

ReCALL

Newsletter

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CTI Services in 1999

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At the beginning of the year, CTICML and CILT initiated a consultation process with the languages discipline, in order to prepare the ground for a proposal for a new Subject Centre for Languages. The new subject centres will have a wider remit than that of the CTI Centres, though we believe the discipline will recognise the importance of communications and information technology (C&IT) in the learning and teaching of languages in the next millennium. The expected timetable is:

- Early March: call for proposals issued by HEFCE
- Early May: deadline for proposals
- August: announcement of new subject centres
- January 2000: new subject centres in operation

In the meantime, it will be 'business as usual' at CTICML, with Newsletters planned in June and November, another series of Open Days (see page 15 for dates), and the continued maintenance of information services on the CTICML website at <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/>

CTICML staff will continue to carry out campus visits and workshops in response to requests from Departments or Language Centres. In the current academic year we have visited Essex, Exeter, the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (Glasgow), Dundee, Teesside, Brighton and Birmingham, with Cardiff and Newport booked for early May. If you are interested in an event at your campus, please contact Jenny Parsons at the address above for details of what a CTICML visit can provide.

Copy deadline for next issue: 31 May 1999

FDTL Update . . .

FDTL Languages National Conference

The FDTL Languages National Conference **An Agenda for Change** will be held at Leeds Metropolitan University on May 7-8. All ten FDTL languages projects and one TLTP3 project will be represented at the event. Attendees will have the opportunity to find out more, first hand, about the findings and achievements of the projects to date and to discover and discuss how these may positively affect teaching and learning practice within their own institutions. The conference will commence with a keynote address from Bahram Bekhradnia, HEFCE's Director of Policy.

ALLADIN - the TLTP3 project at the conference, recently joined the Co-ordinating Group for Languages (CGL), formed last year by all 10 FDTL languages projects in conjunction with CILT. Officially launched in November 1998, ALLADIN focuses on the learning of languages for students on art, design and media courses within higher education institutions. From the outset the project has gained the attention and backing of some notable creative professionals - such as Susanne Tide-Frater, Director of Fashion at Selfridges - who have an understanding of and commitment to the value of languages within the workplace.

All the languages projects are dedicated to maximising the opportunities for the dissemination and embedding of good teaching practice within the sector. They are achieving this through a variety of means, including:

- running workshops;
- arranging meetings;
- visiting institutions;
- publishing booklets and reports;
- developing Web-based resources and e-mail fora;
- filming videos and writing materials;

- networking between projects and institutions throughout the UK.

Workshops, regional meetings and visits to institutions have been an important element of the dissemination process. Collectively, the projects have organised and run the following events to date:

- 76 local/internal workshops;
- 31 regional workshops and one conference;
- 79 institutional visits.

Some of these have been collaborative ventures between languages projects, such as the regional workshops and meetings involving **CIEL**, **TransLang**, **SMILE** and **ALLADIN**. The four Residence Abroad Matters (RAM) regional workshops, attended by 140 delegates, were jointly organised by the three residence abroad projects, **LARA**, **Interculture**, and **Residence Abroad**. The LARA and Residence Abroad projects have also worked closely in developing the *National Residence Abroad Database*, an on-line Web-based resource. The **DOPLA** project organised a conference attended by participants from 31 institutions.

Publications, such as **WELL**'s information booklet *Web Skills for Language Learning* and TransLang's *Survey of non-specialist language provision in further and higher education institutions in the UK* have been in great demand. The **DEVELOP** project is presently in the process of fine tuning its video and supporting materials.

The project led by the University of Ulster, **Effective Practices in Assessment in the Modern Languages: a German Perspective**, has been exchanging experience with TransLang on the assessment of transferable skills.

The FDTL languages projects recognise that the data they have gathered so far and analysed could be of enormous value to those undertaking research. Through the CGL, a summary of this data has now been collated and a report will be presented and distributed at the conference *An Agenda for Change* on May 7-8. The report highlights the areas that each project has investigated and addresses the shortfall in empirical data in language

teaching in higher education, particularly relating to:

- the mode of delivery of language teaching;
- who is carrying out the teaching;
- what facilities and training are available to both teachers and learners;
- the structure and management of different aspects of language teaching and learning in different institutions.

If you would like further information about the FDTL and ALLADIN languages projects, and/or about the conference *An Agenda for Change*, please contact: Paul Davey, FDTL and ALLADIN Information Unit, CILT. Tel: 0171 379 5101. Fax: 0171 379 5082. E-mail: paul.davey@cilt.org.uk. Links to all the project Web sites can be accessed via URL: <http://lang.fdtl.ac.uk>

FDTL Projects News

ALLADIN

Joint CIEL/ALLADIN workshop: Using New Technologies for Language Teaching, 22 May 1999, University of Southampton. *Communication and Information Technologies for Language Learning*. The workshop focuses on the use of computer-based environments for the independent language learner, including video-conferencing, tandem email, internet resources and language authoring programmes, with lots of opportunities for hands-on sessions.

CEIL

Joint CIEL/ALLADIN workshop: See above.
CIEL 3rd round of regional meetings: 28 May 1999, University of Southampton; 4 June 1999, Leeds Metropolitan University; 11 June 1999, South Bank University, London, *Assessment and Independent Language Learning*: How can we evaluate effective independent learning; how does independent learning fit into the assessment process and QA structure, and what is the role of self-assessment?

