Practical Methods of Using the Internet for English Language Learning

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CONTENTS

1. Fundamental Assumptions

The aim of this paper is to show how the author used (and is continuing to use) the computer and, in particular, the Internet's World Wide Web (WWW) to teach language learners to be independent and self-reliant in their efforts to acquire English. The motivating force behind the present project is the firm conviction that for learning to take place, at least one of two conditions must be met: a) The students must see the material that is being taught as somehow relevant to their lives. b) The material must be interesting. In this paper, the educational activities described involving the World Wide Web satisfy both of these criteria.

2. The Students

The English language learners chosen for this study came from two schools: Chuo Gakuin University (forty-nine first-year and thirty second-year law majors) and the Science University of Tokyo (forty-five second-year biological science majors and forty-three second-year information science majors).

3. The Advantages of Computers

The primary tool that was used in this method was, obviously, the computer. Computers have at least two advantages in teaching.

First, they are necessary in the modern world. Therefore, students who have practice using them will be better equipped to perform their jobs in society when they graduate.

The second advantage is that computers are not as threatening to students as teachers sometimes are. Computers do not criticize anyone. Without complaint or reprimand, they allow language learners to play an audio or video clip, for example, as many times as necessary. In other words, students can learn at their own pace, without the pressure of face-to-face confrontation with the teacher.

4. The Teaching Environment

An explanation of the hardware and software environment is in order before a description of the advantages of instructing with the assistance of the World Wide Web. It should be pointed out that most of the research for this report was done at Chuo Gakuin University, although some was carried out at the Science University of Tokyo. The teaching environment described below is that of Chuo Gakuin University.

The author used two rooms (a computer lab and a language lab) for teaching, and his office and a room at home for class preparations. Here is a brief description of the hardware and software.

a) The Computer Lab

Hardware for class use:

(1) Sixty IBM PC720 computers with 100 MHz Pentium processors, 48 MB RAM and 850 MB hard disk drives. The computers were arranged in pairs.
(2) Four Hitachi Typhoon Sixteen printers.
(3) Thirty Matsushita TM-1050V TV display units (one unit between

each pair of computers).

Hardware for the author's use:

(1) One IBM PC720 computer with a 100 MHz Pentium processor, 48 MB RAM and an 850 MB hard disk drive.
(2) One Hitachi Typhoon Sixteen printer.
(3) One Matsushita TM-1050V TV display unit.
(4) One SONY TCK710S audio cassette tape recorder.
(5) One SONY SVO-260 VHS tape recorder.
(6) One ELMO EV-400AF TV camera for displaying classroom materials.

Software for the above computers:

(1) Operating system: Windows NT 4.0 SP3.
(2) Microsoft Office 97 SP1
Included in Microsoft Office were the following components:
(a) A word processing program: Microsoft Word 97.
(b) A spreadsheet program: Microsoft Excel 97.
(3) A World Wide Web browser: Netscape Communicator 4.04.
(4) E-mail software: AIRMAIL 1.7.2.
(5) A keyboard practice program: TYPEQUICK 1.06.

b) The Language Lab

Hardware for class use:

(1) Thirty-six PowerMac 7500/100 computers with 100 MHz PPC

processors, 64 MB RAM and 1.2 GB hard disk drives.

(2) Four Hitachi Typhoon Sixteen printers.

(3) Eighteen Matsushita TM-1050V TV display units (one unit between each pair of computers).

(4) Thirty-six SONY ER-9060 tape recorders with SONY HS-90 headsets.

Hardware for the author's use:

(1) One PowerMac 7500/100 computer with a 100 MHz PPC processor, 64 MB RAM and a 1.2 GB hard disk drive.

(2) (The four Hitachi printers mentioned above were also available for the author's use.)

(3) One Matsushita TM-1050V TV display unit.

(4) A SONY LLC-9000 language laboratory console.

(5) One SONY TC-K710S audio cassette tape recorder.

(6) One SONY SVO-260 VHS tape recorder.

(7) One ELMO EV-400AF TV camera for displaying classroom materials.

Software for the above computers:

(1) Operating system: KanjiTalk 7.5.2 (for Japanese Macintosh computers).

