

The Application of Internet in ELT in Mainland China

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Abstract:

Compared to the beginning of the century, nowadays the Internet has been widely applied in ELT in mainland China. The main advantages of using the Internet in language classrooms are the follows: it can improve students' writing skills and reading skills, it helps students to build up vocabulary and motivate students, and it will achieve cross-cultural understanding and learner autonomy. In order to help teachers to better apply the Internet in classes, this article provides a few example lessons from the aspects of using dedicated web-sites, non-dedicated web-sites, and E-mail / WeChat. Besides, this article analyses the rationales and the techniques of the above application.

Key Words: Internet, ELT, Rationale, Technique

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, “the Internet has emerged as a prominent new technology” (Singhal, 1997), which influences almost all the aspects of the world, such as business, industry and so forth. Without a doubt, “The advent of the Internet and the wide spread of technology in our life create new opportunities for language learning”. (Krajka, 2000) In the universities, especially in those of developed countries, the Internet has played a significant role in English education. (Eastment, 1999)

Between 1996 and 1998, the use of the Internet in all aspects of the ELT has grown rapidly and “the number of ELT sites on the Web has tripled”. (Eastment, 1999: 2) And this tendency is continuing to accelerate. In the developed world, “Internet connections are commonplace in schools ...with at least one workstation connected.” “More prosperous private schools and virtually all universities have significant numbers of networked, Internet-connected machines and are beginning to use them imaginatively and creatively for language learning.” (Eastment, 1999:2)

At the same time, applying the Internet in ELT is a major issue of the late 1990s. Teeler and Gray (2000), Debski and Levy (1999), Kern and Warschauer (2000), and among others, are all useful sources for the excellent ideas. Besides, Dudeney (2000) recommends a series of classroom activities as well. In addition to the resource books, a plethora of articles have been published: Jarvis (1997, 2001) suggests using the web for an authentic learning experience. Muehleisen (1997) discusses the motivation of applying the Internet in language learning. Trokeloshvili and Jost (1997) prove the effectiveness of using the Internet in the composition course with a case study in Japan. Nagel (1999) suggests how to use E-mail in the classroom. Belisle (1996) studies E-mail activities in the ESL writing class. And Ho (2000) advocates developing intercultural awareness through E-mail exchanges.

Under this influence, many Chinese universities have started to apply the Internet to English language teaching and learning, although the application is rather limited at the beginning. Some Chinese experts set foot on the area of integrating the Internet into English education, such as Liou (2002) and Gu (2002). Today, it is happily found out that the Internet has been extensively applied to English language teaching and learning in the universities of Mainland China.

2. CLASSIFICATIONS OF THE INTERNET

The Internet is a network of thousands of computer networks. Each individual system brings something different to the whole and the end result is a vast accumulation of information. It is a worldwide network of computers that interact on a standardized set of protocols, which act independently of particularly computer operating systems, allowing for a variety of access methods to the Internet. (Lewis, 1994; Singhal, 1997; Teeler and Gray, 2000: 1) It can be seen as

a digital media, a global CD-ROM of unlimited capacity, or a communication network. (Eastment, 1999: 2)

According to Eastment (1999:4), the Internet is mainly dominated by two items. One is E-mail, and the other is World Wide Web. Besides E-mail and World Wide Web, Social media have risen to prominence recently, among which WeChat is commonly used in Mainland China. In the following, the three will be respectively discussed.

2.1. E-mail

E-mail refers to the electronic mail, which means “typing messages at the computer keyboard and sending them off into cyberspace to someone who can receive them”. (Eastment, 1999:4) Although they are basically a text-based medium, E-mail programs make it possible to attach large files, graphics, video or sounds to notes. Some E-mail programs even feature voice-mail so you can listen to your messages. (Teeler and Gray, 2000)

In terms of the pedagogical goal, according to Carrier (1997), E-mail is likely to accelerate both students and teachers to conduct the following exchanges:

Teacher - student: E-mail is used for class follow-up, discussing homework, submitting writing assignments, etc.

Student - student: students forge personal links with other students either in their own institution or overseas (e.g. in English speaking countries).