DOPLA

The DOPLA project is offering £500 to institutions setting up new teacher-training programmes for foreign language assistants, postgraduate teaching assistants and other part-time staff over the next academic year.

Workshops: 22 March 1999, Leeds; 17 May 1999, Manchester. There will be the opportunity to talk to some of our consortium members and to work with other institutions that have introduced training programmes following the DOPLA approach. The DOPLA project will contribute £25 towards your travel costs.

Further information: Penny Gravestock, tel 0121 414 7978, email kingpm@m4-arts.bham.ac.uk

RESIDENCE ABROAD PROJECT

The project's aim is to define, describe, disseminate and promote best practice with regard to every aspect of student residence abroad. The project website - RAPPORT (Residence Abroad @ Portsmouth - <http://www.hum.port.ac.uk/slas/fdtl>) is being developed to offer detailed guidance to both university staff and individual students.

Videoconferencing: The project is using videoconferencing in two ways. The consortium recently held a meeting using multipoint ISDN-based videoconference through the UKERNA bridge in Edinburgh. Holding the two-hour meeting in this way saved several person-days of working time, as well as travel and subsistence costs. A full evaluation is underway. A different approach is being tested for the 'virtual visit'. Given the demands in time and resources of visiting students abroad, and the increasing use of email to keep in touch, the Residence Abroad project is evaluating how far internet-based videoconferencing can accomplish the same objectives as a visit. As well as liaison between staff in home and host universities, videoconferencing will embrace staff-student and student-student interactions. Following an evaluation of the technology decisions have been made on hardware and software and analysis of the interactions should be completed by summer 1999.

SMILE

Language Learning Advisers' Forum, 27 April 1999, University of Manchester. A gathering of UK HE language learning advisers which will provide an opportunity to share experiences, swap information, air problems and discuss the possibility of a series of regular events on specific practical and theoretical issues.

Further information: Marina Mozzon-McPherson, tel 01482 465852, fax 01482 466180, email m.mozzon-mcpherson@selc@hull.ac.uk

TRANSLANG

Publications: The Survey of Non-Specialist Language Provision in Further and Higher Education Institutions in the UK 1997 Price £7.50 + P&P

Workshops: Northern Ireland: 23 March 1999 at Queen's Belfast; Scotland: 16 April 199 at Abertay Dundee; three regional workshops in 1999/2000: North East of England, Central England & Wales, Southern England.

Website: <http://www.uclan.ac.uk/facs/class/languages/translang/tlweb>

WELL

Workshops: 24 planned this semester, with dates fixed for 16. Contact the project if you are interested in hosting a free WELL workshop to provide an introduction for staff in your institution on using the Web in teaching.

Case Studies: WELL is collecting case studies of how telematics has been used for teaching and learning of Languages, and has funds available to support new initiatives to encourage uptake of new technologies by the relatively inexperienced. Full details are available on the WELL website.

Website: <http://www.well.ac.uk> has been re-designed and the database of links to language resources for the major languages of study in the UK is growing. The Who's Who contains links to all UK HE language Departments, Schools and Centres.

Copyright Issues

Teachers preparing their own materials for web-based delivery, or who use authentic materials from the web for teaching purposes, may be interested in the information on copyright provided by two of the FDTL languages projects, CIEL and WELL.

- Educational Copyright in the context of language teaching and the provision of independent language learning materials

<http://ciel.lang.soton.ac.uk/copyright.html>

- Copyright relating to Web- and Internet-based materials

<http://www.well.ac.uk/teacher/wellclas/copyright.htm>

ICT4LT

The new EC funded project outlined in the last ReCALL Newsletter, which will be delivering a WWW-based course in Information and Communications Technology for Language Teachers, is developing its website at the following address:

<http://www.ict4lt.org/>

Further information about the project, a course outline and a list of modules are currently available on the site.

CALICO On-Line Resource Guide

<http://calico3.modlang.swt.edu>

The CALICO On-Line Resource Guide contains a searchable 2,700 item bibliography (which grows weekly) and the beginnings of a searchable People and Services section. The Guide will also eventually include a section on CALL educational programs.

Conference Proceedings

Selected papers from EUROCALL 98, held in Leuven, Belgium, will be published as a special double issue of the *ReCALL* journal in May 1999. All UK higher education institutions receive *ReCALL* through their library. If you would like *ReCALL* delivered to your department or language centre, this can be arranged through corporate membership of EUROCALL. Full details on the EUROCALL website at <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/eurocall.htm>

EUROCALL 99

This will be at Université de Franche-Comté, Besançon, France, 15-18 September. The main theme is 'Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in diverse language learning environments'. Full information is at <http://eurocall99.univ-fcomte.fr/>

National / regional representatives

Local EUROCALL activities are being encouraged through the establishment of a list of national or regional representatives. The current list is on the EUROCALL website.

Research

EUROCALL is promoting the importance of research into CALL and TELL via an initial research colloquium to be held at the University of Essen, Germany on 30 April 1999. A number of experts in the field have been invited to consider various key questions, and a report of the proceedings will be published in due course.

Northern Media Research Group Day Conference 6 Newcastle upon Tyne Saturday 24 April 1999, 10.30-16.30

A sixth NMRG day conference is planned in Newcastle on 24 April 1999. Subsidy from the French Embassy Cultural Services will ensure the presence of a speaker from France. For details of the programme and venue please see the website located at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/sml/NMRG/>

Information: h.d.dauncey@ncl.ac.uk, g.e.hare@ncl.ac.uk, Sheila.Perry@unn.ac.uk, or by post: School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU

CALL in Higher Education: Case Study

Continuing the series of Case Studies printed in the *ReCALL* Newsletter over the past two years, we have published on the web a follow-up to one of the first Case Studies published in *ReCALL* Newsletter Number 11, June 1997, from Bristol University.