(2) Microsoft Office 4.2.

Included the following components:

(a) A word processing program: Microsoft Word 6.0.

(b) A spreadsheet program: Microsoft Excel 5.0.

(3) A World Wide Web browser: Netscape Navigator 3.05.

(4) E-mail software: AIRMAIL 1.4.15.

(5) A keyboard practice program: Keyboard Master 3.0.

(6) Quick English 2.0: Business Conversation 2.

c) Outside Hardware (This hardware was in various locations and was used for preparing class materials.)

(1) A Fujitsu FMV-5100NC/S laptop computer with a 100 MHz Pentium processor, 16 MB RAM and an 850 MB hard disk drive, with a SONY Multiscan 17GS external monitor.

(2) One PowerMac 7200/120 computer with a 120 MHz PPC processor, 32 MB RAM and a 1 GB hard disk drive.

(3) An Apple Laser Writer Select 300 printer.

Software for the above computers:

(1) Operating systems: Windows 95 for FMV-5100NC/S and KanjiTalk 7.5.2 for PowerMac 7200/120

(2) Microsoft Office 97 for FMV-5100NC/S

Included in Microsoft Office were the following components:

(a) A word processing program: Microsoft Word 97.

(b) A spreadsheet program: Microsoft Excel 97.

Microsoft Office 4.2. for PowerMac 7200/120

Included the following components:

(a) A word processing program: Microsoft Word 6.0.

(b) A spreadsheet program: Microsoft Excel 5.0.

(3) World Wide Web browsers: Netscape Communicator 4.04 for FMV-5100NC/S and Netscape Navigator 3.05 for PowerMac 7200/120.

(4) E-mail software: AIRMAIL 1.7.2 for FMV-5100NC/S and AIRMAIL 1.4.15 for PowerMac 7200/120.

d) Student Equipment

The students were required to bring the following materials to each class:

(1) At least one floppy disk (for downloading Web pages and for practicing typing).
(2) At least one audio cassette tape (for recording audio materials that the author brought to the classroom).
(3) English dictionaries.
(4) Color pencils.

5. The Advantages of the World Wide Web

The Web has a number of advantages over books. First, it offers immediacy: there is current information from official news, business, governmental, scientific and other reliable sources. Databases and a variety of types of search engines keep the user well-informed about virtually any subject. Professionally produced data available online is more current than that in books because the Internet allows the instant updating of facts.

The current, unofficial "raw material" of human interaction is also available on the Internet. We have a direct "hot line" to virtually any aspect of world culture that we choose to explore and participate in. Web browsers now allow us access to many areas of the Internet: newsgroups, lists, chat rooms and even the "real time" talk shows of distant local radio stations. Through these services we can read (and, in some cases, hear) the exact words of individuals

from an enormous variety of backgrounds, interests and geographical area–individuals who, in the past, might not have been able to make their views widely known. And we can direct any of our own thoughts that we wish to any segment of this vast, worldwide audience. Then others will be able to consider what we have to say. We can participate in world society in a way that was undreamed of only a few years ago in what might be called the "age of the book."

The second advantage that the Web offers is variety. Since it is composed of millions of sites, it presents the user with an astonishing range of materials. There is sure to be something that will appeal to any student, no matter what his or her interests or English proficiency level might be.

Another advantage is accessibility. Everything that the Web has to offer is easily accessible. Computer technology enables the user to "hop around the world" like a free spirit.

What can a free Internet spirit find? Just one example is little-known aspects of culture, which can be explored better than by any other method. There is a Web site produced by students in Barrow, Alaska that shows pictures of certain elements of the way of life in that part of the world–vehicles with enormous wheels for driving through mud and the four planes per day that bring in mail and supplies from the "outside world." Or it is possible to read a hometown newspaper from Dundee, Michigan to learn about the fire at the local high school and how the people dealt with it.

Besides showing what is "culturally available," the Internet can keep the user informed about what is commercially available–one online bookstore, for

instance, offers 2.5 million titles for sale. Another has 109 pages with just titles of history books for children.

