressive is its ease of file sharing. Users can share files very quickly and very easily. There is also an option of how folders are accessed, they can be publicly shared or privately shared. For those who are more technologically inclined, Dropbox can also be used as storage space for setting up a website.

Check out: www.dropbox.com

Google Drive

Google offers an impressive 15GB of storage for its free users. There is an option of extending, but only through payment.

Google Drive is not just cloud storage. There is a fully cloud-based office suite available to all users of Google Drive. This way, regardless of what computer you might be using, you will always have access to your files and the ability to edit them.

The programs available are: Document (Word Processing), Spreadsheet, Presentation, Form (Database) and Drawing.

One extremely useful feature of Google Drive is that two users can be editing a document simultaneously, and both changes saved without overwriting one of them.

Check out: <https://drive.google.com>

There are quite a number of alternatives for cloud storage. For Mac users, there is iCloud, for Windows 8 users there is oneDrive. However, in the Cloud storage battle, Dropbox and Google Drive are currently the most popular.

Online References

Interactive Phonemic Chart (English)

Potentially the most complicated part of language learning is pronunciation. It is arguably the least taught area in the classroom. For many teachers it is a complex issue, and for non-native teachers it is problematic if they themselves are unable to relate to the phonemic structure of a language.

With the current push for Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) taking place in Europe just now, foreign language pronunciation is a necessity at a young age.

Pronunciation is something that requires continuous feedback, and as such cannot be taught by a computer. However, it can be helped by interactive charts and general listening exercises.

The link below is an interactive phonemic chart in English designed by the British Council:

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/phonemic-chart>

Wordlink

<http://multidict.net/wordlink/>

"Wordlink is a WWW based facility which links arbitrary webpages automatically, word by word with online dictionaries. It was developed by Caoimhín Ó Donnaíle at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig as part of the European funded POOLS-T project (2008-2010), and development is being continued as part of the European funded TOOLS project (2012-2014)."^v

Wordlink is a versatile tool that allows users to select a webpage and have every word connected to an online dictionary in a number of different languages. It processes the webpage through the Multidict website (See Online Dictionaries).

To add a link to a particular webpage, all the user has to do is add the web address (without www) to the following url:

<http://multidict.net/wordlink/?navsize=1&sl=en&url=...>

ie To add cnn.com:

<http://multidict.net/wordlink/?navsize=1&sl=en&url=cnn.com>

Users can also create their own text to be run through Multidict.

Online Dictionaries

Multidict - <http://multidict.net/multidict/>

"Multidict allows the user to select easily from a choice of online dictionaries. Built into it is a large database of dictionaries with information on the languages they cater for and the parameters they require. Multidict attempts to remember the user's previous dictionary choices so as to speed up subsequent selection. Multidict also includes a facility to link to dictionaries in page-image format at the Web Archive, Google Books, etc, via an index of the initial word on each page."^{vi}

Multidict is arguably the most useful Dictionary tool on the internet. It contains all of the world's major languages and a number of obscure ones too.

Visuwords

<http://www.visuwords.com/>

Visuwords is a dictionary and thesaurus designed for the visual learner. Entering a word will create an animation providing definitions and word families.

RSS (Rich Site Summary)

RSS (often dubbed 'Really Simple Syndication') is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated digital content, such as blogs, news feeds or podcasts.

Users of RSS content use programs called feed 'readers' or 'aggregators': the user 'subscribes' to a feed by supplying their reader with a link to the feed. The reader can then check the user's subscribed feeds to see if any of those feeds have been added to since the last time it was checked, and if so, retrieve that content and present it to the user.

New content is automatically added. This eliminates the need for the user to look up several sites to check for any updated content. The content comes directly to the user.

RSS-aware programs are available for various operating systems. Client-side readers and aggregators are typically constructed as standalone programs or extensions to existing programs such as web browsers and email readers. Many browsers have integrated support for RSS feeds. There are also other applications that can convert an RSS feed into a page viewable through major newsreader software such as Mozilla Thunderbird and Forté Agent. This page is often referred to as a *usenet article*.

Web-based feed readers and news aggregators such as Feedly <http://feedly.com/> or Digg Reader www.digg.com require no software installation and make the user's "feeds" available on any computer with Web access. Some aggregators combine existing web feeds into new feeds, eg taking all football-related items from several sports feeds and providing a new football feed.

