



*CENTRAL UNIVERSITY "MARTA ABREU" OF LAS VILLAS*  
*FACULTY OF HUMANITIES*

*ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT*

An Interactive Website for the Teaching  
and Learning Process of Interpreting

A Dissertation in partial fulfillment of the Baccalaureate  
Degree

in English Language Studies

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## *Dedication*

*To my beloved parents for always believing  
in the person I could be,*

*To my sister for always showing me the way,*

*To my boyfriend for being always by my side,*

*To my family,*

*To “The Girls” for being another family to  
me.*

*Danaily*

*To my dearest parents for being so lovely and  
supportive,*

*To my brother for the professional he will be,*

*To my family for having always trusted me  
and encouraged me to go ahead,*

*To my beloved boyfriend for being with me  
through good and bad,*

*To “The Girls” for being so special and  
unique.*

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*Abstract*

## **ABSTRACT**

Recently, ICTs and more specifically Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) materials are given a paramount importance as tools to support the teaching and learning process in higher education. The implementation of this technology is supported by the more progressive pedagogical approaches which promote the ideology of active learning and students' self-assessment as better ways to construct new knowledge.

Considering the affordances of CAL materials a website was built. The website is endeavored to provide supporting materials and to enhance students' interpreting skills so as to support the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) at the UCLV.

This major paper is structured into three chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the theoretical bases for the use of ICTs, specifically CAL materials to improve the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the training of students of English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French). Chapter 2 implies the characterization of the sample, main methods and instruments used, as well as the analysis of the results obtained from the diagnosis. Chapter 3 consists on the proposal of an interactive Website to improve the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), and its validation by specialists.



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# *Introduction*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Interpreting is an activity that consists of establishing, either simultaneously or consecutively, oral communication between two or more speakers who are not speaking the same language. As far as types of interpreting are concerned, the main distinction is made between consecutive interpreting and simultaneous interpreting (<http://www.talkandlistenkit.com/interpreting-glossary/index.php> ).

To help this activity become an easier task some efforts have been made, which include as the most important one, the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Thus, we can find on Internet a huge number of websites providing glossaries of terms as well as written texts available for the interpreting activity. There are also some supporting materials for the teaching and learning process of simultaneous and consecutive interpreting. However, none of them provides interactive options that could foster active learning and self-assessment, which would have a greater impact on the enhancement of interpreting skills.

In Cuba, as in many places world wide there are courses to train people as interpreters. This is the case of language courses such as English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), whose students are trained to be interpreters and translators.

On the other hand, recently Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) is becoming an important resource to support the teaching and learning process in higher education. Therefore, it would be useful to use this resource as a tool to support the training of students of English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), in the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas (UCLV). As it is known, the discipline Interpreting in the previously mentioned course comprises six subjects; the first subject (Introduction to Interpreting) is taught in the first semester of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, but difficulties arise in the 4<sup>th</sup> year. It has its roots in the lack of training time during classes, because it is not enough for students to improve the abilities acquired in 3<sup>rd</sup> year due to the dual role as students and teachers. On the other hand, the supporting materials available do not satisfy the students’

necessities. For example, the access to Internet is limited, causing many troubles when looking up the information needed for classes, and the dictionaries available for the students are not sufficient. Therefore, most of them get to 5<sup>th</sup> year with poor interpreting skills.

Consequently, the previously described situation led to the following **scientific problem**:

What could be done to improve the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the training of students of the English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French)?

Thus, the **scientific object** of this research is the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), being the **field of action** the enhancement of interpreting skills of the students of English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) .

Therefore, the **general aim** of the present research work is:

- To propose an interactive Website to improve the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the training of students of the English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) at the UCLV.

To accomplish the previous aim, the following **scientific questions** were answered throughout this research:

- What are the theoretical and pedagogical bases that support the teaching and learning process of Interpreting by means of the ICTs?
- What is the current situation of the teaching and learning process of Interpreting to students of the English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) at the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas?
- What characterizes a website to improve the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French)?
- What are specialists' opinions about the website proposed?

To answer the questions stated above, the following **scientific tasks** were accomplished:

- Establishing the theoretical and pedagogical bases that support the teaching and learning process of Interpreting by means of the ICTs.
- Diagnosis of the current situation of the teaching and learning process of Interpreting to students of the English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) at the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas
- Building an interactive Website to improve the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French)?
- Validating the proposed Website by specialists.

### **Methods**

For the accomplishment of the previously mentioned tasks, different methods were used:

#### **Historical and logical method**

This method allowed analyzing both the evolution and the current situation that faces the discipline Interpreting which demands the use of ICTs and CAL materials to support its teaching and learning process.

#### **Theoretical methods**

- Analytical and synthetical method
- Inductive and deductive method

These methods were used for establishing the research process foundations.

#### **Empirical methods**

- Analysis of documents: in order to determine the optimum situation according to the existing official documents for the training of students of the English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French).
- Survey: to supplement other data obtained

- Participant observation

### **Statistical and mathematical methods**

- Percentage analysis: to process data obtained from surveys

The sample chosen for the investigation involved 53 students of the English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French). To choose the sample, some aspects were taken into consideration:

- **Academic Level:** The students surveyed had taken the subjects corresponding to the discipline Interpreting.
- **Willingness:** All the students surveyed were willing to cooperate.

### **Expected Results**

This research is intended to provide students with an interactive website as supporting material to improve the teaching and learning process of Interpreting. On the other hand, teachers will have the opportunity to guide this process and assess students out of the constraints of a classroom, adding to the Website as much information and tasks as they think necessary to enhance students' interpreting skills.

This major paper is structured into three chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the theoretical bases for the use of ICTs, specifically CAL materials to improve the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the training of students of the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French). Chapter 2 implies the characterization of the sample, main methods and instruments used, as well as the analysis of the results obtained from the diagnosis. Chapter 3 consists on the proposal of an interactive website to improve the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), and its validation by specialists. Finally, there are included conclusions, recommendations, bibliography and appendixes.



# *Chapter 1*

## CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BASES ABOUT ICTs AND CAL MATERIALS AND THEIR APPLICATION IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

### 1.1. The interpreting process

Interpreting is an activity that consists of establishing, either simultaneously or consecutively, oral communication between two or more speakers who are not speaking the same language (<http://www.talkandlistenkit.com/interpreting-glossary/index.php>). Consecutive interpreting is one of the variants of interpreting; it is performed in situations where the speaker utters speech chunks of various lengths, which are interrupted to provide the interpreter with the possibility to render from the source into the target language. It is typical of intercultural communicative situations like lectures, presentations, public addresses, and the like.

Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989) proposed the "*théorie du sens*", which has been renamed to "*La théorie interprétative de la traduction*" (The Interpretative Theory of Translation). According to this theory, interpreting is based on meaning, not on words or linguistic structures. Thus, this theory postulates that the interpreting process consists of three phases:

1. Verbal phase - incoming discourse
2. Non-verbal phase - processing
3. Verbal phase - reproduction of the message

In the first phase (verbal) the incoming discourse (in chunks of 7-8 words) is retained in short-term memory for only a few seconds. Then, it is split into meaning units which are associated to previous knowledge and enters the cognitive memory losing their verbal form by transforming into ideas. However, in real consecutively interpreted situations, interpreters could not stop the speaker every seven or eight words to clear their short-term memory and prepare to receive new information. Therefore, interpreters are required to drop form and concentrate on meaning. Seleskovitch (1979) and Smith (1985) proposed that meaningful segments of great

size can be placed into long-term memory and retrieved later. Interpreters working consecutively will often make notes as they take in the source utterance. These notes help them retrieve the message from their long-term memory (Seleskovitch, 1991). To efficiently perform in such a situation, interpreters should master a number of cognitive as well as attitudinal aspects (Rodríguez, J.L., 2005):

- Knowledge of source language
- Knowledge of target language
- Knowledge of the theme being treated
- Knowledge of the cultures and idiosyncrasies involved
- Psychological self-control and stress assimilation
- Good interpersonal and social communication abilities

Consequently, for the interpreting activity, professionals should be trained to develop linguistic and extralinguistic competence, and to enhance their short-, mid- and long- term memory skills.

## **1.2. The overall field of ICTs in education**

Within education, ICTs have begun to have a presence but the impact has not been as extensive as in other fields. Education is a very socially oriented activity and it has traditionally been associated with strong teachers having high degrees of personal contact between teachers and students. The use of ICTs in education means a turn of perspective since it leads to more student-centered learning settings and often this creates some tensions for some teachers and students. But with the world moving rapidly into digital media and information, the role of ICTs in education is becoming more and more important and this importance will continue to grow and develop along the 21st century.

There have been a number of factors interfering the extensive use of ICTs in education across all sectors; these have included such factors as a lack of funding to support the purchase of the technology, a lack of training among teachers, a

lack of motivation and need among teachers to adopt ICTs as teaching tools (Starr, 2001). But in recent times, factors have emerged which have strengthened and encouraged the introduction of ICTs into classrooms and learning settings: the growing need to explore efficiency in terms of software delivery (Oliver & Short, 1997), the capacity of technology to meet the needs of individual learners (Kennedy & McNaught, 1997), and the growing use of the Internet as a tool for information access and communication (Oliver & Towers, 1999).

Along the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the use of ICTs in education will become more extensive since they provide significant opportunities and affordances. In this sense, ICTs are being considered a new tool for generating knowledge. They give learners the possibility to experience the information rather than simply acquire it. Therefore, ICTs have a paramount impact on the acquisition of knowledge.

