Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL): Instructing Native and Non-Native English Speakers in a Mixed Classroom Environment

By

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Since the 1960s, computers have been used within the language classroom as a supplemental tool to enhance instruction in the target language. Teachers have incorporated the computer into their lessons to provide additional support and perhaps supply a clearer understanding of the content to the students. With the progress of technology, the computer has become a much more efficient machine, which is a clear indication as to why it is being increasingly used in the classroom.

Currently, I teach an English grammar skills course (*Reading and Writing Strategies*) at a college in the Twin Cities area. I teach in a residential classroom setting, where the students attend class once a week. I deliver the material in a traditional manner: using the white board to define concepts, passing out worksheets to practice the material, setting up pair/group work activities. In addition, the students also use the computer in my classroom to perform practice exercises while focusing on the content. I have been teaching for quite some time, both at the college level and in the public sector. Incorporating the computer into the lessons has always been an essential part of my instruction. I use this only as a tool to support, not replace my instruction. I have noticed that students find value in being given additional resources as they are working on learning the core concepts of the class. Moreover, the computer often is an engaging tool that retains students' interest while they are working on the content.

The course (*Reading and Writing Strategies)* that I teach is offered to both native and non-native English speakers, and both types of students are combined into the same class. This course reviews basic grammatical concepts for all students. The nonnative English student makes different language errors/mistakes as opposed to the native speaker. Therefore, it is imperative that additional resources are provided to nonnative learners to assist them in their language

learning and allow them to focus on areas that specific to their needs. In addition, these resources will help future instructors if faced with a similar situation.

The Syllabus – Content of the Course

The purpose of this course and others like it is to give the students the grammatical tools to build up to the writing process; therefore, the focus is primarily on learning English grammar. Then, the overall objective, after learning the core elements of grammar, is to have the students apply these skills during the writing process for the courses they take at the college. As mentioned previously, the one disadvantage to this course is that it is geared towards native English speakers only. Although the course syllabus covers the basic core grammar skills, it lacks sufficient resources for the student to learn and practice these skills.

This is a remedial English course, so many of the students lack many of the core English grammar skills. Prior to enrolling, both native and non-native speakers take an English placement test. If the student scores below 70% on the test, he/she will be placed into this course, as it is determined that some remediation is necessary. This is a residential course, so the students come to class each week, and I deliver the content in the form of a traditional lecture. Then, they complete an assignment based on the weekly topic. Topics that are covered include the eight parts of speech, punctuation, capitalization, types of clauses, sentence fragments, run-ons, modifiers, and plural and possessive nouns. Late in the quarter, writing is discussed very briefly. I introduce how to set up a paragraph by illustrating the essential elements: topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence, but this course is not designed to deal with the writing process in-depth.

Throughout this paper I focus on the course that I teach and examine ways where I can provide additional support for both groups: native and nonnative speakers. In addition, this paper

will discuss the use of computer technology and its implementation into the classroom for all students. This paper is also designed for other teachers who may encounter a similar situation with a class of both native and nonnative speakers by allowing them to utilize specific resources, such as worksheets, activities, and computer-related resources to assist these learners with the target language. The course syllabus will be used as my guide throughout this paper as I look at the areas that need to be developed further and provide supplemental material to enhance the syllabus.

This paper will also provide some background information regarding why the topics covered in the course can be challenging for nonnative speakers. My primary focus will be describing how the computer and supplementary activities can assist the nonnative speakers with their language learning needs. Next, I am going to explore a variety of ways the students can use software programs along with the Internet to guide this group to become proficient with the language. In addition, some of the focus of this paper will cover the advantages and disadvantages of implementing Computer Asssisted Language Learning (CALL). Moreover, I will propose ways to address specific challenges faced by nonnative speakers by devising some supplemental work (electronic and paper versions) to help these particular students with learning the target language along with highlighting some activities created by other authors and available for instructors. Although some of the content described within this paper will be geared towards nonnative speakers, my goal is to improve this type of course for all students, so the material will be able to be used with both native and nonnative speakers.

The need for different approaches to teaching nonnative speakers is evidenced by the number of resources available for teaching grammar and writing. In many English writing and grammar books, there are special sections dedicated to teaching nonnative speakers. The authors

of these books clearly recognize the nonnative speaker has different needs when it comes to learning English. In The Wadsworth Handbook, there is a section, titled, "Grammar and Style for ESL Writers," which examines topics, such as verb usage, articles, adjectives, adverbs, and nouns, which the students may encounter while learning English. This book is a guide designed primarily for the native English speaker who is working on crafting a well-written essay, yet the authors found it necessary to include a section for nonnative speakers (Kirszner and Mandell 956 – 994). In another writing resource, The Longman Concise Companion, there are sub-sections scattered throughout the book, indicating specific information is written for nonnative students. For example, part of the book focuses on articles and how they are used in connection with nouns. At the end of this section, there is a sub-section, titled, "ESL Advice: Nouns and the Use of Articles," which demonstrates how articles are used in English in connection with nouns (Anson, et al. 291). The creation of these subsections, which are solely meant for nonnative speakers, is indicative that there is a need to provide additional support to these individuals.

One objective of the course is to learn the eight parts of speech. I have created and found some additional resources to assist both groups of students. At present, as in many classes of this type, the lesson that I deliver is in the form of a PowerPoint. I simply deliver the content to the students; they take notes, and then they use the notes to complete their homework. The content consists of the grammar rule and a few examples to support it. There is not an opportunity for the student to practice the material in the class. In the following sections, I will identify three specific grammatical concepts (subject-verb agreement, phrasal verbs, and articles) nonnative speakers struggle to learn. In addition, I will discuss CALL and its development overtime. I will also examine specific studies where CALL has been used to teach language and discuss students' and teachers' perspectives regarding this method. Later, I will propose CALL and non-CALL

supplemental activities, which can be used in any course that consists of both native and nonnative speakers, so the students can successfully learn these language components for proper development.

Grammatical Concepts that Pose Difficulties for Non-Native Speakers

When focusing on the reasons students often misuse third-person singular and plural verb forms (subject-verb agreement), I located an explanation from a website, Whitesmoke, that provides some insight into these grammar errors. First, deciphering the difference between singular and plural subjects may not be an easy task for the nonnative speaker and may influence how he/she inflects the verb. In order to demonstrate this, I would like to point out the word *everybody.* Although it may "look" like it is plural because it represents more than one person, it exists as one unit to represent a group, meaning it is a singular subject (Whitesmoke 1). Other examples that may cause confusion are: *anybody, somebody,* and *nobody*.

Another explanation for nonnative speakers committing subject-verb agreement errors might be due to their native L1 influencing their production of the target language verb forms. Students from one language background have been known to produce more subject-verb errors than students from a different language background. According to Hawkins, the use of English subject-verb agreement was examined between native Japanese speakers and native Spanish speakers. The native Spanish speakers produced fewer errors with subject-verb agreement than their Japanese counterparts. It was concluded that because Spanish "has a rich history of subject-verb agreement" and Japanese is not as fixed when it comes to this language construct, the Spanish speakers were more successful with producing the correct forms (Hawkins 65).

A less empirical yet plausible explanation for these subject-verb agreement errors could simply be due to students not receiving enough practice with using these forms (Zajac 3).

Although this explanation may seem like common sense to most, it definitely deserves recognition within this paper. This is one of my goals throughout this paper – provide additional resources to students in order for them to receive as much exposure to specific language constructs to facilitate the language learning process.

According to Cimasko, students may also over-generalize the rule of English verb conjugation. When this happens, the student applies the same form to all verbs when using them in connection with the subject. For example, the present tense verb *walk* needs to be conjugated differently depending upon the subject. The nonnative speaker may have a tendency to write/speak the phrase *I walk*, *you walk*, *he/she walk*, and the latter subject + verb construction demonstrates the student's inability to conjugate correctly by over generalizing the verb conjugation rule and applying the rule to all verbs (Cimasko).

Phrasal verbs also seem to be troublesome for nonnative speakers. A phrasal verb consists of a verb and a particle, often referred to as an adverb because of its direct connection with the verb. With phrasal verbs (*hand in* or *hand back*), the student cannot decipher the meaning of these phrases by translating each word individually; the student has to learn phrasal verbs as an entire unit of meaning and deduce the meaning by the context of the sentence (Folse par. 8). Complicating matters further is the nature in which a word, acts or "behaves" within a sentence. As stated, phrasal verbs are identified as a verb + particle (adverb) construction. However, the same word that functions as a particle can also function as a preposition. For example, a verb + particle construction is demonstrated in the sentence "Tom will look up the word in the dictionary." On the other hand, a verb + preposition construction is identifiable in the sentence "I live up the road from Tom." The latter sentence clearly has a literal meaning, where "up" indicates a directional word (Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman 425).

Also, nonnative speakers may be accustomed to using specific grammatical rules while learning the target language; however, since different types of phrasal verbs follow different types of rules in how they are constructed, they may create frustration for the nonnative learner. For example, in some instances, phrasal verbs can be separated from the particle, and in other situations, phrasal verbs cannot be separated from the particle. Additionally, phrasal verbs can be challenging because they are polysemous, meaning that they can have multiple meanings when used in conjunction with other words (Folse par. 8). For example, the phrase *take up* can have several meanings when used in different contexts: *I am going to take up karate* (learn karate); *I am going to take up the assignments to the teacher* (bring assignments to the teacher); *I am going to take up that issue with my supervisor* (discuss the issue); *I need to take up my pants because they are too long* (shorten my pants). According to the article "Teaching ESL to Adults, " one approach to helping students learn phrasal verbs is to simply have them memorize these phrases (Garcia).

According to *The Grammar Book,* by authors Marianne Celce-Murcia and Diane Larsen-Freeman, the nonnative speaker is often taught to place the stress on the content word (the word that carries meaning) within a sentence. However, a word acts differently in the sentence depending upon the stress. The sentence "Tom looked up the word in the dictionary" places the stress on "up," which is not a content word. As a result, this word ("up") is classified as a particle. On the contrary, the sentence "Tom looked up the road" does not place stress on the word "up." When the student does not know where he/she needs to place stress on other words, in addition to content words, he/she may have difficulties understanding the different constructs all due to where the stress is placed (Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman 431).

Pronoun usage in connection with the phrasal verb can present additional problems for the nonnative speaker. As mentioned earlier, sometimes phrasal verbs may or may or may not be separated within a sentence; the verb does not have to occur directly next to the particle. The following sentences are both appropriate constructions: "I put away the clothes" (no separation of verb + particle) or "I put the clothes away" (separation of verb + particle). However, if the direct object ("clothes") is used as a pronoun, the verb + particle must be separated. There is only one proper construction, which is "I put them away" as the sentence "I put away them" is an ungrammatical sentence (Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman 428). Therefore, the nonnative speaker must be taught the rule for the positioning of pronouns within phrasal verbs.

According to *The Grammar Book,* the nonnative speaker, at some point, may become aware that the use of phrasal verbs may be governed by the context. The nonnative speaker has to be privy to the fact that while although the literal meaning may be correct, using the phrasal verb construction may be more appropriate for an informal situation. Adversely, nonnative speakers must also be aware that phrasal verbs may not be appropriate in formal situations, such as writing an essay for a class. For example, in an academic essay, it would be inappropriate for a student to write "The company *put off* the plan until a later date in order to save money." The more accepted version in this type of situation would be, "The company postponed the plan until a later date in order to save money." If a nonnative student is speaking with native student in an informal context, it would be appropriate for the student to say "I got up at 7:30 this morning." If this student were to use the literal meaning of the phrase, "I arose at 7:30 this morning," the meaning would be construed as being too formal for this situation, thus alerting the native student to the fact that the nonnative student may either not be aware of phrasal verbs or not know how to properly use them in a specific situation (Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman 425).

