Greetings WAESOL members and friends,

All of us on the WAESOL Board are working hard to prepare for the upcoming WAESOL Conference scheduled for October 19, 2013 at Highline Community College. By the time you read this, the accepted presentations, covering a wide range of topics and interests, will be posted on our conference page. This year, for the first time, in addition to the regular workshops and presentations, the conference will feature professional development Pre-Conference Workshops. These half-day workshops are designed to provide opportunities to discuss and examine relevant topics and important issues in greater depth. They will take place on Friday, October 18 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Highline Community College. Regular conference sessions will follow on Saturday, October 19.

Also, we are excited about our conference speaker, Christina Cavage, who will share with us on a topic titled Blended Learning: Deconstructed. (We are thankful to Pearson ELT for their support.) More about Christina Cavage, her background, and her keynote address can be found on our web site.

For the second year WAESOL is again offering updated Grants and Awards. For more information, please visit our web site and click on the Grants & Awards link/tab to apply for a grant or to nominate someone for an awards.

WAESOL is moving forward, and I am very thankful for all the 2013 board members and their work!

Thanks for reading,
Ron Belisle
2013 WAESOL President
http://waesol.org
WAESOL Conference 2013
Embracing and Enhancing Multi-Dimensional Learning

Keynote Speaker
Christina Cavage
Sponsored by Pearson ELT

When
Saturday, October 19, 2013
7:30AM - 4:30PM

Where
Highline Community College
Des Moines, Washington

Cost*
Through October 14: $95
On-Site, after October 15: $120

Pre-Conference workshops will be available on Friday from 1:00 - 4:00PM for only $20.

*The registration fee includes lunch, snacks, and a one-year WAESOL membership.
Clock hours are available:

For more information, visit waesol.org
2013 Pre-Conference Workshop & Conference Registration Information

Conference Fees:
(Includes one-year WAESOL membership)

- **Online registration fee**: $95. (Deadline: Tuesday, October 15 at 10:00 p.m.)
- **Onsite registration**: $120 (at the conference registration area).
- **Exhibitor registration fees** (go to waesol.org for more information.)

The Friday before the conference (October 18), we will be offering Pre-conference Workshops. These half-day workshops are designed to provide opportunities to discuss and examine relevant topics and important issues in greater depth. They will take place on Friday, October 18 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Highline Community College. Regular conference sessions will follow on Saturday, October 19. The fee to attend one of these workshops is $20. We will let you know when these are available for registration.

If you became a WAESOL member via our online Membership page after last year’s conference, and you register for this 2013 Conference, please contact Indira, the WAESOL Administrative Assistant, for a refund of that membership fee ($35) as the 2013 Conference registration includes membership for one year.

# WAESOL Professional Development Grant Recipient 2012

**By Macy Ratliff**

I was one of the 2012 recipients of the WAESOL professional development grant. This grant was a truly wonderful opportunity for me as an educator as it allowed me to attend two very different, but very inspiring, conferences.

The first conference that I was able to attend was the WAESOL 2012 conference, where I had many incredible opportunities to network with some amazing colleagues and had the opportunity to attend a wide variety of conferences geared to educators working with a variety of populations.

The second conference that I was able to attend was an amazing Center for Child and Well-being Conference. This conference was centered on mindfulness education for children from birth through high school and beyond. I chose this conference because many of my elementary-school-age students have a lot of anxiety due to cultural adjustment, language learning worries and many have underlying learning difficulties, which make learning and school difficult. It was incredibly valuable to be able to arm my students with a wide variety of skills and techniques in order to enhance and enrich their language learning and school experience.

Through both conferences I was able to bring back many hands-on activities to use with my students. I would like to thank the WAESOL board so very much for providing me with these amazing educational opportunities through the professional development grant. I am looking forward to seeing many of you at this year’s WAESOL convention.
2014 WAESOL Board Elections

There will be five board positions to be voted upon and filled for the upcoming year: President Elect, Recording Secretary, Assistant Treasurer, and Two Member-at-Large positions. Please consult the WAESOL Constitution and By-Laws for the position descriptions and nomination procedures. When voting opens, members will receive an email with a ID number to provide and a link to the ballot for voting online.