#### **1.2.1. ICTs implementation in Cuban higher education**

ICTs are given a special interest in our country, and education is one of the most privileged sectors. Taking into account the challenge students and teachers have been forced to face concerning the lack of supporting materials and updated bibliography, new alternatives were needed to be implemented. Following the world wide tendency towards self-guided learning and student-centered learning settings, ICTs have proved to be the best choice. Therefore, ICTs have gained an outstanding importance in the Cuban educational system and they have been used as main tools to generate knowledge.

Of special interest is the training of specialists on ICTs. Thus, increasing numbers of professionals are being trained in 12 Cuban higher education institutions. A special reference should be made to the “Universidad de las Ciencias Informáticas” (University of Computer Science), which began to operate in the academic year 2002-2003 and students from 99 % of the municipalities of the country are enrolled there. This university has played an important role in the development of the Cuban Software Industry ([http://www.cubaminrex.cu/Sociedad\\_Informacion/Cuba\\_TIC/TIC\\_Masivo.htm](http://www.cubaminrex.cu/Sociedad_Informacion/Cuba_TIC/TIC_Masivo.htm)).

However, the role of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas should not be overlooked. Many professionals from this University have devoted their work to the creation and implementation of ICTs materials to improve the teaching and learning process in the different courses.

### **1.3. ICTs & CAL effectiveness as new tools for generating knowledge**

For many specialists, ICTs are the solution to the practical problems that progressive teachers face nowadays. But are ICTs and particularly the Internet tools for the progressive approach? The majority of literature suggests that the latter is true. For example O'Shea and Self (1983) describe the revolutionaries in education as encouraging students to use IT which allows them to avoid a mass educational system with its national syllabuses and examinations, its non-adaptive teachers and classrooms of thirty or forty students.

Papert (1980) also provides a similar philosophy where he describes the need for children to 'absorb the computer culture', to become familiar with these tools. This echoes the learning theorists like Piaget (1970), who describes the need for children to be allowed to do their own learning since good pedagogy must involve presenting the student with situations in which he himself experiments, in the broadest sense of the term.

However, O'Shea and Self (1983) take the view that a computer in itself is not a tool that demands a particular teaching style but is it is unlimited. In fact, the didactic expository style of the traditionalist can be mimicked by computers. On the other hand, if it is appropriately used, it can be an excellent tool for repetitive, didactic teaching and individualized learning pathways can be quickly constructed and monitored.

Hoogeveen (1995) discusses the effectiveness of the multimedia paradigm in teaching and learning. According to his theory, the use of multimedia is believed to lead to the following psychological responses:

- A high level of stimulation of the senses, particularly auditory and visual perception systems
- A high level of involvement, attention and concentration
- Emotional arousal making the activity fun
- Strong recognition effects, using mental reference models

The point is that learners experience information rather than simply acquire it. This issue has been argued by perception psychologists (Marmolin, 1991) who state that “our senses are constructed to handle very complex flows of information as from natural environments, and that they can not handle simple stimuli so well”. Hoogeveen states that there are five variables involved in the psychological impact. The more they increase, the more the level of learning increases, but only if applied carefully. These are:

- Level of multimediality (sense stimulation, arousal, involvement and recognition)
- Man-machine interactivity (the degree of user control in their explorations of the material)
- Level of congruence (where different information types reinforce similar idea)
- Degree of reference modeling (where the content is based within a recognizable context)
- Quality of information representation (the degree of realism)

(<http://www.mcqueens.net/mcqueen-ntl/dis/toc/Pt07.html>)

Besides the preceding commented issues, teachers have long faced the problem of how to translate accumulated research knowledge into effective, widely implemented practice. ICTs can help in this endeavor. According to Ron Oliver (2002), ICTs can be used to develop highly interactive multimedia Intelligent Computer-Assisted Learning (ICAL) materials. Some of these ICAL materials are more effective than conventional methods of instruction that make use of conventional aids for teaching and learning.

Moreover, specialists understand that constructivism is an important learning theory. But it is not possible for a teacher to understand the current knowledge of each student on the particular topic to be studied, and then to individualize the instruction so that each student is functioning in a constructivist mode, carefully building on his/her knowledge and/or skills. Some of the modern highly interactive Intelligent Computer-Assisted Learning can do a much better job of accomplishing this task than a teacher with a class of about 25 or more students.

Computer-Assisted Learning (CAL) involves an interaction between a person and a software-based course or unit of study. There are literally thousands of these types of CAL units. Often they are a combination of CAL and entertainment. There are extensive sets of CAL materials that cover substantial amounts of curricula. These sets of CAL materials typically contain a record keeping system. They can record individualized reports for the various students using the system. (<http://www.uoregon.edu/~moursund/ICT-planning/ict-in-education.htm>).

There is a substantial and growing research based on CAL. In summary, for a wide range of subject matter areas and a wide range of students, CAL can be considered as an effective tool to learn significantly faster and better.

CAL is a powerful solution to many of the issues that confront teachers in higher education--the need to innovate in course delivery and to accommodate increasing numbers of students, sometimes at physically distant sites. The particular virtues of this type of CAL are as follows (Calderon, R. 1997):

- Availability outside normal class hours, limited only by necessary security arrangements. Documents are constantly available to students anywhere on any computer platform. However, access to any document or set of documents can be easily controlled as required and password can also be protected.
- Self-administered learning/revision/assessment. Students can set their own pace, with no direct staff involvement, resulting in a considerable efficiency gain.
- Use of visual images. This system can provide a high quality mix of line diagrams, full color images and text, with interaction by means of hypertext

indicators. Visual images are an important element in many subject areas; computer based systems allow a degree of interaction not possible by conventional methods (lectures). Recent upgrades to browser technology (e.g., Netscape 3.0 plug-ins, Internet Explorer) extend this capability to in-line video and 3D VRML animations, without imposing any additional training burden on users.

- Selectivity. Hypertext enables individual students either to concentrate on a particular topic or to browse more widely through the subject.
- Adaptability: Web-based activities can easily be modified to support students at different proficiency levels or with special needs.
- Renewability: Once created, materials can be updated easily and often (is the administrator's responsibility to upgrade and renew the information)

CAL provides perhaps the best opportunity for student self-guided learning. It is self-paced and self-planned, with the students themselves choosing their own paths through the amount of information accumulated in CAL materials. The successful use of such materials will not only increase students' knowledge, but will require them to develop other important skills, including self-assessment and planning of studies, information technology skills, creativity, and self-motivation. ([http://horizon.unc.edu/projects/monograph/CD/Professional\\_Schools/Cann.html](http://horizon.unc.edu/projects/monograph/CD/Professional_Schools/Cann.html)).

Therefore, interactive computer-based courseware represents a move towards active learning (i.e., student self-guided teaching) and can be used as a constantly available learning resource for students. In addition to their advantages for students, such systems also provide powerful and flexible tools for course administration

#### **1.4. Asynchronous and synchronous learning**

Nowadays, it is evident the advancement of educational methods under the influence of the ICTs. There is a growing interest in getting quality education to all, and technology has proven to be the best tool to spread the teaching and learning process. In this sense, there have been implemented two different teaching



methods, determined by the type of communication established: these methods are *asynchronous* and *synchronous* learning.

According to Mayadas, F. (1997) *asynchronous learning* is a student-centered teaching method that uses online learning resources to facilitate information sharing outside the constraints of time and place among a network of people. The online learning resources used to support asynchronous learning include:

- Email
- Electronic mailing lists
- Threaded conferencing systems
- Online discussion boards
- Wikis
- Blogs

Course management systems such as Blackboard, WebCT, Moodle, Joomla and Sakai, have been developed to support online interaction, allowing users to organize discussions, post and reply to messages, and upload and access multimedia (Mayadas, 1997).

According to McQuiggan (2007), asynchronous learning is based on constructivist theory, a student-centered approach which demands that instructors become more than dispensers of knowledge: it requires that they become instructional designers, facilitators, and assessors of both grades and their teaching methods.

On the other hand, *synchronous learning* has been defined by Sheila Kavanagh (2004), as live learning, because it refers to a group of people learning the same things at the same time out of the constraints of space. People can communicate in real time using their computers in a type of interaction known as a 'virtual classroom', which provides:

- A place to meet: Students and teachers use their computers to go to a virtual meeting place instead of a classroom

- Take attendance: A list of students is recorded
- Lecture: Teachers can choose from a variety of synchronous technologies including:
  - Slide presentation
  - Audio and video conferencing
  - Application sharing
  - Shared whiteboard
  - Text and voice chat
  - Telephone conversations
- Interaction with students: Students can indicate when they want to speak by virtually raising their hand. Teachers can let students speak through audio and video conferencing. Teachers and students can use instant messaging and chat
- Quizzes: Teachers can present questions to students (<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/online/current/synchronous/>).

The pedagogical frameworks which support the online learning are still evolving; however, it has been proved that online learning environments can enhance graduate attributes and the development of higher order learning and critical thought, achieved through reflective and collaborative work and assessments using online tools such as groups, asynchronous discussion boards and synchronous communications such as virtual classrooms and conference rooms.

In the creation of websites, certain asynchronous and synchronous principles can be used to develop student-centered learning settings. Concerning this issue, there have been made some projects in the UCLV intended to improve the environment for distance learning. One of the most outstanding example is the SEPAD (*Sistema de Enseñanza Personalizado a Distancia*), a platform for the virtual training aim to get education to all. It has a virtual classroom where you can access the didactic materials, marks, tutorial services, as well as communication

and interchange services, such as internal messenger service, forum, news, and chat. From the teachers' point of view, the system also provides environments where they can follow the learning process of their students. To conclude, it is important to remark that this platform combines both, asynchronous and synchronous learning.