John Parkin has now provided a detailed update entitled *The co-ordination and integration of IT and degree-level French*, which can be found at

<http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/pubs/newsletter/bristol.htm>

Language Learning & Technology : online journal

Editors: Lucinda Hart-Gonzalez & Mark Warschauer

Vol 2, No 2 January 1999

This issue contains four Feature Articles plus Commentary, Columns, On the Net, Emerging Technologies, Announcements, Reviews and Call for Papers on the theme: Literacies and Technologies, all at <http://polyglot.cal.msu.edu/llt/>

TELL Consortium materials for French, German, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese were developed for UK HE Institutions with funding from the UK HE funding bodies. The special low prices for UK HE will be maintained during 1999, and if your institution has not yet explored what the TELL Consortium has to offer, please contact Jenny Parsons on 01482 465872, email j.a.parsons, or explore the website at <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/tell.htm> where you will find descriptions, screenshots and details of how the materials may be viewed.

REAL: Reading and Listening Strategies

REAL Reading for Swedish

The *REAL Reading for Swedish* package is now completed and is available free of charge to anyone who is interested in using the program. It consists of 6 authentic Swedish texts which users can explore and undertake activities in Predict, Skim, Scan, Search and Link modes, supported by glossaries, model responses to questions and a student notebook in which work can be saved.

To receive details of how to download the package from the web, please email tell-support@langc.hull.ac.uk, giving your contact details, and name of your institution where appropriate.

REAL Reading for Dutch

This package has been available since last autumn, and contains 10 authentic texts which can be explored as described for *REAL Reading in Swedish* above. The program is available free of charge,

and details can be obtained from tell-support@langc.hull.ac.uk.

Forthcoming REAL packages include

- *REAL Reading in Greek*
- *REAL English for Business and Management*
- *REAL English for Social Scientists*

Further information is available on the web site at <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/real/>

Student Licences for GramEx and GramDef

The TELL Consortium has introduced a new scheme for allowing HE institutions which have purchased *GramEx* or *GramDef* programs to provide copies to students at low cost.

The scheme involves an extension to the existing licence, to allow institutions to make copies of the program and sell them on to students.

The minimum licence extension allows an institution to make 10 copies of the program. The cost to the institution for this licence extension is 75 pounds (plus VAT). The institution will then be able to sell 10 copies of the program on to students at cost (7.50 plus VAT plus, if desired, an amount to cover the cost of the disk, and any other related costs e.g. photocopy of manual if provided).

Licence extensions to provide greater numbers of copies will be provided at a lower unit cost.

The licence extension can be arranged such that it does not distinguish between *GramEx* and *GramDef*, or between the various language versions of the two programs. This would allow an institution to purchase, for example, 100 licences at a cheaper unit cost (recoupable from students) and sell a mixture of *GramEx* (French, German, Italian & Spanish) & *GramDef* (French & German) provided no more than a total of 100 copies in all was sold.

Please contact tell-support@langc.hull.ac.uk if you are interested in this scheme.

GramDef and GramEx English

English versions of *GramDef* and *GramEx* have been produced, and can be used to support EFL/ESL learners OR native speakers of English who want to consolidate their grammar to enhance their language learning.

GramDef English is available now, price 40 pounds plus VAT for a single copy or 80 pounds plus VAT for a site licence. *GramEx English* will be available shortly, at similar prices.

TELL Consortium Summative Evaluation

Case studies of the use of *GramEx*, *Encounters* and *TransIt-TIGER* in UK HE institutions are presented in detail in the TELL Summative Evaluation Report. The full report is downloadable from the web at <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/eval.htm>. Printed copies of the main report are also available, at a small charge. Please email tell-support@langc.hull.ac.uk if you wish to receive a printed copy.

GramEx French Upgrade

An upgrade of *GramEx French* is in preparation, and the consortium would be pleased to hear of any suspected bugs, content errors or inconsistencies in the program, so these can be rectified. We are particularly interested in feedback about the **Guide des Temps des Verbes** section, where problems have been reported under some circumstances.

Please contact Jenny Parsons on 01482 465872 or j.a.parsons@selc.hull.ac.uk if you have anything to report. The upgrade will be made available free of charge by ftp.

CTI Website redesign

<http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti>

Just before Kylie Baxter left us at Christmas, she finished her work on a completely redesigned website for the CTI Centre for Modern Languages. The growing amount of information held on the site has been reclassified and the navigation simplified. As the site is often accessed by overseas users, and individuals using modems, the aim has been to keep the graphics to a minimum so that the pages can be accessed quickly.

The main categories on the site are **Events**, **Publications**, **Resources** and **Services**. The Resources section in particular has been expanded, and now includes: *Acronym Guide*, *Bibliography*, *Discussion Lists*, *Events Calendar*, *Postgraduate Courses*, *Software Database*, *Software Reviews* and the popular *Internet Resources for Language Teachers and Learners*.

