HELLENIC REPUBLIC
National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens

English and Digital Literacies

Unit 2.3: Communicative CALL

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What is Communicative CALL?

Communicative CALL is based on the communicative approach to foreign language teaching which became prominent in the 1970's and 1980's.

The communicative approach

- Is a reaction to the audio-lingual approach.
- Focuses on language as a medium of communication.
- Recognizes that we use language to get things done: we speak a language in order to communicate with others (e.g. we want to express likes and dislikes, ask somebody's hobbies, find directions to a place).

How the Communicative CALL works?

- Grammar is taught implicitly rather than explicitly.
- Computers are used to stimulate discussion, writing or critical thinking. Students are encouraged to generate original utterances rather than just manipulate prefabricated language.
- The programmes avoid telling students that they are wrong and are flexible to a variety of student responses.

Behaviourist vs Communicative CALL

Behaviourist approaches:

- individualized drills,
- programmed-learning,
- viewing language as discrete components,
- emphasizing the importance of control,
- giving extrinsic feedback.

Communicative approaches:

- task-based, collaborative activities,
- providing alternatives to learners,
- viewing language as a whole,
- emphasizing the importance of guidance,
- giving both extrinsic and intrinsic feedback.

Roles of the computer in the Communicative Approach

1. **The Computer as Tutor**: as a teacher.
2. **The Computer as Stimulus**: to stimulate discussion and critical thinking.
3. **The Computer as Tool**: to use and understand language.

The Computer as Tutor

- Skill practice, but also in non-drill format: paced reading, **text reconstruction**, and language games.
- The computer is the "**knower-of-the-right" answer.**
- As opposed to drill and practice, the right answer involves a fair amount of student choice, control, and interaction (the rationale reflects explicit learning approaches).

Advantages of Computer as Tutor (1/2)

Interaction:

- Active participation in the learning process.
- Exercises are beyond multiple-choice and fill-in questions.

Efficiency:

- Review.
- Address individual skill deficiencies.

Advantages of Computer as Tutor (2/2)

Motivation:

- Research suggests that quality Tutor programs (use of graphics and sound) can hold students' attention much longer than traditional methods. (Simonson and Thompson, 1997: 96).