### **1.5. Pedagogical bases for CAL design**

A number of pedagogical approaches have developed in the computer age, including the communicative and interactive/experimentative approaches. Others include Constructivism and Historical and Cultural Approach.

Piaget's psychological theory of Constructivist learning has had a great impact on learning theories and teaching methods in education. He stated that learners are active participants in a task in which they construct new knowledge out of their experiences. That is the reason why it is often associated with pedagogic approaches that promote active learning. Vygotsky's research on the same topic, suggests that "there is a distance between the actual developmental level (as determined by independent problem-solving) and the level of potential development (as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers)", which he called *zone of proximal development*. According to this theory, learners should be constantly challenged with more complex tasks, to enhance their skills and knowledge beyond their current level of mastery.

Based on the Historical and Cultural Approach, the organization of the teaching and learning process is focused on its orientation, fulfillment and check out, taking into account that it must be directed towards the development of the zone of proximal development to generate knowledge.

What most of these approaches have in common is that they take the central focus away from the teacher as conveyor of knowledge to give students learning experiences that are as realistic as possible while they play a central role (<http://edvista.com/claire/call.html>). In other words, the teacher's work is limited to

guide the teaching process, to provide aid to students while they actively build up their own knowledge. There are five principles that characterize these guided teaching situations (Rogoff, 1984; Calderon, R. 1997):

1. They provide students with a bridge of knowledge between the available information -the background- and the required knowledge to overcome the objectives.
2. They offer a connected structure for homework and activity development.
3. They involve a progressive transfer of control that passes from being exercised by the teacher to be taken on by the students.
4. They make the teacher and the student to intervene actively in the process.
5. They can appear implicitly or explicitly in the regular interactions among adults in different contexts.

Based on those progressive pedagogical theories, Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) is applied on the educational field, providing opportunities for students to be less dependent on a teacher and have more freedom to experiment on their own. It is necessary to remark that the use of computers in the teaching and learning process does not constitute a teaching method, but rather, it forces pedagogy to think of new ways to exploit the computer benefits and work around its limitations.

### **1.6. Interactive website**

To build a website, there is a very important issue to take into account: *Interactivity*. Websites, specifically those used as CAL materials to generate knowledge are supposed to be a high-interactive medium. A high level of interactivity will offer the user (student) more opportunities to access the information and options contained in the website. Therefore, the user will exert a better use of the website as a tool that will support his self-guided learning.

1. The term “interactivity” had been widely used in different disciplines long before the Web came into being. Interactivity is an assumed attribute of

interpersonal communication (Morris and Ogan, 1996). With the rapid rise of the Web as a commercial medium, interactivity emerges as a unique characteristic distinguishing the Web from other traditional media. Many scholars from different disciplines have defined interactivity from different points of views (William, Roger and Rice, 1988; Rafaeli, 1988; Steuer 1992; Hoffman and Novak, 1995; Aldersey-Williams, 1996; Milheim, 1996; Kirsch, 1997; Rafaeli and Sudweeks 1998; Pavlik, 1997 and 1998; Ha and James, 1998).

Steuer (1992) defines interactivity as “the extent to which users can participate in modifying the form and content of a mediated environment in real time”. This definition takes into consideration the important role of users in conceptualizing interactivity. He proposes speed of interaction, range and mapping as three major factors affecting interactivity. Speed of interaction is also referred to as response time. The more instantaneous a user perceives their actions in a mediated environment, the higher he or she perceives interactivity. Range is concerned with how many options a user has in making changes in the mediated environment. Mapping deals with “the way in which human actions are connected to actions within a mediated environment” .These three factors can be applied to the computer-mediated environment like the Web. Speed of interaction and range of the Web seem to suggest how responsive users perceive the Web as a system to their actions. In contrast, mapping seems to indicate how users perceive themselves as controllers of their actions in the computer-mediated environment.

Heeter (1989) provides a comprehensive understanding of interactivity, defined as a six-dimensional concept. According to her, the first dimension of interactivity is complexity of choice, or "selectivity." This dimension is concerned with the extent to which users are provided choices of available information. So, the more choice the user has or the more choice the medium provides, the higher the interactivity of the user or the medium. A second dimension of interactivity is related to the effort that users must exert to access information. A high-interactive medium allows users to access information more easily than a low-interactive medium. A third dimension of interactivity is “responsiveness to the user.” Responsiveness” is defined as "the degree to which a communication exchange resembles human

discourse". Therefore, humanlike responsiveness is the highest level of interactivity, and if media have higher interactivity, they react to a user like a human. The fourth dimension of interactivity is the "potential to monitor system use." In a high-interactive medium, user selection of information can be monitored across the entire population of users. The fifth dimension is the degree of "ease of adding information." In a high-interactive medium, a user can add information to the system that a mass, undifferentiated audience can access. The last dimension, according to Heeter, is the degree of interpersonal communication that a medium can offer. The high-interactive medium can facilitate interpersonal communication among users. Although Heeter's six dimensions of interactivity are not perfectly applied to current new media like the Web, they still offer a good overview. Heeter (1989) also points out that as technology is continuously developing, users have much more control over the information they wish to be exposed to, which is a form of selective exposure. So, among the six dimensions of interactivity, selective exposure is becoming a more important factor to give users a feel of interactivity in a new medium environment.

Newhagen et al. (1995) offered a different approach to interactivity. They proposed the concept of perceived interactivity. They conceptualized perceived interactivity based on efficacy, which is "a two-dimensional construct: internally-based self-efficacy and externally-based system-efficacy". For a Web user, internally-based efficacy can be translated into his or her perceived control over where he or she is and where he or she is going, while externally-based efficacy can correspond to his or her sense of how responsive the Web as a system is to his or her actions. Under Newhagen et al's two dimensions of interactivity, Web users can find their internally based efficacy in their navigation through cyberspace.

Even though definitions and dimensions of interactivity differ across previous studies, perceived interactivity should be based on users' actual interactions with the stimulus. Interaction with the website means that users have perceived control over information and communication flow. Therefore, a website, which can allow users to seek and gain access to the information or demand where the content and

sequence of users surfing is under their own direct control, can be perceived to give greater interactivity to them while they are surfing. If a website presents users with difficulty in gaining or accessing the information that they want, then users may have a lesser degree of perceived interactivity with the website.

Although there are many theories about interactivity they all are centered on the user-web involvement. Involvement refers to "the extent to which the attitudinal issue under consideration is of personal importance" (Petty & Cacioppo, 1979, p. 1915). So, when users have high MAO (motivation, ability, and opportunity) to process communication, users are willing or able to exert a lot of cognitive processing effort, which is called high-elaboration likelihood. In this process, users' attitudes are formed and changed through the central route, and central cues such as existing beliefs, argument quality and initial attitude influence, attitude change and formation.

Therefore, to create interactive websites that can be used as learning tools, the user-web involvement should be considered. There should be a wide range of options (information, exercises, supporting materials, etc...) for the user to exert selectivity. The interaction speed to be used with exercises should be programmed to simulate real life situations in order to involve students to such extent, that they could be able to perceive the interactivity and to construct their own knowledge based on their experiences.

### **1.7. Website Design**

A website is a collection of information about a particular topic or subject. Designing a website is defined as the arrangement and creation of web pages that in turn make up a website. A webpage consists of information for which the website is developed ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web\\_design#cite\\_ref-0](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_design#cite_ref-0)).

The process of designing webpages, websites, web applications or multimedia for the Web may involve multiple disciplines, such as animation, authoring, communication design, corporate identity, graphic design, human-computer

interaction, information architecture, interaction design, photography, search engine optimization and typography.

Such a process should present certain technologies which may include:

- Text editors: a simple writing program which allows only the entry of text characters, in upper or lower case, with no use of bold, italic or other formatting. This can be used to write HTML files.

- Word processors: modern word processors (e.g. Word and AppleWorks) can save files in HTML format ready for publication on the web.

- Web authoring software: allows document creation either in a format resembling a text editor or in a format resembling a word processor. The most widely used programs are Dreamweaver and FrontPage.

- Graphic software: allows the creation and editing of images. The two basic types of software are image editors and vector drawing programs. Image editors (e.g. Photoshop and Photopaint) use bitmaps, which are like digital photographs. Vector drawing programs (e.g. Illustrator and Corel Draw) use lines and fill colors.

- Programming languages: allow the writing of computer code to carry out specific operations (e.g. Java, Javascript, PERL, and C++). The code runs on web servers which host individual websites.

- Database programs: are used to store and manage data. Dynamic web pages draw data directly from databases (e.g. Access, Oracle, MySQL) and format it for using web pages.

- Content Management Systems (CMS): run on a web server and provide a convenient method of managing web content (intranet and internet) created by larger organizations.

([http://www.websitearchitecture.co.uk/def/web\\_design\\_theory.php](http://www.websitearchitecture.co.uk/def/web_design_theory.php))

The first page of a website is known as the Home page or Index. Each web page within a website is an HTML file which has its own URL. After each web page



is created, they are typically linked together using a navigation menu composed of hyperlinks.

Before designing and publishing a website, it is important to take the time to plan exactly what is needed in the website. The first step in this planning process is to define its purpose. It should be focused on what the website will accomplish and what the users will get from it. Consequently, the second step is to define the target audience. Besides the previous commented issues, content evaluation and organization are other important steps to clearly define the purpose of the website. Collecting a list of the necessary content and then organizing it according to the audience's needs is a key step in website planning. The next step is to organize the basic information structure by categorizing the content and organizing it. Each category should be named with a concise and descriptive title that will become a link on the website. Planning for the site's content ensures that the wants or needs of the target audience and the purpose of the site will be fulfilled.