On web pages, web feeds (RSS or Atom) are typically linked with the word "Subscribe", an orange rectangle, or with the letters RSS. Many news aggregators such as 'My Yahoo!' publish subscription buttons for use on web pages to simplify the process of adding news feeds.

Check out:

- Feed Reader - <http://www.feedreader.com> - An online RSS feed reader
- Blog Lines - www.bloglines.com – An online RSS feed reader
- Thunderbird - <http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/thunderbird/> - Email client and RSS reader
- Netvibes - www.netvibes.com – Online dashboard and RSS reader

Teaching Foreign Languages to Hearing Impaired Students

Learning about deaf- and hearing- impaired students:

SIGNALL is a transnational language competency and training project which aims to increase awareness of deaf culture and sign languages amongst organisations, employers and hearing people. It aims to cultivate a behavioural change and commitment by organisations, employer bodies, educational establishments, public authorities and society as a whole in the way people who are deaf are perceived and treated.

Participant countries include the Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, Spain and the UK.

SIGNALL's awareness information pack aims to provide a mechanism that will witness a change in the way society in general behaves towards hearing-impaired people - not by being tolerant as in the past, but through social integration, access and understanding.

Products include a book, a DVD documentary, a CD-ROM and a website.

For more information, please visit www.signallproject.com

Tips for Teaching Hearing-Impaired Students by means of Audio-Visual Materials

- Take advantage of a variety of assistive listening devices (eg amplifiers) for watching foreign TV or foreign language movies.
- Use more reading/writing activities such as transcribed audio activities or computer assisted language learning software.
- Whenever possible, use video-clips or movies that have subtitles in the foreign language.

Subtitling Audio-Visual Materials

Subtitling as a rule should be clear and understandable but not detract from the audio/video to the extent that the focus is solely on words. In order to ensure that subtitling is clear, a Serif font is recommended. For more information about Serif fonts, check out the Wikipedia page: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serif>

Educational subtitling for deaf children

- Damper, R. I., Baker, R. G., Lambourne, A. D., Downton, A. C., King, R. W. and Newell, A. F. (1984) Educational subtitling for deaf children. In Proceedings of Proceedings of Second International Conference on Rehabilitation Engineering, pp. 304-305.
- Teaching English to Deaf Learners in China
<http://www.eslcafe.com/forums/teacher/viewtopic.php?t=1056>
- An English link list on forums and research institutions serving the needs of deaf people <http://www.deafblind.com/deafness.html>

Computer Assisted Language Learning within the framework of Task Based Learning

Why Task Based Learning?

Task-Based Learning (TBL) methodology has gained many supporters as it is a learner-centered approach that is very different to the behaviouristic PPP paradigm – Present, Practise and Produce.

In the PPP approach the aim is to present a form/structure, encourage the students to practise what was presented and finally produce a number of sentences using the practised form. With this approach, the teacher has full control over what the learners work with, do and say. The teacher works within a framework where answers are ruled as in/correct in relation of the taught form – regardless of whether the student produces a correct sentence, the aim of the exercise is to match what was presented in Stage 1.

PPP is, admittedly, a restrictive approach to teaching. Unfortunately, it has been the most widely used approach to language teaching for the last fifty years and is still used by many text book writers.

TBL is methodology based on language learning by the achievement of different tasks in order to bring to life the spontaneity and individuality of the classroom – in short, learning by doing. The achievement of the task takes precedence over the kind of language used, ie function over form. The aim of the TBL method is that each learner, by working with different tasks and primarily with other learners, goes through an individual internal learning process. The most important job for the teacher is to supply the teaching material, the tasks and to help create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom.

