Network Update

The WWW for Instruction: Three Types of Activities and Projects

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[Editor's Note: With this issue, we introduce Chris Higgins as our new columnist for network issues. We welcome Chris to writing on this most important of topics!]

Introduction

As seen on LLTI in the past year, there has been a definite barrage of information concerning the World Wide Web (WWW). Do you remember last year when Tennessee Bob bombarded LLTI with lists and lists of language-related WWW sites to explore? There were museums, galleries, libraries, cultural information for countries, cities, regions, businesses, and more. As a natural progression to having access to the multitude of language-related sites, LLTI discussion has turned to how to use the WWW in language learning and teaching. So, what can we do with all this information?

To look at the teaching possibilities of the WWW, let's consider the various types of activities possible on the Web. I believe we can classify Web work into three categories: 1) information collection, 2) information distribution, and 3) information creation.

Information Collection

Probably the most common use of the Web as an educational tool, information collection involves activities that have students explore the WWW to find general or specific information. Some activities included in this category are scavenger hunts, cultural research projects, and reading international news. Below are some examples of information collection exercises.

Scavenger Hunts   Scavenger hunts can be used for many purposes. As an introduction to searching the WWW, a scavenger hunt adds an element of fun to the learning process. In a friendly class competition, students either individually or in small groups explore the web to find the pertinent information. For Foreign Language Week this year at the University of Maryland, we have created a Foreign Language Internet Safari to follow the theme of "Life can seem like a jungle without learning a foreign language." **Foreign Language Internet Safari** is available at **http://www.inform.umd.edu/EdRes/Colleges/ARHU/Depts/langctr/**.

Cultural Information   Gathering cultural information for reports and presentations is another type of activity in this category. WWW resources like CityNet offer a way to access information about countries, places of interest, historical information, and more. Brigham Young University has set up a WWW page for their Spanish textbook *Mundo 21* from DC Heath. They have created pages of links for the 21 Spanish speaking countries represented in the text: **Mundo 21 at Brigham Young University, http://humanities.byu.edu/spanish/mundo/mundo.html**.

International News   Many newspapers and news agencies from around the world are making articles and photos available on the WWW on a daily or weekly basis. These materials have a great advantage over subscriptions to foreign newspapers in that they are current. Articles or photos can be used in class the same day they are published in another country. And the news can be used in many different courses. At Lake Forest College, Carol Faber uses current event information in her Spanish for International Affairs course. On February 16, 1996 she wrote on LLTI:

> ⁓   My students, in a class called Spanish for International Affairs, are using the Web to gather information about current events for different Spanish-speaking countries. Each student is responsible for keeping track of a different country, and at mid-semester they will give oral presentations on what they have found. (LLTI #2567.2, The Web for Teaching/lLearning)

Information   With the second category of Web-based activities, the
Distribution   teacher puts up information on the Web and may elicit a response from an activity-based page. Information distribution can also take many guises. At Virginia Commonwealth University some of the faculty have created exercises based on a graphic, text and/or WWW site that has been posted to a class page. The students are given specific tasks that they write

out and turn in to the teacher in class. These tasks focus on beginning language skills like object description, vocabulary, etc. These types of exercises can also be submitted by a directly via the WWW page or via e-mail access from the WWW page:

Intensive French—Sonja Moore
> http://www.fln.vcu.edu/Moore/materials.html

Intensive Spanish—Andre Thomas
> http://www.fln.vcu.edu/Thomas/hw/hw-101.html

Other instructors provide grammatical exercises utilizing, "forms" for the student to submit to the instructor. Juan Ramon de Arana at Washington University in St. Louis has authored interactive grammar exercises as a supplement to his Spanish classes. These exercises cover a wide range of grammatical topics from pronouns to the subjunctive.

Spanish Grammar Exercises
> http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/~jrdearan/
> ejercicios.html

At Northwestern University, faculty members have created El Camino de Santiago, one of the Middle Ages' most popular pilgrimage sites. Through an interactive simulation students become pilgrims on the road to Santiago de Compostela. Students learn the legends and history of Santiago and the places along the way. They also have the virtual experience of a medieval pilgrimage.

El Camino de Santiago
> http://itg-pc1.acns.nwu.edu/santiago/santiago-
> loc.html

> *"As a natural progression to having access to the multitude of language-related sites... discussion has turned to how to use the WWW in language learning and teaching."*

Information Creation

In the third type of activity, information creation, the teacher or the students create and post information (syllabi, class newsletter, original works, etc.) on the WWW. Putting information on the WWW is an exciting prospect for both teachers and students. A teacher can create an interactive syllabus with links to class-related sites, class assignments, and more. The development of a class Web page is just another way to utilize the WWW as an educational tool. Students can write a newsletter to post on the web or the teacher can post student essays or poems. By connecting with students in other classes or other schools a class can share information or take part in peer editing.