Therefore, to build a successful website it is of paramount importance to efficiently plan the web content and to wisely choose the technology required to meet the aim of the website as well as the users' needs.

#### **1.7.1. Theoretical analysis of the color psychology**

According to the Webster's dictionary, color is defined as "the aspects of objects and light sources that may be described in terms of hue, lightness, and saturation for objects and hue, brightness, and saturation for light sources". Due to the different interpretation colors have acquired throughout the cultures, scientists have shown interest in its psychology, emerging as a new field of research. Color psychology refers to investigating the effect of colors on human behavior and feeling ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Color\\_symbolism\\_and\\_psychology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Color_symbolism_and_psychology)). The ancient Chinese, Egyptians, and Indians believed in the effect of colors on human beings, to such extent, that they created their own therapy called *chromotherapy*, or *healing* with colors. Nowadays, an increasing number of studies proves that

colors can cause specific responses on human body and are able to evoke different moods.

Though, the perception of colors varies through different cultures, there are some color effects that have universal meaning. Those are colors in the red area of the color spectrum, which are known as warm colors and include red, orange, and yellow. As well as colors on the blue side of the spectrum, known as cool colors, which include blue, purple, and green. Taking into account the psychological effect they have, the warm colors evoke emotions ranging from feelings of warmth and comfort to feelings of anger and hostility. However, the cool ones are often described as calm, but can also call to mind feelings of sadness or indifference. (<http://psychology.about.com/od/sensationandperception/a/colorpsych.htm>).

Some specific effects of colors are illustrated below:

- Red: has proven to be a color of vitality and ambition, thus it has been shown to be associated with anger. Sometimes red can be useful in dispelling negative thoughts, but it can also make one irritable.
- Pink: has the opposite effect of red. Pink induces feelings of calm, protection, warmth and nurture. This color can be used to lessen irritation and aggression as it is connected with feelings of love.
- Orange: has shown to have only positive effects on your emotional state. This color relieves feelings of self-pity, lack of self-worth and unwillingness to forgive. Orange opens your emotions and is a terrific antidepressant.
- Yellow: is similarly to orange, yellow is a happy and uplifting color. It can also be associated with intellectual thinking: discernment, memory, clear thinking, decision-making and good judgment. Also aiding organization, understanding of different points of view. Yellow builds self-confidence and encourages optimism. However, a dull yellow can bring on feelings of fear.
- Green: creates feelings of comfort, laziness, relaxation, calmness. It helps us balance and soothe our emotions. Some attribute this to its connection with nature and our natural feelings of affiliation with the natural world when experiencing the

color green. Yet, darker and grayer greens can have the opposite effect. These olive green colors remind us of decay and death and can actually have a detrimental effect on physical and emotional health. Note that sickened cartoon characters always turned green.

- Blue: is usually associate with the night and thus we feel relaxed and calmed. Lighter blues make us feel quite and away from the rush of the day. These colors can be useful in eliminating insomnia. Like yellow, blue inspires mental control, clarity and creativity. However, too much dark blue can be depressing.

- Purple: it has been used in the care of mental of nervous disorders because they have shown to help balance the mind and transform obsessions and fears. Indigo is often associated with the right side of the brain; stimulating intuition and imagination.

- Violet is associated with bringing peace and combating shock and fear. Violet has a cleansing effect with emotional disturbances. Also, this color is related to sensitivity to beauty, high ideals and stimulates creativity, spirituality and compassion. Psychic power and protection has also been associated with violet.

- Brown: brings feelings of stability and security. Sometimes brown can also be associated with withholding emotion and retreating from the world.

- Black: is mysterious and associated with silence and sometimes death. Black is passive and can prevent us from growing and changing.

- White: brings feelings of peace and comfort while it dispels shock and despair. White can be used to give you a feeling of freedom and uncluttered openness.

- Gray: is the color of independence and self-reliance, although usually thought of as a negative color. It can be the color of evasion and non-commitment (since it is neither black nor white.) Gray indicates separation, lack of involvement and ultimately loneliness.

(<http://library.thinkquest.org/27066/psychology/nlcolorpsych.html>)

One of the fields that have given great importance to color psychology is Computer Science, since the selection of colors to be used in the different web applications is of paramount importance. Website programmers always take this into consideration to make a proper use of color depending on the mood they want to evoke on the target audience.

### **1.8. Conclusions (Chapter 1)**

Interpreting is a mental process that requires the mastery of certain cognitive and attitudinal aspects as well as certain skills. In this sense, interpreters must receive a special training in order to develop linguistic and extralinguistic competences as well as skills required to interpret such as short-, mid- and long-term memory skills.

On the other hand, ICTs and more specifically CAL materials have gained relevance as new tools to support the teaching and learning process in higher education since they have proved to be more effective than conventional teaching methods. The implementation of this technology is supported by the Constructivist and Historical and Cultural pedagogical approaches. According to these approaches, the student centered-learning has a paramount role in the acquisition of knowledge.

Therefore, ICTs materials represent a step towards active learning. They provide self-guided learning; they are self-paced and self planned, and their appropriate use will not only enhance students knowledge, but will make them to develop other important skills including self assessment and planning of

## *Chapter 2*

## **CHAPTER 2: NECESSITIES FOR THE BUILDING OF A WEBSITE TO SUPPORT THE TEACHING AND LERANING PROCESS OF INTERPRETING IN THE COURSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE WITH A SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE (FRENCH).**

### **2.1. Description of the sample and instruments**

In this step of the research there were involved 47 students of the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), representing (88, 68 %) of the total sample.

Students were surveyed to find out the current situation in the teaching and learning process of Interpreting and the acceptance of an interactive website as a supporting material for the teaching and learning process of Interpreting (Appendixes 1 and 2):

- 28 students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years and 19 students of the 5<sup>th</sup> year of English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) course out of 53 were given 2 questionnaires. In the first case it was intended to find out the main problems the students face in the training of their interpreting skills and their acceptance of an interactive website as a supporting material for the teaching and learning process of Interpreting. The latter was also one of the intentions of the second questionnaires, besides being endeavoured to determine the main problems students tackle as the result of their training in previous years. A very important step to chose the sample, was to determine the academic level of students, as well as their willingness to cooperate with this research:
- **Academic level:** the students interviewed had taken the subjects corresponding to the Interpreting discipline.
- **Willingness:** all the students surveyed were willing to cooperate.

## **2.2. Diagnosis parameters**

The following direction was considered to carry out the diagnosis:

To know the students' opinion about the usefulness of an interactive website as a supporting material for the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French).

## **2.3. Information gathering**

In this research, some methods were applied to diagnose the necessities of the teaching and learning process of the Interpreting discipline in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French). Those methods are:

- The historical and logical method, which made possible the analysis of the evolution as well as the current situation that faces the discipline Interpreting which demands the use of ICTs and CAL materials to support its teaching and learning process.
- The theoretical methods, including both the analytical and synthetical method and the inductive and deductive method. They were used to establish the research process foundations.
- The empirical methods, such as analysis of documents, survey and participant observation were also used. In the analysis of documents, the Curriculum of the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), the Syllabus of the discipline Interpreting and the Syllabus of the subject Computer Managing of the same course were examined. The analysis of documents was made to determine the skills bachelors of the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) should have and to what extend ICTs could influence their professional training process. On the other hand, the survey was carried out to find out the current situation in the teaching and learning process of Interpreting and the students' opinion about the usefulness of a Web site for interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French).

- The statistical and mathematical methods such as the percentage analysis were also applied to process data obtained from surveys.

## **2.4. Analysis of documents**

### **2.4.1. Analysis of the curriculum of the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French)**

Curricula for the teaching and learning process in higher education have always been through an uninterrupted development process which implies modifications in the study curricula. Curriculum “C” of the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) was first implemented in the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas in the academic year 1989-1990. Later, in the academic year 1998-1999, Enhanced Curriculum “C” was implemented.

The implementation of this Curriculum meant a further step in the training of specialists of a foreign language since it showed substantial changes concerning its entry requirements, being the most outstanding the development of high competence in the use of the English Language and professional performance capacity in this first foreign language and in the second foreign language (French), as well as showing moral and civic values and professional ethics. Therefore, the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) has been designed to integrally develop the four basic skills of the verbal act: speaking, writing, listening comprehension and reading. These skills are given priority with an intensive work in the initial stage of the studies (Introductory Course) which allows students to use the English Language as an instruction means for the following years of their studies. During their university studies, this intensive work continues through different curricula dimensions such as translation and interpreting, among others; this makes able to develop the necessary professional abilities to use the English Language and the second foreign language (French) as instruments of specialized work.



According to the Enhanced Curriculum “C”, bachelors of the English language with a Second Foreign Language (French) should be able:

- To work as translators and/or interpreters in a concrete historical situation
- To contribute to the communication between Spanish speakers and non-Spanish speakers
- To teach English efficiently in order to contribute to the cultural development of a foreign language in our society

Thus, graduates of the English language with a Second Foreign Language (French) should have acquired and developed the necessary abilities in order to play an outstanding role as mediators between people in the communication process.

Recently, in accordance with the constant curricula enhancement and development, the Cuban Ministry of Higher Education is taking steps towards the implementation of a new curriculum for the development of the teaching and learning process in higher education studies: Curriculum “D”. This Curriculum promotes the ideology of blended learning which gives priority to students’ self-guided learning; therefore, it is necessary to create new infrastructure to allow its successful implementation. In this sense, there is a growing need to develop certain supporting materials with the aid of ICTs to complement the teachers’ role in the teaching and learning process.