CTI primers

The first twelve CTI primers on the use of C&IT in learning and teaching are now available. They have been written to help academics understand the new technologies available and integrate them effectively into their courses, with the emphasis on active and student-centred learning. They can be downloaded as PDF files and printed off or used online as a gateway to further resources. See <http://www.cti.ac.uk/publ/primers/>

List of titles:

General introduction: using C&IT for learning and teaching
Finding appropriate CAL materials
Embedding CAL into courses
Computer assisted assessment
Presentations and lectures
Searching for materials on the Web
Teaching and learning with the Web
Authoring for the Web
Computer mediated communication: email
Computer mediated communication: Web conferencing
Simulation
Modelling for students

Book Reviews

Virtual Language Learning: Finding the Gems Amongst the Pebbles

Uschi Felix

Language Australia Ltd, Melbourne, VIC 3001
1998, ISBN 1 875578 88 9, Price: 35 Australian
Dollars

In this new book, Uschi Felix provides a thought-provoking overview of how the Web can be used as a resource in language learning. The book's intended audience is:

- Teachers who wish to integrate interesting sites and ideas into their curriculum;
- Anyone who wishes to refresh or improve a language or get a feel for a new one in the comfort of their own home;
- Teachers who are toying with the idea of developing their own courses or materials on the Web;
- People who wish to learn more about approaches to language teaching, and in general to delivering courses, on the Web.

Some readers, whether they are learners or teachers, may find an existing resource in the book which they can immediately incorporate in their teaching or learning. However, the book's primary value is as a means of providing good examples for the curious teacher who may then be inspired to explore the Web in more detail. The book will also serve as a source of ideas for those wishing to develop their own resources.

The book is divided into four main parts:

- Introduction
- Annotated List of Example Sites
- Making Sense of the Technology
- Getting the language right: text input and output

In Part 2, *Annotated List of Example Sites*, chosen Web sites are categorised, then sub-categorised by language. An effort has been made to select sites from lesser taught languages, as well as the commonly taught European languages. The majority of examples from the lesser taught category reflect South East Asian languages. The categories chosen include:

- A Integrated Material - cases where web resources are used in face-to-face teaching in conjunction with other resources such as text, video, and CD-ROMs;
- B Substantial materials - whole subjects;
- C Substantial materials - protected;
- D Activities/Exercises/Task based on Magazine or book;
- E Grammar instruction/pronunciation/dialogues - traditional;
- F Grammar/Vocabulary - interactive with feedback;
- G Sites in target language country providing authentic interaction;
- H Moos/MUDS/Mushes;
- I Self-contained interactive tasks - ideas;
- J Self-contained interactive tasks - proformas to print or submit;
- K Structured teaching plans for interactive tasks;
- L Interactive Tasks: Using Chat sites.

The amount of explanation for sites covered in each section varies from a short description of the content and purpose of the site, to a detailed account of how it can be used in language teaching. For example, in section D, sites are referenced which directly complement material contained in commercially available textbooks such as *Mosaicos* and *Chez Nous* for Spanish and French from Prentice Hall. These exercises could easily be exploited by existing users of these course books. Other sites examined contain exercises linking to freely available authentic materials such as on-line newspapers and magazines. Whilst usable in their existing format, these examples also provide a source of good ideas for anyone wishing to provide structured learning materials for use with freely

available resources either in the classroom, or in independent learning. Worksheets of this type could be produced either on paper or on the Web, depending on technical skills and time available.

Each section contains at least one well developed case study serving as an example of good practice that is transferable to other contexts and languages. For example, sections H and L provide examples of on-line chatting and MUDs and MOOS (text-based virtual worlds where users can move to different locations, pick up or view objects, and chat to other users) which provide the uninitiated with experience of these environments. In section L, there is detailed advice from Andrew Ferguson of the Association of German Teachers of Victoria, Inc., Australia, on planning a chat session for advanced learners of German (see <http://www.epub-research.unisa.edu.au/AFMLTA/resguide0.htm>). This advice is relevant to anyone planning a chat session whatever the language or level of student.

Part 3, *Making Sense of the Technology*, provides a basic overview of the Internet with simplified explanations of the technology behind it designed to be easily understood by the non-technical reader. This section deals with graphics, audio, and video formats in the context of producing Web-based materials for language learning. Also included is an overview of interactive technologies which allow feedback to the learner, thus increasing the degree of interactivity within tasks or exercises. Such feedback ranges from interpersonal communication between tutors and fellow learners, to interaction of the form found in language exercises, such as instant feedback when completing grammar or comprehension exercises. This section gives a non-technical person an idea of the degree of complexity involved in producing different types of material.

Part 4, *Getting the language right: text input and output*, deals with the problem of displaying text, and enabling input from the learner for non-standard character sets. The languages covered range from the relatively simple European languages to languages requiring alternative fonts such as Greek, Cyrillic, Thai, and Vietnamese, as well as right to left languages such as Hebrew and Arabic. A wide

range of problems and alternative solutions are considered in some detail.

In addition to the material reviewed so far, the book contains some lengthy appendices offering links to resources and resource collections organised by language. To facilitate examination of the resources, the book comes with an accompanying CD-ROM containing the full text of the book, and live Web links to all of the sites covered. Given that publications of this type become out of date quickly due to the dynamic nature of the Web, it is intended that updates to the book will be distributed on a updated version of the CD-ROM.

Dawn Ebbrell
University of Hull

Information Technology in English Language Learning

Proceedings of the Conference organised by The Division of English Language & Applied Linguistics, National Institute of Education and The Society of Reading & Literacy, Singapore, 11-13 September 1997.