The Internet is an excellent tool for educational research. The Educational Resources Information Center/Clearinghouse (ERIC) (http://www.aspensys.com/eric/) database is available online and can be accessed from the convenience of the user's home. It is possible to type in keywords and get the names and summaries of articles on specific educational subjects this way, without having to spend hours traveling to libraries to look up the information there.

The World Wide Web is an excellent source not only of printed matter but also of audio materials from major world broadcasting organizations such as the Voice of America (VOA) (http://www.voa.gov/) and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (http://www.bbc.co.uk/), which are typically heard via shortwave radio. However, there are at least two advantages of receiving audio materials via the Internet instead of shortwave radio, which must rely upon the vagaries of ionospheric propagation.

The first advantage is better fidelity. Internet "reception" is usually much better than shortwave reception because there is neither fading nor interference from other stations. There are, admittedly, sometimes breaks in Internet "transmissions" during periods of congestion, but usually the listener will experience local radio station quality if he or she has a good Internet Service Provider.

The second advantage is that with the Internet, the listener can hear broadcast material in either "real time" (the same as on a shortwave radio) or on a

delayed basis. When people listen to shortwave radio, in order to hear a certain program, they must tune in when that program is being transmitted. With the Internet this is possible, too. However, some broadcasting organizations, such as the BBC and VOA, also make it possible to listen any time. For example, the BBC produces a program called "The Lab", which has science news in a format that will appeal to young people. If one tunes in to this program on shortwave, he or she must listen on a certain day of the week at a certain time. Also, the series takes a "break" after a couple of months and then resumes, so it is not possible to hear "The Lab" on shortwave during the break. However, even after a given series of "The Lab" programs ends on shortwave, it is still available on the Internet.

In addition, portions of the Internet are, in effect, "audio newspapers." If parts of a delayed broadcast are uninteresting, they can be skipped. Interesting or difficult material, on the other hand, can be replayed. The skip/replay feature has the advantage of "random access." This is comparable to playing a phonograph record: any part of it can be easily accessed by picking up the arm and placing the needle on any location on the disk. There are no long waits, as with sequential media such as audio and video tapes.

Yesterday USA (http://otr.uwsp.edu/) is another Web site that allows listeners to receive delayed broadcasts (over 2000 of them), and they can all be downloaded by members. (With currently available computer programs, BBC delayed broadcasts cannot be downloaded, although it is possible to record them on tape.) In contrast to the BBC and VOA, Yesterday USA's broadcasts are decades old. Audio materials from a different time period can be studied for cultural comparison.

6. The Introductory Phase

Since many students lacked familiarity not only with various aspects of the English language but also with computer technology, the early part of the author's course was concerned with fundamental skills that acted as stepping-stones to more advanced aspects of the subject. The eight components below were used in this phase.

First, the author dealt with English pronunciation. A small portion of a commercially available CD program[1] was ideal for this purpose. The program showed, in animated form, the movements that the mouth and tongue must make in order to produce various English sounds. Also, the sounds themselves could be heard during the animations. This was more effective than traditional static diagrams.

Second, subsequent to pronunciation practice, students read aloud transcripts from online broadcast news services such as the VOA. The techniques of "shadowing,"[2] and "lip synching"[3] were used here.

Third, students were encouraged to use a typing program[4] to familiarize themselves with the use of the English QWERTY keyboard. The first ten minutes of every class, which in Japan are often unproductive, were set aside for typing practice. Typing is an essential skill for exploring the Internet, as will be explained below.

Fourth, students were taught some fundamental operations of a word processing program: the use of a spelling checker, the word-search function, for-

matting, etc.

Fifth, students were taught the basic mechanics of getting onto the World Wide Web: the keys to push, the operation of a "mouse," the portions of the screen to "click" or "double click" on, etc. Other basic skills included how to "bookmark" a Web page; how to save a file; how to print out a Web page, a saved file, etc.

Sixth, students were introduced to the various types of written materials available on the World Wide Web: news articles, commercial messages from various companies, official government announcements–for example, from the FBI (http://www.fbi.gov/), the White House (http://www.whitehouse.gov/), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (http://www.cdc.gov/), etc. Also, students became acquainted with audio materials from sources such as the Voice of America "News Now" program, the BBC World Service, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) (http://www.radio.cbc.ca/), local English broadcasts from various parts of the world[5] and "Internet only" broadcast services. A greater variety of programming is available over the Internet than from shortwave sources, and, as mentioned in the previous section, Internet broadcasts are not subject to the fading and interference that plague shortwave.

