

Integrated, Enjoyable and Engaging L2 Acquisition Through Computer-Aided Language Learning

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ABSTRACT

The use of computers, software, and digital resources to enhance language learning and instruction is an overarching definition of “Computer-Aided Language Learning” (CALL). The word “computer-aided” refers to a variety of different technologies, such as personal computers, laptops, tablets, mobile phones, and the Internet. CALL refers to a wide range of activities that can be used to learn a language. Some examples of these activities are language practice through interactive exercises, virtual language exchanges, multimedia resources, interactive language learning websites, interactive language learning applications for smart phones and language games. Both formal educational settings (like schools and language institutes) and informal contexts (like learners engaging in self-directed language learning utilizing Internet resources) are suitable for its application. This paper aims to discuss certain aspects of this learning method and tool as envisaged in NEP like online teaching platforms and tools like SWAYAM, DIKSHA, assistive tools for monitoring progress of learners, Content creation, digital repository, and dissemination and addresses the digital divide.

Keywords: Computer-Aided Language Learning- CALL, Multimedia Learning Resources and Platforms, Task-based language teaching, Virtual exchange of languages and gamified approach.

Introduction

The New Education Policy 2020 envisages the creation of an “autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, and administration. It also strives to promote appropriate technology integration into all levels of education and ensure the availability of all resources through school complexes and clusters. The expansion of open and distance learning promotes the internationalization of education. In this context, we look at ICT and technology integration at all levels. It is here in this scenario that learner-centred techniques are becoming increasingly popular as teachers of foreign languages attempt to establish learning environments that are inclusive and equitable for all students. These different approaches emphasize learner autonomy, learner agency, and individualized education. According to Benson, educators may create a learning environment that is more interesting and fruitful for students by catering to the needs, strengths, and interests of individual students. In addition, multicultural and intercultural perspectives are now essential to language instruction, with the overarching

goal of fostering cultural awareness, sensitivity, and intercultural communicative competence. (Benson: 2017)

The use of computers, software, and digital resources to enhance language learning and instruction is an overarching definition of “Computer-Aided Language Learning”. The word “computer-aided” refers to a variety of different technologies, such as personal computers, laptops, tablets, cell phones, and the Internet. CALL refers to a wide range of activities that can be used to learn a language. Some examples of these activities are language practice through interactive exercises, virtual language exchanges, multimedia resources, and language games. Both formal educational settings (like schools and language institutes) and informal contexts (like learners engaging in self-directed language learning utilizing Internet resources) are suitable for its application. Schools and language institutes are two examples of formal educational settings.

The term “Computer-Aided Language Learning” has evolved as a strong and transformative approach to language education in this digital age. It has revolutionized the way in which English language learners engage with course materials, practice language skills, and connect with instructors and peers. CALL is an acronym that stands for computer-aided language learning. It is the practice of incorporating various forms of technology into the teaching and learning of languages in order to facilitate more dynamic and interactive educational environments. This introductory piece offers a detailed review of computer-aided language learning, explaining its significance in the context of English language learning, tracking its historical evolution, and casting light on its prospective benefits.

1. Importance of Computer-Aided Language Learning in Promoting English Language Acquisition:

The ability of computer-aided language learning to alleviate some of the more common difficulties encountered by language students is essential to the field of English language education. CALL provides a multitude of materials and techniques that are adaptable to a variety of learning styles, which makes the process of acquiring a second language more interesting, participatory, and pleasurable for the learner.

Because of its versatility and adaptability, CALL is an extremely useful tool for responding to the specific requirements and interests of individual students. Adaptive learning platforms make use of algorithms powered by artificial intelligence to personalize the educational routes taken by learners based on their performance and progress. These platforms also provide learners with focused language practice and content that is in line with their current levels of proficiency and their learning objectives.

Additionally, computer-aided language learning (CALL) encourages learner autonomy by providing people with the tools necessary to take charge of their own language acquisition path.

The use of CALL also paves the way for international cooperation and communication. Learners can engage in authentic language practice and foster intercultural conversation through the use of virtual language exchange platforms, which connect students with native speakers of the target language from all over the world. This worldwide contact supports the development of multilingual and multicultural competence in learners as well as enriches the linguistic experiences of those who are learning.

2. Theoretical Underpinnings of the “Computer-Aided Language Learning” (CALL) Field

The concept that language acquisition is at its most successful when students are actively engaged in meaningful activities is at the foundation of the principles of task-based language teaching (TBLT). Learners are inspired to use language for the sake of communication when they are given tasks to complete, as opposed to simply concentrating on isolated language forms. This method is consistent with the constructivist view of learning, which according to Doughty and Long, places a strong emphasis on the significance of active involvement, collaborative effort, and problem-solving. (Doughty and Long: 2003)

Perspectives Based on Behaviorism in CALL:

Learners are able to participate in more dynamic and interactive activities, which is one of the key benefits that come from utilizing technology to boost language acquisition. Learners can put their language skills to the test with quizzes, games, and other interactive activities provided by digital tools, all of which provide instantaneous feedback on their performance. According to **Chapelle** (2018), these activities encourage active engagement, motivation, and independent learning because students can advance through the content at their own pace while receiving individualized direction.

3. Software and application categories that fall under the umbrella term “computer-aided language learning” (CALL)

The term “Computer-Aided Language Learning” (CALL) refers to a wide variety of programs and applications that make use of technology to facilitate language learning as well as language instruction. These computer-aided language learning (CALL) tools provide experiences in language learning that are interactive, engaging, and individualized. They respond to the demands of learners of varying levels of language ability and learning styles. This section examines the many kinds of computer-aided language learning (CALL) software and applications that are available to students of the English language. It provides an overview of the characteristics, benefits, and prospective applications of these programs in the context of language training.

4. The Pros and Cons of Using “Computer-Aided Language Learning” (CALL) for the Purpose of Learning English

1. Increasing Students’ Interest in and drive to Learn the Target Language
2. CALL platforms give learners with individualized learning experiences that are suited to their competency levels, learning styles, and preferences.
3. Encourages Learner Autonomy and Self-Directed Learning: CALL promotes learner autonomy, which enables individuals to play an active role in the process of acquiring a second language.
4. Access to Authentic Language Materials and Cultural Contexts: CALL systems give students access to a wide variety of authentic language materials, including films, audio recordings, news articles, and interviews, among other things.
5. Fostering Global Communication and Intercultural Competence The use of online collaboration tools and platforms for exchanging languages virtually helps to build global communication and intercultural competence.

6. Access to Language Resources and Practice Opportunities Regardless of Time or Location The online aspect of CALL gives students the ability to access language resources and practice English at any time and from any location.

Conclusion:

The function that CALL plays in the development of particular language abilities as well as its ability to cater to a wide variety of language situations makes it an invaluable tool for language instructors. The abilities of hearing, speaking, reading, and writing are addressed in CALL applications, in addition to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Learners have access to a wide variety of interactive materials and tools that may be adapted to their own requirements, areas of interest, and goals about their future careers.

The incorporation of CALL, on the other hand, is not without its share of difficulties and ethical concerns. A competent implementation of CALL must include all of the following critical components: ensuring fair access to technology; protecting the privacy of learners; eliminating the biases introduced by algorithms; and developing digital literacy. To ensure that all students can benefit from technology-mediated language learning experiences without compromising data security or inclusivity, educators and policymakers need to take the initiative to solve the difficulties that lie ahead.

By embracing these new directions, educators of the English language have the ability to build dynamic and inclusive learning environments that empower learners, develop multicultural understanding, and equip them with the language skills and competencies necessary for success in a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected.

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