Note the following dates about the 2014 elections:

Open Nominations: 9/7/2013 (nominations of current WAESOL members for the open positions can be done by contacting Indira)
Online Voting Opens: 11/6/2013
Online Voting Closes: 11/20/2013

2013 TESOL Advocacy & Policy Summit Report

Joan Johnston, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Olympia, WA
Julie Baumgartner, Intensive American Language Center, Washington State University

This last June, two of your WAESOL board members, Joan Johnston and Julie Baumgartner, attended TESOL’s annual Advocacy & Policy Summit. As stated by TESOL on their website, “The goal of the Summit is two-fold: to meet with key decision-makers to advocate for students and teachers, and to serve as an educational and leadership development experience for the field.” (http://www.tesol.org/events-landing-page/2013/02/27/2013-tesol-advocacy-policy-summit)

The summit was a two and a half day event. The first day and a half focused on educating the delegates on the important federal legislation that is currently being decided upon by Congress and taking part in training exercises on how to advocate effectively for the programs and students that we serve. The second day, we met with our elected officials on Capital Hill to share our experiences relating to the education of English language learners in our respective states.

One piece of the federal puzzle we dealt with was the impact of the Sequester on educating English language learners in both adult literacy and k-12 programs. Some new programs include: Effective Teachers & Leaders State grants, Teacher & Leader Innovation Fund, Preschool for All, and Preschool Development Grants.

The reauthorization of ESEA (the Elementary & Secondary Education Act, currently known as “No Child Left Behind” was again at the forefront of the discussions. Long overdue for reauthorization, seven years to be exact, the discussion with representatives and senators focused on the benefits and drawbacks each of the
That wasn’t homework, was it?

Using Email Dialogue Journaling to Extend ESL Students’ Learning Time Beyond the Four Walls of the Classroom

By Cody Lyon
Kyungnam University
Masan, South Korea

Introduction

In the fall of 2010, I began my first teaching position in higher education as an ESL instructor at a large university in South Korea. With a teaching schedule that involved several classes that met with students only once per week, I was quickly faced with the dilemma of how to reach and engage my students throughout the semester. Prior to that, I had used journaling assignments extensively with my elementary and middle school students as a way to take their learning outside the classroom. With the addition of a back-and-forth dialogue between students and the teacher, along with email as the means of delivery, I was excited to use email dialogue journaling (EDJ) in my new teaching context.

Traditional Journaling

Journaling is a universal writing practice similar to keeping a diary. This form of tangible writing can be clearly evaluated and corrected for students to easily see and reference for their own self-development process. That being said, journaling lacks any kind of communicative element, so students often dread mundane journaling assignments and complete them as some sort of an automated action that failed to engage and excite them with real-life context or dialogue.

Dialogue Journaling

Dialogue journaling (DJ) is an extension of the journaling process where the teacher has an ongoing dialogue with students via the students’ journals. Peyton (2000) describes DJ as “written conversations in which a
learner and teacher...communicate regularly” (p. 3). Earlier studies have shown that DJ has the ability to improve ESL students’ English language abilities (El Koumy, 1998; Ghahremani-Ghajar & Abdolhamid, 2005; Song, 1997) as well as creating a sense of community in ESL classrooms (Kim, 2005).

The Dialogue Journal as a Communicative Tool

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is a method of teaching language in context. CLT focuses on the communicative process that students use in order to learn language within a meaningful situation. Canale and Swain (1980) declared that, “A communicative…approach…is organized on the basis of communicative functions…that a given learner or group of learners needs to know and emphasizes the ways in which particular grammatical forms may be used to express these functions appropriately” (p. 2). Sandra Savignon (2001) declared that the practice of CLT demands that more time be spent involving students in a communicative exchange of language than time spent on presenting the application and form of language (p. 237).

One of the benefits of DJ is that it facilitates English language learning through the use of student-centered writing exchanges rather than focusing on the correctness of the students’ writing (Peyton, 2000, p. 5). DJ has long been used as a communicative tool in ESL classrooms. Clarena Larrotta (2008) used DJ with seventeen Hispanic second language students over the course of a semester. Her goal was to create authentic communication between herself and her students. Students’ journals were not corrected, and mistakes were not pointed out (p. 13). The students’ experience with dialogue journaling helped them discover a new form of writing. According to Larrotta, “…most of the students changed their view about writing in English. They started to appreciate the importance of using writing in L2 in order to communicate ideas” (p. 20).