Seventh, in preparation for the eventual reading of news articles from English news sources online, students were first taught how to read English newspapers, with an emphasis on paragraph styles, frequently used words and sentence structures, headline grammar conventions and standard expressions.

Finally, students were taught the difference between newspaper and broad-

cast English. Some topics included sentence and word length, referent repetition, vocabulary and syntactic complexity.

7. Types of Web Sites and Their Use in Teaching

It has been the author's observation that Japanese teachers frequently fail to make an important distinction between two types of Web sites: a) ESL/EFL and b) General.

a) ESL/EFL Sites

The first type includes thousands of sites[6] that have been specifically designed to enable ESL/EFL learners to practice and test their grammatical and other language skills at their own pace. These structured environments allow both students and teachers to monitor progress. They also give students a feeling of accomplishment while at the same time serving as an introduction to the broader variety of general sites that will be encountered at the next stage of Internet language learning development.

ESL/EFL sites can be further subdivided. Some are devoted to exercises and others to reference. Concerning the exercise variety, the teacher should keep in mind that there are various levels of difficulty as well as the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and grammar to choose from. In the early stages easy material should be introduced first, and more advanced material later. Also, the skill to be developed will determine which kind of site is to be used. To accomplish this, it is necessary for the teacher to be familiar with the contents of a given site before presenting it to the class. One useful characteristic of learning sites is that directions are often included, thus relieving the teacher of the need to make his or her own directions.

ESL/EFL Web sites are sometimes interactive, which makes them quite popular with students. (See Appendix 1 for an example.)

Concerning the reference variety of ESL/EFL sites, the teacher can choose from those that specialize in grammar, writing style, idiom lists, phrasal verb lists (see Appendix 2 for an example) and a plethora of other categories. He or she can either explain how to use the contents or just introduce them.

For both exercise and reference sites, students can save their files and print out material that they or their teachers find useful.

b) General Sites

The general variety of Web sites, although not intended for ESL/EFL learning, can be effective for this purpose. Unfortunately, material that is designed for teaching is often boring, but the "real world" material found on general sites is often quite interesting. It has more relevance to students' lives, and they know it. The language one encounters on non-teaching Web sites is real world, "valid" language. It is not simplified "textbook" English. Therefore, using general Web sites represents an improvement over traditional methods of teaching, which concentrate on language usage that often tends to be relatively artificial.

The author's method of using general Web sites also has the advantage of allowing students to absorb real, natural language at their own pace. If students were to be suddenly immersed in an environment where only English was spoken, they might be overwhelmed. However, real-life language in a controlled environment will expose learners to language they will really encounter without causing them insurmountable difficulties.

The author suggests nine methods for using general sites for teaching.

(1) The teacher records and transcribes material from the Internet. Subsequently, he or she prepares exercises, such as cloze passages, student- and teacher-directed dictation, and reading aloud. One example is traffic reports. (See Appendix 3 for examples.)

(2) This suggestion applies to the VOA Web site. The site provides transcripts of some VOA news broadcasts, but the transcripts are entirely in capital letters. Students are first told to listen to a tape of a specific VOA news broadcast. They may take the tape home. Later, in class, they are given the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) of VOA, and beginners are also provided with additional instructions for navigating to the Web page with the all-capitals transcripts. (More advanced learners must find the page on their own.) The students must use a word processor to retype the entire news broadcast, word for word, using capital and lower case letters where appropriate. After they have finished, they must check their typing with the word processor's spell checker. Finally, they must print out their work and submit it to the teacher.

(3) Students are provided with a tape of a single news item from a broadcast by a major news organization, such as the VOA, that can be heard on the Internet. Then they are required to find a similar news item, in written form, from another news service on the Internet, for example, CNN (http://www.cnn.com/). The wording from these two sources will not be the same, although the ideas will be. After getting the same information through two physical senses (the eye and the ear) and from two different news sources, students write a report, in their own words, on what they heard and read. Instead of giving written reports, selected students might give their reports

orally, thus getting speaking practice. This multiple-sensory, multiple-form method is a new and innovative approach to language learning. It gives students practice in seeing how the same ideas can be expressed in different ways. Both native-speaking and Japanese teachers can use the method in their classes. Web sites that had previously been "bookmarked" on the students' browsers can be used.