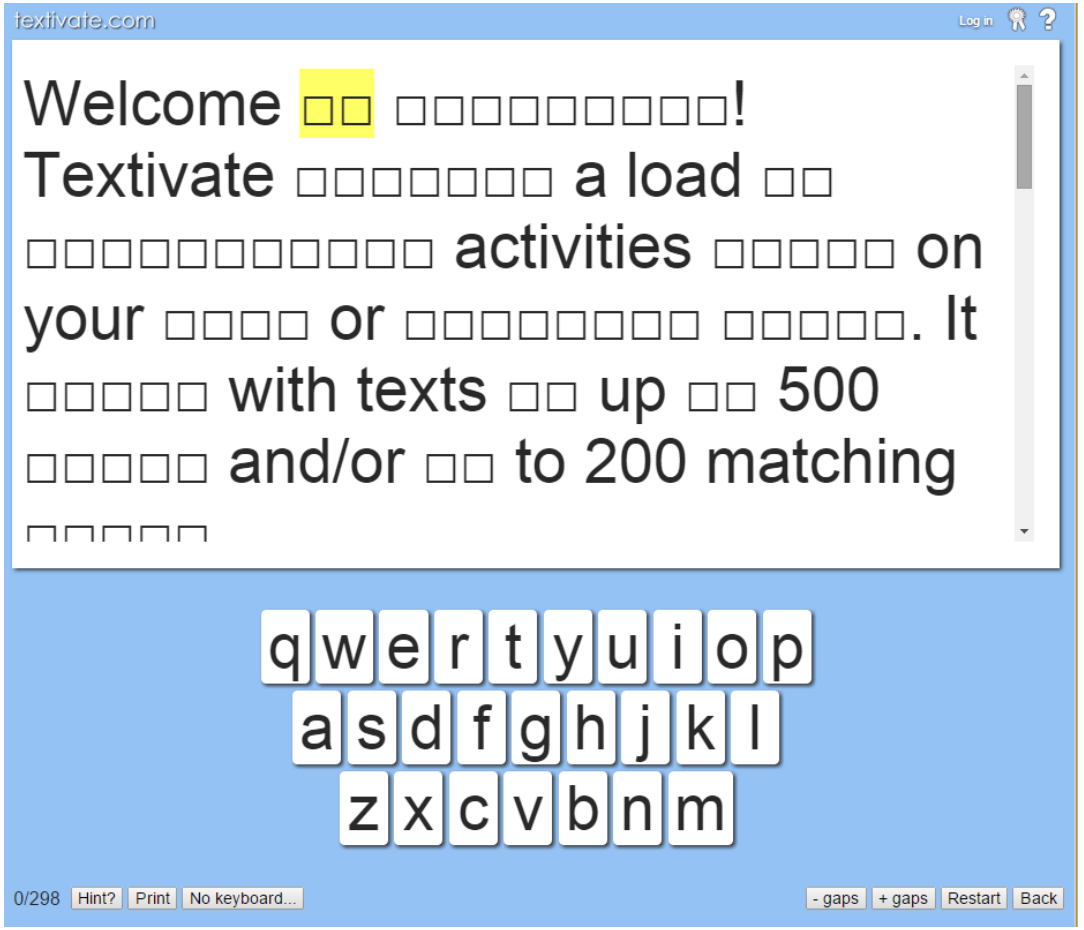
Two types of programs

Authoring programs where the teacher may enter his/her own content.

Dedicated programs where the content is fixed.

Text reconstruction

All letters of a text are replaced with blanks and the learner reconstructs the text from contextual clues.



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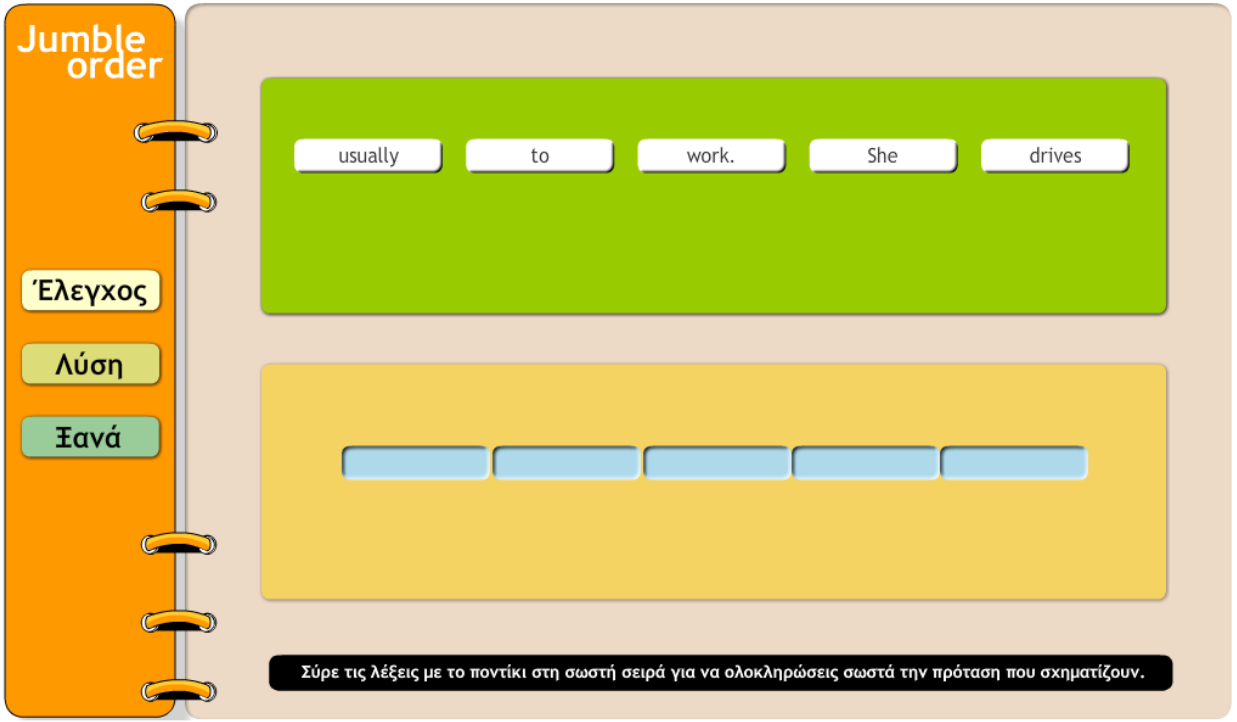
Text manipulation