Example Lesson Plan

The following example is a task-based lesson using some CALL software - Clilstore and Hot Potatoes. The lesson is aimed at giving students vocabulary based on technical language involved in wiring a British plug. This exercise is available online in Basque, Danish, Dutch, English, Gaelic, German, Romanian, and Spanish at <http://multidict.net/clilstore/>

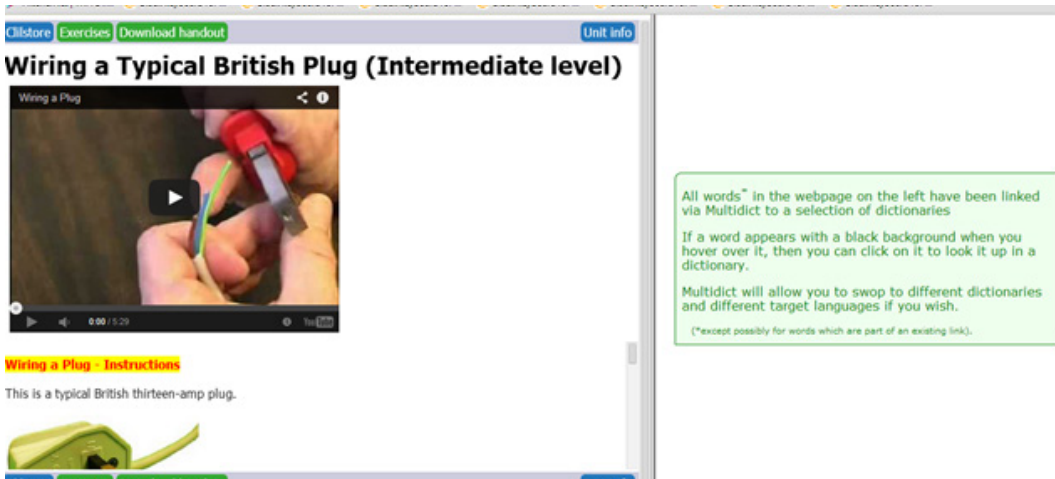
List of materials:

- a. Electric plugs; it is best if British plugs are available because these are more “complicated”, but other plugs may be used.
- b. Flexible wire
- c. Screwdrivers
- d. Wire cutters
- e. Wire strippers (but wire cutters can be used if these are not available)

Lesson plan

1. The students are introduced to the CALL materials, in this case a web-based application with video and text, followed by exercises: <http://multidict.net/word-link/?navsize=1&sl=en&url=http://multidict.net/clilstore/page.php?id=245>

- The students work through the web based multimedia material doing the following activities:



Wiring a Typical British Plug (Intermediate level)

Wiring a Plug

Wiring a Plug - Instructions

This is a typical British thirteen-amp plug.

All words™ in the webpage on the left have been linked via Multidict to a selection of dictionaries

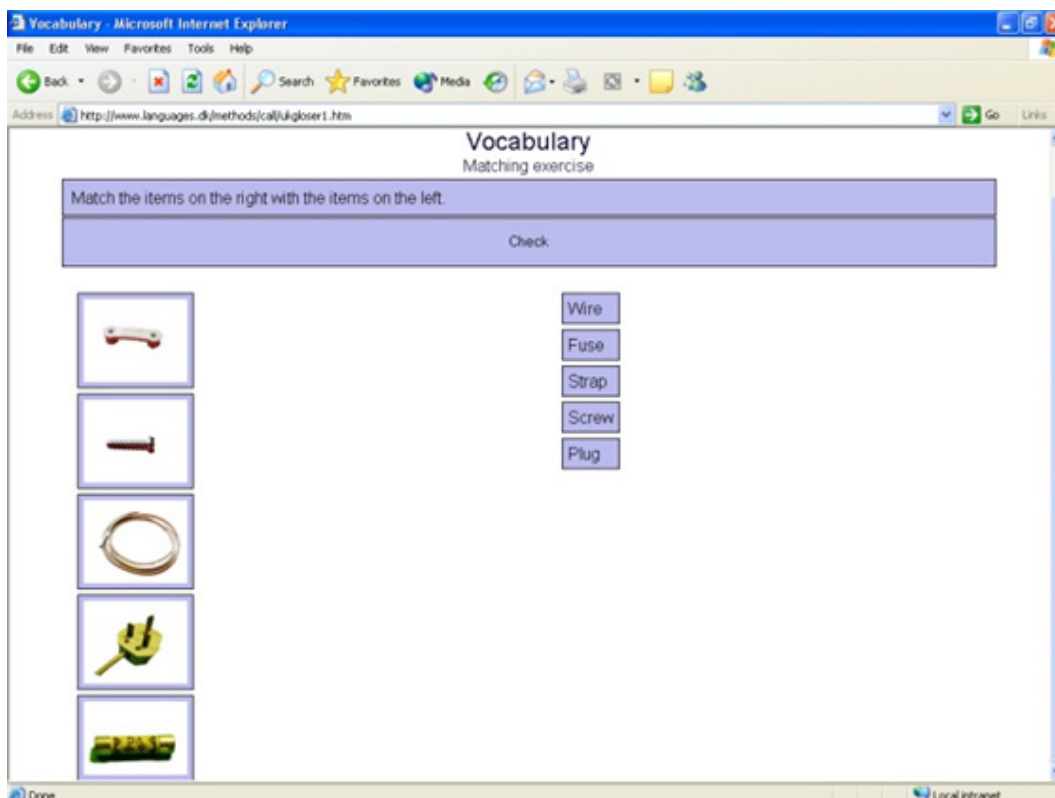
If a word appears with a black background when you hover over it, then you can click on it to look it up in a dictionary.