(4) Students are given certain common expressions that often appear in news broadcasts. Some examples would be (a) "on the Richter scale" for an earthquake report, (b) "on suspicion of," "attempted murder" or "attempted fraud" for a crime report, (c) "allegedly" for various types of negative news items, (d) "reportedly" for news items whose authenticity has not been completely verified, and (e) "today's high/low" for weather reports. Students then must search various Web sites where the news is presented in printed form and save an appropriate news item in a file on their word processor. Next, the file is printed out. (This is called a "hard copy.") Then, using the "search" function of their word processors, the students must find examples of the given expressions and circle them with a colored pencil on their hard copies. Thus, they can see for themselves how the expressions are used by a variety of different news sources. They can easily discover the proper collocations of the expressions. (And the colored pencil markings make it easy for the teacher to check how well the students are doing.) This independent research technique helps solidify common news expressions in the learners' minds.

(5) To avoid the monotony and narrowness of subject matter that sometimes results from over-coverage of a given news event, the author, from time to time, has his students search sites that have archived news. An example of a Japanese site with archived news is *Sankei Shimbun*

(http://www.sankei.co.jp); a corresponding English site is *The Japan Times* (http://www.japantimes.co.jp). The students must look at the same news item in both Japanese and English and compare frequently occurring expressions. Then they must use their word processors to make a word/phrase list to show their findings. Examples of expressions they might find in business-related news are (a) *sokaiya*, which is "corporate racketeer" in English, and (b) *bogai-saimu*, or "off-the-book debts." An example from soccer is *kohan gofun ni*, or "in the fiftieth minute" in English. It should be noted that beginning students are told exactly where and how to find news articles for the appropriate date on the appropriate Web sites, but more advanced students are simply given the date and the name of the Web site to search. They must then find the articles themselves. This gives them additional practice not only in applying Internet search techniques but also in reading English.

(6) The author has also experimented with a new application of "push" technology. (With push technology, the user does not have to search for information. Instead it is provided automatically.) Students get information from the CNN "Quick News" service, which sends news items to recipients' e-mail addresses. Students must then compare the CNN news items with those that occur in Japanese sources such as newspapers, radio and television. Students study which events are reported only in Japanese sources, which are reported only in English sources and which occur in both. Also, students are told to observe the way that news is covered. This exercise helps point out some differences between Western and Japanese culture.

(7) Students search any Japanese or English language news Web sites they wish and read only the first "page" of these sites. The object is to build up a collection of people who appear frequently in the news. From this collection a

"Who's Who" database can be produced. Students fill in information on a standard form provided by the teacher. The form includes items such as the person's name, nationality and reason for his frequent occurrence in the news. By using this teaching method, the author is able to familiarize students with famous personalities and current news topics. Students are given a few weeks to complete their "Who's Who" assignment.

(8) The Internet is also a potentially valuable research tool. For example, teachers could have students do independent research by logging onto a Web site that is advertising something for sale, such as apartments, houses, or cars. The students could then be instructed to look up houses in various locations, make comparisons and tell which seem most desirable and why.

It would also be possible to include, in this activity, Web sites that give cultural or geographic information or demographic data such as crime rate, quality of schools and medical facilities. Other research possibilities include nature sites that could be investigated. Students could report about the lives of various kinds of animals. For example, if a teacher were teaching zoology, he or she could have students connect to the Web site of the San Diego Zoo (http://www.sandiegozoo.org/) or the *National Geographic* (http://www.na8tionalgeographic.com/) magazine. If these choices were too difficult, the teacher could have his or her class try a children's Web site related to animals. For astronomy, the teacher could connect to one of the numerous Web sites that show pictures of planets, galaxies and other types of astronomical phenomena. For business, it would be possible to connect to Web sites that give stock market reports,[8] show apartments or cars for sale, or give information on business theory.