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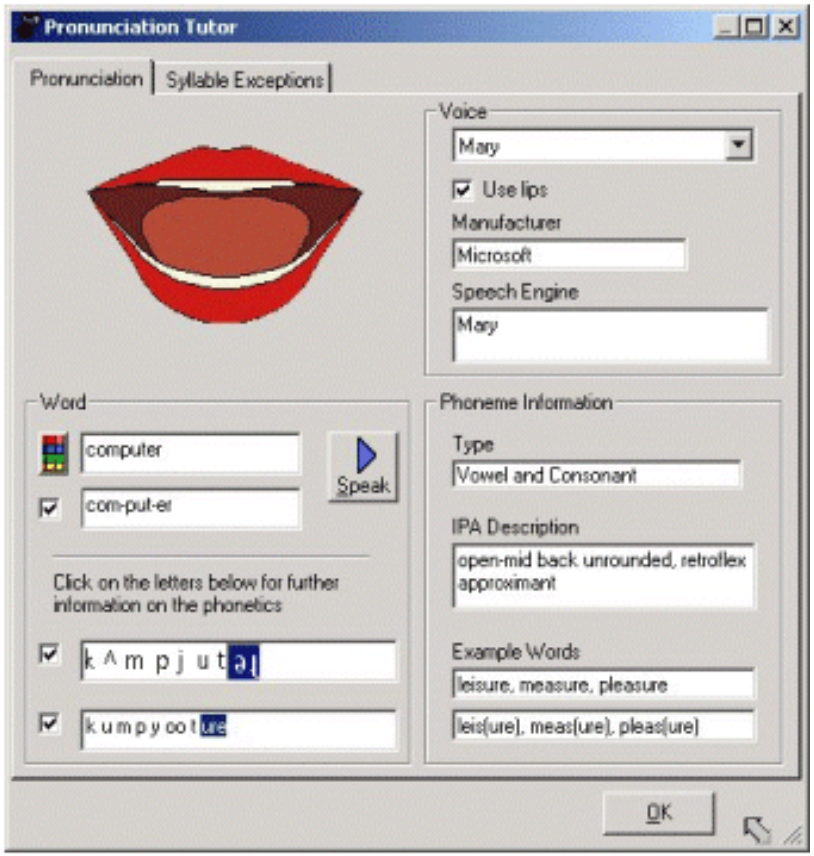
Learners perform various types of manipulation such as re-ordering a jumbled discourse

The Pronunciation Tutor

It breaks words into syllables facilitating easy recognition and pronunciation. You select the word you want to hear pronounced and click on the Pronunciation button. This will open the **pronunciation** tutor window. You will hear the word read aloud syllable by syllable and see the synchronized lip movements.



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Rosetta Stone (1/2)

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Notice the different kind of philosophy from behaviourism.

Rosetta Stone (2/2)

[5]

Watch the Video:

[Rosetta Stone Product Overview: How it Works]

Summary

Computer as Tutor:

- multiple-choice and true/false quizzes,
- gap-filling exercise/cloze,
- matching,
- re-ordering/sequencing,
- crossword puzzles,
- games.

