Computer Assisted Language Learning

Creating Interactive Multimedia Resources

Speaker Notes

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Full presenter guidance for the 24 slide seminar. Invite questions throughout. The times and original listening sample can be demonstrated with the presenter's voice. The new presentation contains no recorded narration.

01 Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

Welcome. In this seminar I would like to share how I prepare and use interactive multimedia resources for language learning. My archive contains examples of listening work, dictation, picture discussion, games and coursebook adaptations. We will examine what learners actually do with these materials. You are welcome to ask questions and comment throughout the session. By the end, each pair will have planned a small resource for a class they know. The computer supports the lesson, while our teaching decisions give the activity its purpose.

02 Workshop aims

Think of a particular class while you listen. What do those learners need more practice with? Keep that need in mind as we examine the examples. Our task is to connect a language aim with an activity that gives learners something useful to do. We will also discuss how to judge a resource before and after using it. A visually attractive file may be inviting, but we still need to ask whether it gives learners appropriate practice and whether the teacher can see what they have understood.

03 My multimedia archive

My earlier CALL presentations brought together resources I had prepared for use in my classes. The 2011 and 2012 index files list listening materials, dictation, pictures, telling the time and activities for young learners. The archive also contains covers and labels for many projects. These show the range of the work. They do not by themselves demonstrate every activity. Today I will select a few teaching processes from that collection and explain the decisions behind them, rather than try to open every historical link.

04 CALL in the classroom

For this workshop, computer-assisted language learning means using computer resources to support language presentation, practice and review. The resource might be a PowerPoint file, a local web activity or a short recording. It can support a whole class or an individual learner. We should look closely at the relationship between the material and the learner. Does the activity simply display information, or does it create a reason to listen, think, choose, speak or write? The same computer can support very different kinds of learning activity.

05 The learner's role

An activity becomes more useful when learners have a clear response to make. They may predict the content of a recording, choose an answer, explain a picture or reconstruct a sentence. Give them enough time to think before showing feedback. A click should have a teaching purpose. It can reveal a clue, replay a difficult phrase or allow a learner to check an answer. Ask participants to recall a resource they have used and describe the learner's actions. This helps us examine participation more precisely.

06 A resource for this class

Teachers know the classes they work with. This makes it possible to adapt materials to a particular group. Begin with a manageable need, such as asking and answering questions about daily routines. Decide what language the learners will practise and how much support they require. A beginner may need a model answer and a small choice of words. A more confident learner may explain a choice or ask a follow-up question. These decisions shape the material before we choose pictures, recordings or slide effects.

07 Multimedia choices

Different media can serve different purposes. A picture can establish a setting or give learners something to describe. A recording provides language to listen to, and text can help learners check what they heard. We do not have to present all these elements at once. For a listening task, we might show a picture first and provide the transcript after an initial response. Too much information on the screen can make the task hard to follow. Choose each element because it supports a specific step in the lesson.

08 Meaningful interaction

Suppose we display a question and immediately show the answer. Learners may have little opportunity to work with the language. Instead, pause and ask everyone to decide. Let pairs compare their responses and give a reason. Then reveal feedback and invite correction. This pattern is easy to apply to vocabulary, listening questions and picture tasks. The interaction can happen between learners as well as between a learner and the screen. Ask participants which step they would add to a familiar digital activity to make participation clearer.

09 Demonstration Telling the time

This short demonstration works within the new seminar file. Ask participants to say the three times using both digital and familiar spoken forms where appropriate: seven thirty or half past seven, eight o'clock, and eight thirty or half past eight. Then ask: What time do you start work? What do you usually do at half past seven? Partners ask and answer without reading a complete model sentence. In a classroom version, learners could listen to a recorded time before checking it. Here, the presenter supplies the spoken model.

10 A listening sequence

Use this short original sample: 'Mina starts her English lesson at half past eight. She arrives ten minutes early because she wants to prepare her notebook.' Before reading it, ask participants to predict one thing Mina might do before a lesson. Read it once and ask when the lesson starts. Read it again and ask why she arrives early. Partners compare their answers before checking. Finish with: How do you prepare for a lesson or meeting? This demonstrates a listening sequence without relying on a missing archive recording.

11 Interactive dictation

My dictation procedure uses three listenings with different purposes. During the first listening, learners focus on the general meaning. During the second, I pause so they can write. During the third, they check their work. Use the two-sentence Mina sample from the previous slide. Ask pairs to compare their versions before checking the wording. Discuss a difference that affected meaning, such as the lesson time. A digital resource can hold the recording and the checking text together, while the teacher controls when learners see the text.

12 Pictures for speaking

Use the background illustration as an imagined classroom scene. Ask: What are the learners doing? How might the teacher help them? What would you like to learn in this room? Encourage pairs to explain one answer and ask a follow-up question. State clearly that the illustration is not a photograph of my classroom. In a lesson, I can use my own suitable photographs or another picture I have permission to use. The resource should give learners room to interpret and discuss, with prompts matched to their level.