Classes could do serious research projects or more lighthearted ones. For example, one "fun" project might ask the students to tell which animal they would rather be, a monkey or a cheetah, and why. Where would they like to live, in the jungle or in the desert? What planet would they like to go to? What are the conditions on various planets? The Internet could tell them all these things. Students could be assigned research topics on just about any subject, and they would emerge from the course with a feeling of self-confidence: they would believe that they could go out into the world and find their own answers to difficult questions.

(9) There are also possibilities for class activities. The teacher could print pictures of wanted criminals from the FBI Web site. One group could be asked to describe a picture to a second group, and the members of the second group could try to guess which picture was being described. Another idea would be to see how well students could solve simulated "real-life" problems. For example, learners could be shown how to answer a question using a search engine–either Yahoo! (http://www.yahoo.com/) for Web sites or DejaNews[(9)] (http://www.dejanews.com/) for actual-language newsgroups. Then the students could be given a problem and told to do their own Internet research on how to find the answer. They could write a report on their findings. A comparison could be made between how quickly and effectively two groups of students found the answer(s) to the same research question. One group could use traditional search methods (in libraries, for example) and the other group could use computers and the techniques taught in this course.

8. Grade Determination

In his Internet courses, the author evaluated students in a number of ways.

Attendance, of course, was important. Missing more than one-third of the classes resulted in failure. A paper test was given at the end of the term. Students were also judged on their attitude. This included attentiveness; posture; and the willingness to obey instructions, do the required work, participate actively in activities, read aloud and work with others. Students had to gather the required information and submit assignments on time (for example the "Who's Who" assignment).

9. Student Evaluation of the Course

At the end of the term, students in the current study were given a blank sheet of paper and requested to write an evaluation of the course. Out of forty-nine law majors in the author's first-year classes at Chuo Gakuin University, ninety-eight percent said they liked the course. Ninety-four percent of thirty law majors in a second-year class at the same university expressed approval. At the Science University of Tokyo, ninety-one percent of forty-five second-year biological science majors had positive comments, as did ninety-three percent of forty-three information science majors.

Students who commented positively about the course said that they enjoyed using the computers and learning English at their own pace. They felt that being exposed to current news and information in a constantly shrinking world broadened their horizons–especially their interest in domestic and overseas matters. They became accustomed to investigating things actively instead of passively receiving materials and memorizing them. They felt that hearing the sounds of English was important, and seeing color pictures stimulated their interest. They enjoyed learning English while acquiring the ability to type, learning more about the world and becoming familiar with computers.

As for negative comments, out of forty-nine students in the author's first-year class at Chuo Gakuin University, two percent said they did not like the course. Six percent of thirty students in a second-year class at the same university expressed disapproval. At the Science University of Tokyo, nine percent of forty-five second-year biological science majors had negative comments, as did seven percent of forty-three information science majors.

Students who had negative comments said that there was too much material to absorb, and they couldn't digest it all. Some complained that it was difficult to get onto the Internet because of their lack of familiarity with computers. There were also complaints that in a computer laboratory, unlike in a traditional classroom, the computer came between the teacher and the student, thus inhibiting meaningful interpersonal communication. The author has been aware of this last problem for some time, and he has attempted to compensate by conducting classes occasionally in a traditional classroom setting, using a room where no computers are present.

10. Problems with Using the World Wide Web

If your school doesn't have an Internet connection, it will be difficult, although not impossible, to use the World Wide Web in your classes. (It would be possible to purchase programs such as WebWhacker (http://www.bluesquirrel.com/), WebEx (http://www.cnet.com/) or Web Buddy (http://www.dataviz.com/) to download Web sites for off-line browsing by students. However, online searches cannot be done if the user is off-line, and certain special types of Web pages cannot be downloaded. Also, with downloaded sites, students are obviously limited to browsing only the sites that have been downloaded.)

If the Internet connection is poor, students will have to wait a long time for a Web page to be displayed on their screen. Also, the server might be down (unavailable) temporarily, just when the teacher wants to use it for a class demonstration. This is why people sometimes refer to the World Wide Web as the "World Wide Wait."

There are some Web sites that may contain obscene, racist or other types of objectionable material.