Class - class: a group of students makes contact with an overseas group to conduct a survey or similar project work (usually cultural in nature).

Teacher - world: the use of mailing lists and newsgroups to exchange information and discuss relevant issues (e.g. TESOL-L).

Student - world: the use of mailing lists and newsgroups to exchange information and discuss relevant in ELT-appropriate forums.

2.2. World Wide Web

In this part, Jarvis’s opinion (2002:16-17) will be adopted, which divides the Web into non-dedicated web-sites and dedicated web-sites.

Non-dedicated web-sites

According to Jarvis (2002:16), non-dedicated web-sites can be defined as “any web-site that has not been specifically written for the language learner or teacher; these web-sites only post authentic materials.” For example, from www.cnn.com or www.bbc.co.uk both students and teachers will know what happened in the world; from www.expedia.com, a great deal of travel information can be obtained; from www.mtv.com, the information of the entertainment will be gained as well.

The pedagogical goal of applying non-dedicated web-sites lies in that students will be able to “read, comprehend and react to authentic materials” (Carrier, 1997:289). “Authentic texts promote acquisition because they challenge learners to activate relevant knowledge of the world, of discourse, and of the language system, and thus construct the conditions for further learning.” (Little et al, 1989:28)

Dedicated web-sites

Compared to non-dedicated web-sites, dedicated web-sites refer to any web-site that is “specifically dedicated to language teaching or learning.” (Jarvis, 2002:16) For example, www.uefap.co.uk by Andy Gillett is an excellent web-site for EAP students, which provides the chance for students to practice the four skills. Randall’s ESL Cyber Listening Lab www.esl-lab.com/index.htm is the fantastic web-site focusing on the listening practice.

One pedagogical goal of using dedicated web-sites is that they provide distance learning courses for students or teachers. Thus, by means of learning through the web, they can get a degree or a job qualification. The other pedagogical goal is that they can supply supplementary material either for the teacher to develop his or her career or for the students to consolidate their language knowledge.

2.3. Social media (WeChat)

Social media are computer-mediated technologies, which share the information, ideas, and other forms of expression by means of virtual communities and networks. Social media use the internet, desktop computers and mobile phones, for example, IPAD and smartphones. (See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media) With the popularization of the smartphones, social media are more and more accepted. The most popular social media around the world are the follows: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, WeChat and so forth. Among those, most people in Mainland China prefer WeChat.

From the pedagogical aspect, social media (WeChat in the case of Mainland China) play most of the role that E-mail plays in ELT learning. Like E-mail, WeChat accelerates students and teachers to communicate in various ways: one teacher to one student, one teacher to all students, one student to one teacher, one student to many teachers, one student to another student, and one student to all other students. But to some extent WeChat is better than E-mail in that it makes all the communication happen at the same time. In fact, WeChat is like a forum, creating excellent interactive platforms, through which all individuals are able to discuss their opinion or share their information simultaneously. Besides the function of a forum, WeChat, like E-mail, can be used to send pictures, videos and voice messages to others. But better than E-mail, WeChat makes all these handy and convenient to both senders and receivers. For example, the teacher took a video with a smartphone for a student when he was making a speech in class, then still in the class, just a minute after the student finished, the video was sent to all the students of the class by WeChat as a demo to learn how to make a speech.

3. THE EXTENT OF APPLYING THE INTERNET IN ELT BEFORE AND NOW

In 2004, a case study was made on the extent of applying the Internet in ELT. Thirteen years later, the same case study was carried out and the data has been greatly improved.

East China University of Political Science and Law (ECUPL for short) was chosen as the subject of the case study. The reason of investigating this university is that ECUPL represents the average teaching context among the universities of Mainland China. First, Shanghai is the economic center of Mainland China, where English education is always in the leading position, and ECUPL is one of the universities of Shanghai. But since ECUPL is featured by Law, ELT is often, unfortunately, put into the second-rank list. Second, the facilities of ECUPL accord with the demands of Education Committee and the English course programs are set by College English Syllabus. Third, the quality of the English teachers of ECUPL is in the medium or upper-medium level and the language ability of the students is similar to that of most other universities. Therefore the result of the study is able to reflect the average level of the application of the Internet in the universities of Mainland China.