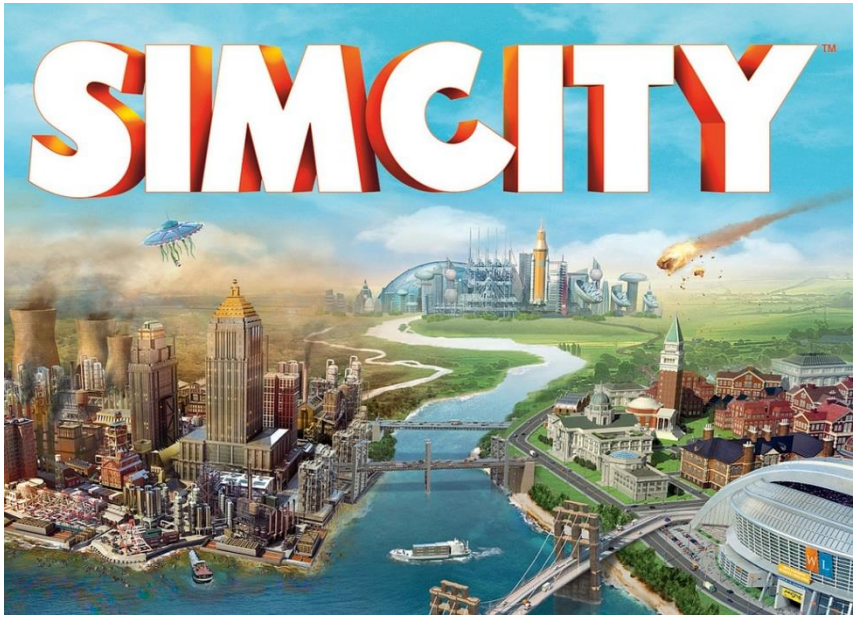
The Computer as Stimulus

The purpose of the computer is not so much to have students discover the right answer, but rather to stimulate students' discussion, writing, or critical thinking.

The computer as Stimulus: Simulation

Simulation:

- is a representation or model of an event, an object, or a phenomenon, e.g. Sim City, Sleuth.
- it attempts to model real-life situations and objects.