#### **2.4.2. Analysis of the Interpreting Syllabus in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French)**

Based on Curriculum “C” bachelors of the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) should be able to work as interpreters, therefore, special interest is given to the discipline Interpreting. In this sense, the objectives stated in the Interpreting Syllabus are endeavoured:

- To develop on students skills and strategies that allow them to

self-assess their daily performance and self-guide their learning process.

- To acknowledge the importance of looking up information about the given topics for the students to do quality interpretations and to up-date their knowledge.

- To develop on students the skills required to do consecutive

interpreting of conferences, speeches, lectures, etc., on different topics. This activity should be based on the theoretical knowledge, the practical mastery of both languages (source and target language), and the knowledge of historical, social, cultural and thematic contexts.

- To develop on students the skills required to do bilateral interpreting of interviews, dialogues, and conversations on different topics. This activity should be based on the theoretical knowledge, the practical mastery of both languages (source and target language), and the knowledge of historical, social, cultural and thematic contexts.

#### **2.4.3. Analysis of the Computers Managing Syllabus in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French)**

With the world moving rapidly into the digital era, computer science has gained a tremendous importance. Experts in different fields have embraced the new technology to optimize their professional performance. That is the reason why the Cuban Ministry of Higher Education grants special interest to the teaching and learning process of Computer Managing.

In the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), Introduction to Computer Managing is taught in the first year, however, along the whole course, students are challenged with tasks to improve their computing skills.

The Computer Managing Syllabus in the previously mentioned course is intended:

- To develop skills and habits in the use of computers as a mean of communication in order to obtain, process and store information.
- To know and to apply the established regulations for the use of computers in the University networks.
- To familiarize students with concepts, tools and specific procedures for the use of computer applications in their professional life.

Besides the skills this Syllabus is intended to create on students, they are not enough taking into account the students' growing interest towards the creation of ICTs and, more specifically, CAL materials to complement the teaching and learning process. Therefore, there is an increasing need to include in the Computer Managing Syllabus the teaching of webpage and/or website building and software production.

## **2.5. Survey to students**

From the application of these surveys to 28 students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year and 19 students of the 5<sup>th</sup> year to find out the main problems they face in their training of the interpreting skills, and the acceptance of an interactive website as a supporting material for the teaching and learning process of Interpreting, the following results were obtained:

### **Fourth year:**

- 28 students (100%) think the interpreting training time during classes is not enough.
- 28 students (100%) consider the supporting materials available for the teaching and learning process of Interpreting (dictionaries, glossaries, Internet access) are not enough.
- 25 students (89.28%) think the implementation of an interactive website which provides exercises as well as supporting materials would be very helpful.

- 3 students (10.71%) think the implementation of an interactive website which provides exercises as well as supporting materials would be helpful.

#### **Fifth Year**

- 3 students (15.79%) feel satisfied with the interpreting skills they have acquired and developed
- 10 students (52.63%) feel partly satisfied with the interpreting skills have acquired and developed.
- 6 students (31.59%) feel unsatisfied with the interpreting skills they have acquired and developed.
- 3 students (15.79%) think the training they received in previous years to develop interpreting skills was enough.
- 16 (84.21%) students think the training they received in previous years to develop interpreting skills was not enough.
- 1 student (5.26%) considers the supporting materials available for the teaching and learning process of Interpreting (dictionaries, glossaries, Internet access) are enough.
- 18 students (94.73%) consider the supporting materials available for the teaching and learning process of Interpreting (dictionaries, glossaries, Internet access) are not enough.
- 17 students (89.47%) think the implementation of an interactive website which provides exercises as well as supporting materials would be very helpful.
- 2 students (10.52%) think the implementation of an interactive website which provides exercises as well as supporting materials would be helpful.

## **2.6. Analysis of the results**

After analysing the Curriculum of the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), the Computer Managing Syllabus and the Interpreting

Syllabus of the same course, as well as the results from the application of the survey, there was came to the following conclusions:

- Due to the advent of the implementation of Curriculum “D”, which promotes the ideology of blended learning, there is a growing need to develop certain supporting materials with the aid of ICTs to complement the teachers’ role in the teaching and learning process.
- There is an increasing need to include in the Computer Managing Syllabus the teaching of web page/ site building and software production.
- Most of the students agree they do not have enough time for training their interpreting skills during classes due to their dual role as students and teachers. Therefore, they just receive half of the content planned in their syllabus.
- The majority of the students think the implementation of an interactive website which provides exercises (texts to be interpreted) as well as supporting materials (dictionaries, glossaries, hyperlinks to information on the given topics) would be very useful.

Based on these results obtained from the diagnostic stage, it was decided to build a website as a tool to support the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French). The proposal of the previously mentioned website will be introduced in Chapter 3, as well as its validation by experts.

## *Chapter 3*

## CHAPTER 3. PROPOSAL OF AN INTERACTIVE WEBSITE FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS OF INTERPRETING

### 3.1 Characteristics of the proposal

After analyzing a set of documents, such as the Curriculum of the Course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), the Interpreting and Computers Managing Syllabus of this course as well as the application of surveys to students pointed out in chapter 2, it was concluded that most of them agree that the supporting materials and the training time required to develop interpreting skills are not enough. Moreover, they think the implementation of an interactive website to support the teaching and learning process of Interpreting could be very helpful.

Consequently, the website proposed has been built considering the theoretical bases explained in chapter 1, taking into account the results of the diagnose of the necessities stated in chapter 2 to support the teaching and learning process of Interpreting by means of CAL (Computer Assisted Learning) materials.

The website is entitled *InterEnglish* and it is available at the address [inter.sociales.uclv.edu.cu](http://inter.sociales.uclv.edu.cu). The website is divided into different pages shown in the *Home* page where the users (students and/or teachers) can choose what page to visit. As it was designed to equip students with the required tools to supply the lack of supporting materials and training time, endeavoring to enhance their interpreting skills, the core of the website is the webpage containing the interpreting exercises with limited access, as well as the links to dictionaries and glossaries that also appear on it. The other elements that the students/users will find in the website answer the same goal and are meant to be a hook for the students to enjoy their active learning process.

The main software used in the building of the web site is Joomla 1.5., but it was also needed to use the Moodle platform to design the interactive exercises since Joomla's interactive options demands programming. On the other hand, other softwares were used for designing the web content, like Adobe Photoshop 8.0 which was used to create images, Sony Vegas 7.0 to edit videos and games,

Adobe Audition 1.0 to edit recorded texts, and TmpEnc Express 4.5 was used to convert the videos' format.

Joomla was selected for being an open source of content management system. In other words, Joomla is a system which allows easy update of contents, and is not difficult to handle with.

Joomla acts as an easy interface that separates the complexities of updating web content from the user. It can help in adding features to an existing site like Blog, Forum, Gallery, etc. It organizes website content as sections, categories, and content items, and these data are stored in a mySQL database. Therefore, it acts as a graphic user interface for this database. Joomla template uses HTML with PHP hooks that contain information about the place which should be given to particular parts of the content. Joomla's core engine uses this information from the database and uses it in the template file to produce a Webpage (<http://www.goarticles.com/cgi-bin/showa.cgi?C=1224542>).

### **3.2. Home page**

As it was already said, the content of the different webpages is displayed in the middle of the *Home* page (Picture 1).

Starting from the upper right corner of the *Home* page, the student/user will have access to the section *Recently Updated*, where it is shown the information which has been recently updated. Besides this section, there is another one entitled *Most Popular*, which contains the most visited webpages.

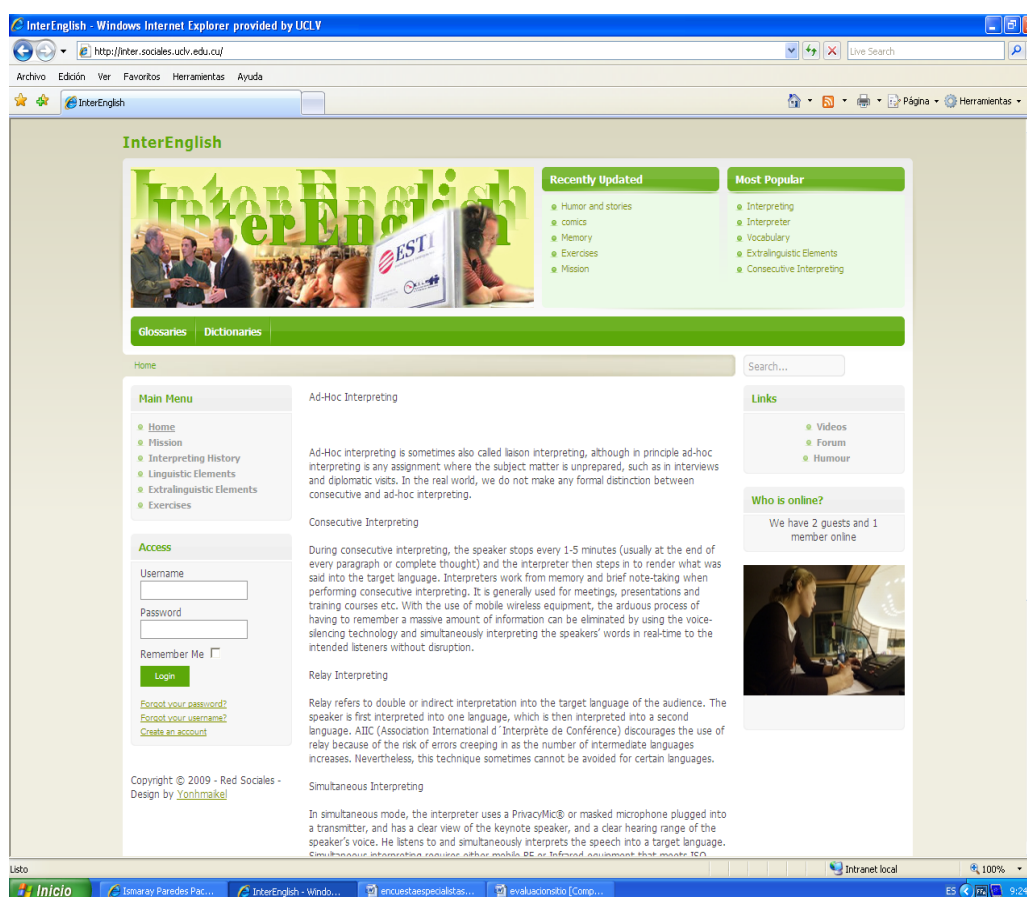
Right under the banner, the student/user is provided with glossaries of terms, and bilingual and monolingual dictionaries. In the middle of the *Home* page it could be found information about the different existing types of interpreting. To the right, there are links to *Videos*, *Forum* and *Humour* and the access to the second one is limited. Below the *Links* section, the website offers an option for the user (student and/or teachers) to know how many people on-line are.