Multidict will allow you to swop to different dictionaries and different target languages if you wish.

(*except possibly for words which are part of an existing link).

Watch the video giving instructions on how to wire a British plug.

Read the text while listening to the video. Click next when finished.



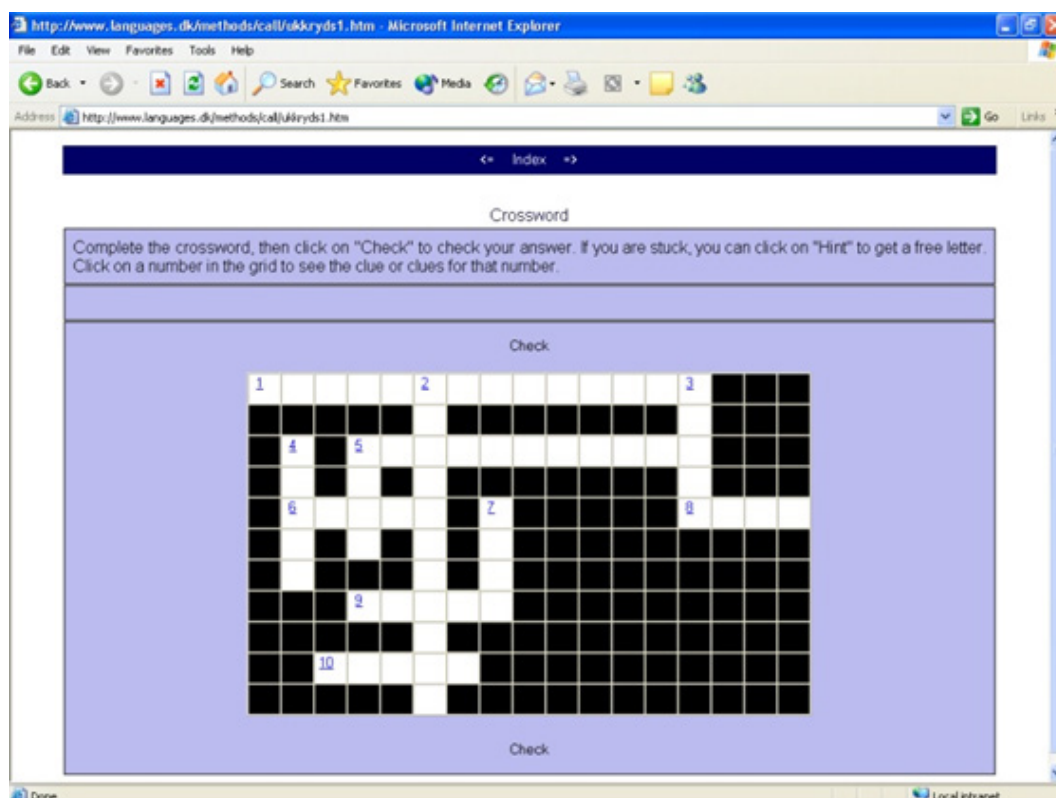
Vocabulary
Matching exercise

Match the items on the right with the items on the left.