That being said, it is acceptable in formal situations for a person to say "I got up at 7:30 this morning." Therefore, a paradox exists, where formal word usage may not be considered appropriate given the context yet informal usage of a word may be completely acceptable in a formal situation. As a result, the more exposure the nonnative speaker has with phrasal verbs and their appropriate contexts, the better prepared he/she will be to respond to specific situations, both formal and informal.

There is the belief that these non-native speakers may avoid producing phrasal verbs because there is no equivalent form in his/her native language. Since Chinese does not use phrasal verb structures (verb + particle), these speakers, while learning English, tend to avoid using this construction (Liao, Fukuya 200). In Chinese, the verb and particle are one structure, treated solely as a single unit/word; *guolai* is a combination of the verb *guo* and the particle *lai,* which means "Come over here" (Liao, Fukuya 211).

According to the article, "Avoidance of Phrasal Verbs: The Case of Chinese Language Learners" there are times when a single word verb ("bare" verb) is used without a particle and other times this "bare" verb is transformed into a phrasal verb, where a verb + particle construction is required. For example, "to open one's eyes" suggests the person's eyes will go from a closed state to an open state, but "to open up one's eyes" figuratively suggests the eyes are open but to a greater degree or in an idiomatic usage that an individual needs to be aware of a current situation. The addition of "up" by transforming the single verb ("open") into a phrasal verb changes the meaning of the phrase altogether. This is another parameter that can confuse the nonnative speaker, where he/she must be aware that the meaning of sentence and/or degree of an action is amplified by the addition of a particle (Neagu 134). The preference of using single verbs as opposed to phrasal verbs is often evident in native Hebrew speakers learning English.

Since there is no phrasal verb equivalent in Hebrew, the nonnative speaker may not know when to use this construct or may avoid from using it altogether in fear of making a mistake. (Liao, Fukuya 197).

Another area that is not covered in most classes designed for native speakers is the use of English articles in sentences. There are three types of English articles: *the*, *a(n)*, and *ϕ* (*zero*). In English, *the* is used to denote definiteness, where the topic being discussed is known to the person(s). The article *a(n)* is used when the topic is indefinite and not known to the person(s). The *zero* article is used in a situation when an article is simply not needed in a given context (Hawkins 232). There are actually two zero articles. One of the articles, which is referred to as the *zero* article, is used with noncount and plural nouns that are nonspecific. The sentence "The girls ate (a) pizza" is an example of the *zero* article, where *a* is omitted, showing that the amount of pizza does not need to be acknowledged in the situation. However, when needing to recognize the amount of pizza that was eaten, the indefinite article, *a*, will be used in the sentence – "The girls ate *a* pizza." The other article that falls under the *zero* article category is the *null* article, which is used with proper and singular count nouns. An example of this type of article is present in the sentence "(The) Dinner was lovely," which emphasizes the specific item: *The dinner*. (Celce-Murci, Larsen- Freeman 280).

English articles can present challenges for nonnative speakers because a native language, such as Chinese, may not use a system of articles (Shoebottom par. 10). Slavic languages and many African languages also do not have a system of articles (Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman 271). In some languages, word order is used to denote whether a noun is definite or indefinite. So although some languages mark definite or indefiniteness, the system the speaker is accustomed to using is entirely different (Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman 271). In addition, since many

nonnative adult speakers frequently use abstract nouns, they often have a difficult time understanding and applying articles in relation to these types of nouns. According to Gunn, children, however, relate to the world in concrete nouns, thus possibly making the task of applying articles less difficult. (Lanternfish). Some languages use definite articles with abstract nouns. For example, the sentence "The peace is the route to happiness" is a proper statement in certain languages, such as Spanish, whereas in English, definite articles are not used – "Peace is the route to happiness." Since some native language require definite articles to precede abstract nouns, it is understandable that proper usage of this construct in English may be challenging for them.

In English, there are times when indefinite articles are not needed, specifically while using noncount nouns (*furniture).* The native French speaker may have difficulty with this construct because French uses articles with noncount nouns. Therefore, in French, it would be proper to say "A furniture is in the living room." This matter becomes even more complicated for the nonnative speaker because there are times when a noncount noun transforms into a count noun (Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman 274). There are situations when it is proper to say "I like soda" and there are other contexts when it is appropriate to say "I would like a soda." Since there are situations when an article is required and others when it is not, it is important to expose nonnative speakers to both types of contexts so they are able to apply the article properly in language usage.

Narrowing the field of nouns, I will focus on the use of articles with proper nouns, specially the names of people and geographical locations. In most cases, articles do not precede proper nouns. However, when there is a need to emphasize a person's name, a definite article can be placed in front of the name. It is appropriate state the phrase "I am going to Michael's house."

Moreover, it is also acceptable to say "I am going to *THE* Michael Jackson's house." With the latter sentence, I am implying that this person is well-known. In terms of geographical locations, articles are typically not placed in front of the noun as well. For example, it is acceptable to state the phrase "I am going to California." The phrase "I am going to THE Himalayas" is also a proper statement. Both of the above cases can create many challenges for nonnative speakers because they may have learned not to use articles with proper nouns. As a result, they must be exposed to instances, such as these, where articles need to be used with nouns and other instances when articles are not acceptable to precede nouns. Later, I will suggest an activity where students can practice using articles with proper nouns, mainly focusing on geographical locations.

In many cases, articles are often used to introduce a new topic, such as in a reading passage or in an oral story. Usually, when the topic is introduced, an indefinite article (a/an) precedes the noun. This signifies that the topic is unfamiliar, at the moment. This is also referred to as *nonspecific* noun (Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman 278). However, if the topic is referenced thereafter within the same context, a definite article (the) is placed in front of the topic. In this case, the noun would be considered *specific* because the topic is familiar to the speaker/listener (Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman 278). This can be problematic for nonnative speakers because if they are not aware of this construct, they may continue using indefinite articles throughout a conversation/writing passage, not realizing they needed to shift to using definite articles with a "now-made" familiar topic. In a later section, I will address this area by providing some supplemental work for the students so they can practice identifying and producing articles in certain contexts.

Prior to moving forward, I must acknowledge that in addition to the language challenges students face in my class, native and nonnative speakers are different types of students and, therefore, operate differently inside the classroom. Oftentimes, the nonnative speaker received his/her formal education outside of the United States. The educational systems around the world vary, and in countries that are plagued by economic instability, the resources available to schools are very limited. The role of the teacher is viewed differently across educational systems throughout the world. In Western societies, the teacher is thought of as simply a person who delivers his/her knowledge and skills to others. In contrast, Eastern societies, such as China, perceive the teacher as more of a parent figure or a friend who is there to guide the students by providing worthwhile information (Rubenstein 436). Contrasting student views of the role of a teacher in a class of mixed students (native and nonnative) will cause differing expectations of that teacher.

With this awareness, ESL teachers will be able to conduct their courses with the knowledge that students may perceive the teachers' roles differently. In order to ensure that students fully understand my role, I will set the course expectations on the first day of class. Setting the course expectations early on in the course allows the ESL teacher to conduct him/herself in a manner that is consistent with his/her teaching style. It is vital for the ESL teacher to always adhere to the policies that have been set forth (i.e. late assignment policies, academic misconduct policies, etc). If one wavers with upholding these policies, the ESL teacher may find that it may cause the students to question his/her role as the teacher, thus creating an unbalanced environment. Moreover, ESL teachers must enforce the policies equally amongst the group and make sure that all students (native and nonnative speakers) are held to the same standards/expectations. This will hopefully foster an environment where all the students clearly

understand what they can expect, and they do not have to question whether a policy may change throughout the course, which will allow the students to focus solely on the content of the course.

The Use of CALL to Support Target Language Acquisition

Prior to moving forward, I would like to clarify the term CALL, which is used in the teaching profession to describe the process of implementing computers into the language classroom. With CALL, the students learn a specific grammatical skill and then go on to perform an exercise on the computer to reinforce this skill. As one may discover, CALL is also known by many other names, such as Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI) (Underwood 38). Later, I will briefly mention the context when CAI was used, as it was only for a short period of time in the teaching field. Since the more preferred and commonly used term in recent times is CALL, I will exclusively use this acronym to refer to this process throughout the paper. With the structure of a CALL class, students physically attend class and for a portion of the class period, they are involved in either using computer software programs or working with online learning activities. At times, the students may also have access to these online exercises at home so they can gain additional exposure to the language.

Historical Roots of CALL

There is information dating as far back to the 1940s in terms of the inception of CALL, although it truly did not gain momentum until the 1950s. As with any new concept, researchers and educators alike wanted to analyze how to effectively incorporate the computer into the curriculum before actually doing so. It took a significant amount of time before educators realized the relevance of the computer as an educational tool in the classroom (Ahmad et al 28).

While taking a more in-depth look at CALL and its timeline, I discovered there are three phases of development it has undergone, stemming back to the 1950s. During this time, B.F.

Skinner was influential with his behaviorist theories, which advocate the "repeated exposure" of

a specific concept which will inevitably lead to learning the concept (Warschauer 2). The audio-

lingual method, which was used predominantly during this period to teach language, was based

on behaviorist ideals. According to Levy, with the development of new technology during this

time, Skinner felt that computers could be implemented as a means to carry out this theory. He

proposed the "use of teaching machines for individualized instruction" (Levy 4). Since the

computer could be programmed to perform repeated drills at an individualized pace, the "drill

and practice," also known as the "drill and kill" method was applied to additionally be used with

computers. In addition, it may also be advantageous to use the computer to carry out "drill and

practice" exercises because the computer does not become bored with performing the same tasks

continuously, whereas teachers may become quickly bored with having to present the same

material on a repeated basis. Although CALL is the most commonly used overall term to

describe the combination of computer usage and language learning, it is important to mention

that Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI), rather than CALL, is the name/acronym often used

when referring to this specific time period of the CALL realm. Since many of the computer-

related activities were based solely on information provided from language workbooks,

computers were used to instruct rather than guide the student in his/her language learning path.

Essentially, the computer could replace the teacher who adhered solely to the "drill and

kill"/behaviorist model (Levy 79).

The first computerized system that incorporated the use of the "drill and practice"

exercises was the Programmed Logic for Automated Teaching Options (PLATO) project, which

was developed at the University of Illinois in the 1960s (Levy 15). The purpose of this program

was to meet the needs of computer-based education across many disciplines along with

providing "interactive, self-paced instruction for large numbers of students (Levy 15). In the first version of PLATO (PLATO I), there was a "talk" feature embedded within the program, which allowed users, who were logged-in to the same system, to practice written communication skills with one another (Levy 16). Appropriately, this program was written by teachers – the individuals who would be ultimately using and applying this software. The first program was designed for students to translate written Russian into English (Curtain 354). In addition to Russian, other languages, such as Chinese French, German, Hebrew, Latin, and Spanish were developed within the system. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, four versions of the PLATO project were developed (PLATO I, II, III, and IV). The PLATO program was and is still quite successful and continues to be used in classrooms today (Underwood 41).