Compared to thirteen years ago, when more than 20% teachers didn't use dedicated web-sites and around 10% teachers didn't use non-dedicated web-sites (See Table one), today all teachers would like to apply both dedicated web-sites and non-dedicated web-sites in ELT. Compared to thirteen years ago, when more than 25% teachers didn't use E-mail in ELT (See Table two), today all teachers choose to use E-mail frequently. But the purpose of using E-mail doesn't change much during the past thirteen years, handing in assignments and exchanging information are still the main reasons for using E-mail in ELT (See Table three). Moreover, thirteen years ago, no one used social media in ELT, but today all English teachers use WeChat, and the only difference lies in the frequency and dimension of the use (See Table four).

Table one: The extent to which dedicated and non-dedicated web-sites were used in ELT in 2004

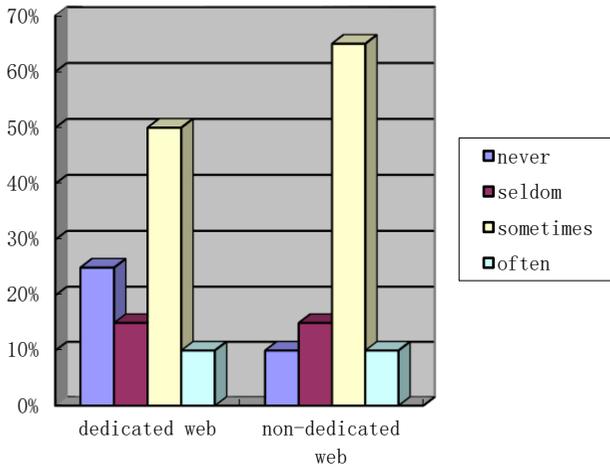


Table two: The extent to which E-mail was used in ELT in 2004

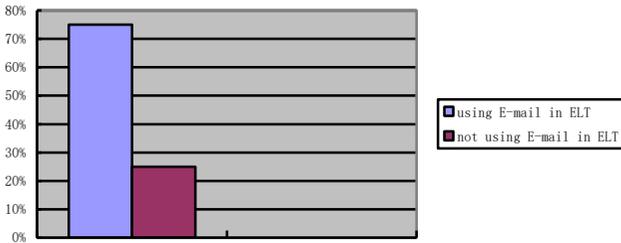


Table three: The purpose of using E-mail in ELT in 2004

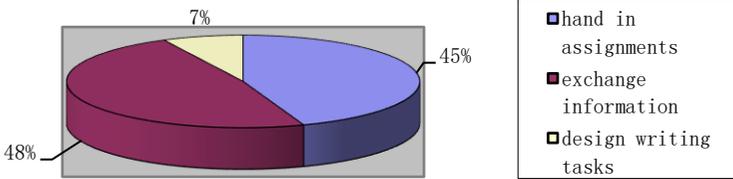
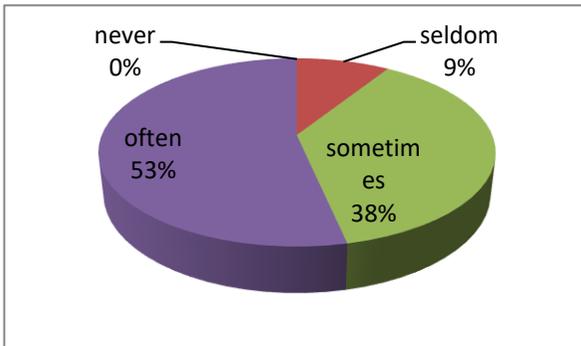


Table four: The extent to which WeChat was used in ELT in 2017



4. ADVANTAGES OF APPLYING THE INTERNET IN ELT

In the teaching practice, the advantages of applying the Internet in English learning and teaching are as follows:

4.1. To improve students' writing skills

The Internet is beneficial to improve students' writing skills in two aspects. First, "e-mail provides students with an excellent opportunity for real, natural communication..." (Carrier,1997:284). Compared to the traditional writing, in which students write because they have to do, because writing is their course work, with E-mail, however, students write for exchanging information. In order to correctly send the information and make oneself understood, the student will be willing to use the mind and make effort to express himself clearly when he writes.