Advantages of Using Email for Dialogue Journaling

Using email as the delivery method for dialogue journaling can provide several advantages for both students and teachers. Firstly, students become unknowingly trained in one of the most ubiquitous forms of communication around the world. Secondly, it breaks through the confines of the classroom walls and takes classroom learning into the students’ world and at the students’ leisure. Thirdly, the logistical highlight for teachers and students is the ease of organizing, distributing, and monitoring students’ writing assignments while utilizing an environmentally-friendly writing method. Lastly, students’ writing becomes less inhibited, more fluent in nature, more communicative, and more focused on content rather than form (Belisle, 1996).

Yu-mei Wang (1996) carried out research using EDJ with ESL students at a large public university; she gave this description of the students’ EDJ writing: “They wrote as if they were holding a conversation” (p. 778). Not only did the majority of the students have positive reactions to using email for DJ, but the use of email also made it easier and more convenient for the students and the instructor to communicate with each other (p. 777). Wang’s research displays the potential that email has for applying DJ in a different way for ESL students (p. 779).

Procedure

Each of the twenty-five students in my class was required to write standard weekly essay responses in a journal as part of their participation score for the class. The thirteen students who volunteered to participate in this research completed both the compulsory journal writing and the voluntary EDJ each week for the duration
of the fall semester.

Each week I separately emailed each student with my own writing on the week’s topic. A different topic was given each week, and students were instructed to respond to my email with their own journal writing for the week’s topic plus questions they wanted to ask me about what I had written.

None of the students’ emails were corrected for mistakes. I wanted a natural, uninhibited back-and-forth exchange of emails between the students and myself that would be conducive to a comfortable writing environment. According to Kasper and Petrello (1996), many ESL students become overly concerned with their writing evaluations, taking focus away from creative expression and causing an excess of anxiety and inhibition in their writing process (p. 6).

Results

All thirteen of the participating students felt that EDJ was more effective than DJ. Additionally, they felt their English abilities had improved and felt involved in the course.

Survey and questionnaire results showed that the students in my study valued EDJ as “exciting”, “sophisticated”, and “easier” than standard journaling. Some students also claimed that the use of email for homework made it feel like it wasn’t actually homework, which allowed them to more freely express themselves. Student samples of the EDJ process also showed that students were engaged in a very communicative process by responding to and initiating meaningful dialogue.

Below are some examples of students’ unedited survey responses that exemplify the advantages of using EDJ in the classroom:

Survey question: What do you think about the method of using email for studying English compared to the traditional method with a pen and notebook?

“We always adapt computer. If I want to do homework, I felt this homework is study. But it’s not. I think it is just email, not study, not homework. So I felt relax for write email.”

“The method of using email is more free and easier than the traditional method with a pencil and notebook.”

“I think method is using email is more sophisticated than traditional’s. So, homework is email, it’ll be exciting.”

Survey question: What was the best thing about your email dialogue journaling experience?

“The best thing is improvement of my English ability. In the past I couldn’t English composition well. Now I gain confidence of English.”

“I conversation a foreigner. It was exciting time.”

“Interesting, easy and simple.”

Reflection

From the teacher’s point of view, EDJ was an efficient use of time and resources. I was able to engage with my students in a meaningful communicative activity that didn’t take up any in-class time. In addition, the nature of email made it logistically easy to organize and conduct the EDJ assignments.

But the more profound advantage is the effect of EDJ on students’ perception of the significance of writing.
“Writing should always have a communicative purpose - writing should never be done simply to practice writing” (Paulson, 1992, p. 3). EDJ is considerably more communicative than standard journaling and allows for frequent back and forth exchanges that simulate a spoken conversation between the student and teacher much more closely than one-way pen and paper journaling. EDJ is also easier and more fun for students because they don’t feel like it’s a homework assignment, so they’re inclined to express themselves more freely.

Lastly, EDJ creates a stronger sense of community between the teacher and individual students because it allows for a process of communication and personal interaction that would otherwise be extremely limited with standard journaling. EDJ has great implications for large ESL classes where individual teacher-student communication is limited due to large class sizes or infrequent class times.

Technology as an ESL Teaching Resource

Larrotta stated very well “Adult ESL learning can no longer be conceived of as occurring solely inside the walls of the classroom” (2009, p. 77). EDJ is just one way to break through those classroom walls. As communication technology continues to advance, there are more and more opportunities to incorporate them into ESL curriculums. A common dilemma faced by many ESL teachers is the lack of enough student-to-teacher exposure time. Resources such as instant messaging, web-chat, and email can be applied as a remedy for this problem by creating a portable CLT environment for students and teachers to take advantage of.