Edited by Gloria Poedjosoedarmo and June Imada Lee.

ISBN: 981-3025-10-7

Note: This is a shortened version of the review which is published on the CTICML website at <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/pubs/newslet.htm>

These proceedings demonstrate once again the global dimension of CALL. Thousands of professionals are actively engaged in exploiting information technology (IT) worldwide in one way or another for language learning and teaching. Interestingly enough, the emerging educational and technical trends are very often strikingly similar, be it in Asia, Europe or North America - and although some prominence is given to the Asian perspective, some of these global trends are captured in this volume. The ITELL brought together 40 speakers from 11 countries. 17 papers have been selected for these proceedings and grouped into four sections: invited speakers from abroad (5 papers), local schools and ministries (4), local polytechnics (3) and teacher trainers, both from Singapore and

from abroad (5). The Proceedings have been produced in an attractive layout; the spacious font and wealth of screenshots, tables and illustrations give it the look and feel of a 'real' book.

Given the conference title, it is hardly surprising to find a wide range of topics encompassing Internet projects in the British primary sector, tertiary education in Australia, a historical overview of language centre developments, the evolution of video technologies in CALL, a mainly technical description of the 'ideal classroom computer' and a largely linguistic account of computer roles in the writing classroom.

The editors do a good job in outlining all the papers in their introduction. One paper from each of the four sections is mentioned in the fuller version of this review:

- Martin Tibbetts *From Cassette to Cyberspace*
- Mark DeWolf *Re-thinking the classroom computer*
- Lilian Lee *E-Mail: Boon or Bane?*
- Hedy McGarrell and Gloria Poedjosoedarmo *The Role of Information Technology in the Teaching of Writing in English in a Multilingual Environment*

My only substantial criticism of this volume would be that on two or three occasions the general down-to-earth and realistic frame of mind seems to give way to an over-trusting attitude towards IT, for example the somewhat naive assumption that with the advent of the Internet, "presenting authentic and interesting materials is no longer a problem to language teachers". Nevertheless, reading the proceedings was for the most part informative and enjoyable – and unlike many Internet apologists, I believe that there is a future for printed conference proceedings.

Dr Markus Ritter
Münster, Germany

Tools for web-based interactive exercises

If you are considering creating web exercises there is an increasing number of tools available. The following two have been developed specifically for delivering language learning activities:

Hot Potatoes

Freeware available from <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/halfbaked/>

Review by Dawn Ebbrell for CTICML at <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/resources/reviews/hotpot.htm>

Xercise Engine

Free Demo available from <http://www.kolumbus.fi/rvilmi/>

The materials consist of HTML pages arranged as books and chapters, and interactive exercises. There are four basic exercise types to choose from: Fill-in-the-blank, Hangman, Matching Pairs and Multiple Choice. The system is flexible enough to deliver a range of learning materials and multimedia elements can be included. The exercises can be used as obstacles for an adventure game in which the player's success in the exercise solving determines his or her route in the adventure.

Although not developed specifically for languages, the **CASTLE Project** may also be of interest. It provides freely available tools for creating online multi-media assessments and requires no prior knowledge of scripting or mark-up languages. The website is at <http://www.le.ac.uk/castle/index.html>

Multilingualism on the Web

This is a paper by Marie-France Lebert, translator and editor. This study is divided into four parts: Multilingualism; Language Resources; Translation Resources; and Language-Related Research. Updated with comments on new websites and new interviews, this version replaces a first version posted in November 1998. See <http://www.ceveil.qc.ca/multi0.htm>

Software Reviews

Business Territory 1

Supplier: Lingonet Oy, Linnankatu 11 A 20, 20100 Turku, Finland, Fax: +358-2-234 5445.

System requirements: 486/66 processor or better, Windows 3.1 or 3.11 with 8 MB RAM or Windows '95 with 16 MB RAM. Four speed CD-ROM drive and Soundblaster compatible sound card.

Price: £62.00 + VAT + P&P

Note: The following is a summary of a much fuller review published on the CTICML website at <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/resources/reviews/revlist.htm>

Business Territory 1 is a multimedia learning package available on a single CD-ROM. It is intended for adult learners of English who need to use business English in their workplace. It exposes learners to authentic language as used by a selection of employees of a British electronics company. Learners are expected to have some knowledge of business concepts and idiom, and to have an intermediate to advanced level of proficiency in general English.

Business Territory 1 includes 40 minutes of authentic video material recorded on location in a Cambridge company. The video clips are supplemented by support material comprising transcripts, audio/text paraphrases, and audio/text comments, as well as a glossary. There is also a wide range of tasks that are based on the video clips and suitable for self-access use as well as one-to-one and group teaching. The support material and tasks encourage students both to take responsibility for their learning and to co-operate and communicate with their fellow students.

The materials are arranged under the headings *Overview, Jobs, Topics, Group work, Exercises, and Teacher's Territory*. The contents can be approached in one of two ways: by clicking on an icon representing one of the employees, which gives access to the video clips relating to that person, or by selecting one of the options from the headings above. Navigation is intuitive and a return button is always available to backtrack.

My overall opinion of *Business Territory 1* is positive because it exploits genuinely authentic materials, providing audio-visual contents suitable for progressively more difficult and complex activities, including group work. I found especially interesting the section for teachers, which allows them to make the most of the materials available throughout the courseware.

