Finding and Evaluating CALL Tools

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Steps to finding & evaluating CALL tools

1. Defining purpose
2. Finding tools
3. Weighting priorities
4. Pre-use evaluating
5. Post-use evaluating
1. Purpose

- Blogging
- Using social network in TL
- Writing practice in TL
- Interacting with TL speakers in writing outside of class
Example: Class discussions

- Fully online pedagogical grammar course
- Content presented via website
- Quizzes/tests in D2L
- Need: Asynchronous written discussion tool
  - Small group
  - Whole class
2. Finding

- Find all tools that might fit your purpose
- Don’t be too judgey at this point
- Sources:
  - Yourself
  - ANGEL/D2L
  - Colleagues
  - Betsy’s CALL help hour (Tuesdays, 3-4), CeLTA
  - Google
  - Diigo list of CALL tools
2. Finding: Diigo resource

- Curated collection of bookmarks
- Viewable by anyone
- Please join and contribute!

v.gd/calico
Example: Asynchronous discussion tools

- Discussion forum in ANGEL
- Discussion forum in D2L
- Blog within website
- Discussion forum within website (e.g., bbPress)
- Discussion forum embedded in website (e.g., Bublaa)
- Discussion forum in external website (e.g., ProBoards)
- Facebook group
- Email list
- ???
3. Priorities

- **Cost**
  - Free or fee?
  - If fee, who pays?

- **Privacy/Security**
  - Is tool online or offline?
  - Where is tool hosted? MSU or elsewhere?
  - Is tool available in ANGEL or D2L?
  - Does tool protect students’ privacy? Comply with FERPA? (Who owns student data?)

- **Stability**
  - Is tool stable?
  - Is tool provider reputable?
3. Priorities

• Compatibility
  – Is tool available for Mac & Windows? Linux?
  – Is tool available on iPad/iPhone/Android?
  – Does tool require installation of software? Browser plugins?

• Ease of use
  – Is tool easy to use? Is use intuitive?
  – Do students need to create an account?
  – Are students already familiar with tool?
  – Can tool be embedded in D2L/ANGEL/course website?
  – How many steps are needed to accomplish purpose?
  – Does tool comply with accessibility guidelines?
3. Priorities

• Help
  – Is help available online? Offline?
  – How quickly is help available?
  – Do colleagues already use tool?
  – Do you have to pay for help?

• Aesthetics
  – Is design pleasing?
  – Is tool engaging?
  – Are ads included?

• Other
  – Does tool support TL script?
  – Is tool popular with students outside of classroom? Will they be willing to use it for learning?
  – ???
Example: Priorities

- Free
- Online
- Stable
- Easy to use
- Engaging
- Students already familiar
- Popular with students outside of classroom
- Pleasant design
- Can be embedded/exists in D2L/course website
4. Pre-use evaluation

• Based on identified priorities, which tool is the best fit?
Example: D2L discussion forum
[Image of a webpage showing a discussion thread]

**Test post 1**

Elizabeth Lavolette - Oct 10, 2013 11:29 AM

Mark Unread [Reply] More actions...

Attachments:

Audio 2013-10-10 1120.wav (61.04 KB)

Test content 1

**Re: Test post 1**

Elizabeth Lavolette - Oct 10, 2013 11:30 AM

Mark Unread [Reply] More actions...

Test reply content

[View: Threaded]
Example: Pre-use evaluation of D2L discussion forum

- Free
- Online
- Stable
- Easy to use
- Engaging
- Students already familiar
- Popular with students outside of classroom
- Pleasant design
- Can be embedded in D2L/course website
Example: Pre-use evaluation

- Free
- Online
- Stable
- Easy to use
- Engaging
- Students already familiar
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- Pleasant design
- Can be embedded/exists in D2L/course website
5. Post-use evaluation

• During and after use, collect informal and formal feedback from students about tool
  – Midterm survey
  – End-of-course survey

• Based on feedback & your own experience, was tool
  – Acceptable?
  – Effective?

• Changes to original list of priorities?
  – Addition/deletion of priorities?
  – Reorder?
  – What tool is now best choice?
Example: Post-use evaluation

- Free
- Online
- Stable
- Easy to use
- Engaging
- Students already familiar
- Popular with students outside of classroom
- Pleasant design
- Can be embedded/exists in D2L/course website
So, what’s your purpose?

- Practice in fluent speaking/writing/reading
- Practice in accurate speaking/writing
- Practice listening
- Speaking TL with L1/L2 speakers
- Practicing particular grammar point
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Resources

- Finding and Evaluating CALL Resources (Phil Hubbard)  

- CALICO’s software review guidelines  

- NFLRC checklist for evaluating software  
  [http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/Networks/NW31/NW31t.pdf](http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/Networks/NW31/NW31t.pdf)

- Usability review template  

- Rubric for online instruction  
  [http://www.csuchico.edu/celt/roi/history.shtml](http://www.csuchico.edu/celt/roi/history.shtml)

- Criteria for Evaluating the Quality of Online Courses  
Resources