References


Larrotta, C. (2009). Final thoughts on community in adult ESL. *New Directions for Adults and Continuing Education*, 121, 75-77.


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**English as a Second Life:**

*Juggling Cultures in the Age of Globalization*

By Patrick Parr

University of Washington

Seattle, Washington

www.patrickparr.com

I stand in front of sixteen students, all of whom have traveled a great distance to be in this room—in downtown Seattle. They’re armed with student visas and have plunked down 4,200 dollars in order to complete a 10-week certificate with the title, *Business English for International Professionals*.

Of course, this is not what I tell other people when they ask me what my job is. My short answer is to tell them I teach English as a Second Language, or ESL. Reactions have ranged from ‘That sounds intense.’ to ‘That’s a job?’

Oh, it’s a job all right. In my class today are seven Japanese students, three Saudi students, two South Korean students, four French students, and one lone Taiwanese student with ages ranging from twenty to thirty-six.

Teachers are trained never to generalize a student’s nature before getting to know them. When teaching ESL, any pre-conceived ideas can take one astray because they may include knowing only a little bit about how students from each culture learn or wish to be treated. As I stand in front of the class today, I find all these generalizations flooding my mind.

For example, even before coming to class, I assume from past experience that the French students will be used to discussion, debate, and flexing their intellectual muscles concerning a borderline controversial topic. When I attempt to deliver a teaching point, they may often shrug, believing it to be common sense, even if they are hearing it for the first time.

I expect that the Japanese students will be concerned about my intensity and style. How serious will I be? Will I ask them to give me their opinion in a manner that favors the western style of thinking? Will I be
offended if they never volunteer in class and listen passively, often only delivering a minimum amount of discussion to a group? Or do I have Asian sensibilities?

I find myself thinking that the Korean students will wonder if I will mistakenly lump them together with the Japanese, even though they have made it a point to be more outgoing and participatory than their ‘friend next door’. In addition, I anticipate that they will probably have Western-style nicknames, like Alicia or Kevin, prepared for when I botch the pronunciation of their real name.

Surveying the students, I consider how I find that Saudi students typically hate writing assignments, but when given a chance to speak, they have no problem chumming it up with the teacher. Affable in class, they will be even kinder when they miss class three times in a row and tell you they are sorry in the hallway. As they explain, their charm comes out, and at least in that moment, you are the best teacher they have ever had.

Finally, my expectations settle on the lone Taiwanese student. I anticipate that he will be quick to tell me that he is ‘not Chinese’. This is because he wants me not to associate any negative perceptions I might carry with me regarding Taiwan’s large neighbor, and it comes to mind that the Japanese students likely will find that refreshing. His accent may also carry tones that may come off as aggressive to other students unfamiliar with their culture.

I imagine that they may also be thinking similar things about me. So, I begin by telling them about myself, and I draw a horrible map (partly to make them laugh, partly because I’m simply bad at drawing). While I name-drop the cities and countries where I’ve lived (New York City, Cleveland, Japan, Switzerland, etc…), they are not only listening to what I’m telling them, but they are also listening to my voice itself. Do I have an accent? Is it clear? Is the speed intimidating? Are they in the right class? Is my tone sensitive or insensitive? Will I talk too long or will I include them? I know they are assessing me.

Next, I give them the syllabus and have them read most of it to me. I call on them randomly, without asking for volunteers. Many teachers ask if anyone would like to read…this, at least to me, takes too long, and it causes angst among students. We’ll know soon enough who are the extroverts and introverts, but right now all I care about is assessing their reading skill. To even out the power dynamic, I apologize for how boring the syllabus will sound.

After that painful task is dealt with, I place them in pre-planned groups of four. In case you’re wondering, yes, I divide by nationality, because that’s what they hope for, at least for the first few weeks, when they are getting to know each other. In five weeks, everyone will have sniffed each other out, and I’ll likely have to navigate a different kind of drama. For the Japanese students, I try to not have a group with three of them, since they likely are already self-conscious about being the majority of class. In general, if three same-language students are in a group, there’s a risk of the native language being spoken, and the odd person out in the group may just sit there, hoping English will reappear again.
The first activity is simply a generic questionnaire that will help them discuss their background and their business experience. My job is to walk around and allow students to interact. This is where I get jealous. The 4,200 dollars is pretty steep for a 10-week certificate, but this moment, this chance to make friends with people from all over the world, is worth more than half of it. Yeah, sure, they’ll learn a few things about business, but for many it’s all about the friendships that will no doubt last longer nowadays thanks to social networking.