Ana Gimeno-Sanz

Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, Spain

Silverom Chinese-English Dictionary

Supplier: Silverom Technologies Pte Ltd, 420 North Bridge Rd #03-04 North Bridge Centre, Singapore 188727, Tel: 65-3363511 Fax: 65-3371337, hoyeesun@singnet.com.sg, <http://www.asia-mfg.com/client/silverom>

System requirements: 386 processor or better, 4MB RAM, 3MB hard disk space, CD-ROM drive and MPC compatible sound card. Windows 3.1 or later. No Chinese operating system required.

Price: \$65 single user, \$95 site licence

Note: The following paragraphs are taken from a longer review published on the CTICML website at <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/resources/reviews/revlist.htm>

This Chinese-English dictionary is intended for an English-speaking learner of Chinese, (and not a Chinese learner of English). It can also be used as an English-Chinese dictionary, but less satisfactorily. This needs pointing out from the outset, since its purpose and usefulness is really rather limited. It is easily installable, bug-free and an attractive easy-to-use package. Interestingly, however, it did not install successfully onto the Chinese version of Windows. It comes on a CD, but in terms of size it is not much more than a floppy. Its special features are the pictures accompanying many of the words and Chinese pronunciation of each word. The general layout in tables and grids of words is similarly helpful and attractive.

There are two ways in which we found the software useful and satisfying to use. It is possible to flick (alphabetically) backwards and forwards

through the dictionary. Generally speaking, the dictionary is clear and well laid out and the pictures and pronunciation do bring it alive. Secondly it was possible to read and listen to the lists of compounds - and, with the proviso of the speed, this was an interesting browsing activity.

All in all, the software is of too limited use to recommend it wholeheartedly. Despite its claims, it has not been well thought through from a learner's point of view. There is quite a lot of Chinese language software available now which has been imaginatively designed, besides word-processing packages with more versatile (if less colourful) dictionaries included. However, it does have the advantages of allowing you to listen to words and to record your own voice, as well as the picture help. The presentation is excellent, and from this point of view at least it is a pleasure to use. It is reasonably priced at \$65 for a single user, \$95 for a site licence.

Tim and Jianping Francis
University of Bath

Español Interactivo

Método Camille

Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, Lingua, Camille, Difusión.

Supplier: European Schoolbooks Limited, The Runnings, Cheltenham, GL51 9BR, UK

System Requirements: 486DX processor, 8MB RAM, CD-ROM drive 4x, 16 bit sound card, Windows 3.1, Microsoft Video for Windows 1.1

Price: Single user £39.95 plus VAT

The software package comprises two CD-ROMs with a user guide, and is aimed at beginners in Spanish. Five European universities have collaborated to develop this package which was designed and produced at the Universidad Politécnica de Valencia in Spain. It consists of 14 units built around communicative situations, each unit being introduced with a video sequence. These units are grouped around 4 modules organised by communicative skills, grammar and vocabulary. For ex-

ample, the second module *En la ciudad* includes 'At the market' as the context for developing communicative skills; 'the indefinite article' as a grammar objective; and 'fruit and vegetables' as vocabulary items to learn. Unit 5 of each module is a revision unit.

Intended Use

Español Interactivo lends itself to being used as a self-access learning resource. One of the features of this program is the constant presence of the 'tutor's' voice, which guides and provides help for the learner at every point. This help is also available in written form and the student can choose between French and English as a support language. There is also a tutorial to enable the learner to get to know their computer; no previous knowledge of computers is assumed.

There is a good balance between providing choice for the learner and a guided approach. Learners are given freedom to take their own preferred learning path, without leaving them completely to their own devices. Indeed, a great deal of support is given to the student by presenting activities in a graded manner: students first establish the meaning by doing a listening comprehension exercise (e.g. matching pictures with what they hear), and then they concentrate on more specific aspects, such as grammar, by filling in the gaps.

The backbone of the program is the 'units', which are complemented by reference tools in the form of grammar and dictionary. These work well as feedback and teaching tools.

Pedagogical content

The program's main aim, as the title suggests, is to introduce language in an interactive way. This is achieved by providing the student with numerous graphics and sound for each language point dealt with. The three components of each unit include exercises where graphics and sound form a central part. The visual elements usually have the function of presenting the language interactively, and are followed by an exercise to practise the new teaching point. There are different types of exercises: written input gap-fills, matching, true/false, role-plays where students can record themselves, etc.

It is worth singling out a very useful and simple exercise that is included at the end of each unit, where students can test themselves on the key vocabulary learned by matching up jumbled words.

Learners are given freedom to take their own preferred learning path, without leaving them completely to their own devices. Indeed, a great deal of support is given to the student by presenting activities in a graded manner: students first establish the meaning by doing a listening comprehension exercise (e.g. matching pictures with what they hear), and then they concentrate on form, by filling in the gaps.

Feedback is given with different phrases, such as, *¡Así es! ¿Como lo sabías? ¡Fíjate más!*, which appear randomly both in written and aural forms. Another form of feedback is the reference grammar and dictionary which can be accessed by students. Feedback is also given by allowing learners to listen to particular pieces of the audio again and trying the exercise once more. At the end of the exercise, users can also look at their score. However, not much 'immediate' feedback (specific to each response or answer) is given, and if learners want to know where and why they failed they have to find out by accessing the reference grammar.