According to Levy, the second largest CALL project developed was the Time-Shared, Interactive, Computer Controlled Information Television (TICCIT). This project began in 1971 at Brigham Young University. The combination of the computer and television technology was the basis for this project, and it was the first use of multimedia in the CALL realm (Levy 18). One of the main features of TICCIT is the control the learner has while using the program. The student is provided with more options, such as a "specially designed keyboard," to guide him/her through an exercise. There are keys marked with the words "Rule" "Example" "Advice" "Easy" "Hard" etc, and the student is able to push the desired key to prompt the computer to perform the programmed operation. For example, if the student pushes the "Rule" button, he/she will be given an explanation of the rule pertaining to topic at hand (Levy 18).

Moving further into the 1970s and 1980s, new technologies ushered in different ways to implement CALL. The second phase of CALL is referred to as Communicative CALL. As the audio-lingual method started to become highly scrutinized due to its inauthenticity and lack of

student-centered activities, a new "approach" to teaching language emerged during this phase, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). With CLT, two ideals were established as the basis for this approach: incorporating the four language skills to communicate effectively and the goal of "communicative competence" (Levy 22). CLT provided the student with more opportunities to practice using language forms rather than simply selecting the proper form to use from a created list of words. CLT encouraged the use of only the target language to provide for more authenticity of the language (Warschauer 2). Grammar was taught implicitly rather than explicitly during the Communicative CALL phase, where the student was encouraged to infer the rules rather than being taught them directly by the teacher.

In terms of technology and the usage of computers during this phase of CALL, 1973 saw the introduction of the microcomputer (Levy 22). Not long thereafter the impact was felt in the education realm. With more widespread use of the computer, it became cheaper for teachers to gain access, allowing them to use the pre-loaded software to create CALL programs (Levy 23). As PLATO and TICCIT were well-known during the 1960s and 1970s, Storyboard was developed and prominent in the 1980s. This program allowed the user to reconstruct a written text by being provided with the title and context clues. With Storyboard, teachers now had the ability to author the program, which was a significant improvement from previous programs. Since the teachers knew exactly the topics students were concentrating on and the challenges within those areas, they could program activities to focus on those key areas (Levy 24). Also developed in the 1980s, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) began an eight-year program called Project Athena, which was an initiative to discover "innovative uses of the computer in education" (Levy 26). Under this initiative, the Athena Language Learning Project (ALLP) was developed in order to create communication-based exercises for German, French,

Russian, English, and Spanish beginning and intermediate courses. There were two important developments affiliated with ALLP. First, MUSE was developed, and its basic function was to cross-reference video, audio, and graphic images. Secondly, along with MUSE, MIT worked to create its own artificial intelligence system where the computer would guess the intended meaning of the language input and check its understanding with the user (Levy 27). Under the ALLP project, three interactive language programs based on real-world scenarios were developed and put on laserdisc: *A la rencontre de Phillippe*, *Dans le Quartier Saint-Gervais*, and *No Recuerdo* (Blake 51). According to Levy, *No Recuerdo* is simulation game based on a Columbian scientist who has amnesia. As the student watches the video, he/she encounters different scenarios and tries to understand the main events within the story. The student is able to type questions and commands on the keyboard in order to gain a clearer understanding of the story. Using artificial intelligence, the computer is able to parse the questions and commands, which then provides the student with the necessary information to proceed further in the game (Levy 27).

Forging ahead in time and technological advancements, the 1990s was a period that underwent significant changes and developments with the implementation of CALL. As Warschauer states, this was a time considered by some to be the *Integrative CALL* period. There were two elements that experienced considerable growth: the use of multimedia computers and the Internet (Warschauer 5). Multimedia computers allow the user to combine the features of sound, animation, text, graphics, and video simultaneously. The combination of these elements being accessed at the same time with a click on the mouse to produce an effect is called *hypermedia*. *Hypermedia* is an excellent feature for learning another language. The combination allows the user to truly "see" and "hear" what it may be like to be in a different country in a

simulation game thus creating a more authentic language learning experience. According to Warschauer, one example of this is a computer program called *Dustin,* which was developed in 1996 at Northwestern University by the Institute for Learning Sciences. *Dustin* is a simulation game where the user plays the role of a student arriving at an airport in the United States. The student experiences real-world airport situations, where he/she goes through customs, searches for transportation from the airport to a hotel, and checks in at the hotel. The student meets many people throughout the journey and is asked questions along the way. The student responds by typing in responses, and if the response it correct, the student proceeds to the next task in the journey. If the student responds incorrectly, he/she is given examples and the task is broken down into smaller parts (Warschauer 4).

Another computer-related innovation in the 1990s was the International Email Tandem Network, which was developed by Helmut Brammerts (Levy 32). The premise was to provide a format where students could exchange language with the goal of becoming proficient (Levy, Stockwell 25). According to Levy, The International Email Tandem Network adheres to the *tandem learning* concept, which seeks to achieve the principle of reciprocity and the principle of autonomy. Within the International Email Tandem Network, the principle of reciprocity is met by having at least two people share language exchanges at the same time. Additionally, according to Levy, the principle of autonomy is achieved by putting responsibility on each individual to contribute within the forum. With the Tandem Network, students from colleges and universities around the world are linked together and communicate via email with one common goal (Levy 33).

Also, in 1990s, as with other colleges and universities, the University of Victoria was actively working on developing software for the CALL field. The product they invented is called

Hot Potatoes, and it is a series of six templates that allow language teachers to create their own

exercises, thus finally having the authoring capabilities to develop material specific to their own

students' needs. The teachers could create cloze exercises, crossword puzzles, matching

exercises, and fill-in-the blank activities with these templates. These software programs could be

used on both MAC and PC computers (Blake 59).

Up to this point, I have discussed how CALL provides students with the opportunity to

learn language independently on a computer. Additionally, and now more than in the past,

students can use the computer and Internet tools as a means to communicate with others to learn

language, which is referred to as Computer-mediated Communication (CMC) (Levy, Stockwell

24). Forms of CMC have existed since the 1960s, but have made significant advancements only

over the last 10 years (Warschauer 5). Some examples of CMC include discussion forums, email,

blogs, live chat, and wikis (Blake 70). Email is a form of asynchronous CMC (ACMC) because

communication can be delayed. On the other hand, live chat forum as considered synchronous

CMS (SCMC) because communication is done in real-time, without delay (Blake 70). To date,

email has been the most widely used form of CMC in regards to language learning via the

computer (Levy 97).

Prior to the Internet, CALL activities could only be accessible through the computer they

were programmed on. However, with the Internet, there were now many opportunities to create

more web-based programs that were accessible to many people over far distances. One

significant development during this time was the creation of the Learning Management System

(LMS). LMS is the format students use when they are enrolled in a class, learn the content-

related material outside of the classroom (i.e. at home), and communicate with other classmates

via the Internet: the creation of online classes (Blake 59). As an example, the aforementioned the

template-based program, Hot Potatoes, could now be built into this online course framework and accessed by people throughout the world. *Moodle*, *WebCT*, *Blackboard*, and *Angel* are considered Learning Managements Systems as the deliver course information built into these online frameworks by instructors and curriculum specialists (Blake 59). Also, the LMS framework incorporates elements of CMC, such as the discussion board and email. This correlates directly with situation I currently face in my classroom, where I use the LMS framework (*Angel)* to deliver information to students and provide them with opportunities to practice using the language via online exercises built into the course shell. In a further section, I will discuss how the LMS is used in my classroom so others can discover some ideas if encountering a similar situation.

Using CALL in the Classroom: What Students Are Saying

Some studies have been done to identify the attitudes students have developed in regards to the use of CALL. It has been determined that students vary in their opinions about this type of learning. One study, conducted by M. Daugherty and B. Funke, found that students favored this type of learning because they felt more motivated to do the work while using a computer. Furthermore, these same students, while using the CALL format, liked having direct access to the information on the Internet, which was directly connected to the course content (Pérez-Prado and Thirunarayanan 196).

In another study, P. Navarro and J. Shoemaker discovered that students, who enrolled in an introductory economics course, chose the online classroom format because it was "convenient" for them. In order to measure student progress, two sections of the introductory economics course were examined: the online class and the residential class. Reportedly, there

were "no significant differences" between the two groups in terms of their skills in the content area (Pérez-Prado and Thirunarayanan 196).

Although many students favor the CALL format, it is not meant for every learner. In another study, Sherry *et al.* examined the satisfaction level of online learners based on the level of interaction with the course, the other students, and the instructor. It was determined that those who had a low-interaction level were less satisfied with the online format than those who had a greater amount of interaction with the course. Those who appeared to invest more time, felt more satisfied with the course (Pérez-Prado and Thirunarayanan 196).

Using CALL in the Classroom: What Teachers Are Saying

In the previously mentioned study, conducted by Daugherty and Funke, the faculty members involved were also asked to provide their opinions on the use of CALL. There was a mixture of responses, both positive and negative. On the positive side, instructors liked the idea and "convenience of teaching at irregular time periods." In addition, they felt that the students improved in their learning abilities through the use of CALL (Pérez-Prado and Thirunarayanan 196). On the other hand, some instructors felt there was not a sufficient amount of technical support when issues arose while using the computer and Internet. Furthermore, instructors noticed an increase in the amount of time they needed to invest while using CALL. They were required to prepare more material for instruction. As a result, this led to a negative perception of using the CALL format to instruct students (Pérez-Prado and Thirunarayanan 196).

To complement the above findings, another source describes how teachers view implementing CALL in the classroom. According to the article, "The EFL Teacher and the Introduction of Multimedia in the Classroom," there are six reasons that discourage teachers from using CALL in the language classroom: *Incentives, educational technology understanding,*

model of teaching, the lack of resources access, technological challenges, and *institutional traditions. Incentives* refer to the notion that the computer will eventually replace the teacher in the classroom (Fernandez Carballo-Calero 8, an idea unlikely to become reality. Computers, although useful in many realms, cannot interpret human emotions. If a student appears frustrated while working on the computer, the teacher is able to observe this emotion and work to remedy the problem. A computer does not have the capability to do so (Yi-dong 62). For *educational technology understanding*, teachers' fears of simply not knowing enough about using the technology available may inhibit them from using it in the classroom. *Model of teaching* refers to the teacher's role and how it fits in with the ever-changing educational system. Since the educational system is constantly evolving with new mandated policies and procedures, teachers are forced to allocate time to learn and implement them into the classroom, thus reducing the amount of time they have to implement an elective process – CALL. *The lack of resources access* is a clear indication that teachers may not have appropriate access to use certain tools, thus preventing them from incorporating technology into the classroom, The *technological changes* solely rest with the computer itself, where the teacher has to constantly grapple with computer viruses and a system that is constantly evolving, which create frustrations for the teacher by possibly preventing him/her from using the tools. Lastly, the teacher must consider the *institutional traditions* of the school and incorporating these requirements (work overload, curriculum objectives) into the daily tasks, creating yet another potential barrier for implementing the components of CALL into the classroom (Fernandez Carballo-Calero 9). All six potential deterrents make it understandable that teachers may become discouraged and not forge through with their efforts to use technology in the classroom. These forces, although

discouraging on the surface, can be overcome and the implementation of CALL can prove to be successful.

Case Studies – Technology Usage in the Classroom

In order to gain more insight into the current status of CALL, I am going to provide a brief overview of case studies that were conducted with students who used technology within the language classroom. Also, I will examine the effects of this type of learning. Students' responses will be highlighted as a way to discover how they perceive using CALL in the classroom.