From the left side of the website, the first section to be mentioned is *Main*



## An Interactive Website for the Teaching and Learning Process of Interpreting

*Menu*, divided into five subsections: *Home* page (in case the students/users want to return from another page), *Interpreting History* (provides a brief history of the interpreting activity), *Linguistic Elements* (provides terms that will appear on the consecutive interpreting exercises, as well as lists of false cognate words that the students should know to avoid wrong linguistic solutions when interpreting), *Extralinguistic Elements* (provides information that might appear on the consecutive interpreting exercises both in the source language (English) and in the target language (Spanish), as well as lists of acronyms), and finally, *Exercises* (provides memory and consecutive interpreting exercises). The access to the last subsection is also limited.



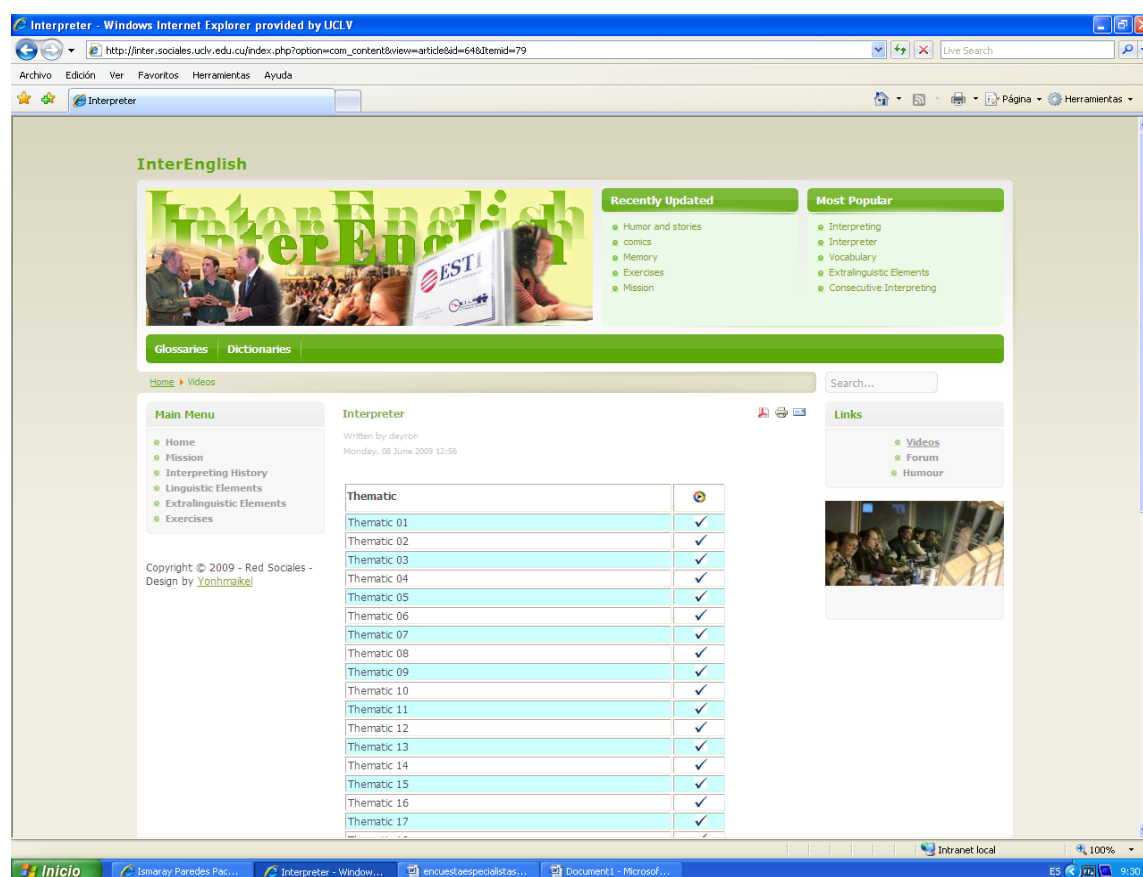
**Picture 1**

As the access to some sections of the website is limited, it was required to create an option for the users (students or teachers) to log in.

### 3.3. Videos webpage

This web page contains two lists of videos: *Thematic and Interpreter* (Picture2). The first list (*Thematic*) could be very useful for the students since it provides extralinguistic information about the different topics they will be asked to search. The second list (*Interpreter*) offers videos showing the performance of real interpreters in their field of action. It gives students the opportunity to see real life interpreting settings.

The software used to convert the videos from MPGE format to Window Media Video format was TmpEnc Express 4.5. These videos were then produced and copied to a specialized streaming media server (Microsoft Windows Media Services) which runs on Windows 2003 Server Enterprise Edition.

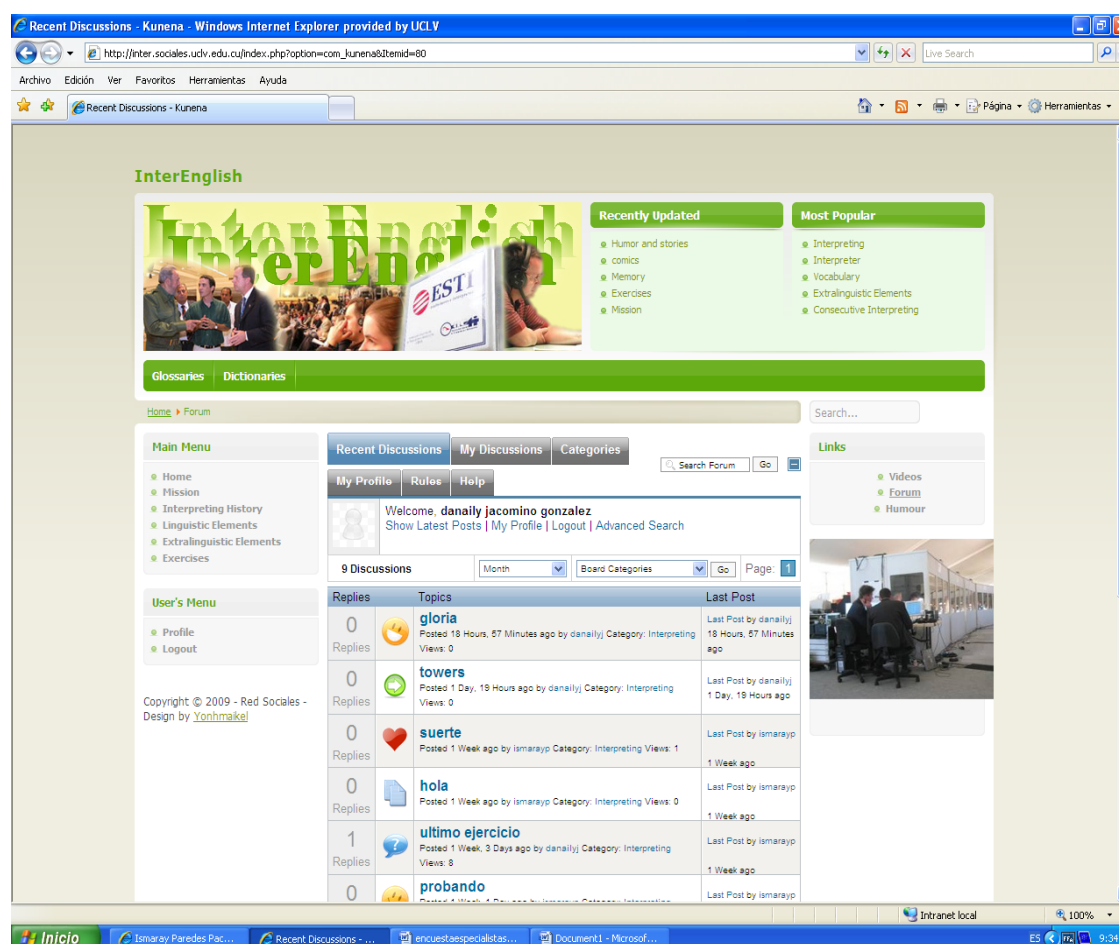


Picture 2

### 3.4. Forum webpage

This web page (Picture 3) is intended to provide a space for discussion and interaction between students and students and teachers. The users (students and/or teachers) who want to post a message through the Forum have to log in to be given access to this web page.

The first step to post a message is to click *Categories*, then *Interpreting*, which is the main forum category, and finally, the user has to click *New Thread*. In case the user (student and/or teacher) wants to reply a message, this option is also provided.