All in all, the pedagogical approach is very sound: functions, grammar and vocabulary are taught in a communicative way, are practised within 'real' contexts and by doing real tasks (e.g. filling in forms, describing a painting, etc.) and there is some form of meaningful feedback provided. There is also an element of fun in the exercises. For example, in the vocabulary section we find riddles, and many dialogues represent humorous scenes.

The reference sections (grammar, vocabulary and culture) are comprehensive. The grammar section covers in depth many of the problems that the student of Spanish encounters, although sometimes the level might be a bit too high. The vocabulary/dictionary section is very helpful, so students can always find out the meaning of a word and its gender (in the case of nouns) without having to reach for their hard copy of the dictionary. Finally, there is also a culture section where the learner is made aware of the basics of Spanish culture in a very entertaining and visually rewarding way. This

is a section that is rarely seen in language courses, and it enhances the course considerably, not only because of the content presented in it, but also for the assumption underlying it, namely that language and culture go hand in hand.

In general, this is one of the best CD-ROMs I have seen. It offers a varied and substantial language teaching component which goes well with current approaches to language teaching. As well as being a pedagogically sound package, *Español Interactivo* succeeds in presenting new language in a light hearted and visually attractive way by exploiting the best that multimedia can offer. To sum up, the strong and weak points of this application are:

Strong points:

- Contextualised grammar exercises.
- Good quality and relevant illustrations and graphics
- Good variety of exercises
- Well designed listening comprehension exercises
- Comprehensive culture section
- Presentation of key vocabulary for each unit
- Grammatical, dictionary and cultural references across the program

Weak points:

- Control and navigation is sometimes weak
- No immediate or context-specific feedback

To conclude, I strongly recommend this CD-ROM. I think it will prove to be an essential learning aid for anybody with access to a PC and who is beginning to learn Spanish, since it can be used either as a stand alone package or to complement another course. Have fun!

Cristina Ros i Solé
The Open University

Acknowledgements: Many thanks to Mike Truman and Raquel Mardomingo for their revision of an earlier draft of this review.

COLLOQUIAL SPANISH CD-ROM: A Multimedia Language Course

Author: Untza Otaola Alday

Supplier: Routledge, 11 New Fetter Lane, London, EC4P 4EE, UK

System Requirements: 486 processor, 8MB RAM, 2MB hard disk space, double speed CD-ROM drive, sound card and Windows 3.1. or higher.

Price: Single user £39.99 plus VAT

The software package is aimed at beginner language learners of Spanish. It consists of lessons built around situational dialogues. There are 14 lessons covering topics ranging from 'travelling around' to 'hopes for the future'.

Intended Use

Colloquial Spanish is presented as a tutorial to be used on its own or to support autonomous learning. The package gives the student a fair amount of control by keeping him/her informed of the objectives of the lesson and by giving him/her clear instructions of what to do. This is achieved by providing the student with access to a summary of the content of the lesson, including the language points covered, and a matrix of all the language points covered in the whole program.

Pedagogical content

The program introduces each lesson in a contextualised way, with photographs that illustrate the theme, and leads the student into the topic through a dialogue. This dialogue presents the main language points that will be practised later on in a variety of exercises. There are listening comprehension questions, multiple choice exercises, 'drag and drop' gap-fills, where the student can key in the answers, 'matching' exercises and even some 'role-play' exercises where the student is asked to play a part by translating an English sentence into Spanish.

There are plenty of pronunciation exercises where students listen to the words and check themselves by recording their voice and comparing it with the model. However, most of the exercises are quite

repetitive. There are no discriminatory exercises or visual help.

The recordings are very clear and there is a variety of voices. The inclusion of some Latin-American accents would have enhanced the materials.

The level of the language content is right for beginners and the grammatical explanations provide them with a good level of support. The explanations are presented in a very simple and clear way and cover most of the problems that students at this level encounter. However, there are a few inconsistencies that could be ironed out.

Learner independence and control

An asset of this program, as mentioned earlier, is the fact that the learning objectives of each lesson and language points to be practised are very well defined. This helps students to feel more in control of their own learning. However, another simple way of giving more control to learners is by letting them choose their own path in the program. This can be done by a non-linear design. This program, however, seems to be written with a linear approach in mind. There are even references in the grammar such as 'As you have seen earlier' which indicate that students are not expected to choose different routes. Similarly, exercises can only be done at one level; whereas devices and help screens that ask students to state their preferences would give them more freedom and control (e.g. to work with or without sound, with or without translations, etc.). Finally, incorporating a record-keeping mechanism or 'study-tracker' with which students could tell where they had been and whether they had completed the exercise could also enhance the program.

Feedback plays a vital role in giving students control over their own learning. It points out why they have made mistakes and provides them with the knowledge they need to find the right solution next time. If programs provide inadequate feedback they can become little more than testing devices. This program offers two mechanisms for feedback. The first is the very clear guidance and information about the language points covered in each unit: students can assimilate this before

attempting the exercise. The second is the audio component, in which students can hear the correct answers. Unfortunately, however, much of the feedback is of the 'right or wrong' type.

Screen layout and design

Although graphics are numerous, they do not always directly help or illustrate the exercise on the screen. Video is not used in any part of the program, so an opportunity to add cultural and linguistic context to the exercises has been missed.

In general, the pedagogical approach is sound, with a good variety of exercises and practice in a range of skills. The screen design is very clear and user-friendly and the language coverage is comprehensive. Here is a summary of the pros and cons.