13 Coursebook adaptations

In my earlier notes, I describe using a slide for each activity and adding materials according to my students' needs. This allows the class to focus on the activity being discussed. A teacher can add a prediction question, a short pair exchange or an extra example. Plan the checking stage as carefully as the presentation. Learners should know when to work independently and when to compare answers. When sharing a public resource, use original or appropriately licensed examples. Keep publisher material in its permitted context and distinguish it from teacher-created additions.

14 Listening and recall

KEEP IN MIND connects listening with retaining and reproducing spoken language. For a small demonstration, read a short sentence with a clear meaning. Ask participants to listen without writing, then repeat it to a partner. Begin with a length the group can manage. Increase the challenge gradually and allow another listening when needed. A resource can organise the sentences and their recordings, but learners still need a clear routine. Observe whether they retain the message and reproduce the language. Avoid treating a single attempt as a complete measure of listening ability.

15 Games and competitions

The archive contains games and competitions as well as listening resources. A digital quiz can organise questions and feedback. Before playing, explain the rules and run one practice round. Give learners roles that rotate, such as reader, speaker and checker. Include thinking time so that the quickest learner does not answer every question. Use errors as opportunities for explanation. A score may help structure a round, but the language practice remains the main purpose. Ask participants how they would include a quiet learner in the activity.

16 Learners create content

Learners can also contribute to a CALL resource. A group might prepare a short picture presentation or record a simple dialogue. Ask them to include a question for their classmates. Give a clear language aim and a manageable limit so that preparing slides does not take over the lesson. Model respectful comments and useful feedback. Learners can rehearse before sharing their work. The teacher checks that the content is appropriate and that any images or recordings can be used. This gives learners a reason to communicate with an audience.

17 Independent practice

A resource for independent practice needs instructions that learners can follow without the teacher beside them. Explain what to do first, when to listen again and how to check. If possible, allow learners to repeat a task without losing their place. Consider the devices and connectivity available to the class. A simple local file may be more usable than an elaborate online activity. Ask learners to bring a question or a short spoken response back to class. This connects independent work with the next lesson.

18 Preparing a resource

Plan the teaching sequence before building the file. Write the opening instruction, the response you expect and the checking stage. Decide which parts require a picture, audio or text. Then make a small first version. Test it in the way a learner will use it. Is the next step obvious? Can the recording be heard? Does the answer appear at the right time? Try the file on the intended device. An uncomplicated resource with clear instructions is a useful starting point for a teacher developing materials.

19 Evaluating a resource

Evaluation begins with the purpose of the lesson. Ask whether the level and task match the group, whether the instructions are clear and whether learners have a meaningful response to make. Look at feedback: does it help learners understand an error, or does it only mark an answer wrong? Consider participation across the class. After using the resource, note what learners could do and where they needed support. These observations guide revision. We should avoid claiming that an attractive resource improves learning unless we have evidence for that particular claim.

20 Access and participation

Check the physical conditions of use. Can learners at the back read the text? Is the audio clear at a comfortable volume? Provide a transcript or another suitable form of support when learners need it. Give time for replay and discussion. Prepare a simple alternative, such as reading a short text aloud or using a printed question sheet, when the equipment is unavailable. Participation also depends on instructions, pace and pair organisation. Ask participants which change would make their chosen activity easier for their particular class to use.

21 Reliable teaching files

This public package provides the seminar and supporting notes as PDF files. For any classroom resource, check media and navigation on the device you will use. When practical, embed necessary audio in an editable teaching version and keep a separate backup. Use a clear folder structure and avoid renaming linked files after testing. The time and listening demonstrations in this seminar use slide text and the presenter's voice, so they do not require separate recordings or historical archive files.

22 Teacher planning task

Work with a partner. Choose a class you know and a small language aim. Plan a resource with an opening prompt, a learner response and feedback. You do not need to build the file during this task. Decide what the learners will see and hear, and what they will say or write. Explain how you will support someone who finds the task difficult. Include one way to observe whether the activity met its aim. Use the planning sheet in the Teacher's Notes. I will circulate and ask questions while you work.

23 Sharing and revision

Invite two pairs to present their plans briefly. Ask listeners to identify the language practice and describe the learner's response. Then request one specific suggestion. It might concern a clearer instruction, more thinking time or feedback that explains a difficult answer. Keep comments respectful and practical. Each pair records one change they would make before creating the resource. The workshop ends with a plan that participants can try in their own context. No single design will suit every class, so adaptation remains part of the teacher's work.

24 Computer-Assisted Language Learning

Thank you for taking part. My archive brings together materials and teaching procedures developed across many classroom activities. CALL gives us ways to organise and share that work. The choices we make about learner level, response time and feedback determine how the resource fits a lesson. I hope you leave with a small plan you can use or adapt. You can explore related seminars through BEREKET ELT Archive. Please share a question, an observation or an idea you would like to try with your learners.