Second, In contrast to the traditional writing, in which students only hand in what they write to the teacher, who correct and return the writing to individuals, with E-mail or WeChat, however, the piece of writing will be read and evaluated by the classmates as well. Thus, on one hand, in order to "keep face", students are no longer making the elementary mistakes, such as spelling, capital letters, which tends to cause a rigorous attitude towards study. On the other hand, by

means of peer evaluation, students are provided the opportunity to learn from each other. “Students can formulate an idea of their level of proficiency...setting targets for themselves, they are more likely to consider these targets on their own and feel responsible for reaching them.” (Scharle and Szabo, 2000: 8)

4.2. To improve students’ reading skills

The non-dedicated web-site is a virtual library at one’s fingertips, according to Singhal (1997), which includes all kinds of reading materials, such as a love story, a business report or an interviewing of a pop star. Towards these different kinds of materials, learners will subconsciously apply one or several specific skills in order to read efficiently, such as skimming, scanning or top-down method. Keeping on the extensive reading, learners are bound to have the ability to apply proper skills to the corresponding materials, thus, the reading skill will definitely be improved. Nuttall (1996:127) reports “getting students to read extensively is the easiest and most effective way of improving their reading skills.” Mason and Krashen (1997) report that reluctant ELT learners at a Japanese University made significant gains on a cloze test after a semester of reading extensively.

4.3. To build up students’ vocabulary

Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985) maintains that being exposed to the language environment, learners can subconsciously acquire the language from the input they comprehend. When L2 learners are exposed into the non-dedicated web-sites, it is probably that there are some repeatedly unfamiliar words in the material. If an individual word is read again and again and understood more than once in different contexts, naturally learners will quickly identify the words and tend to easily remember the words. Harris and Sipay (1990:435-436) comment “all the sources of information about a word are consolidated into a single, highly cohesive representation.” As a result of frequent appearance, the unfamiliar words can turn into learners’ familiar words. Richards (1998:16) comments that “familiarity breeds automaticity,” which is called automatic processing with peripheral attention by McLaughlin (1990). Wilkins (1972) believes that through reading, learners can effectively come to understand which words are appropriate in which context.

4.4. To achieve cross-cultural understanding

Delanoy (1997:60) comments “cultural learning is now viewed as an integral part of communicative language learning.” With the use of the Internet, cultural learning can be conducted in two aspects. First, from the non-dedicated web-sites, students can read web versions of daily newspapers and same-day news reports from sources such as the British government’s attitude towards topping up the tuition fees. For convenience, the teacher can send the screenshot of the news report to students by WeChat. After reading, all students are supposed to join in the discussion. “Such experience can allow learners to participate in the culture of the target language, which in turn can enable them to further learn how cultural background influences one’s view of the world.”(Singhal, 1997)

Second, by means of E-mail, students can make pals with the native speakers. Getting along with a foreigner, it is possible that students will encounter the culture shock. But the friendly communication will help students realise as well as accept the cultural difference, so as to get out of the cultural bump and achieve cultural awareness. Fantini (1997:41) comments “language work is always complemented by explicit attention to sociolinguistic aspects, cultural aspects, and the comparing and contrasting of target and native linguacultures.”

4.5. To achieve learner autonomy

Learner autonomy believes that learners have the “freedom and ability to manage their own affairs”. (Scharle and Szabo, 2000:4) With the use of the dedicated web-sites, information is presented in a non-linear sequence, which enables learners to select the items they wish to practice at an individualized pace.

Moreover, students can get immediate feedback from the dedicated web-sites. Nobody knows the failure or the success but the student himself. With the feedback, students will know to which part special attention should be paid. Naiman et al (1978) suggest that the most successful language learning strategies are connected with assuming responsibility for one’s own learning.