With the classroom full of English chatter, I now act as a human dictionary, a completer of sentences, and a discussion igniter. Only nine and a half weeks left. As long as I remember the general rules of every single culture, I should be just fine. But after I remember cultural norms, as long as I ignore everything I just told you and treat the students equally and without judgment, the class will be a success.

Maybe it is a little intense.

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**Building a Hybrid IESL Class:**

*Learning Management Systems, Flipped Classrooms, Multiple Intelligences, Oh My!

By Stephanie Solomon

IESL Instructor

Seattle Central Community College

Seattle, Washington

One of the trends in teaching is focused on creating and expanding hybrid or completely online classes. Can a hybrid course be successful in terms of an intensive English language-learning program? I believe it can, using elements of the flipped classroom and building on Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence theory.

To begin with some background and basic definitions, Seattle Community Colleges currently use the Canvas LMS, a learning management system where the instructors can put anything they want to teach or share with their students: lectures, syllabi, assignments, videos, grades, power points and more. Teachers can also communicate with their students and students can communicate with each other all within this framework.

In a flipped, or inverted, classroom, some aspects are online, focusing less on a teacher-fronted lecture-style classroom, and more on a student-centered collaborative, engaging classroom. IESL classes are naturally highly collaborative and student-centered due to the nature of language learning. There are many different activities that engage the learners, in order to teach and encourage the reception and production of the target language. However, some elements, such as putting lectures online, work within the framework of a flipped classroom. Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence (MI) Theory (developed in the 1980s and since added on to with Naturalist and Existentialist Intelligences) asserts that there are nine kinds of “Intelligences”. People have differing degrees of all the intelligences, but their strongest areas correspond with their learning styles. These are:

Linguistic – learning through speaking or writing
Mathematical/Logical- learning by logic and patterns
Musical – learning through music and rhythm
Bodily/Kinesthetic – learning through a hands-on approach and moving the body
Visual/Spatial – learning by visually seeing things as connected/ spatial relationships
Intrapersonal- learning best by working individually
Interpersonal – learning by working in groups and having discussions
Naturalist - learning by relating to the natural world
Existentialist – learning by looking at the greater whole

These are simplistic definitions of the corresponding learning styles based on the intelligences, but they serve to illustrate that different activities may work better for related learning styles of an individual’s stronger “intelligences”.

So, how does one combine an LMS, a flipped classroom, and individual student learning styles to create a workable hybrid IESL class? I would like to use my experience as an example. Using Canvas, I put many of my lectures online as an element of the flipped classroom. Using Tegrity Video online within the Canvas framework, I recorded four-eight minute grammar lectures (on topics such as past perfect, present perfect, and modals) and equally short lectures about sentence structure (simple sentences, compound sentences, and complex sentences). I can film myself at the board only, or I can add a Power Point to go along with my lecture.

Feedback from my current Reading/Writing/Grammar Level Three class shows students prefer to view a PowerPoint with me giving a voiceover, but a few students prefer seeing me actually speaking and writing at the board. I have a mix of videos of both styles to satisfy both groups. All of the students have said that they really like being able to watch the lectures again and again and feel more prepared for class. I have also started adding various online grammar practice links to the videos, so students can practice at their own pace without pressure or grading before coming to class.

Regarding learning styles related to Multiple Intelligence theory, students can watch a chosen lecture again and again, thus appealing to the visual/ spatial learner, the intrapersonal learner and linguistic learner. I can make Power Points for diagramming for the mathematical/logical learners. In addition, I can create and/or display songs and jazz chants online for musical learners. Other ideas to engage various learning styles may be by using the Collaboration area in Canvas. There I ask the students to share ideas, such as a book report, either with the whole class or a specific number of students. This works well for the interpersonal style learner. Finally, bodily/kinesthetic and spatial/visual learners may enjoy creating their own vocabulary lists in quizlet.com, where there are a variety of computer games and exercises using student-made vocabulary lists, and sharing these with other students, also using the Collaboration area.