Some Web sites might contain viruses. However, it is possible to take precautions. Programs exist that will check files, as they are downloaded, to be sure there is no virus contamination.

It is not necessary to worry too much about repetitive injury syndrome with the World Wide Web because a mouse instead of a keyboard is usually used.

Glare from computer screens can be reduced with special filters.

It is not certain how harmful radiation from computers is. Some people question how much of a danger exists, but "the jury is still out" on this issue. Certain types of monitors are less dangerous than others. LCD displays apparently produce less low frequency radiation than cathode ray monitors.

There are reports of Internet addict disorder (IAD). Psychologists treat people who have this problem.

11. Conclusion

The author has had considerable success to date in using the Internet to motivate and instruct his students. This success points to the Internet as a vast and largely untapped potential for developing the creativity and encouraging the interest of students. The potential can be realized once the methods outlined in this paper have been integrated into language curricula. At that point, students who are not satisfied with still widely used grammar translation and teacher control methods will feel encouraged and will embark on their own independent research.

With the World Wide Web, the language learning process will be more satisfying for the teacher, too. The author derives great satisfaction from seeing students progress during a course. In the beginning some of them are unable to operate computers at all, but by the conclusion their technical proficiency and independence have advanced to the point where they can improve their language ability through self-directed study, following paths that interest them. It is the author's sincere hope that his methods will benefit many teachers in the future and will make a meaningful contribution to English language education.

Notes

(1) I. N. S., *Quick English, Ver. 2.0: Business Conversation 2* (Tokyo: I. N. S., 1994)

(2) Shadowing means that students repeat every word that they hear on the demonstration tape and optionally record what they think they heard.

(3) Lip synching is the author's terminology. It means that the student moves his or her lips in imitation of the sounds that he or she hears on the demonstration tape.

(4) TYPEQUICK PTY. LTD., *TYPEQUICK* 1.06 (for IBM PC720 computers) (Tokyo:

Japan Data Pcidfic, 1995)/PLATO Corp., *Keyboard Master* Ver. 3 (for PowerMac 7500/100 computers) (Tokyo: PLATO Corp., 1995)

(5) http://www.audionet.com/radio/News/WWNZ/ (WWNZ 740AM, Orlando, Florida, U.S.A.)
http://www.broadcast.com/radio/talk/klif/ (KLIF 570AM, Dallas, Texas, U.S.A.)
http://cfrb.istar.ca/ (CFRB 1010AM, Toronto, Canada)

(6) http://www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/eslcafe.html (Dave Sperling, U.S.A.)
http://www1.kaplan.com/view/zine/0,1282,511,00.html (Kaplan Educational Centers, U.S.A.)
http://www.u-net.com/eflweb (Intec Publishing Ltd, U.K.)
http://vweb1.hiway.co.uk/ei/intro.html (The English Institute, U.K.)
http://www.ilcgroup.com/interactive/ (International Language Centres Group International House, England)

(7) http://www.yomiuri.co.jp (*Yomiuri Shimbun*)
http://www.asahi.com (*Asahi Shimbun*)
http://www.usatoday.com/ (*USA TODAY*)
http:// http://www.iht.com/ (*The International Herald Tribune*)
http://www.nytimes.com/ (*The New York Times*)

(8) http://www.bloomberg.com/ (*Bloomberg*)

(9) DejaNews is an Internet service that searches for words and expressions from newsgroup communications that occurred within three years of the date of the user query.

Appendix 1:

http://www.ilcgroup.com/cgi-bin/ilc/interact.pl?01

Interactive English Language Exercises
A pilot development from International House – ILC Group

HOME

IH Hastings General Executive Teachers | Vacation Centres | Books | Newsflash

Exercise 1 Grammar, Vocabulary and Idioms Mixed Levels

Your First Name/s: [ ] No accents please

Instructions: Complete each of the 10 sentences with a suitable word or selection. In text boxes, type just ONE word. Use capital letters only where appropriate. Each correct answer gets 10 points. Can you score 100%?