According to the article, "Learner Experiences in Web-based Language Learning," the usage of technology, specifically the Internet, was examined in an ESL class. In this class, there were twelve ESL students at the upper-intermediate level, aged seventeen to thirty-eight years old. They represented a variety of different language backgrounds. The students came to class five days a week for five hours a day, for fifteen weeks, totaling twenty-five hours per week of instruction. This course lasted fifteen weeks. The teacher combined both traditional language instruction and the use of the Internet to complete the "pre-created" exercises. The first exercise dealt with vocabulary usage, which asked the students to fill-in-the blank with the correct vocabulary word for each given sentence. While the students worked on the activity in pairs, the teacher observed two students (one of the pairs) checking their personal emails. This is one issue that may arise when using the Internet as a tool for language exercises, and the teacher must be aware of his/her students at all times. Another online activity the students completed involved grammar. With this activity, some of the students had difficulties accessing a particular website. In order to prevent this from happening, the teacher should always try to access the website prior to having his/her students visit the site, to assure that the link does still in fact exist (Son 26).

At the end of this course, the students were given a questionnaire to provide the teacher with some feedback as to how they felt about the online activities. All of the students (12) were very positive about the experience, indicating that they felt confident with using online activities. However, other students reacted negatively to some aspects of the experience. For example, three students disliked the fact that they had to share the computer. One student reported having "tired eyes" from working with the online activities. It is apparent that there must be set time limitations with these types of activities. If students are required to work for long periods of time on the computer, their eyes will most likely tire from the constant visual stimulation. Another student reported that the wording on some of the websites was a bit too technical. Since these are nonnative speakers, their ability to comprehend certain terms is limited. If a teacher truly wants to provide an environment that enhances the language learning, he/she will make sure that the language is at the students' language level (Son 32).

Web-based discussions are becoming more commonly used in the language classroom. In the article, "Confidence and Competition: ESL Student Perspectives on Web-based Discussions in the Classroom," the focus is primarily on how students feel about using discussion boards to facilitate language learning. For example, the students have the opportunity to practice their language skills by responding to a question posed by the teacher. They are able to write in the target language to enhance their grammar skills. In this article, some students reported that their own lack of technology skills caused frustration (Ware 458).

As a suggestion, in order to better understand students' technology skills, the teacher could develop a survey for his/her students to determine their knowledge in this area. With the results of this survey, the teacher could then conduct a basic technology skills course, where the

student is not initially working on the language, but is gaining the skills to using the Internet successfully.

In some instances, there will be students in the class who have sufficient knowledge of the computer and will want to move ahead to begin learning the language. Since the teacher often needs to assist many students, teaching basic computer and Internet skills may take some time. In order to speed up the process and begin working with the language, the teacher could encourage the students to work together; the students could pair up, where one will assist the less "tech savvy" student. As a result, there will be less time spent focusing on technology skills and more time working with the language. With my classes, I have conducted technology skills surveys, and I have found them to be very beneficial. If teachers are seeking to spend more time working with the language rather than on technology skills, they should consider conducting this type of survey to pair-up students and utilize the time to concentrate on the language.

According to Ware, another issue that arose from the study was the question of authenticity (in the discussion forum). The goal of communication is to try to make the activities as authentic as possible. However, if the instructor requires the students to post a message to their peers on a discussion board, one may question how real and authentic this type of communication is. The students are not necessarily writing to communicate with their peers, but rather writing for their teacher because they are receiving a grade for the assignment (Ware 459).

Lastly, Ware's article reports that the students did in fact like using the discussion boards to communicate with their peers. However, it appears that in terms of enhancing language skills, this specific activity can have detrimental effects. For example, one student stated that he did not have to worry about mispronouncing words or using incorrect intonation because all of the communication was through writing. If a student is never taught the correct pronunciation of

words, he/she will never master the correct form(s). Typically, students often learn best from making mistakes. I have first-hand experience with this type of situation as a former nonnative Spanish speaker. When a student is not given the chance to make mistakes in the presence of others, especially the teacher, the language problems will never be corrected. Although the student, described above, truly enjoyed using the discussion board, there is evidence to support that not all students favor this type of learning. In the article "Computer Means/Changes My Life: ESL Students and Computer-mediated Technology," one student reported that after reflecting on using a discussion board in his class, he did not feel as though his English grammar skills improved. He recognized that because he could say whatever he wanted to say in the discussion posts and no one would correct his spelling and grammar mistakes, he gained very little knowledge in terms of grammar skills   (Bao 5). While using web discussion boards, the teacher must consider how he/she will use them effectively.

According to the article, "Reducing Foreign Language Communication Apprehension with Computer-mediated Communication: A Preliminary Study," discussion boards were also used in a different study with the ESL students to aid in their language learning process. In fact, two types of web discussion boards were used: *asynchronous* and *synchronous.* The students in the asynchronous group would post a message, and students would respond to it later; the discussion was not done at the same time. However, with the synchronous group, students would post a message, and other students responded right away; the communication was done at the same time. Several students in the asynchronous group reported that they did not like these type of web discussions because they felt that when they posted a message in regards to a specific topic and went back to view it later, the topic had changed quickly. However, when the students could communicate, in the synchronous group, they enjoyed this activity because the topic was

current. If a question was posed, someone would immediately give a response. It appears that using the synchronous discussion board was more beneficial to the students because they did not have to worry about the lag time when topics changed quickly, as with the asynchronous group (Arnold 479).

Using CALL offers many benefits for the student. However, each teacher must fully explore the type of software programs that have been developed for language learning. Often times these programs are developed by people who have worked in the computer and technology industry, yet they have no experience in the classroom. They do not know how to properly develop a program for language learners because they often lack the knowledge as to what to include in the programs. It is also rare that a teacher has the capacity and the know-how to develop these types of software programs. An ideal solution that has been proposed by researchers is for language teachers and software program developers to work more closely together (Ahmad et al. 8). If the language teacher explains exactly what to include in a program and the program developer listens, a very effective program may be developed. Until these two units fuse together, we will continue to see poorly developed programs that are highly ineffective for language learning.

Software Programs Available to Implement CALL

Some specific programs available for language teachers have shown to be beneficial regarding certain elements of language learning. In the article, "Passport to ELL," Ana Schwartzman, an ELL instructor, reviews computer software programs designed to be used with English language learners. One software program, Compass Learning Odyssey ELL, provides activities for the learner to enhance his/her language skills. In this article, the author states that it has "excellent assessment features." However, when one reads directly below this section, in the

"limitations" section, the author points out that "incorrect answers are not always explained" (Schwartzman 4).

As a teacher considers selecting a software program for his/her classroom, he/she must closely examine the visual appearance of the programs on the computer screen. There are some programs that can be highly effective for language learning purposes, but they may be too old in terms of technology. One reviewer of another software program, Ellis Academic 3.0, explained that the "video clips look outdated in style" (Schwartzman 4). Students often like using technology in the classroom; however, they may quickly lose interest if the exercise is not visually appealing

"Cognitive Processes at Work in CALL," written by Jane Vinther, discusses the language internalization process students go through when learning language. The purpose of this study was to discover the cognitive processes ELL students use while parsing sentences and building tree diagrams on a computer software program. It is often difficult to understand the mental process a student uses to develop his/her language acquisition skills because it is a silent process. A think-aloud study was devised to give researchers better insight as to what is actually going on in terms of the cognitive processes at work. As a result of these studies, more appropriate software programs can be developed that will cater to the students' needs in terms of language learning on the computer. While working on the CALL software program, Visual Interactive Syntax Learning (VISL), the students were asked to verbalize their thoughts as they built tree diagrams. Within this article, a point was made that the focus has been on "what the students should be doing." However, teachers and program developers should be looking at "what the students are doing" (Hosenfeld, 128).

This study lasted over a period of ten weeks, where the first and last week were examined and compared in terms of vocalizations of the students. The students were videotaped, and their vocalizations were recorded. The students in this study fell into three language level categories, termed as "good," "medium," and "low scoring." The "good scoring" students displayed an almost automatic response while working with the program, and near its end, these students used very few verbal responses while working through the VISL program. The "medium scoring" students continued to show use of cognitive strategies throughout the ten weeks, and their vocalizations did decrease, but not as quickly as the "good scoring" students. The "low scoring" students appeared to make no use of any cognitive strategies during the ten weeks, and their vocalizations showed that these students exhibited a lack of confidence with their language building skills. Some examples of vocalizations include: "Tools, build tree." "Why doesn't it show that one again?" "That's weird," "It seems a bit slow today," and "It keeps removing those." In terms of the above comments, software developers should take these student vocalizations into account when developing language programs. For example, when a student states, "Why doesn't it show that one again?" the developer must locate (from the videotape) which part of the program the student was working on at the time and possibly add whatever is necessary to improve the program for the learner (Vinther, 260).

In a related study, two groups of language learners were compared to determine the usefulness of the VISL program. In "Can Parsers be a Legitimate Pedagogical Tool?" Jane Vinther examines the use and non-use of VISL amongst student groups. The students involved in this study were allowed to build tree diagrams through VISL on the computer. In addition, there was another group of non-VISL students, who used the traditional paper/pencil method of building trees. The purpose of the study was to compare the results between the two groups,

VISL and non-VISL, to understand if one group outperformed the other in regards to constructing tree diagrams (Vinther, 268).

The VISL program was developed at the University of Southern Denmark. There are a variety of games in this program, which primarily focus on syntax and parts of speech, and the students can work individually or in pairs. One core reason for the development of the program was to increase student motivation for learning English syntax, which can be a rather daunting, and an unenjoyable task for many students. Once students are motivated, they may be more apt to continue doing a task they normally wouldn't enjoy under different conditions (Vinther, 270).

Throughout this ten week study, both VISL and non-VISL groups were given a questionnaire on three separate occasions to provide feedback to the researchers. The researchers were interested in the students' perceptions of VISL. The VISL group was very positive about using the program. For example, it was surmised in the article that since the focus is taken off the students and placed more on the computer, students feel less pressure, and they can blame the computer if something goes wrong. However, non-VISL members commented that they may do poorly on any upcoming tests because they felt the computers gave the VISL group an advantage. It was believed that these students felt the computer enhances instruction (Vinther, 278).

It was also reported that the VISL group did much better on tree diagramming than the non-VISL group, which was predicted when the study commenced. There are many reasons why this group was more successful than the non-VISL group. First, the students were given a "hint" on the computer screen as they worked on diagramming a sentence. However, one who has ever built tree diagrams on paper knows that a "hint" does not pop up on the paper. In addition, the VISL program is very colorful on the screen. Since it is appealing and eye-catching, the VISL

students most likely had an easier time paying attention to the material, thus maintaining their focus and successfully completing a task (Vinther 282).

Although members of the non-VISL group were concerned that they did not perform as well as their VISL counterparts, they did feel their own skills using and understanding syntax had improved at the culmination of this study. Most members of this group found the training to be beneficial even though they had to use the paper/pencil method. There was only one student in this group who said "she had perceived no beneficial effects." Overall, the consensus of the group was positive regarding their own skills, which is important to note because many of them commented that they felt the VISL students did have the upper hand (Vinther 282).

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Online Sources to Implement CALL

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There are many websites teachers can use to implement the usage of computers in the classroom. One such resource is a website, *English Trailers,* which allows the student to view a movie trailer in order to enhance his/her language skills. Movies have been used for many years in the language classroom as a way to increase the students' authentic language competencies (Johnson and Heffernan 63). When a student visits *English Trailers,* he/she can select from a collection of over 100 movie trailers to view. The student is involved in a variety of activities on this website, from reading short movie summaries, identifying slang terminology, participating in online quizzes, along with doing Cloze exercises.