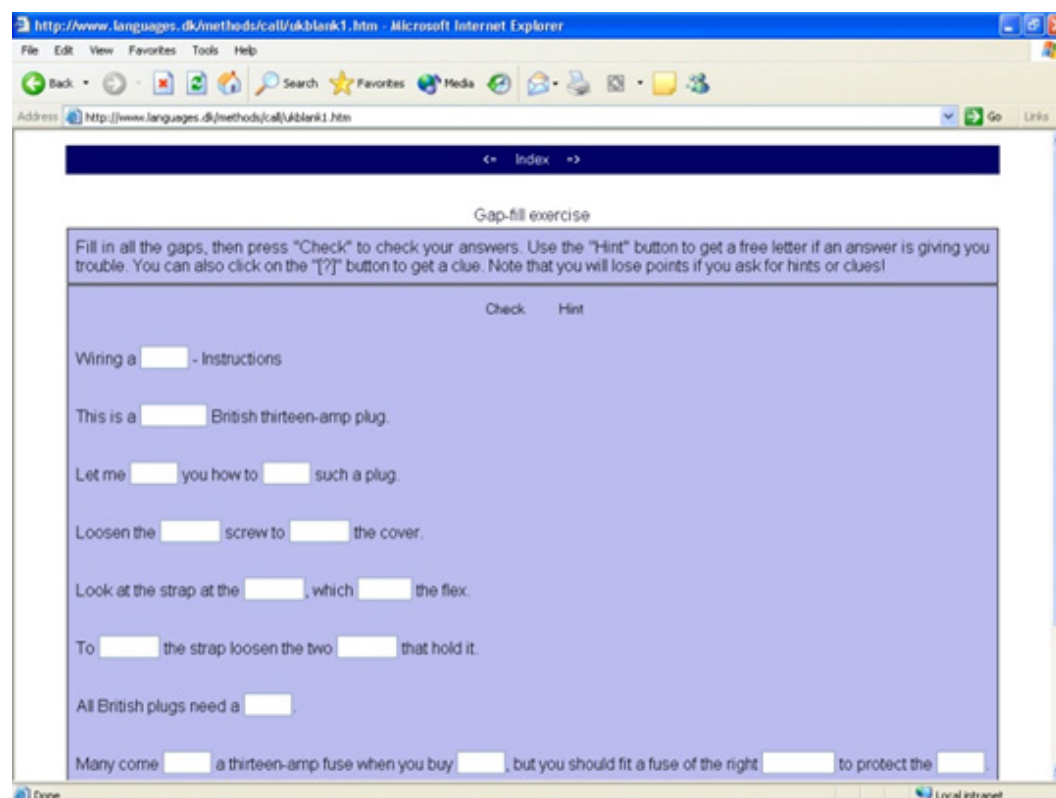
Check

Wire
Fuse
Strap
Screw
Plug

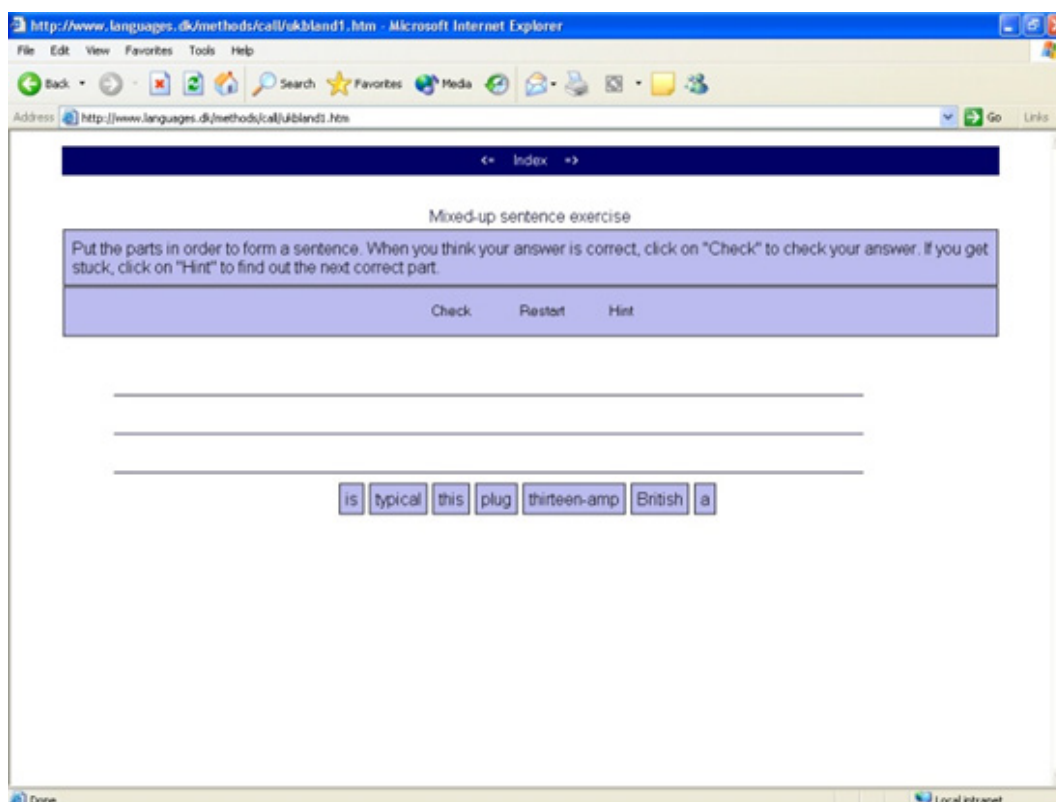
Place words next to photos of tools to learn the technical vocabulary.