In general, many of the aspects of the learning styles from Multiple Intelligence theory that one uses in a face-to-face classroom can also be put online for the students to explore on their own prior being in the physical
classroom for reinforcement with other activities and more one-on-one help from the teacher. While this article doesn’t focus on assessment, I would like to note that an instructor can easily assign and grade homework assignments and quizzes through Canvas as well, where the answers are loaded in and the grading program grades the assignment for you.

These are just a few possible ideas for creating a hybrid class. We are only limited by our imaginations and the limits of the technology. As imagination spurs the development of technology, so can technology encourage us to new heights of imagination!

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**Media Review: Livemocha**

Nadia A. Nsir,
Washington State University, WA
Rani Muthukrishnan,
Washington State University, WA

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>Target users</td>
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**Livemocha**

Computer access and other technological literacies are vital for learners in the 21st century. The literacy framework by Cummins et al., (2007, P. 109), which covers major principles of learning and literacy development, provides guidance for reviewing the language learning website Livemocha. They proposed the following questions which we have used as a template to review the technology-supported instruction in Livemocha website:

1. Does the instruction provide cognitive challenges and opportunities for deep processing of meaning?
2. Does the instruction relate to prior knowledge and experiences derived from students’ homes and communities?
3. Does the instruction promote active, self-regulated, collaborative inquiry?
4. Does the instruction promote extensive, engaged reading and writing across the curriculum?
5. Does the website promote students to develop strategies for effective reading, writing, and learning?

6. Does the instruction promote effective involvement and identity on the part of the student?

We evaluated the website from the perspective of a beginner learning American English and signed up with our primary languages- Tamil and Arabic. Our review provides an overview of the website design and lesson structure and moves on to evaluating the possibilities for multi-literacy learning based on the framework of Cummins et al. (2007).

**Evaluation**

**1. Does the instruction provide cognitive challenges and deep processing of meaning?**

Basic cognitive skills involved in teaching are listening (process auditory information), reading (recognition of sight words and decode new words), comprehension (understanding what is read), and formulation (access new information and express it). According to Cummins et al. (2007, P.237) levels of cognition are evoked in tasks set for the student. The higher-order thinking skills involve analysis and synthesis of information, while the lower-order thinking involves rote memory and direct application of information.

For example, in a sample audio exercise (Fig. 1) the student hears “I am good. Thank you. And you?” The listener/learner needs to order words correctly, including words with punctuation, to create sentences.

The cognitive skills involved in solving the exercises provided in the activities are listening (when words are spoken), reading (the tiles), comprehension (picking the right words), and formulation (of the complete sentence). This is lower-order thinking and involves direct application of information presented to the learner.

Opportunities for meaningful analysis of information are required for deep processing of information. Deep processing involves giving words a meaning or linking them with previous knowledge. There were very few activities on the website that provided such opportunities.

![Figure 1. Sample audio lesson presented in multiple inputs](image-url)
2. Does the instruction relate to prior knowledge and experiences derived from student’s homes and communities?

Cummins et al (2007, P.43) indicate that prior knowledge, skills, beliefs, and concepts significantly influence what learners notice about their environment and how they organize and interpret it. The site is not intended for introducing learners to the English alphabet. In order to use this site, students should have recognition of words, a rudimentary sense of grammar, and understand sentence structure. A degree of comfort, exposure, and familiarity with the language is also required to use this site effectively. When the students come with all the requirements listed above, it is possible for them to build on their background knowledge by performing the exercises.

However, a significant drawback in the site is the lack of diversity of people depicted in the lessons. The majority of the models are fair and slim. In a foreign language-learning context, having more diversity is advantageous. Another issue is that even the most basic conversational phrases are depicted with unnecessary degree of glamour (Figure 2).

![Figure 2. Example of glamour in basic conversational phrases](image)

3. Does the instruction promote active self-regulated collaborative inquiry?

Donovan and Bransford (2005), as well as Cummins et al. (2007, P. 43) point out that a self-monitoring approach can help students develop the ability to take control of their own learning, consciously define learning goals, and monitor their progress in achieving them. Livemocha strongly promotes active self-regulated and collaborative inquiry.

Additionally, tools within the website help students stay motivated by rewarding ‘mochapoints’ for lessons completed and teacher points for supporting collaborative inquiry. Students are encouraged to help each other providing opportunities to initiate a dialogue, participate, and be heard. It also facilitates participating in discussions in a different language.