Making the language learning process authentic is typically a top priority for teachers. This website offers highly authentic materials because movies typically contain the language spoken by the general public within their dialogue. When a student views these movie clips, he/she is able to hear the language spoken by the target culture, including slang, which makes up a large portion of many languages. This website will identify the meaning of the slang terms so

the student will be able to internalize the meaning for future occasions if the word(s) is presented again. Although students are typically instructed on the proper grammatical word forms to use, it is important to also introduce slang words. If teachers want to students to successfully function in the target culture, they need to provide the students with opportunities to learn all forms of the language. Both slang/improper terms and proper terms can be taught simultaneously. The teacher may further this discussion by instructing the students when certain terms (slang terms) are appropriate and when they are not.

Another online resource that promotes language learning is a website called *Mango Languages*. This online program allows students to practice learning the target language through listening, speaking, and reading exercises. There are two versions of *Mango Languages*: Mango Basic and Mango Complete. Mango Basic is designed for the learner who wants a minimal level of language instruction. This version is designed for the international traveler who wants to learn some basic phrases in order to function in a foreign country. The other version, Mango Complete, provides more in-depth language lessons by allowing the student to role-play real-life situations, such as asking for assistance when falling ill or ordering food in a restaurant. In these scenarios, the student is able to hear how a sentence is pronounced (i.e. "My son needs help"). Simultaneously, the student hears the sentence and sees it written on the computer screen. Then, he/she is encouraged to take a few moments to speak the sentence aloud.

Up to this point, the focus has been on using online exercises and software programs to develop language skills. Students can also be evaluated in terms of their progress while using the Internet. There are many online websites teachers can subscribe to in order to assess their students' abilities, in addition to the exercises used for practicing the language. There is one website that I have extensive experience with, which is called Quia. When I taught Spanish at the

junior high level, I used this website to evaluate my student's performance on a specific grammar concept. I developed the quizzes online, where I would type a question and supply four to five multiple choice answers for the students to select from. As a side note, I realize that multiple choice tests are not necessarily a clear indication of student knowledge because the student does have the ability to get the correct answer even if he/she does not know the information. However, with a class of thirty-eight students, I was very limited on time for grading because the students were tested each week. Therefore, the online quizzes provided the students with immediate feedback, rather than having to wait several days for me to correct a paper test. With that said, the students were not only given an electronic test, but also mini-quizzes throughout the week, where they had to supply the correct answer without choosing from a list of answers.

On a test day, I would activate the quiz from my computer, and the students would begin taking it. Once all the students had completed the quiz, I would deactivate it so those who were absent could not take it until they set up a time. The students were only given one chance to complete the quiz. Although it was a user-friendly format, it came with a few problems that needed to be worked out. One issue that I consistently dealt with was student cheating. If a student cheats, it is a clear indication that my methods of instruction were not effective, as the student does not know the information and must cheat to get the correct answer. Since the students each had their own laptop, I had to constantly monitor their computer screens to see if they clicked off the quiz to look at any notes they may have had stored in another file on their computers. Instead of positioning my desk at the front of the classroom, in a traditional manner, I moved my desk to the back of the classroom so their backs and computer screens were always facing me. This helped because they all knew that I was behind them and could see what they were doing while they were online, taking the quiz. Another option, which helps teachers to

prevent from student cheating, is a program that allows you (the teacher) to log-in to the students' computers at any time to oversee what they are doing. This is referred to as Remote Desktop, which is a component of Microsoft Windows. This was another very helpful tool that I had at my disposal to help curb the cheating issue, although I am not sure this can ever be truly prevented. I will focus more on Quia later in this paper in terms of how I presently use it in my classes with my current students.

Other Technological Tools to Implement CALL

There are many tools that have been developed to complement the lessons in the classroom that use technology. One tool that is being used in classrooms today is the Interactive Whiteboard (IWB). The IWB looks similar to the common whiteboard that is used classrooms. The IWB consists of a computer, a projector, software programs, and a display panel. Once a software program is downloaded onto a computer, the images from the program are projected onto the whiteboard (the display panel). It is sensitive to touch, so a student or teacher can use a hand or finger to move the projected images on the board. This tool allows students to become actively involved in the lesson. In classrooms that utilize the IWB, students have found this tool to be beneficial when learning the content. The student is able to physically manipulate images on the display panel, which provides another opportunity to reinforce the material. Also, students found this resource to be "exciting" because it appeals to their interests (Schmid 52).

Advantages to Using CALL

Implementing CALL into the language classroom affords many opportunities for the student to enhance his/her language skills. First, the educators who use the computer in the classroom allow the students to learn and advance their skills in this area. With the implementation of CALL, not only are the students working on learning a language, but also

enhancing their skills with the computer itself. Secondly, CALL affords the opportunity to conduct a variety of activities that may interest the students. Educators must seek out ways to maintain student interest on a specific task, which can be a daily challenge. Once the student loses interest, he/she may lose sight of what is being taught and progress ceases. CALL is a method that can be used to keep the students involved in the material. Since the students often encounter computer images that are vibrant in color and appear energetic on the screen, they may become more interested in these types of programs. Sometimes, these software programs are even accompanied by sound, which can intensify the interest level. However, the sound can be a distraction for other students, so headphones may need to be provided to eliminate the noise.

Furthermore, in regards to advantages of using CALL, students are given immediate feedback when completing exercises on the computer. Prior to the implementation of CALL, students performed tasks in a written format and waited a significant amount of time before receiving any feedback from the teacher. However, CALL programs allow students to do a certain task and know within moments if they are correct or not. For example, in one specific program, the students are asked to complete a matching exercise. On the left side of the computer screen is a column with five incomplete sentences written. On the right side of the screen are the endings to each of the five incomplete sentences. The students must match the correct ending to each sentence by using the arrow keys on the keyboard to move the items in the column up or down until the complete sentences are formed and across from one another. The student will know immediately if he/she is successful or not by pressing the "Return" or "Enter" key in order to gain feedback. The electronic feedback form is a version of the traditional paper answer key, which is often used in classrooms as well. However, it is becoming more common to use paperless feedback forms for economic reasons.

The Limitations of Using Technology in the Language Classroom

There are limitations, however, with online evaluations in regards to language learning. For example, the students cannot be tested on their speaking skills in the target language via the computer, unless it is done over a video chat. With this type of program, the quality of the sound may not be very precise, and it may be difficult to get a clear understanding as to what is being said by the student. This limitation proves that the teacher cannot be replaced by the computer.

In addition to how affective the teaching of language pedagogy is with online learning, there are other factors that must be addressed, which could affect the language learning process. One example that may inhibit learning is the physical environment of the classroom and specific aspects of the computer while using CALL. If a student is working on a computer, he/she must be provided with adequate space to place his/her materials next to the computer to allow work to be done on paper, if need be. Also, in regards to the classroom environment, the computers must be placed in a room where there is very little noise. Students are often required to concentrate on exercises while working on the computer. If there is a lot of noise, the students become distracted quite easily, and learning sometimes fails to occur.

With the actual computer itself, as described by Ahmad, there may be issues that could be rather bothersome to the student, which in turn affect his/her ability to process the information effectively. One problem that often exists is the small size of the computer screen. Since students are often asked to work for a significant period of time on the computer, possibly a full class period, which can be two to three hours, the screen must be large enough for all students to see and read the information. This is especially important if there are students with visual impairments in the classroom. The consideration of font size must also be addressed. If the font size is too small, the students will have a very difficult time reading the information. They will

be concentrating more on reading the word correctly and may then miss the entire meaning of the assignment or the lesson being delivered. If a website offers what appears to be very beneficial language exercises, yet does not allow the student to read the wording with great ease, meaning the font is too small, simply do not use the website. There are many grammar websites on the Internet that will provide activities for the language task at-hand, and they will also allow the student to read without difficulties. In addition, the teacher could write to the developer of the website explaining the situation and why the website is not beneficial for language learning. Often, when students are trying to read information on the computer screen, they will get glare from the sun or the lights in the classroom. In order to prevent from this happening, Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) screens will completely eliminate the glare, and the students will be able to see the screen without any difficulties. However, locating the funds to provide for this type of learning can be rather challenging. Therefore, the solution cannot always be to simply throw out the old computers screens and buy new ones. An easier solution may be to place the screens (and computers) in an area where the student will not get a glare from the sun. If there are blinds or shades in the classroom the teacher could pull them down to reduce or eliminate the glare. If the classroom lights are the source causing the glare, the teacher could turn them down completely, as there should be enough light emitted from the computer screen to allow for the work to be completed (Ahmad et al. 46).

Another drawback to using CALL in the classroom is the cost of using this type of technology. Many colleges and universities struggle with budget issues and find it very difficult to implement an expensive program. Stanford University once had a Russian language program that used CALL. However, once it was discovered that the program was costing three times as

much as having a traditional course taught by an instructor, the program immediately came to a halt (Underwood 95). This is one issue that may be rather difficult to overcome.

Implementing technology into the classroom is becoming more and more common as a method of instruction. Students can use CALL exercises to assist them in their language learning process. Although they afford many opportunities for the learner, there are obvious disadvantages to using them. Once the teacher is aware of what may happen as a result of using CALL, he/she can work to make the necessary modifications so that there will be little to no interference.

Teaching Experience in a Class of Native and Nonnative Speakers

As stated previously, I am teaching a remedial English class at a college in Minnesota. This course is a "blended" course, meaning that the students come to campus for the lecture, but all of the assignments are completed and submitted through an online course shell. Since this course is a "blended" course, I have asked the Dean of Faculty to allow me to conduct my courses in a computer lab. The students work with activities online in my class and complete each assignment within the course shell, so I felt it would be beneficial to have access to the computers at all times throughout the class period.

The "blended" format is a type of Web-based Language Learning. Although I deliver the course material in the form of a traditional in-class lecture, the students can always refer to the online course shell to find the course notes. In cases when students are absent, they can log-in and look over the notes to discover what they missed in class; they can teach themselves the material through the course shell. In addition, the students are allowed to complete practice activities and quizzes in the online shell prior to completing the weekly assignment. The practice

activities and quizzes are another type of Web-based Language Learning. These will be discussed in greater detail in a later section along with the demographics of the course.

Current Technology Usage in the Course

Technology is intertwined into the structure of my classes; the students are immediately introduced to a variety of online tools in the "blended" course. A few days prior to the start of each quarter, the students are enrolled by the college in the online portion of the course. Prior to the start of the class, the students are given a tutorial on how to use the course shell. The students come to campus for this introductory lesson on how to use the online system, which is conducted by a college employee. The students must log-in each time they need to access the "blended" course. The college provides each student with a username and password, which can be changed, upon enrolling in the college. I have access to the "blended" section at all times, prior to when the students have access to it. Each quarter I type a message on the course homepage. I welcome the students to the class, introduce myself, and ask them to familiarize themselves with the information provided in the course shell. In the course shell, the students can send me emails, and I also send the students an email, again welcoming them to the class. In addition to email, the students can also post messages in the "Student Lounge," which is a place where the students can post general comments for the entire class to read, and other students within the course can respond. The "Student Lounge" forum helps the students build relationships with one another, and these forums also give them the opportunity to connect with their classmates while outside of the actual classroom.

In addition to the above resources found within the course shell, the students have even more tools to assist them through the course. For example, the students can monitor their grade throughout the eleven weeks of the quarter. They have access to their grades twenty-four hours a

day, seven days a week. Since students should always be aware of their grades, it prevents from any surprises at the end of a quarter.