4.6. To motivate students

Countless studies and experiments in human learning have shown that motivation is a key to learning. (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991) For English language teachers, one of the most difficult problems is how to motivate students, how to make students realize its importance.

Being exposed into the Internet, when they find the majority of information on the Internet is in English, students will “appreciate in more concrete terms the usefulness of acquiring ESL skills.” (Fox, 1998) Thus, English is taken to a new level, no longer an interesting curiosity or hobby, it takes on the characteristic of a vital and important skill that will be useful later in life. (Muehleisen, 1997)

5. EXAMPLE LESSONS OF APPLYING THE INTERNET IN ELT

Since most of the English teachers have realized the significance of applying the Internet in ELT, and they are willing to do it as well, the only thing left is how to use the Internet in class effectively. The followings are the example lessons from the aspects of using dedicated web-sites, non-dedicated web-sites, and E-mail/WeChat.

5.1. Applying dedicated web-sites to listening skills

“Listening is the most frequently used language skill in everyday life.” (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000:102). In both CET 4 and CET 6 (English tests for non-English major college students), listening is an important part, occupying 35% of all the points. This example lesson is designed on how to use dedicated web-sites to develop listening skills.

Aim: Develop listening skills

Level: Upper-intermediate

Time: 45 minutes (35 minutes online)

Web-site: <http://www.esl-lab.com/index.htm>

Preparation:

- (A) The teacher checks the web-site before the class.
- (B) Make sure that each student is provided with a computer / smartphone connected to the Internet.

In class:

- (A) Instructions (5 minutes)

The teacher explains to students that they will practice listening with the Internet. Students can choose the degree and do the exercises at their own speed, and they are required to give feedback to the class in the later. Then the teacher writes the web-site address on the blackboard.

- (B) Online activities (35 minutes)

- (a) Ask students to type the address: <http://www.esl-lab.com/index.htm>, and enter Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab.

- (b) Students will see four choices "General Listening Quizzes", "Listening Quizzes for Academic purposes", "Long conversation with real video" and "short listening exercises". Ask students to choose any quiz from general or academic quizzes.

Students spend two or three minutes looking through the web-site and decide one quiz to make self-testing. For example, one student might choose "Christmas is coming", which is the medium degree of General Listening Quizzes.

- (c) Students follow the instruction to do the exercises of pre-listening, listening and post-listening. For example, in the pre-listening exercise, the question is *Imagine you are one of the children in the conversation, what would you ask for Christmas?* In the listening exercises, there are 5 multiple-choice questions and 10 gap-filling questions. In the post-listening exercise, the question is *Is Christmas celebrated in your country? If so, in what ways?* Students do the exercises individually and they can listen to the materials as many times as they like.

- (d) Students check the answers by clicking on "Final Score" or "Show Score", through which they can see their scores and the correct answers. Students can also click on "Quiz Script", through which they can read the listening materials and the explanation of key words and phrases.

- (C) Offline activities (5 minutes)

The teacher divides students into small groups.

- (a) Students retell what they have listened to online in the group.

(b) Students discuss on the effective way of comprehending listening materials.

Remarks:

During the online activities, the teacher should walk to each student frequently. One purpose is to provide necessary assistance if students need it. The other purpose is to supervise students in case they do something else online.

Rationale for this example lesson:

First, dedicated web-sites provide non-threatening learning environment, which has been discussed in 4.1 of the article. Bradin (1999:167) reports that many students have commented they are annoyed or, even worse, embarrassed because they do not wish their classmates to know every time they make a mistake. In order to keep face, many students prefer to keep silent, which is bound to cause unsuccessful leaning result. With dedicated web-sites, students will be encouraged to try what they think correct.

Second, online dedicated web-sites provide instant feedback, which has been discussed in 4.5 of the article. It is known that on average each English teacher in Chinese universities teaches nearly 300 students, thus it will take at least one week for a teacher to give feedback to students, which tends to result in the fact that students have forgotten what their answers are and why they answer in that way. With using online dedicated web-sites, however, the quick feedback will guarantee the better learning effect.