1. George Washington [ ] the first President of the United States.

2. He said I looked tired and asked me if I ○ did ○ would ○ will like to sit down.

3. My grandfather will be a hundred next year. He was ○ born ○ dead ○ married in 1898.

4. You can't see the garden from the street because it's ○ in front of ○ under ○ behind the house.

5. I've spent all my money. I can't buy ○ no more ○ anything ○ nothing else.

6. He went out in the rain and [ ] a nasty cold.

7. They lent him $8 and he's paid back half. So now he ○ must ○ needs ○ owes them $4.

8. My doctor says I [ ] smoke. It's bad for the health.

9. Her boyfriend left her, but she soon got ○ over ○ past ○ round it.

10. The best thing for a hangover is to go to bed and sleep it ○ away ○ off ○ over

Submit your answers | Clear all answers

Exercise content by Webmaster, International House, Hastings. Apr 5, 1996

Teachers of English: If you would like to write an exercise and have it published here, please e-mail the text to ilc webmasters

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Appendix 2:

http://www.eslcafe.com/pv/pv-a.html

Dave Sperling Presents....

Dennis Oliver's Phrasal Verbs: A

B ▼ Take Me There!

act up (no object): misbehave (for people); not work properly (for machines).

"The babysitter had a difficult time. The children**acted up** all evening."

"I guess I'd better take my car to the garage. It's been**acting up** lately."

◆ ◆ ◆

act like (inseparable): behave in a way that's like ___ .

"What's wrong with Bob? He's **acting like** an idiot."

Note: This phrasal verb is very informal.

◆ ◆ ◆

add up (1. no object): logically fit together.

"His theory is hard to believe, but his research**adds up**."

Note: This phrasal verb is often negative.

"His theory seems, at first, to be plausible, but the facts in his research don't **add up**."

◆ ◆ ◆

add up (2. separable): find the total.

"What's the total of those bills? Could you**add** them **up** and see?"

◆ ◆ ◆

add up to (inseparable): to total.

"The bills **add up to** $734.96. That's more than I expected!"

◆ ◆ ◆

ask out (separable): ask for a date.

"Nancy has a new boy friend. Joe **asked** her **out** last night."

Appendix 3: This appendix contains two traffic reports given on Oct. 11, 1998 on radio station WOR, located in New York City. The URL of WOR is 〈http://www.broadcast.com/radio/Talk/WOR/〉. The date of the reports is later than the date of the end of the present study. However, the author is including them because they are good examples of the type of material that is available on the Internet and that can be easily modified.

The first WOR (New York City) traffic report:

280 West, an accident, middle lane just before the Garden State Parkway. Squeeze left and right. Some rubbernecking delays eastbound. The good thing about your trip on 280 this morning once you reach the turnpike, you're in pretty good shape: very minor delays Hudson and East River crossings, and your trip downtown good–FDR Drive, Westside Highway. Look out on 1 and 9: truck accident causing delays each way at Seacaucus Road.

Explanation of the first report:

[On Route] 280 West, [there is] an accident [in the], middle lane just before the Garden State Parkway. [You'll have to] squeeze left and right [to get by the accident]. Some rubbernecking [looking about, staring, or listening with exaggerated curiosity] delays eastbound. The good thing about your trip on 280 this morning [is that] once you reach the turnpike, you're in pretty good shape: [there are] very minor delays [at the] Hudson and East River crossings, and your trip downtown [is] good–[for example,] FDR Drive [and], Westside Highway [are good]. Look out on 1 and 9: [because a] truck accident [is] causing delays each way at Seacaucus Road.

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The second WOR (New York City) traffic report:

Connecticut into Westchester good. Very light along the east side and the west side, and 16A and 16W look in good shape, and moderate and steady traffic in Brooklyn, but all lanes are open.

*****

Cloze quiz for the first report:

280 West, an _____, middle lane just before the Garden State Parkway. Squeeze left and _____. Some rubbernecking delays eastbound. The good thing about your ____ on 280 this morning once you reach the turnpike, you're in pretty good _____: very minor delays Hudson and East River crossings, and your trip _____ good–FDR Drive, Westside Highway. Look ___ on 1 and 9: truck accident causing _____ each way at Seacaucus Road.

Cloze quiz for the second report:

Connecticut into Westchester good. Very _____ along the east side and the west side, and 16A and 16W look in good _____, and moderate and steady _____ in Brooklyn, but all lanes are open.

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