Another feature in the course is an "Attendance" link. As instructors, we must keep accurate attendance records for each class that is taught throughout the eleven weeks. When a student is absent or present for a class, the information is entered into the system. The students can access the "Attendance" link to verify their attendance for each class. Sometimes conflicts arise, and the student claims that he/she was present on a specific date, yet his/her online attendance record indicates an absence for that date. In order to solve this dilemma, we (instructors) are also required to keep a paper copy of the attendance, which is then turned into the records department at the end of each class period. When a student questions his/her attendance, the student and I can go directly to the records department and consult the paper copy of the attendance for a specific date, if necessary.

Prior to completing the weekly online homework assignments, the students have the ability to practice working with the weekly course content. Each week the students can click on the activity links in the course shell, which allow them to practice the material in the form of an exercise or interactive game. These activity links are intended to enhance the students' skills with a specific concept. The students can complete these activities as many times as they like. Once they feel comfortable with the material, they can they move forward and complete the assignment. For example, during week one, the eight parts of speech are discussed in class. I write each part of speech on the white board, provide a definition, and then also provide a few examples of each part of speech. The students, while outside of class, then go into the course shell, click on the activity links and complete an exercise. For example, the activity links for week one allow the student to identify the part of speech for a selected word in a sentence. Once

the student identifies which part of speech the selected word is, he/she will drag the box over to the sentence, using the mouse. If the student is correct, a green check mark will appear next to the sentence. If the student provides an incorrect response, the box will simply not move and will change to red, indicating that there was an error. There are four choices to choose from for this specific exercise.

In a blended course, students do not turn in an actual physical copy of their homework assignments. The assignment is posted within the course shell. The students download the assignment each week to their computer and work on it, while consulting their in-class notes. Once the students are finished, they upload their completed assignment into a drop box and "submit" it to me. I provide the students with a step-by-step approach to uploading the assignments. Please see Appendix 1 for a representation of this.

Typically, the students only have one assignment per week; there are only two weeks during the quarter that they are required to do two assignments in one week's time. Although I have access to all the assignments at any time throughout the eleven weeks, the students do not. The assignments are posted on a week-by-week basis; they cannot work ahead. Each assignment is due by midnight on Sundays. If a student submits an assignment late, the college's policy requires a 10% reduction of points per day, each day the assignment is late. For example, if an assignment is worth 30 points, and it is turned in 1 day late, the deduction will be 3 points (30 X .10 = 3); therefore, the student will receive a score of 27 / 30 points possible. An additional 3 points will be deducted each day the assignment is submitted late.

Each quarter I give the students a copy of the course syllabus and verbally discuss the policies of the college. Often, the students will misplace or lose their copy of the syllabus throughout the quarter, which may inhibit their ability to remember the policies. If a student has

forgotten the rules regarding a specific policy, such as the above late assignment policy, he/she

can be immediately reminded of said policy because an electronic copy of the syllabus is posted

in the online shell as well. In addition to the "Late Assignment Submission Policy," the students

will also find other policies in the electronic copy of the syllabus. These policies include

"Attendance Policy", "Incomplete Policy", and "Academic Misconduct Policy." Moreover, the

students can find the instructors' contact information on the syllabus; therefore, they will never

have to worry about misplacing their instructors' office phone numbers and email addresses.

Enhancing the Course through the Implementation of CALL and Other Supplemental Resources

When delivering a lesson on the eight parts of speech, the teacher may notice a need for

additional resources to support learning these concepts, which I have noticed in my own classes.

During my search for supplemental activities, I discovered an instructional website, *Education*

Place, which would serve my purpose and others in this type of situation. Within this website,

there is a link to an activity, titled, "Wacky Web Tales" where the students have access to 101

differently themed stories. This online activity focuses on using parts of speech. It is an

electronic version of Mad Libs. Mad Libs are activity books, invented to help students practice

the eight parts of speech. Students or their parents/guardians can purchase Mad Libs at many

local stores, such as grocery or book stores. There are many different Mad Libs books, which are

organized into different themes. For example, there are "Rock 'n' Roll" and "Haunted" Mad Libs

themed books. For the non-electronic version, the students must have a pen or pencil to complete

this activity. Mad Libs are a form of a "Cloze Procedure," where the majority of the words are

already printed; however, the student needs to complete the story by filling in the missing words.

Typically, this activity is made for two people, where one person is the "writer" and the other

person is the "word giver." The "writer" verbally asks for a particular part of speech from the

"word giver," the "word giver" says a word for the part of speech, and the "writer" writes in

what the other person has said. Since the person (the "word giver") saying the part of speech has

no idea what the story is about and cannot see the rest of the words in the story, the end result

can be rather comical. Once the list is complete, the "writer" reads the story aloud. At this point,

laughs are usually exchanged, as the story often does not make sense. That is exactly the point

of <u>Mad Libs</u>: to not make sense. It is supposed to be funny and engage the students in this

activity in order that they learn the eight parts of speech.

In regards to "Wacky Web Tales," which can be located in Appendix 2, the students

have the ability to type in the part of speech asked for. They begin by clicking on a story that is

of interest to them. On this particular website, there are approximately ninety-six different stories

the students can click on. Once a story is found, the student is presented with a screen that does

not show the story, but only empty blanks to type in the part of speech being asked for. This

online activity is unique because the students can perform this task individually, where the

paper/pencil format of the original <u>Mad Libs</u> is designed for two people in order for it to be

successful. One option that the online version offers, which is not available in the paper/pencil

format of <u>Mad Libs</u>, is the ability to ask for help. If a student cannot remember a certain part of

speech and cannot offer a word, he/she can click on the "PARTS OF SPEECH HELP" tab at the

bottom of the page. A new window will open up, and the student will see a list of the parts of

speech, which include definitions and examples. This option will hopefully lead him/her in the

right direction and give them the ability to type of a word. After the student has successfully

filled in each blank, he/she will click on "SEE YOUR WACKY WEB TALE" at the bottom of

the page. On the next screen, the student will be able to read the entire story with his/her insertions of the parts of speech.

Since I have discovered this website, I have used it every quarter, throughout each quarter. The feedback has been very positive. It seems to be interesting to the students, as I hear them laughing upon reading their stories, which indicates that this is an improvement to the course content. Per the lessons I am given, I am only responsible for providing a simple definition of the word and a few examples. This activity has provided the necessary reinforcement of the material for both the native and nonnative speaker. In addition, the activity supports CALL as students will be using the computer as a means to learn language. This type of activity (cloze exercise) has roots stemming to the 1990s. Please see Appendix 2 for examples of the "Wacky Web Tales" activity.

As discussed in a previous section, the nonnative speaker may encounter challenges while acquiring English verbs. A particular area of concern for these individuals is the use of third-person singular forms. I will now discuss the actual types of activities I have developed for nonnative students based on third-person verb forms, both present and past. I am using an integrated assessment approach, where I will combine speaking and writing together and listening and reading together. According to the video, "Integrated Assessment," from the International Language Testing Association, this type of test "combines two or more skills" (Plakans). In this video, Lia Plakans, explains that often there are "thematic links" in integrated assessment, where the student will have to speak about a topic and in addition, write about the same topic. For the assessment tasks I have created, there are "thematic links" between the skills, as they are centered on the same topic.

For the speaking assessment, I will conduct an oral interview with individual students. I am observing the student's ability to use third-person singular verbs. I will ask him/her to talk about a person that is important in his/her life. In addition, I will ask the students to elaborate more on these individuals. Since each student will be discussing another person, he/she will need to use third-person verb forms. I will not explicitly correct the student's errors, which could affect the flow of the conversation and hinder the student from speaking altogether. Moreover, my intention is make this an authentic exercise where the student is able to relate to the situation through his/her own experiences. Since the student is required to speak about someone in his/her life, it makes the topic more meaningful to the student, hopefully satisfying the goal of authenticity. As an option, students also video record their speaking exercise. One website, *Screenr*, allows the user to record a video and send the link to the appropriate person who would like to view it. *Screenr* allows the user to record a video up to five minutes in length for free. Some students may find a face-to-face interview intimidating, which could lead to mistakes in language production. The teacher could provide this option to students to avoid potential mistakes along with giving them the opportunity to utilize technology. If a teacher provides this option, he/she would need to do a brief lesson on how to use the website to record videos. Please see Appendix 3 for an example of the speaking activity.

For the writing portion, the student will also have to write about this same topic: a person that is important in his/her life. I am assessing the student's ability to correctly use third-person verb forms in writing. I will identify the errors explicitly upon correction of the writing sample. Also, this topic maintains the idea of authenticity, as it is similar in nature to the speaking portion, where authenticity is taken into account upon the activity development. Please see Appendix 3 for an example of the writing activity.

For the listening portion, I found a movie synopsis, <u>Freedom Writers</u>, which includes substantial usage of third-person singular verbs. There were two reasons why I chose this specific activity/story for assessment. First, it focuses on the use of present tense third-person verb forms, and moreover, I believe it is an authentic task because people can relate to movies, as they are a part of the culture. For this activity, I will ask the students to listen to the story. Then, using a *listening cloze* task, I will ask the students to write down any third-person singular forms they hear in the blank spaces. They are simply noticing the forms. I will identify the exact number of correct past tense third-person verb forms they write down. Then, I will compare the results to the total amount of forms that are actually used in the paper to determine a final grade. These activities relate to the 1990s CALL period, where teachers began creating their own activities, such as cloze exercises, for their students. Students can be asked to complete this exercise on the computer. Not only will this give them another opportunity to enhance their computer skills, but it will also give them the opportunity to use the correction tools within the program as they can send their completed documents to their classmates for peer review. Please see Appendix 4 for an example of the listening activity.

As an extension to the listening activity, students can also visit *You Tube* to look up video clips of the movie. As the student listens to the clip, he/she can write down any third-person singular verbs that are heard within the segment. Since students will have the opportunity to select any segment they would like, this may lead to learning different verbs that were not mentioned in the movie synopsis that was read to them previously. I was able to find several video clips of this movie on *You Tube* by doing a basic search, and there are a variety of clips to choose from, so this may work well with a larger class because each student can select a different

clip. In addition, the student is enhancing his/her technology skills, specifically Internet navigation skills, by using this website for this activity.

I will use the same movie synopsis from the listening portion for the reading portion by providing the same hand-out to the students. My goal is to have the students recall the verb forms they heard from the listening activity and apply the same forms in this activity. Therefore, they will have frequent exposure, allowing them to have more opportunities to learn the verb forms while discovering the meaning of these forms in a given context. Please see Appendix 4 for an example of the reading activity.

Lastly, I created a short exercise that encompasses the combination of both present, past, and future verb forms within the same worksheet. The purpose of this activity is allow the students the opportunity to practice using the verb forms that they often struggle with using while learning the target language. The worksheet focuses on one verb, but carries it through a variety of tenses depending upon the context of the sentence. This allows the student to discover that one verb can take many different forms, and each form depicts a different meaning depending upon how it is used in a sentence. This is an electronic document, so students can use the computer to complete the exercise and then send it to me or another classmate for review. Please see Appendix 5 for a representation of this item.

I have created these tasks based on the assumption that the students have already been given direct instruction using third-person verb forms, past, present and future, over a period of time. The activities described, both paper and computer-based, will take place at the end of the unit on verbs, and I will use them as a review activity to reinforce the different forms they have learned over the course of time. There may need to be modifications made to ensure the activities are the most optimal tool for students to learn and apply the verb forms.

In regard to teaching and learning phrasal verbs, I discovered some activities to help support my instruction, both through the use of CALL and traditional course materials. My goal is to expose the students to a variety of phrasal verbs. I realize there are many phrasal verbs, so I have narrowed down the list so the class can focus only on the commonly used phrases that they may encounter on a daily basis within the classroom. In terms of presentation, I will pass out the list of selected phrases. Then, I will ask the students to work in pairs (native and non-native speakers work in pairs) to determine the meaning of each phrasal verb. Next, the groups will break up and resume as a class, and I will encourage an open discussion on the meaning of each phrasal verbs. Lastly, I will ask the students to re-group, and attempt to form complete sentences using the phrasal verbs. Please see Appendix 6 for a representation of this item.