Numerous opportunities for social networking are provided for facilitating peer collaboration. The social setup is similar to the familiar web 2.0 tools such as Facebook or Orkut, where one can start an account with their
own profile and invite friends, search friends within Livemocha and communicate socially with them. The option to chat, for example, connects the learner to a wide online Livemocha community with both native and nonnative speakers from around the world. These options are depicted in Figure 3.

![Livemocha tools](image)

**Figure 3.** Examples of tools available for collaborative inquiry on Livemocha

### 4. Does the instruction promote extensive engaged reading and writing across the curriculum?

Cummins et al. (2007, P. 48) reference Guthrie (2004) when defining Engagement: the time on task, enthusiasm and engagement of literacy, strategies to deepen comprehension, and the amount and diversity of literacy practices in and out of school. Livemocha fulfills the components of engaged reading and writing both in the curriculum presented and outside of the curriculum. Much of the enthusiasm is derived from enjoyment and collaboration. Students are able to submit responses to lessons or activities (that involve reading, writing and speaking) to be reviewed by other members of the community. Outside of lessons, students are encouraged to write in English by sharing a story, or picture.

Livemocha provides opportunities for online collaboration for rating and correcting a submission and ensures that language is used in varied roles. This also facilitates a productive, collaborative, learning environment for the participants. Further, ample time is provided for listening, reading, and writing (includes chatting and writing stories) about their daily life. These activities count towards the quantity of time spent in learning and practicing a new language.

Engagement is further facilitated by connecting with native speakers by means of stories, photos, or weblogs, and to receive comments online (Figure 4). All these activities enhance learners’ self-confidence and their sense of identity. It enables students to see themselves as learners, creators, and thinkers and not merely as passive readers. When individuals take the role of educators to educate and assess students while using technology and software resources, they are practicing skills that can help them to be better thinkers and learners (Corio, 2003).
Cummins et al. (2007, P. 91) observe that, “the failure to realize the educational potential of technology has much more to do with pedagogy than with technology itself.” Imaginative inquiry-focused teaching with or without technology is often considered “off task,” in school settings. *Livemocha* uses functions available on most modern computers (e.g. emailing, photos, downloading, and audio-recording) to support knowledge construction and critical thinking to learn with rather than merely instructing the learner.

Learning strategies of *Livemocha* such as “learn and practice”, and created “flashcards” all provide opportunities that the learners can control, spur active engagement, and encourage creation of measurable output. Non-formal reading and writing opportunities are also provided by cultural exploration around the world (Figure 5).

Effective opportunities for reading, writing, speaking and learning are provided in the context of the lessons and in a social setting. The student must complete activities, for which the student can earn ‘mochapoints’ before proceeding to the next level.
6. Does the instruction promote effective involvement and identity on the part of the student?

The technology supported instruction provided by Livemocha involves learners, especially teens and adolescents, who enhance part of their own identity by choosing it- a social and academic praxis-- ‘that is cool.’ Since learning in this situation also involves many other learners of the digital learning generation, the students feel a sense of connection that is meaningful to them (Pianfetti, 2001). It supports the interests of adolescents who work on their building identity through learning the language, while practicing social relationships with Livemocha learning community simultaneously. It also challenges students to interact with native and non-native English speakers effectively (Figure 6). When a deep connection is created between students they can share their stories or pictures, and learning becomes more personalized and interactions take place even in a language they are learning.

![Figure 6. Examples of opportunities to promote effective involvement](image)

Conclusion

Livemocha is suitable for students from variety of backgrounds to learn, practice, and develop competencies in an increasingly culturally-diverse world. The diversity of languages offered in the website and the methods are somewhat aligned with the suggestions of the New London Group (1996). Livemocha presents students with active, challenging tasks that requires them to read, write, speak, and think in new and demanding ways. By facilitating interactions with native speakers and also through the tasks, learners can negotiate their success.

The language learning is also placed in a social context with peer group networking. Livemocha provides ample opportunities for self-regulated collaborative inquiry. The students are engaged in a lively manner, and the learning tools are aptly designed. The website provides multimodal opportunities for learning which retaining a high degree of live engagement by the learners.

References


Accessed 2.7.11


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**Erratum:** Melissa Van De Wege, author of *Arabic Rhetoric in Arabic-speaking Student Essays: Main idea, parallelism, and word repetition*, was erroneously listed as a Fulbright Scholar in the WAESOL Spring 2013 issue. She is not a Fulbright Scholar at this moment in time.
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