Picture 3

Besides, this Forum offers options to attach information and images. All the messages posted are saved and available in *Recent Discussion*, for other users

(students and/or teachers) to see them at any time.

The Joomla component used to build the Forum was Kunena 1.0.

### **3.4. Exercises webpage**

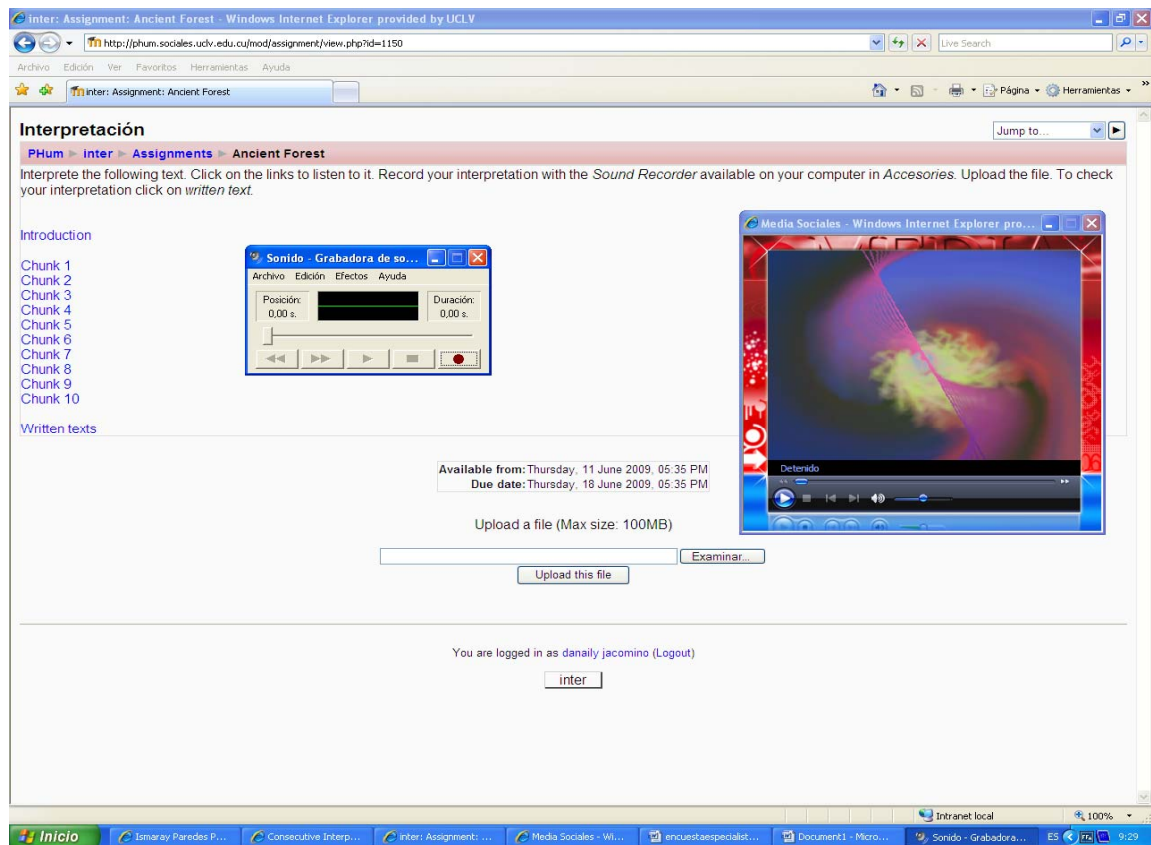
This page provides *Consecutive Interpreting* exercises as well as *Memory* exercises.

The *Consecutive Interpreting* exercises (Picture 4) are intended to train students of the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) in this activity. There are three oral texts available: *Saving our Forest*, *Water Pollution* (divided into two parts: *Water Pollution 1* and *Water Pollution 2*) and *Illegal Logging* (divided into two parts: *Illegal Logging 1* and *Illegal Logging 2*). The last texts were divided into two separate parts taking into consideration their complexity. In this sense, they were organized in an increasing level of complexity to enhance the students' skills and knowledge beyond their current level of mastery.

Considering the affordances of Moodle, the consecutive interpreting exercises were designed on this platform. It provides the interactive options required to do the exercises without having to program.

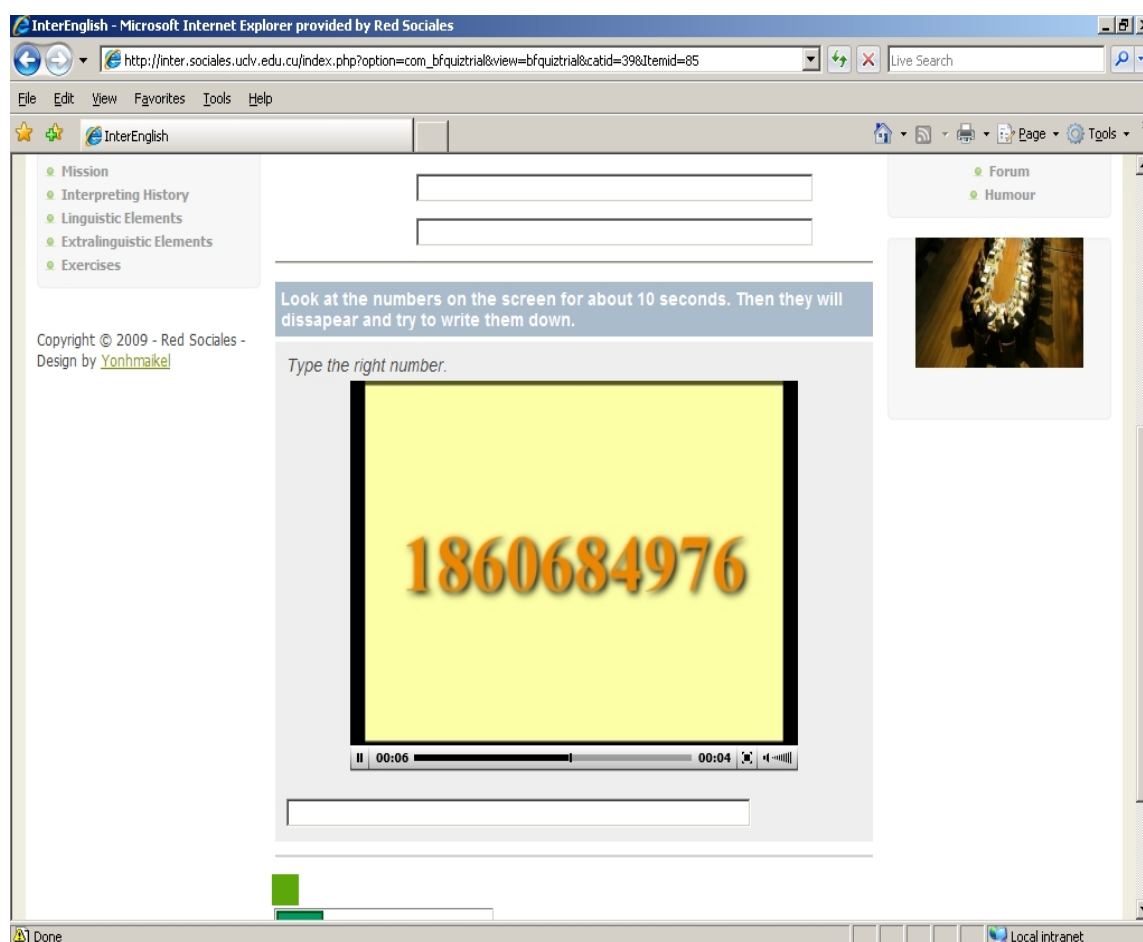
It will remain available for the teacher to check it. Moreover, The written form of the oral texts used in these exercises are available in *Written Texts*, both in the source language (English) and in the target language (Spanish) for the students to self-assess their work and self-guide their learning.

## An Interactive Website for the Teaching and Learning Process of Interpreting



**Picture 4**

Memory exercises (Picture 5) are endeavored to stimulate memory. They were designed in an increasing level of complexity being organized in three different categories: *numbers*, *letters* and *words*. After students finish answering each category, their right and wrong answers will be shown.



**Picture 5**

To design these memory exercises the Joomla component *BF Quiz Trial* was used. The videos for the exercises were created on the Sony Vegas 7.0, and the codec Microsoft Silverlight *must* be installed on computers for them to run.

### 3.5. Validation of the proposal

In order to evaluate the website, surveys were applied to specialists of the English Language who work as teachers of the Department of English at the UCLV and to specialists of informatics and programming who work at the UCLV as well. Specialists of the English Language were surveyed in order to find out their opinion in relation to the website intended to contribute to the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign

Language (French). Specialists of informatics and programming were surveyed in order to find out their opinion in relation to the website as a CAL material.

### **3.5.1. Evaluation of the website by specialists of the English Language**

From the application of the survey (Appendix 3) to 8 teachers of the Department of English the following results were obtained:

- 6 teachers (75%) think that the exercises available in the website are very helpful.
- 2 teachers (25%) think that the exercises available in the website are helpful.
- 5 teachers (62, 5%) think that the information and supporting materials available in the website are very helpful.
- 3 teachers (37,5%) think that the information and supporting materials available in the website are helpful.
- 6 teachers (75%) think that the website could be very helpful.
- 2 teachers (25%) think that the website could be helpful.