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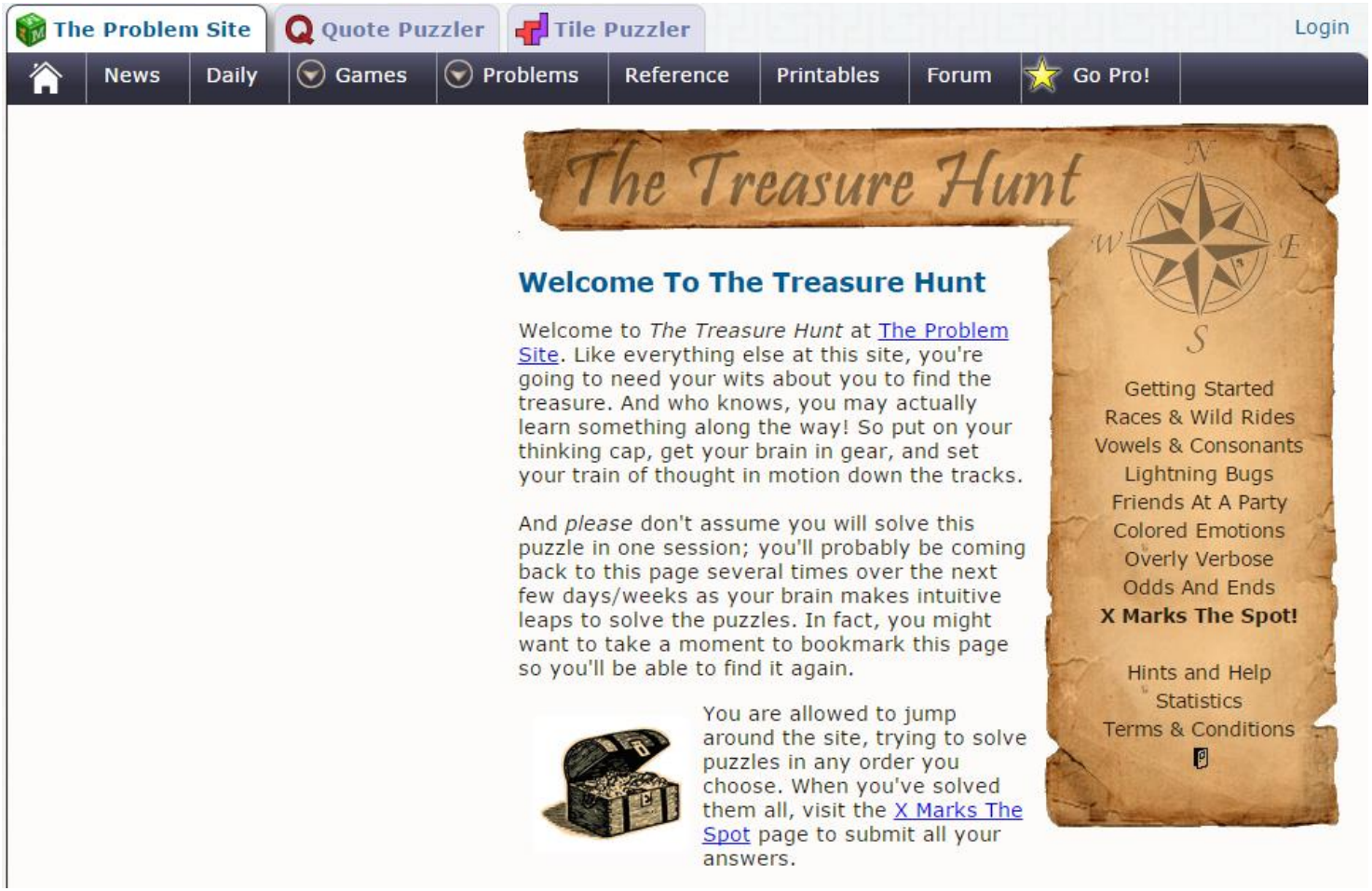
The computer as Stimulus: Problem solving software

- Similar to simulation software in that students are placed in situations where they can manipulate variables and then receive feedback on the results of these manipulations.
- Problem-solving is a more general category that includes all software designed for teaching problem-solving skills (i.e. adventure games: Myst, etc.).

The Problem City: Treasure Hunt



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Escape From Utopia: An adventure game for CALL

A spy game in which the students have the goal of escaping from the city of Utopia within 24 hours. The students have to work out a plan of escape and must remain undetected long enough to put their plan into operation. The game starts in the main square of the city; the students decide which places they want to go to—the restaurant, hotel, railway station, and so on. A map appears on the screen with symbols for the students' location and for that of a patrolling police agent.

Advantages of Computer as Stimulus (1/2)

- Simulations give students an opportunity to apply their learning to a “real-life” situation, these programs tend to address higher-order educational objectives.
- Students become an active part of the educational environment (decision makers) and can usually see the immediate results of the decisions they make in the environment.

Advantages of Computer as Stimulus (2/2)

- Usually, a simulation will require the students to perform application, analysis, and synthesis-level activities.

The Computer as Tool

Programmes not designed specifically for language learning but which can be adapted for this purpose. These programmes do not provide language material, but empower the learner to **use or understand language:**

- Word Processors, Spreadsheets, Graphic Programs,
- Spelling and Grammar Checkers,
- Desktop Publishing Program,
- Reference, e.g dictionaries and encyclopedias in CD-ROMs.