In a French writing class here at the University of Maryland, an instructor instituted a class homepage to which she posted students' compositions. At St. Olaf College in Minnesota, a teacher had her class author a homepage in Spanish for native speakers with whom they had communicated dur-

ing the semester. At Ohio University a class created a newsletter entitled "Digamelo" which they posted on the WWW. All of these projects involve the students writing and editing the text that was posted on the Internet.

> French 301—Writing projects
> > http://www.inform.umd.edu/EdRes/Colleges/
> > ARHU/Depts/FrenchItalian/Fren301/
> El Proyecto Final de los Estudiantes de Español 231
> > http://www.stolaf.edu/stolaf/depts/spanish/
> > spanish-231/
> Digamelo
> > http://www.tcom.ohiou.edu/OU_Language/
> > Digamelo.html

In a project at Virginia Commonwealth University, students in an advanced German course created homepages by submitting personal information on the class page. They also had the ability to post and respond to messages about current events in the Kaffeeklatsch. In a *Dear Abby*-type section called "Fragen Sie Frau Susanne," students could ask questions and get responses that are posted on the Web.

> German 311 Syllabus
> > http://www.fln.vcu.edu/gj/311/schedule.html

Teaching on the WWW: Ideas, Resources and Projects

These are just a few of the possibilities for using the WWW as a teaching and learning tool. I would also note a few places that offer ideas, resources and examples of some more WWW educational projects.

Lauren Rosen at the University of Wisconsin has compiled a list "of ideas for using WWW resources as a teaching tool as well as other links to sites that have pedogogical information." At this site you can also find the results of the discussion group "WWW: New Activities, New Pedagogy" at the NFLRC Symposium on Local and Global Electronic Networking In Foreign Language Learning & Research, which took place July 10 – 14, 1995 at the University of Hawaii.

> Teaching with the Web
> > http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/lss/lang/teach.html
> Language Learning Activities for the World Wide Web
> > http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/lss/lang/nflrc.html

Ohio University allows teachers and studentsto peruse web projects that others have created and even post their own.

> Special Projects in Language
> > http://www.tcom.ohiou.edu/OU_Language/
> > projects.html

The "World Lecture Hall" is a site that has "links to pages created by faculty worldwide who are using the World Wide

Web to deliver class materials. For example, you will find course syllabi, assignments, lecture notes, exams, class calendars, multimedia textbooks, etc." Interested educators can also add their materials to the list.

> **World Lecture Hall**
> http://www.utexas.edu/world/lecture/

At the University of Pennsylvania, James O'Donnell has authored a page which offers tips, advice, encouragement, and resources for using the Internet for educational purposes.

> **New Tools for Teaching**
> http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/teachdemo

Mark Warschauer at the University of Hawaii has compiled activities and projects for language instruction that make use of the WWW as well as other computer-mediated communication in his book, "Virtual Connections: Online Activities & Projects for Networking Language Learners."

Web Exploration Launch Pads

Here are a few sites that can be helpful in exploring the WWW for language-related resources and teaching materials. Universities have created lists of language resources for the languages taught at these schools.

> **Carnegie Mellon Language Learning Resource Center**
> http://www.cmu.edu/hss/llrc/
> **Dartmouth College Language Resource Center**
> http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hr/lrc/
> **Georgetown Language Learning Technology**
> http://www.georgetown.edu/centers/LLT/
> home.html
> **Oxford University Language Centre**
> http://info.ox.ac.uk/departments/langcentre/
> **University of Chigcago Romance Languages Page:**
> http://humanities.uchicago.edu/romance/
> **Swarthmore College Language Lab**
> http://www.swarthmore.edu/Humanities/
> langlab/
> or
> http://www.engin.swarthmore.edu/
> language/

Conclusion

There are many more educational uses of the World Wide Web than I have described here and the numbers and varieties of activities will continue to increase. This

is just a starting point. Hopefully, it will give you some idea of the tremendous potential the WWW has as a tool for language learning and teaching. ■

Note   Tennessee Bob's many site lists can be found in the LLTI Archives (numbered in the 1900 - 2099 range) at the address **ftp://ftp.dartmouth.edu/pub/LLTI-IALL/LLTI-Archive/** or **ftp://ftp.dartmouth.edu/pub/LLTI-IALL/WWW-URLs/**.

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