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## **Using Computers in the Teaching and Learning of Languages Through Call**

**By**

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### **Abstract**

*The advents of computer have made life easier. The teaching and learning of languages has also become easier by the use of computers through CALL. CALL stands for Computer Assisted Language Learning, and it is a technology that is designed to make teaching and learning of language easy. In this article, the authors explained what is CALL, how it can be used in teaching and learning languages and the development of CALL.*

### **Introduction**

Computers have made triumphal entry into education and only a few would deny that they have brought significant benefits to teachers and learner's. In a language classroom computer can be a teacher by teaching students new language, computer can be tester by testing students

on already learned language, computer can be a tool by assisting students to do certain tasks, computer can be a data source by providing students with the information they need to perform a particular task, computer can be a communication facilitator by allowing students to communicate with others at different locations.

Computers have also made a triumphant entry into teaching and learning language through what we call CALL. CALL stands for Computer Assisted Language Learning. In this article, we will look at what is CALL, types of CALL program and activities, development of CALL, the role of the computer in language learning and teaching and principles of using CALL program in language learning and teaching. Also included is the Professional Association of CALL.

### **What is call?**

There are so many definitions of CALL. We will attempt to bring out these different definitions by different authors in this article. Davies (2015) defined CALL as an approach to language teaching and learning in which presentation, reinforcement and assessment of material to be learned, usually includes a substantial interactive element. Levy (1997) defines CALL as the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning. Beatly (2003) defined CALL as any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her language. According to Beatly (2003) also, CALL has come to encompass issues of materials design, technology, pedagogical theories and modes of instruction. Materials for CALL can include those which are purpose-made for language learning and those which adapt existing computer-based material, video and other materials. Schmid, (2009) said that CALL embraces a wide range of information and communication technology applications and approaches to teaching and learning foreign languages from traditional "drill and practice" programmes that characterized CALL in the 1960s and 1970s to more recent manifestations of CALL e.g. as used in a virtual learning environment, and web-based distance learning. It also extends to the use of corpora and concordances, interactive whiteboards, computer-mediated communication (CMC), language learning in virtual world and mobile assisted language learning (MALL) (Lamy & Hampel, 2007; Shield & Kukulsaka-Hume, 2008).

## **TYPES OF CALL**

We will briefly explain types of CALL in this section. They are; Traditional CALL, Explorative CALL, Multimedia CALL and web-based CALL.

### **Traditional CALL**

Traditional CALL programs present a stimulus to which the learner had to provide a response. In early CALL programs, the stimulus was in the form of text presented on screen, and the only way in which the learner could respond was by entering an answer at the keyboard, some programs were very imaginative in the way text was presented, making use of colour to highlight grammatical features (e.g. gender in French and case ending in Germany) and movement to illustrate points of syntax (e.g. position of adjectives in French and subordinate clause word order in Germany). Davies (2015) is also of the opinion that discrete error analysis and feedback was a common feature of traditional CALL and the more sophisticated programs would attempt to analyze the learner's response, pinpoint errors, and branch to help and remedial activities. A typical example of this approach according to (Davis 2015) is the CLEF package for learners of FRENCH. Error analysis CALL is a matter of controversy. Mathew (1994) argued that practitioners, who come into CALL via the disciplines of computational linguistics e.g. Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Human language technologies optimistic about the potential of error analysis by computer than those who come into CALL via language teaching.

### **Explorative**

More recent approaches to CALL have favoured a learner - centred, explorative approach rather than a teacher centred, drill- based approach to CALL. According to (John & King, 1991), the explorative approach is characterized by the use of concordance programs in the language classroom - an approach described as data driven learning (DLL). In market today, there exist a quite number of concordance programs. According to (John & King, 1991), they are as follows:

Monocone

Concordance

Wordsmith

Scp

Etc.

The explorative approach is widely used today including the use of web-concordance and other web-based CALL activities.

