Chapter 47

Understanding the Value of Website Design and Analysis in a Comprehensive CALL Environment:
Website Analysis in a Wider CALL Environment

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ABSTRACT

Website design, analysis, and related critical thinking in a CALL context are rather unique. This chapter presents an in-depth exploration of how website analysis and design pedagogy could help support analytical thinking and English language production in an EFL context. The study investigated if students could analyze English websites and comprehend and produce responses in English for eight open-ended questions, divided into two sets of design and inference-based queries. Additionally, students answered a questionnaire on their own awareness about the use of metacognitive reading strategies during website analysis and questionnaire responses. Results have demonstrated the reasonable ability for students to answer most design and inference set queries. This chapter also introduces the idea of a project-based CALL environment. This was created through 3D-printing-related processes and in-class design, and manufacturing of digital prototypes of products, that culminated in procedural documentation in a computer-mediated collaborative environment and with related website production.

EXPLORING A WIDER CALL

This chapter built on the 2014 published work in IJCALLT on using website analysis as a tool for computer-assisted language learning in a foreign language context (Roy, 2014). The idea with this chapter is not only for readers to reflect on the work as published in IJCALLT by Roy (2014) on website analysis for computer assisted language learning in EFL context, but also highlight some of the work being done in this particular area of research, the present direction and an innovative perspective in CALL research in the context of more practical application of website design and analysis.

The central idea of this chapter is to highlight website design and analysis as an effective critical thinking exercise in an English language classroom, but besides, also introduced the idea of how to further enrich the process of language learning by introducing website design and analysis in a *Project-based CALL* environment.

The current literature in CALL increasingly looks forward to integrating technology and various language-learning skills in a flexible and interactional environment (Warschauer & Healey, 1998). There is little doubt that the future of CALL will be driven by the power of technological change (Warschauer, 2011). However, a massive challenge in CALL context would be to integrate different types of emerging technology in a social language-learning environment and project application context without disrupting the natural flow of typical work-related interactions. Current literature in CALL is increasingly focused on the use of virtual / augmented reality-based applications, the use of iPads and mobile devices, using movies and other technology-focused applications. Recent literature in CALL suggests a very strong focus on wikis and blogs (Wheeler & Wheeler, 2009; Williams & Jacobs, 2004), social networking sites (Harrison & Thomas, 2009), mobile-assisted language learning applications (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008), Second Life (Stevens, 2006), gaming (Ersoz, 2000), etc. for second and/or foreign language acquisition. These are all interesting developments and acceptable pedagogical approaches towards language learning, and there is significant evidence to suggest that these approaches make a positive contribution towards language acquisition.

However, there are two questions that have not been answered in the CALL literature to any reasonable extent.

1. First, the use of diverse technology in various forms does suggest affordances toward language acquisition when it comes to working on language structures and grammar. But, is technology used in a way for language acquisition such that critical thinking is promoted, and the power of reasoning with analytical and technical writing enhanced, similar to what is acceptable in a workplace context? In other words, does technology make the student think and strategize about the learning context?

Such thinking and strategizing could be about the learning context such as a website or an e-book or a courseware, or instructional design for a course. How should I plan for the entire document structure (e.g., website)? How should it look like in organization, format, and layout? How should I write and design the content sequentially and in a form that makes reading easier and interactive for the reader? Is the readers' interaction with the document smooth and structured based on usability principles to create affordance?

This brings us to the second question.

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