The following class period, we will continue our discussion on phrasal verbs, where instead of providing a list of written phrasal verbs, I will state each phrase and ask the students to perform the task as they hear it being read. This group of phrasal verbs pertains to the task of working on a computer. One of my goals is to incorporate the usage of computers, so by having the students actively use the computers, I will satisfy this goal. Please see Appendix 7 for a representation of this item. Then, I intend to review the phrasal verbs we learned from both lessons. For this lesson, I have developed a cloze activity for the students to complete, where they will be encouraged to recall both groupings of phrasal verbs. Students will have the option to complete a paper version of the activity or use the electronic version that will be available in their online course shell. First, students will work individually on this activity. Then, I will encourage the students to work in pairs to compare their results. The students who use the electronic version can be encouraged to work with others who did the same version, where they can send one another their documents. This will give them practice uploading their completed

work to the website and then downloading their classmate's document to view. Later, we will then discuss their results as a class. Please see Appendix 8 for a representation of this item.

In order to finalize the lesson, as a homework assignment, students will locate one phrasal verb (other than the ones discussed in class) and post it in the Student Lounge for other students to comment on. Then, each student will be required to define at least one phrasal verb by replying to the classmate who posted the phrasal verb. In order to confirm to initial "poster" of the phrasal verbs has seen/read the response to his/her post, the student will then be asked to make an additional post, replying back to the classmate and correctly use the phrasal verb in a sentence. Since the student will "know" the meaning of the phrasal verb because another student has defined it for him/her, the student will be able to properly use the phrasal verb in a sentence. Using the Student Lounge for this lesson is a form of Computer-mediated Communication (CMC), which has been used since the 1960s yet has made significant advancements in just the past ten years, as discussed previously in the paper.

As mentioned previously, this course does not discuss the use of English articles. To enhance the course and provide support for nonnative speakers, I will give a brief overview of English articles. For this, I will draw a chart on the white board that shows how articles are used, which provides different instances as to when indefinite or definite articles are used. Please see Appendix 9 for a representation of this chart. Following this portion, I will provide an explanation on the usage of indefinite articles to introduce a topic and the usage of definite articles to refer to the same topic thereafter within the same context. Next, I will provide the students with a story from *Aesop's Fables*, where they will be required to circle the indefinite articles and underline the definite articles. The goal with this activity is to simply have the

students identify the articles in written form. Please see Appendix 10 for a representation of this activity.

The following class period, I will continue focusing on articles by providing the students with a fill-in-the blank exercise. I will use another story from *Aesop's Fables* for this activity, and the students will be asked to identify the proper articles to use within the sentence and write them in the blank spaces. Please see Appendix 11 for a representation of this activity. For additional exposure with the usage of articles, I will ask the students to complete a worksheet where they will identify the underlying meaning of each sentence. They will follow the example at the top of the page to guide them through this activity. The students are identifying the underlying meaning by looking at which articles are used in each sentence to determine the context. Please see Appendix 12 for a representation of this activity. With each activity I will request that the students pair-up (mixed pairs – native and non-native speakers) have them verbally state each sentence in order to hear how they are using the articles in each context. Lastly, I will have the students work independently on the computers to complete an online activity where they can practice using articles, which includes some emphasis on article usage with proper nouns (geographical locations). Please see Appendix 13 for an example of the activity.

In addition to addressing specific grammatical exercises, another supplemental language website is *Mango Languages*, which was discussed previously. Although this does not relate to any specific grammatical construction discussed within this section, *Mango Languages* provide additional opportunities to work with the language and enhance one's skills. In addition, it allows students to use the computer and Internet, supporting the basic premise of CALL. In the future, I plan to use this website with my students. Using their own computer, they will be directed to the

website and will choose a language lesson based upon their native language. Then, they will work through the lessons at their own pace. The English lessons begin by directing students in their native language and, eventually, as students progress through the lessons, more English words and phrases are introduced. There is a variety of native languages to choose from within this website. Teachers can use this website in a mixed class, as there are lessons directed at native English speakers as well. The native English speaker can choose a language he/she would like to learn and proceed through the lessons just like the nonnative speaker. Mango Languages is a useful supplemental tool that can be used in a class with mixed language backgrounds and allows students to work at the own pace while supporting the notions of CALL.

Conclusion

Applying the Research to Create an Optimal Learning Environment through the Use of CALL in a Classroom of Native and Non-native English Speakers.

I will now discuss other considerations from my research and apply them to this type of class in order to enhance instruction. From the case studies discussed previously, many students expressed their concerns with using the computer in the language classroom. My goal is to take their feedback and apply the proper modifications to my own classes. As a result, I hope to avoid having my own students express similar concerns.

According to Son, while working on the computers in the classroom, some students in the case studies reported having "tired eyes." This is due to long periods of time sitting in front of the computer screen. This is something I will consider while we work on the computers in the classroom. I need to make sure I am watching the clock, keeping track of how much time is spent on the computers. This may take some modifications at the beginning, where I need to use direct

observation of the students as to what is an appropriate amount of time to spend on the computers.

From the case studies, other students reported that having to share a computer was a disadvantage to learning the content. I have used pair work on the computers before, where students would form groups of two and work on an exercise on the computer. I like using a variety of methods in the classroom, including pair work. However, I do not think using pair work exercises on the computer would be the most optimal form of learning. With computer exercises, the focus is on the computer, not on each other. When we are not using the computers, I will definitely still use pair/group work, specifically mixed pairs of native and non-native speakers, because they will be asked to focus on one another, not a computer screen.

In addition, having to share a computer can be physically uncomfortable for students. The student who does not like close contact would most likely be more concerned about the invasion of his/her personal space rather than concentrating on the material presented on the computer. As a result, this type of student would truly not benefit from a pair work exercise on the computer.

Previously, technology skills were addressed, demonstrating that students possess different levels of technology skills, ranging from non-existent to possessing the ability to work in the IT field. As mentioned, a technology skills training course can be conducted at the beginning of each quarter to ensure that students have the basic skills to proceed with the course. Some of the students may become bored because they already possess basic computer skills. In order to make use of their time during this portion of the class, students (those who have basic computer skills) can be paired-up with the students who lack the necessary skills to operate a computer and the Internet. Prior to conducting a basic computer skills course, students can complete a survey where they will identify their computer skills. Therefore, the teacher will

know exactly who to pair up. After conducting the basic computer skills course, students can work together, exploring the items discussed in the training course. The students who possess higher level computer skills will act as mentors to the students who need additional training with the computer.

Many online language classes have discussion forum posts as a required component in the course. One disadvantage to the discussion forum was the question of authenticity. Students are required to post a response to a topic in the discussion forum. However, since they are required to do this for a grade, many question the notion of how authentic the written conversation truly is. Since discussion posts are a required component for my courses, I need to work on creating more authentically written topics for the students. The duty of providing an authentic environment relies on the teacher. Therefore, I need to make sure I am an active participant in the discussion forums. In order to enhance the authenticity, I will pose questions that relate to the students' lives. For example, I may ask them about their likes and dislikes. I may select a general theme for them to respond to, such as "In a complete sentence, tell me one food item that you like and one food item that you dislike." Often when students are asked questions that they can relate to, they are more apt to respond thus obtaining the goal of written communication. In addition to the conversation being more authentic in nature, the students will be using present-tense verbs, which is another core skill we focus on in the course. The students will hopefully focus more on being involved in the writing because the topic relates to them rather than commenting on a topic they have no interest in. In turn, if the students are truly providing their own insight and considering the topic, the conversation will be more authentic in nature. In addition, the discussion forum can be used to identify specific language concepts the nonnative speaker found to be difficult, such as third-person singular verbs, articles, and phrasal

verbs. This forum will allow them to freely choose the area of difficulty, state a reason why it was challenging, and provide other classmates the opportunity to comment or give advice to the student.

Continuing forward with the notion of promoting an authentic environment, I will incorporate the website *English Trailers* into my classroom instruction. I found this website to be very motivating tool for a student to learn from. It achieves the goal of being authentic in terms of how the information is presented and the language that is used. In addition, the students will learn word forms they may hear while being active participants within the target society.

I will conduct a lesson, based on the content from this website, on the usage of proper versus improper words usage. It is my belief that the students need to be actively involved in learning process rather than me simply teaching the material. Therefore, I will develop role play scenarios that will prompt the student to think about which forms to use given the situation. Working in pairs, the students will need to develop a dialogue that coincides with the scenario they are given. After creating the dialogue, the students will need to verbally act of the scenario in front of another pair group.

There are many aspects to consider when creating an appropriate assessment for ESL students. It is my belief that an assessment is never complete; the teacher can never use one version of a test for his/her entire career, as is it would be a disservice to the learner. The test/assessment must be constantly evaluated. The test must also always take the learner into account. If we, as educators, lose sight of our learners and their needs, we will never meet the goal of creating the most authentic and appropriate assessment. Moreover, language is constantly changing and evolving, so it is imperative that the assessments given to students reflect the language of the current time period. As new words are added into the language, teachers must

make the adjustments to their assessments so the students become familiar with these words and their meanings. Doing so achieves the goal of authenticity because the language being used within the assessment is current and reflective of the target culture.

Throughout the research I have done for this paper, I have a better understanding of how to best serve nonnative speakers in their quest to learn English. Knowing that the students need additional support with some of the language constructs, I created supplemental exercises for the students to enhance the course content. Another goal I have is to incorporate the usage of computers for some of the activities I have described. The purpose of this goal is two-fold: to enhance the students' language and computer proficiency skills. Since many students need additional practice, I feel the computer can be a useful tool to practice these language constructs, in addition to the paper/pencil activity method. Additionally, I feel that the native English speakers may benefit from participating in the CALL and non-CALL supplemental activities. When other teachers are faced with a similar situation, I hope the suggested activities can provide opportunities for students to enhance their language proficiency skills.

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Appendix 1

Instructions on How to Submit Your Assignments to the Course

1. Log-in to your online class
2. Click on the "Lessons" tab
3. Click on the week you are doing the assignment for (For example: If it is week 5, click on the "Week 5" tab)
4. Click on the "Weekly Assignment" tab – it will be the last item listed on the page
5. Click on the assignment link (it will be typed in blue font).
6. The assignment will open up, once it does, a smaller box will also open up. In the box, there will be a "save" option. Click on the "save" tab. Another box will open up. This is where you will store the file/document so your work will be saved. In the box, under "file name", make sure you save the file to the "H Drive" (if you are working on it at school). Then click "save."
7. Your assignment should still be on the screen.
8. You are now at the point when you can begin working on it.
9. Once you are done with the assignment, click the "save" button, in Microsoft Word. You must give a title to the assignment. Use the week we are currently in at Rasmussen followed by a hyphen, then followed by your first and last name. Please see below. "Save" Week 5 – Collette Henretty. Once you have entered the title, you can click "save"
10. You can close the program by click on the red "X" in the upper, right corner of the screen.
11. Since you never logged- out of Angel, you should have the assignment screen still up on the computer. If not, follow steps 1 – 5 to log-in again to Angel.
12. On this screen, scroll down to the bottom. You will see a small, grey box that says" attachments." Click on this box.
13. Another window will open up. This is when you will search for the assignment. In the file name box, click on the "H Drive", which is where you initially saved the document.
14. In the "H Drive" you may see a list of other documents. Click on the document you were want to send to the instructor. Using the above example, click on "Week 5 – Collette Henretty." Then, click on "open."
15. At this point, you should see the screen in Angel that allows you to "submit" the assignment. Hit the "submit" tab.
16. You will be asked if you are sure you want to submit the assignment – click "yes"
17. Finally, to determine if your assignment was submitted, the next screen you will see includes a message, stating that "You have submitted the assignment successfully." If you do not see the message, please try the steps again. If, after a second attempt, you are still having issues submitting the assignment, please contact me at collette.henretty@rasmussen.edu
18. Well done! Your assignment will be graded and returned to you shortly. Please check your Angel email account in the next few days for feedback regarding the assignment.