Computer as Tutor vs Tool

Computer as Tutor

- multiple-choice & true/false quizzes,
- gap-filling exercise/cloze,
- matching
- reordering/sequencing,
- crossword puzzles,
- games and simulations,

Computer as Tool

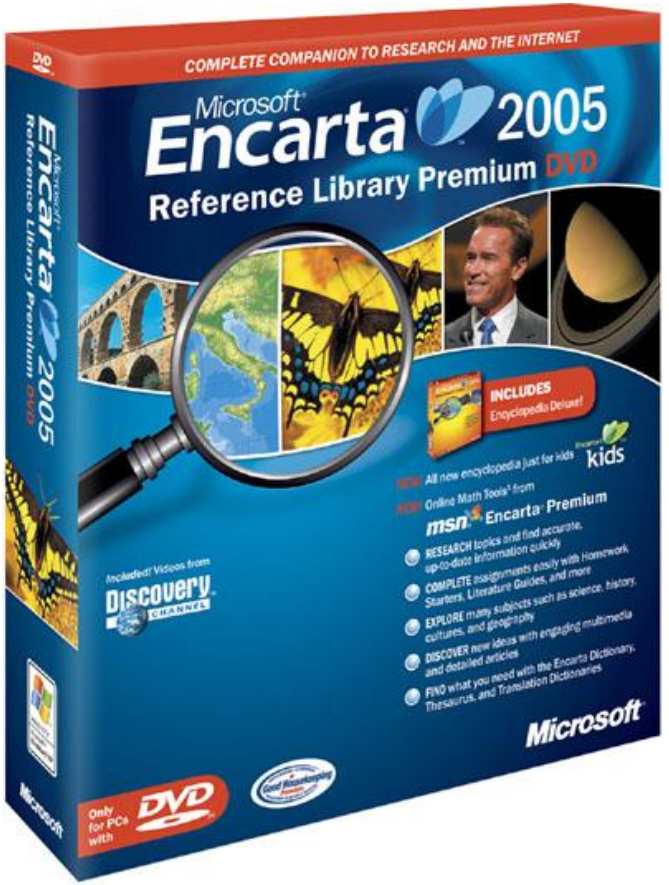
- writing & word-processing,
- concordancing,
- web quests/searching,
- web publishing,
- computer-mediated communication (synchronous/ asynchronous).

Advantages of Computer as Tool

- Teaches students to manage information.
- Tool software is cost-effective (wide application of a word processing program).
- Students learn how to use tool software.
- Emphasises active student involvement (user manipulate information and are controlling the computers as opposed to just being put through their paces).

Encarta Digital Multimedia Encyclopedia (in CD ROM and online)

Published by Microsoft Corporation from 1993 to 2009. Its premium edition consisted of more than 62,000 articles, photos and illustrations, music clips, videos, interactive contents, timelines, maps & atlas and homework tools.



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Merriam Webster Visual Dictionary Online

[9]

Collaborative Writing

A number of tools assist students to work on their writing collaboratively on computers linked in a local area network (LAN) i.e. Aspects, Daedalus, MacCollaborator.

Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment (1/3)

- **Invent** helps writers explore their writing topics through built-in prewriting prompts.
- **Write** a word processor with simple formatting, spell checker and concordance.

[10]

Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment (2/3)

- **Respond** displays a writer's draft and guides a reviewer through a series of feedback prompts.
- **Mail** an electronic bulletin board, enables students to post and read messages.

[10]

Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment (3/3)

- **InterChange** real-time computer-mediated communication with other students.
- **BiblioCite** provides simple forms where the students enter their bibliographic information (eg. MLA).

[10]

Critique of Communicative CALL

- The computer was being used in an ad hoc and disconnected fashion.
- Due to the broader reassessments of the communicative approach to language teaching scholars were no longer satisfied with teaching compartmentalised skills or structures (even if taught in communicative manner).
- Educators were seeking ways to teach in a more integrative manner.

References

Simonson, M. R., & Thompson, A. (1997). *Educational computing foundations*. Merrill/Prince Hall.

Financing

- The present educational material has been developed as part of the educational work of the instructor.
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Notes

Note on History of Published Version

The present work is the edition 1.0.

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