### **Multimedia CALL**

Early personal computers were incapable of presenting authentic recordings of human voice and easily recognizable images, but this limitation was overcome by combining a personal computer and video disc player which made it possible to combine sound, photographic still images and video recordings in imaginative presentations in essence the earliest manifestation of multimedia CALL. The result was the development of interactive video discs for language learners such as:

Montevideo

Expodisc

Alarcón de Philip

**(Shneider & Bennion, 1984) and (Fuersternberg 1993). All these programs are designed as simulations in which the learner played a key role. The techniques learned in the 1980s by the developers of interactive videodiscs were adapted for the multimedia personal computers (MPCs) which incorporated CD - ROM drives and were widespread use by the early 1990s. According to (Davies 2015), MPCs is now the standard Web-based form of personal computers. A feature of many multimedia CALL programmes is What is CALL?**

- **Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)** refers to the use of computers and technology in the teaching and learning of languages.
- It involves software, online programs, and digital resources that aid in language acquisition, offering an interactive and engaging way for learners to practice and enhance their language skills.

## **Types of CALL Programs and Activities:**

CALL can be divided into various types based on its design and use:

### **1. Behaviorist CALL:**

- Based on the idea that language learning involves forming habits through repetition and drills.
- Activities include grammar drills, vocabulary practice, and language exercises.

### **2. Communicative CALL:**

- Focuses on interactive language use in real-world contexts, emphasizing communication rather than rote memorization.
- Activities might involve chatting with native speakers, completing tasks, or using language in simulated real-world settings.

### **3. Integrative CALL:**

- Combines language learning with multimedia resources such as video, audio, and interactive simulations.
- Promotes skills integration, where listening, speaking, reading, and writing are learned together in context.

## **Development of CALL:**

- CALL has evolved over the years, from simple text-based programs to more sophisticated multimedia applications.
- Early CALL systems were often rigid and rule-based, focusing mainly on drill and practice. Today, CALL incorporates more user-centered, dynamic tools that allow for more personalized and communicative language learning experiences.

## **The Role of Computers in Language Learning and Teaching:**

- Computers provide a variety of tools and resources that facilitate language learning in unique ways. Some of these roles include:
  - **Personalization:** Computers allow learners to learn at their own pace, adjusting difficulty levels according to their individual needs.

- **Access to authentic materials:** The internet provides access to authentic materials (e.g., movies, news articles, podcasts) that expose learners to real-world language use.
- **Interactivity:** Language learners can interact with programs, improving their speaking and writing skills through immediate feedback.
- **Multimedia resources:** Computers support various types of multimedia (audio, video, graphics), enhancing the overall learning experience.

### **Principles of Using CALL in Language Learning and Teaching:**

- Effective CALL should be **learner-centered**, catering to the needs of individual learners and promoting autonomy.
- **Task-based learning** should be a central principle, where learners engage in meaningful tasks that encourage them to use the target language in context.
- **Immediate feedback** is critical for language learners, enabling them to recognize and correct mistakes.
- CALL programs should be **adaptive**, providing learners with content that is appropriately challenging for their skill level.

### **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CALL**

There are professional associations that are innovative research, development and practice relating to the use of new technologies in these associations organize conferences and publish journals on CALL. Few of them are language learning and teaching. According to the Resource Centre of the listed below:

APACALL (The Asia - Pacific Association for CALL): Organizes Globalization and localization in Computer - Assisted Language Learning (GLOCALL) conference jointly with PaCALL.

AsiaCALL (The Asia Association of Computer Assisted Language Learning Korea): AsiaCALL publishes the AsiaCALL Online Journal.

Association of University Language Centres (AULC) in the UK and Ireland

CALICO: Established in 1982. (Currently based in Texas State University, USA CALICO publishes the CALICO Journal.

EUROCALL: Founded by a group of enthusiasts in 1986 and established with the aid of European commission funding as a formal professional association in 1983. Currently based at the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland. EUROCALLs Journal, RECALL, Is published by Cambridge University Press. EUROCALL also publishes the EUROCALL Review.

IALLT: The US-based International Association for language learning Technology, originally known as IALL (International Association for Language Labs). IALLT is a professional organization dedicated to promoting effective use of media centres for language teaching, learning and research. IALLT Publishes the IALLT Journal.

IATEFL: The UK-based International Association of Teachers of English as a foreign language. IATEFL embraces the Learning Technologies Special Interest Group (LTSIG) and publishes the CALL Review Newsletter.

JALTCALL: Japan. The JALT CALL SIG Publishes the JALT CALL Journal.

ETC.

## **CONCLUSION**

CALL changes the way in which languages are learnt and taught, and paradigm shift in teachers and learner's roles. In the world over, most developed nations work comfortably with the CALL technology, but the problem of costs and broadband connectivity's is major challenges in using and embracing CALL in developing nation.

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