Complete the crossword containing the technical vocabulary.



Complete the "fill in the missing words" exercise from the video text.



Complete the “jumbled words” exercise to make instructions.

3. When the students have finished the work on the computers, at their own pace, ..
they receive a text version of the same instructions. The texts can be downloaded
from http://www.languages.dk/methods/#Teacher_Course_materials

4. The students work in pairs: Student A instructs Student B on how to wire a British ...
plug. Student B may help Student A with the language, but s/he must not
do anything that Student A does not instruct her/him to do. The text may be used
as supplementary help, but the students should try to avoid this.



5. The students change roles and repeat the activity above

Appendix

Hot Potatoes – A Half-Baked Software product

Hot Potatoes is a collection of 5 programs (JMix, JCross, JMatch, JQuiz and JCloze) and a *masher*.

Masher tools were popular in the early 2000s. They were designed to bring together a number of different programs and display them as one entity. For example, in Hot Potatoes there are 5 programs that produce a variety of separate exercises. The masher program allows each of the exercises to be collected into a single webpage – making it much easier to upload.

All the exercises created in Hot Potatoes can be exported into html format, which allows the exercise to become interactive. The exercises can then be uploaded into cloud storage such as Dropbox, to be accessed by students from anywhere, or installed on computers.

Tutorials explaining how to use Hot Potatoes can be found here:

<http://hotpot.uvic.ca/tutorials6.php>

Hot Potatoes Overview

The best way to get acquainted with Hot Potatoes is to work through the online tutorial mentioned above. By doing so you actually work through various exercises created in Hot Potatoes and Quandary (another program from the same developers).

Hot Potatoes is very versatile in terms of languages it supports. The software itself is only available in a few languages, but the content of the exercises can be adapted into any language – so all instructions and feedback can be given in the target language.

An example of the resources available from these links is “Video on Demand Resources” from the Ashcombe School, UK:

http://www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk/Curriculum/modlang/spanish/index_sp_video.htm

In mid-2006 this site offered, free of charge, a total of: 35 French Videos, 23 German Videos, 16 Spanish Videos, and 8 Italian Videos. Each video is accompanied by exercises made in Hot Potatoes.

The videos cover topics like: Self, Family & Friends, Leisure/Entertainment, Free Time, Pocket Money, Local Environment, My house and home, Home and Home Life, Daily Routine, Education, School subjects, Travel and Transport, Holidays and Tourism, Food and Drink, Shopping & Services, Healthy Living, Healthy lifestyle, Work, and Career & Plans.

Hot Potatoes also provides an option to export the digital exercise into a paper-based task.

N.B. Hot Potatoes is a freeware program, which means that there is no support from the developers. There are online forums of ‘expert’ users, but there is no guarantee that support will be provided.

Hot Potatoes – JCloze (Cloze Text Creator)

JCloze is a program that will allow you to create fill-in-the-blank exercises. The final exercise can be done online, on an offline computer or even on paper.