Strong points:

- Clear and easy screen design
- Language at the right level
- Good variety of exercises
- Well designed listening comprehension exercises
- Clear grammatical explanations
- Objectives of the units are clearly explained.

Weak points:

- Lack of detailed and meaningful feedback
- No video
- Students' control over their own learning is limited by the program design

In general I recommend this CD-ROM and I think it should prove to be very useful for Spanish beginners to improve their listening comprehension and their knowledge of the rudiments of Spanish grammar.

Cristina Ros i Solé
The Open University

Acknowledgements: Many thanks to Mike Truman and Raquel Mardomingo for their valuable comments on an earlier draft of this review.

CTI Modern Languages Open Days 1999

Wednesday 24 March

Wednesday 16 June

Wednesday 28 July

Wednesday 18 August

CTI Modern Languages Open Days are designed to enable you to visit the Centre and provide you with hands-on experience of relevant CALL software. Staff will be available for discussions and to offer advice.

There is no charge to teachers from the HE sector for attending the open days and visitors may attend at any time between 1000am and 1600pm.

Please note that the number of participants that we can accommodate at any one time is limited and that places **MUST** be reserved in advance. Bookings may be made by contacting Jenny Parsons at the CTICML address on the front cover, or by completing a booking form downloadable at <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/events/odbookform.htm>

Open Day visitors wishing to view the CTICML library of books and journals may do so by prior arrangement.

There is a charge of 40 pounds (EUROCALL members 20 pounds) for teachers outside the UK HE sector wishing to attend an Open Day.

Lunch and refreshments are not provided, but may be purchased on campus.

Forthcoming Events

6-7 May 1999, Ottawa, Canada

Technology in L2 Teaching and Learning : What Does Research Tell Us?

Information: Dr Delphine Renié, Institut des Langues Secondes, Université d'Ottawa, 600 King Edward, Ottawa ON K1N 6N5, Canada
Tel: +1 613 562 5800 x3414 & 3410

21-24 May 1999

CALLING Asia 99 International Conference on Computers and Language Learning, Kyoto, Japan

Information: Bryn Holmes, CALL SIG Coordinator, Nagoya University of Commerce and Business Administration, Komenoki-cho, Nisshin-city, Aichi-ken 470-0193 Japan. Email - holmes@nucba.ac.jp, <http://jaltcall.org>

1-5 June 1999, Oxford, USA

CALICO 99

Information: CALICO, 214 Centennial Hall, Southwest Texas State University, 601 University Drive, San Marcos, TX 78666, USA
Tel: +1 512 245-1417, Fax: +1 512 245-9089

16-17 June 1999, Loughborough, UK

3rd Annual Computer Assisted Assessment Conference

Information: Myles Danson, CAA Officer, Loughborough University, Loughborough LE11 3TU
Tel: +44 (0)1509 223765

22-26 June 1999, Maryland, USA

IALL '99 Conference

Information: IALL '99 Conference, The Language Center, College of Arts and Humanities, 1105 Jiménez Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742-4811, USA

Tel: +1 301 405-8544, Fax: +1 301 314-9841

1 July 1999, Sunderland, UK

6th Annual Teaching & Learning Conference: Learning and Teaching for the Students of the 21st Century

Information: Andrea Hill, Learning Development Services, University of Sunderland, Hutton Building, Chester Road Campus, Sunderland SR1 3SD
Tel: +44 (0)191 515 2280, Email: andrea.hill@sunderland.ac.uk

19-20 July 1999, Oxford, UK

Oxford ICT in Classics Conference

Information : Julian Morgan, 81 High St, Pitsford, Northants, NN6 9AD, United Kingdom
Tel (01604) 880119, Julian@JPROGS.source.co.uk, <http://www.source.co.uk/users/jprogs/>

6-8 September 1999, University of York, UK

7th Improving Student Learning Symposium: Improving Student Learning Through the Disciplines

Information: Felix Lam, email: f.lam@brookes.ac.uk, tel +44 (0)1865 484620, fax +44 (0)1865 484622

9-11 September 1999, Exeter, UK

8th International Exeter CALL Conference

Information: Keith Cameron, CALL '99, School of Modern Languages, Queen's Building, The University, Exeter EX4 4LE, UK

16-18 September 1999, Besançon, France

EUROCALL 99

Information: Thierry Chanier, Laboratoire d'Informatique de Besançon, Université de Franche-Comté, France
Tel: +33 3 81 58 84 70, Fax: +33 3 81 66 64 50

17-19 September 1999, Prague, Czech Republic

LSP Forum '99: International Conference on Teaching Languages for Specific/Academic Purposes in Universities

Information: Dr Marta Chromá, Charles University, Law Faculty, Nám. Curieových 7, 116 40 Praha, Czech Republic

Tel: +42 (2)21005387, Fax: +42 (2)24810472, Email: chroma@ius.prf.cuni.cz

21-23 September 1999, Bristol, UK

ALT-C 99 6th International Conference: The Learning Technology Life-Cycle

Information: Sara Hassen, In Any Event UK, 1 Riverside, St. Anne's Road, Bristol BS4 4ED, UK
Tel: +44 (0)117 977 9477, Fax: +44 (0)117 972 4345

31 August - 2 September 2000, Dundee, Scotland

EUROCALL 2000

Information: EUROCALL, CTI Centre for Modern Languages, University of Hull, Hull HU6 7RX, UK
Tel: +44 (0)1482 465872, Fax: +44 (0)1482 473816, Email EUROCALL@Hull.ac.uk