Appendix 2

Activity the student is presented with before completing the task.

Wack Web Tales
Fill in the blanks.
Theme: Adventures Abroad

country [   ]

adjective [   ]

verb ending with -ing [   ]

verb ending with -ing [   ]

Activity after the student completes filling in the blanks, but prior to submitting the answers.

Wacky Web Tales
Fill in the blanks.
Theme: Adventures Abroad

country [Spain   ]

adjective [tall   ]

verb ending with –ing [swimming   ]

verb ending with –ing [jogging   ]

Final screen the student is presented with after submission – the actual story, including the student's responses.

Wacky Web Tales
Theme: Adventures Abroad

One of the most interesting places in the world to visit is **Spain**. This place has everything! There are **tall** mountains for **swimming**, and lakes that are perfect for **jogging**.

Appendix 3

Speaking Activity – Oral interview

Please tell me about someone important in your life. Tell me his/her name, who he/she is in your life, what this person likes to do in terms of a profession and hobbies, and what you and this person enjoy doing together.

Writing Activity – Reflective writing

Using any electronic document (Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, etc.), please write about someone important in your life. Tell me his/her name, who he/she is in your life, what this person likes to do in terms of a profession and hobbies, and what you and this person enjoy doing together.

Appendix 4

Listening, Writing, and Reading Activity – Cloze Procedure

Please listen to the following movie synopsis of Freedom Writers. In the blank spaces, write down the verb forms you hear as the story is read to you.

Hilary Swank plays the role of Erin Gruwell, a new, excited schoolteacher who leaves the safety of her hometown, Newport Beach, to teach at Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, a formerly high achieving school which has recently had an integration program put in place.

(Adapted from imdb.com)

This is a portion of the movie synopsis. The students will be read the full version.

Hilary Swank _____ the role of Erin Gruwell, a new, excited schoolteacher who _____

_____the safety of her hometown, Newport Beach, _____ at Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, a formerly high achieving school which has recently had an integration program put in place.

This is a portion of the listening and reading activities. The students will be given the full version for both cloze activities.

Appendix 5

The Verb *WALK*
Past – Present – Future

Fill-in-the-blank - Please write the proper form of the verb *walk* in the spaces below. Pay attention to all the words within the sentence to guide you in your construction of each verb.

1. Yesterday the dog_____(walk) to the park.

2. Today I am_____(walk) a marathon.

3. Marcy _____(walk) the route many times in the past.

4. Tomorrow we _____(walk) to the store to buy groceries.

5. Right now the twins_____(walk) around the lake.

6. Tom and I_____(walk) everyday for exercise.

7. Last night we_____(walk) through the forest, looking for the deer.

8. Did you_____(walk) to school this morning?

9. They_____ (walk) the path so they did not get lost.

10. Mr. Smith likes to_____(walk) down to the lake to feed the ducks.

Appendix 6

Commonly Used Phrasal Verbs in the Classroom

Instructions: Please read each phrase in bold and the sentences below each phrase. Then, with a partner, try to guess the meaning of the bolded phrases in the sentences. Be prepared to share your answers with the class. After you share your results with the class, then you can work with your partner to write a complete sentence using each phrasal verb.

Catch on
Example Sentence: *Listen and pay attention to the teacher, and you will **catch on** soon.*
Meaning:
Your Sentence:

Catch up
Example Sentence: *I need to **catch up** on my homework because I missed 3 days of school.*
Meaning:
Your Sentence:

Get ahead
Example Sentence: *Tina wants to **get ahead** on her school work because she is going on vacation and will miss one week of school.*
Meaning:
Your Sentence:

Fall behind
Example Sentence: *It is important not to **fall behind** on your assignments because you could fail the course.*
Meaning:
Your Sentence:

Fill in
Example Sentence: *On the worksheet, please **fill in** the blank spaces by writing an answer on each line to complete the sentences.*
Meaning:
Your Sentence:

Find out
Example Sentence: *In order to **find out** the answers to the questions on the assignment, please read the information in chapter one.*
Meaning:
Complete Sentence:

Pick up
Example Sentence: *At the end of class, please **pick up** the assignment that setting on my desk.*
Meaning:
Your Sentence:

Pull out
Example Sentence: *Please **pull out** your textbooks from your book bags and open the book to page ten.*
Meaning:
Your Sentence:

Show up
Example Sentence: *It is important to **show up** on time to class because the lesson will begin right away.*
Meaning:
Your Sentence:

Stand up
Example Sentence: *When you introduce yourself to the class, please **stand up** from your chair so everyone can see you while you are speaking.*
Meaning:
Your Sentence:

Take out
*Example Sentence: Please open your folders and **take out** the worksheet I gave to you yesterday so we can continue to work on it today.*
Meaning:
Your Sentence:

Turn in
Example Sentence: *I would like you to **turn in** the worksheet since it is the end of class so I can grade it and return it to you tomorrow.*
Meaning:
Complete Sentence:

(Purdue Online Writing Lab)

Appendix 7

Commonly Used Phrasal Verbs You May Encounter while Working on the Computer and/or Internet

Instructions: Please listen to the following phrasal verbs and then perform the steps while using the computer.

Plug in – insert a plug into an electric outlet

Step 1). Plug in the computer to the outlet.

Log in – Enter a computer by providing username and/or password

Step 2). **Log in** to the computer.

Open up – Click on a web browser or website so it will appear on a screen

Step 3). **Open up** Internet Explorer

Scroll down/up – With your mouse, move down the page using the bar on the right side of the screen.

Step 4). **Scroll down** the page to the bottom and **scroll back up** to the top of the page.

Close out – Leave the website by often clicking on the red X in the upper right corner of the screen

Step 5). **Close out** the page that is currently on your computer screen

Log out/off – End your session on the computer.

Step 6). **Log-out** of the computer by clicking the "Start" button in the lower left corner of the screen. Then, you will see a button that says "Log off." Click on this button, and your session will now end.

(adapted from English Gateway)

Appendix 8

Phrasal Verbs

Writing Cloze Activity

Instructions: While reading the following sentences, please recall the phrasal verbs we have discussed in class over the past two days. Then, write the correct phrasal verb in the blank space to form a complete sentence.

1). When I returned to school, it took a long time for me to _____ on my missing assignments.

2). The teacher asked to the class to _____ the worksheet from our folders so we could use it in class.

3). I realized the computer was not working because it was not _____to the electrical outlet.

4). The teacher instructed the class to _____ the blank spaces, and I understood that I needed to write the proper words to form a complete sentence.

5). As I _____ the website page, I notice there are a lot of spelling errors, so I will not use this as a resource for my paper.

6). I told Trina she needs to _____ to the computer with her username and password before she can begin working on the assignment.

7). Before I _____ the assignment to the teacher, I need to write my name on the top of the page.

8). Tom was instructed to _____ the computer because he was playing games on the Internet and not doing the assignment.

Appendix 9

Begin with a Noun
                ↓

Does it refer to an object, place, or thing?   Yes → Is it the name of something or someone? No → Use the article *the*

          No   **Yes**   **(example: Put** *the* **milk in the fridge.)**

                ↓   ↓
Is the noun countable?   **No article is needed (example: Michael Jackson was a singer.)**

          No   Yes →   Is the noun singular or plural?

                ↓   **Plural→ No article is needed (example: Dogs can make great pets.)**
                                             Singular → Use *a* **or** *an* **(example: I want a soda.)**

No article is needed
(example: I need to buy milk at store.)

(Adapted from University of New Hampshire – Connors Writing Center)

Appendix 10
The Lion and the Mouse
Directions: Please circle all the indefinite articles (a/an) and underline all the definite articles (the) in the passage below.

Once when a Lion was asleep a little Mouse began running up and down upon him; this soon wakened the Lion, who placed his huge paw upon him, and opened his big jaws to swallow him. "Pardon, O King," cried the little Mouse: "forgive me this time, I shall never forget it: who knows but what I may be able to do you a turn some of these days?" The Lion was so tickled at the idea of the Mouse being able to help him, that he lifted up his paw and let him go. Sometime after the Lion was caught in a trap, and the hunters who desired to carry him alive to the King, tied him to a tree while they went in search of a wagon to carry him on. Just then the little Mouse happened to pass by, and seeing the sad plight in which the Lion was, went up to him and soon gnawed away the ropes that bound the King of the Beasts. "Was I not right?" said the little Mouse.

(http://aesopfables.com/cgi/aesop1.cgi?sel&TheLionandtheMouse2)

Appendix 11
The Fox and the Goat
Directions: From what we discussed about using indefinite articles (a/an) with subjects that are unknown, typically occurring in the beginning of a conversation/written text, and using definite articles (the) with subjects that have been introduced, please fill in the blank spaces below by writing the proper article.

_____FOX one day fell into a deep well and could find no means of escape.

_____Goat, overcome with thirst, came to the same well, and seeing _____ Fox, inquired if the water was good. Concealing his sad plight under a merry guise, _____Fox indulged in a lavish praise of the water, saying it was excellent beyond measure, and encouraging him to descend. _____Goat, mindful only of his thirst, thoughtlessly jumped down, but just as he drank, _____Fox informed him of the difficulty they were both in and suggested a scheme for their common escape. "If," said he, "you will place your forefeet upon the wall and bend your head, I will run up your back and escape, and will help you out afterwards." _____Goat readily assented and __Fox leaped upon his back. Steadying himself with ____Goat's horns, he safely reached the mouth of the well and made off as fast as he could. When _____Goat upbraided him for breaking his promise, he turned around and cried out, "You foolish old fellow! If you had as many brains in your head as you have hairs in your beard, you would never have gone down before you had inspected the way up, nor have exposed yourself to dangers from which you had no means of escape.

(http://aesopfables.com/cgi/aesop1.cgi?sel&TheFoxandtheGoat)

Appendix 12

Articles – Identifying the Underlying Meaning

Directions: From our discussion of the usage of articles with known and unknown topics, please identify the underlying meaning of each sentence below. Please use the example as a guide to help you with this exercise.

Example:
1). A dog bit the boy.
Underlying meaning: The dog is unknown, the boy is known.

2). The dog bit the boy.
Underlying meaning:

3). The dog bit a boy.
Underlying meaning:

4). A dog bit a boy.
Underlying meaning:

5). A woman bought a dress.
Underlying meaning:

6). The woman bought the dress.
Underlying meaning:

7). A woman bought the dress.
Underlying meaning:

8). The woman bought a dress.
Underlying meaning:

Appendix 13

English Articles

*This is an example of a portion of the practice quiz the students will do to practice using articles. This will occur after the lesson on article usage.

1). _____ apple a day keeps the doctor away.

a. A

b. The

c. An

2). - Mount Everest is in_____ Himalayas.

a. an

b. the

c. none of the above

(The rest of the quiz can be found on *usingenglish.com*)