Hot Potatoes – JMatch (Matching Words/Pictures Creator)

JMatch is a program that allows you to create a matching exercise. This can be done online or offline, with an option of printable flashcards available.

Hot Potatoes – JQuiz (Quiz Generator)

JQuiz is a program that allows you to create multiple-choice and short answer quizzes. The quizzes can be printed or done on a computer (online or offline).

Hot Potatoes – JCross (Crossword Generator)

JCross is a crossword generator which can be done online or offline. There is also an option for printing.

Hot Potatoes – JMix (Jumbled Word Generator)

JMix is a program that will reorganize a text into a random order. The student can then reword the sentence correctly. This can be done on a computer or it can be printed.

The Language Menu

Another suite of exercises can be found at <http://www.thelanguagemenu.com>. Several of the tools found there can be used for free. There is also a free trial week in case you want to get a feel of the advanced facilities/tools.

Board game generator

Choose between 3 sizes. You can add pictures from the clipart gallery - or write your own texts, questions or grammar exercises - and let your students work on their grammar or vocabulary by playing a game. You can also make up your own flashcard questions with the flashcard generator.

The Bingo-maker has 3 possibilities: make your bingo boards with pictures, mix pictures and words or just use words, and choose your bingo board size according to your own needs. The clipart gallery gives you hundreds of possibilities for this tool. Choose or randomise. Just create, generate a pdf-file and print. With the refresh button you can change the pictures in seconds.

Crossword maker

Create two types of crosswords in no time. Crossword puzzles are an easy way to practise vocabulary. Use the vocabulary from the clipart gallery to create bilingual crosswords in several categories.

Word search

Enter the words you wish to have hidden, with or without clues. The tool creates a worksheet with answers quickly and ready to print. You can also use it with the multilingual clipart gallery.

Fill in the blank

Create your own worksheets or use the database with hundreds of sentences to choose from.

Make your own flashcards

Just add a sentence you wish to have on the flashcard, generate a pdf document and print. For longer lasting material to be reused, laminate the cards. Use this tool to create discussion themes for your class, bilingual word drills or informative cards. You can also choose a picture from the clip-art card gallery, add your own text next to the picture, and print.

Label the pictures

This works with pictures, with or without hints and/or answers. It is perfect for bilingual use as well. Just choose the native language and let the students write the vocabulary in the target language.

Matching exercise generator

Use the generator to create your own worksheets with pictures, add your own text or just a word for your students to match the picture with the text.

Multiple choice

Make your multiple choice worksheet quickly with the worksheet generator. Write your question and give some alternatives, and create a pdf document. It only takes a minute. Use for vocabulary drills, bilingual exercises, explanations, maths, questions and answers worksheets etc.

Missing words

Add text to the missing words generator, choose the interval of the words to be missing, decide on the font-size, print your pdf file and the worksheet is ready to use. Now you have a text with missing words and a small word bank to choose the right word from.

Split words

Split the words in two and let your students put them together, with or without hints. This is an excellent tool for practising prefixes and suffixes, or just to work on vocabulary. Write the word in two parts, add a hint if you wish, and print your pdf file. Easy to make.

Framework

Choose this tool when you want your students to fill in words in the framework, pictures or words chosen from the clipart gallery. Write the words yourself. Can also be used for bilingual students to translate the "hint" words. Choose between the normal setting or black background. You can also print answers.

Scrambled sentences

Write a sentence and print a pdf document. The generator scrambles the sentence and you have a work sheet ready for your students to practise word order with.

Word spiral

The word spiral works in the same way as the crossword, but the program generates the squares in a spiral. You may also create a spiral that has the first and last letter intertwined. A tool for bilingual use as well.

Lined

A tool to make written exercises for your students. Use your own words, choose words or pictures from our clipart gallery and ask your students to explain what these items are used for, how to use them, write a sentence about the word, or add synonyms for the word. Quick and easy for all levels.

To try out these resources, go to: <http://www.thelanguagemenu.com>

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- i <http://www.ecdl.org/index.jsp?p=93&n=94>
 - ii <http://www.ict4lt.org/en/index.htm>
 - iii <http://multidict.net/clilstore/about.html>
 - iv <http://about.babbel.com/en/>
 - v <http://multidict.net/wordlink/about.html>
 - vi <http://multidict.net/multidict/about.html>