Third, dedicated web-sites encourage learner autonomy, which has been discussed in 4.5 of the article. Bradin (1999:169) comments that “when learners are locked into an extremely limiting interface that permits few or no alternatives, they may feel frustrated.” With dedicated web-sites, students can choose what they wish to learn, thus they are willing to take responsibility for their own studying, which will lead to successful learning effect.

5.2. Applying non-dedicated web-sites to reading skills

“As a skill, reading is clearly one of the most important ones.” (McDonough and Shaw, 1993:101) In fact, the significance of developing reading skills has already been highlighted by the English teachers of Chinese universities, especially when the percentage of reading in CET 4 and CET 6 has been increased to 35%. This example lesson is designed on how to use non-dedicated web-sites to develop reading skills.

Aim: developing reading skills

Level: upper-intermediate and above

Time: 45 minutes (online 35 minutes)

Web-sites: <http://www.greentravel.com> <http://www.independent.co.uk>

<http://www.pti.org.uk>

<http://www.yahoo.com>

Preparation:

- (A) The teacher checks the web-sites before the class.
- (B) Make sure that every two students are provided with a computer/smartphone connected to the Internet.

In class:

- (A) Instructions (5 minutes)

The teacher tells students that suppose they will have a week of holiday, first they should decide where to go, and introduce the place to friends. Then they should decide how to travel, where to live and what to do.

The teacher divides students into pairs.

The teacher writes the above web-sites on the blackboard, and tells students they can use other web-sites as well for more information.

- (B) Online activities (35 minutes)

- (a) Students type the web-site addresses, visit the web-sites, and look through the information of different countries and cities. By comparing the difference between the places and consulting with the partner, each pair decides one city to go.

- (b) Students try to know the place as much as they can in terms of its geography, climate, history, culture, food and so on by clicking on the links to the relevant web-sites. And prepare for the introduction of the place.

- (c) Students search the detailed information for their holiday. By visiting different web-sites, they choose transport and accommodation, make holiday schedule, and book tickets.

For this activity, students are required to take notes.

- (C) Offline activities (5 minutes)

The teacher makes every four pairs into one group.

In the group, each pair makes oral report on *the favorite place and the holiday plan*.

Remarks:

During the online activities, the teacher should walk to each pair frequently. One purpose is to provide necessary assistance, and the other purpose is to supervise students in case they do something else online.

Rationale for this example lesson:

First, non-dedicated web-sites provide authentic texts, which have been mentioned in 2.2 and 4.2 of the article. These authentic texts provide opportunities for designing authentic tasks, which

enable student have “authentic leaning experience” (Jarvis, 1997) ---“An activity which exploits authentic texts through tasks which are likely to occur in real life situations.” Compared to reading for being asked to do, reading for authentic purpose will definitely motivate students.

Second, online non-dedicated web-sites are beneficial for students to think while reading. “The text has interactive links, allowing students to read the way the mind often thinks, in a non-liner path. These links can also involve interplay with other readers, the author or the publisher. They can also lead to support materials that are not available off the Internet.”(Teeler and Gray, 2000: 70)

This lesson was adapted from Dudeney (2000: 87-88)

5.3. Applying E-mail / WeChat to writing skills

“Writing plays an important role in our personal and professional lives”. (Massi, 2001) Although to non-English major students of Chinese universities, writing is not taught as a separate course, its importance is being realized, however. In CET 4 and CET 6, the percentage of writing is 15% . The following example lesson is designed on using E-mail/WeChat to develop writing skills.

Aim: Develop writing skills

Level: Upper-intermediate

Time: 45 minutes (online 40 minutes)

Preparation:

- (A) The teacher checks the Internet before the class.
- (B) The teacher brings enough task sheets to the class.

