COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING
About CALL.

“The search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning” (Levy, 1997)

What is it?
CALL (commonly referred to as TEL: Technology-Enhanced Learning) is not a method of teaching, but a means of utilising technology for language learning.

Why do we need it?
We don’t need a technological approach to language learning. Computers will never replace the teacher. But teachers who use technology will replace teachers who don’t. Technology is all around us and a shift from a traditional teaching approach helps stimulate the students. Students are normally more comfortable with technology than the teacher.
CALL – An Overview

All these areas are referred to in the CALL Manual
Advantages?

- Can possibly have their visual, auditory and kinaesthetic senses stimulated
- Are stimulated by various teaching approaches
- Can be stimulated by many types of media
- Aren't as nervous about making mistakes when using a pseudonym
- Probably don't need to be inducted as they are comfortable with technology already
- Are encouraged to read
- Have no emotional attachment to school computers so should be more pragmatic
- Have a sense of achievement when they observe their ongoing progress
Advantages?

Teachers...

- can use authentic materials much more easily
- can easily encourage collaboration between students
- don’t always need to be on hand and can take a step back
- (long term) can have more free time
- can control what the students are able to access
- can create exercises very quickly
Advantages?

- Can be reused over and over
- Can be used for a wealth of filler tasks
- Use less paper
- Can encourage communication inside and outside of class
- Can be made in a variety of tools catering for different levels of computer users
Advantages?

Some other advantages are...

- ...3G can help the school stay updated when students are on trips
- ...Google and Wikipedia alone are great resources
- ...encourages material sharing between teachers
- ...CALL looks good in a prospectus
Issues with CALL:

- To be able to keep their students under control
- To have a back-up
- Flexibility to deal with changes in the IT world
- Training
- Confidence
- The ability to troubleshoot
- To spend time setting up and maintaining their exercises/systems
Issues with CALL:

- should be able to provide IT support
- could have a problem cross-platforming between PC n Mac
- some systems require a registration fee
- upgrading systems costs money
- should be able to provide a reliable internet connection
- training teachers costs money
- providing systems costs money
- running systems costs money (electricity...etc...)
Issues with CALL:

- ...could potentially cheat
- ...could feel frustrated with 'old' systems in comparison with their own
- ...may feel frustrated with the limited amount of kinaesthetic exercises available
- ...could be easily distracted
- ...may start to avoid peer-to-peer or face-to-face communication
Disadvantages - Summary

As with anything new, there are always some drawbacks. With introducing ICT, the disadvantages can be summed up with 4 words.