Example task sheet: Different timetables of each group

Group 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00-11:00	Lecture				Lecture	Party
11:00-1:00		Lecture				Party
1:00-3:00	Tutorial			Lecture	Swimming	
3:00-5:00		Lecture	Tutorial			
5:00-7:00			Film			

Group 2	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00- 11:00			Lecture	Lecture		Shopping
11:00- 1:00	Lecture		Swimming		Lecture	Shopping
1:00-3:00		Tutorial				
3:00-5:00	Tutorial					
5:00-7:00		Meeting				

Group 3	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00- 11:00		Lecture		Lecture	Lecture	
11:00- 1:00						
1:00-3:00	Lecture		Tutorial			Party
3:00-5:00		Lecture		Tutorial	Swimming	Party
5:00-7:00	Meeting			Shopping		Party

In Class:

(A) Instructions (5 minutes):

The teacher tells students that they will be divided into small groups, and each group will get a timetable. What they need to do is, first, to find out a time that all the class can have a two-hour seminar on how to improve writing skills, and second, to write a notice on this event and make peer evaluation between groups.

Then the teacher divides students into groups (3 persons per group) and gives one timetable to each group.

(B) Online activities (35 minutes):

(a) Each group sends out its own timetable to the other groups, and receives different timetables from the other groups. According to the timetables, they keep consulting the time by sending and receiving E-mails or messages until they make final agreement.

(b) Each group writes a notice, which includes time, place and event. Then send out the notice to another group for being evaluated.

(c) The group, who received the work from another group, evaluates the work and sends out the feedback to the relevant group by E-mail/WeChat.

(d) With the feedback, all the groups rewrite their pieces of writing and send the notice to the teacher.

(C) Offline activities (5 minutes):

The teacher summarizes the main problems made in the writing by the students.

Remarks:

The teacher should control the time for each activity and remind students to do the next step.

Rationale for this example lesson:

First, E-mail/WeChat can develop writing skills in that it provides communicative purpose for writing, which has been discussed in 4.4 of the article. At present, the pedagogical purposes of writing range from reinforcement, training and imitation to communication, fluency and learning (Raimes 1983, 1987). If real communicative behavior is what learners have eventually to learn, then that is what they have to be taught (Widdowson, 1996).

Second, E-mail/WeChat can develop writing skills in that it provides quick feedback, which has been mentioned in 4.5 of the article. E-mail/WeChat makes peer evaluation convenient, instead of printing out the drafts, students can send them out directly. And through peer evaluation, students can learn from each other, which is helpful to improve the learning skills.

This lesson was adapted from the MA TEFL lecturer of Education Technology Module, Huw Jarvis.

6. TECHNIQUES OF APPLYING THE EXAMPLE LESSONS

6.1. Changing the role of the teachers in the classroom

When applying the Internet to ELT, the teacher works as a facilitator rather than a controller in most of the time.

Teachers' acting as facilitators tends to lead to "learner-centredness" (Tudor, 1996: 1), which reflects "a widespread desire in the language teaching community to develop means of allowing learners to play a fuller, more active and participatory role in their language study." The advantages of teachers' acting as facilitators are as follows: First, students are willing to take

responsibility of the learning, which will lead to learner autonomy. Second, students will learn in a relaxed classroom atmosphere, which is beneficial for them to take risks when making output.

6.2. Dealing with discipline problems

When asking students to use the Internet individually or within the group, the class tends to have discipline problems such as that students talk about something else or visit the web-sites irrelevant to the tasks. Therefore the teacher should take action in advance to avoid discipline problems.

First, the teacher may walk around the class to supervise students thus students realize the teacher is observing what they are doing, which is beneficial for students to behave themselves. Second, the teacher should “develop the art of timing your lesson to fit the available period” (Wragg, 1981:22).

6.3. Treating Mother tongue

When applying the Internet in the classroom, a large amount of group work will be involved, while the interlocking problem is that students always use more or less mother tongue in group-work activities.

Zilm (1989) suggests that the nature of the activity is one of the crucial factors of whether mother tongue is accepted or not. If students are doing oral communicative activity, the use of mother tongue will ruin the activity therefore the teacher should stop it. While if students are doing activities such as note taking or writing, the occasional use of mother tongue need not concern us, since it will help students achieve better understanding. At the same time, finding students are using the mother tongue, the teacher should not roughly stop them, on the contrary, he should realize that students might lack English expressions, thereby the necessary assistance should be provided to each group.

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