### **3.5.2. Evaluation of the website by specialists of informatics and programming.**

A specific survey was applied to 4 specialists of informatics and programming (Appendix 4). They were provided with a chart containing some criteria for evaluating the Website in categories from 1 to 5, considering 1 as the lowest category and 5 as the highest. From the application of this survey the following results were obtained:

**Usability:**

- 4 specialists (100%) marked category 5 to evaluate the purpose of the website.
- 4 specialists (100%) put a cross in category 5 to evaluate navigation.
- 2 specialists (50%) selected category 4 and the other 2 specialists (50%) marked category 5 to evaluate the design.
- 2 specialists (50%) think that in terms of enjoyment, the website deserves category 4 while the other half of the specialists (50%) gave it category 5.
- 1 specialist (25%) marked category 4 to evaluate the reliability of the website and 3 of them (75%) thought it deserves 5.

**Content:**

- 4 specialists (100%) marked category 5 to evaluate the authority of the content presented.
- 2 specialists (50%) selected category 4 to evaluate the sufficiency of the content presented in the website, while the other half (50%) thought it deserves 5.
- 4 specialists (100%) marked category 5 to evaluate the appropriateness of the presentation of the information and its difficulty level to the target users.

**Educational value:**

- 4 specialists (100%) put a cross in category 5 to evaluate the learning activities designed in the website.
- 1 specialist (25%) selected category 4 to evaluate the varied additional resources of the website while 3 of them (75%) marked category 5.
- 4 specialists (100%) put a cross in category 5 to evaluate the communication achieved in the website among students and teachers.



- 1 specialist (25%) thought the feedback in the website deserves category 4 while 3 specialists (75%) marked category 5.
- 4 specialists (100%) thought that in terms of evaluation the website deserves a category 5.
- 1 specialist (25%) marked category 4 to evaluate the help tools of the website while 3 of them (75%) put a cross in category 5.

**Vividness:**

- 2 specialists (50%) selected category 4 to evaluate the amount of active and important links of the website while the other half (50%) marked category 5.
- 4 specialists (100%) considered that in terms of updating the website deserves a category 5.

### **3.6. Analysis of the results**

As can be noted, most of the specialists of the English Language surveyed considered that the exercises and supporting materials available in the website could significantly contribute to the enhancement of interpreting skills on the students of English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French). They also agreed that it could be a practical solution to the lack of supporting material and it could be eventually added more information.

On the other hand, from the application of the survey to specialists of informatics and programming favorable results were obtained. From the technical point of view they liked the website as a whole; anyway, they made some suggestions which were considered for the improvement of this CAL material.

As a conclusion, all the specialists of the different fields who were surveyed agreed that the website could be a very helpful tool to support the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French), if it is well implemented.

*Conclusions*

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Though there is still much to do for the improvement of the teaching and learning process of interpreting in our University, the present research work represents an important step towards the better training of Bachelors of the English Language with a Second foreign Language (French). Therefore, after finishing this work it is possible to point out the following conclusions:

- The Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and more specifically the Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) materials could significantly contribute to foster students' active learning in the teaching and learning process of Interpreting.
- Most of the students of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years of English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) think they need more supporting materials in order to improve their skills as interpreters, mainly due to the lack of available time for training and researching and also taking into account the lack of experienced teachers in the interpreting field in the English Department.
- Specialists agreed that the website proposed could become an effective tool to improve the teaching and learning process of Interpreting in the training of students of English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) at the UCLV.

*Recommendations*

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The present research is just one of the first steps for the implementation of further ICT projects for the training of Bachelors of the English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French). So it will be advisable:

- To improve the web site proposed by adding information and by designing other types of exercises that could contribute to enhance interpreting skills.
- To improve the technology used to design the consecutive interpreting exercises using the Joomla component: Flash File.
- To validate the effectiveness of the website after 1 academic year benchmarking.
- To train students in website building to create supporting materials for other disciplines.

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# *Appendixes*

## APPENDIX 1

### Survey (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>) years

It would be very helpful for our research if you could answer the following questions. Focus your answer just on interpreting. Thank you.

1. Do you consider that the training time to develop interpreting skills during classes is:

\_\_\_\_ enough

\_\_\_\_ not enough

2. Are you satisfied with the interpreting training you receive?

\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_ no

3. Do you consider the supporting materials available for the teaching and learning process of Interpreting ( dictionaries, glossaries, Internet access) are :

\_\_\_\_ enough

\_\_\_\_ not enough

4. Do you think the implementation of an interactive Website which provides exercises ) texts to be interpreted) as well as supporting materials (dictionaries, glossaries, hyperlinks to information on the given topics ) would be:

\_\_\_\_ very helpful

\_\_\_\_ helpful

\_\_\_\_ a waste of time



## APPENDIX 2

### Survey (5<sup>th</sup>) year

It would be very helpful for our research if you could answer the following questions. Focus your answer just on interpreting. Thank you.

1. How do you feel about the interpreting skills you have in the current year?

\_\_\_\_ satisfied

\_\_\_\_ partly satisfied

\_\_\_\_ unsatisfied

2. The training you received in previous years to develop interpreting skills was:

\_\_\_\_ enough

\_\_\_\_ not enough

3. The supporting materials available for the teaching and learning process of Interpreting (dictionaries, glossaries, Internet access) are:

\_\_\_\_ enough

\_\_\_\_ not enough

4. The implementation of an interactive Website which provides exercises) texts to be interpreted) as well as supporting materials (dictionaries, glossaries, hyperlinks to information on the given topics) could be:

\_\_\_\_ very helpful

\_\_\_\_ helpful

\_\_\_\_ a waste of time

### APPENDIX 3

#### Survey to specialists of English Language

It would be very useful for our research if you could answer the following questionnaire. Thank you.

1. The exercises available on the website intended to enhance interpreting skills on the students are:

\_\_\_\_\_Very helpful

\_\_\_\_\_Helpful

\_\_\_\_\_Not helpful

2. The information and supporting materials available on the website are:

\_\_\_\_\_Very helpful

\_\_\_\_\_Helpful

\_\_\_\_\_Not helpful

3. The website InterEnglish (a CAL material) intended to contribute to the training of students of the course English Language with a Second Foreign Language (French) at the UCLV could be:

\_\_\_\_\_Very helpful

\_\_\_\_\_Helpful

\_\_\_\_\_Not helpful

#### APPENDIX 4

Criteria	Category					Results
Usability	1	2	3	4	5	
The purpose of the Web site is presented clearly (purpose).					x	100%
Moving around between the pages is clear and easy. In each page the users know where they are and where they can go next (navigation).					x	100%
The web pages are neat, simple and not overstuffed. There is harmony in the use of colors, fonts and backgrounds (design).				x	x	50% 50%
Several attractive multimedia and humor features are used. These features are relevant to the subject and not too heavy (enjoyment).				x	x	50% 50%
The content is presented clearly by proper use of text, sounds and images (reliability).				x	x	25% 75%
<b>Content</b>						
The information focuses on the main topic of the Web site (authority).					x	100%
The amount of information is sufficient and not excessive				x		50%

(sufficiency).					X	50%
The presentation of the information and its difficulty level are appropriate to the target users (appropriateness).					X	100%
<b>Educational value</b>						
The Web site provides learning activities that expose the users to new information and encourage them to construct new knowledge and educational substance (learning activities).					X	100%
The learning activities include well prepared content presented in diverse ways, and they direct the users to varied additional resources in the web (resources).				X	X	25% 75%
Users can interact with their teachers, experts and peers through e-mail, chat and forums (communication).					X	100%
The coordinators of the Web site track the users' performance and evaluate their products continuously through mechanic or human feedback (feedback).				X	X	25% 100%
Each learning activity is accompanied with a clear and easy way for evaluating the users' performance (evaluation).					X	100%

The Web site provides tools to assist users in solving technical, contextual and didactical problems that they might face ( help tools).				X		25%
					X	75%
<b>Vividness</b>						
The Web site provides active and important links to other web pages and people involved in the Web site (links).				X		50%
					X	50%
The Web site is being developed, changed and updated continuously (updating).					X	100%

## APPENDIX 5

### Specialists surveyed to evaluate the Website

<b>Name and surname</b>	<b>Academic rank</b>	<b>Scientific degree</b>	<b>Professional experience (years)</b>
Osvaldo Betancourt Rodríguez	Associate Professor English Language Department	Master	25
Balbina Lopez Rodriguez	Associate Professor English Language Department	Master	31
Juan Carlos Rodriguez Pozas	Associate Professor English Language Department	Master	28
Dianaleis Maza Amores	Assistant Professor English Language Department	Master	15
Alicia Maria Moya Torres	Assistant Professor English Language Department	Master	19
Luis Miguel Tamargo Gutierrez	English Language Department	Instructor	4

Anabel Fernandez Niubo	Trainee English Language Department	-----	1
Delvis Rudy Reyes Linares	Trainee English Language Department	-----	1
Ramón Torres	Electrical Engineering Faculty	Master	5
Roberto Carlos Rodríguez Hidalgo	Faculty of Information and Education Sciences	-----	3
Yoan Pacheco	Center of Infomatics Studies- UCLV	Master	7
Antonio Nuñez Martinez	Informatics Security	Instructor	4

## APPENDIX 5

**Excerpts from a lecture given at the Ohio Botanical Institute about  
Ancient Forests**

1. Throughout the world, ancient forests are in crisis and many of the plants and animals that live in these forests face extinction. Also, many of the people and cultures who depend on these forests for their way of life are under threat.
2. The world's ancient forests are truly diverse. They include boreal, temperate and tropical forests, coniferous and broadleaf forests, rainforests and mangroves. Together they maintain environmental systems that are essential for life on Earth.
3. Ancient forests influence weather by controlling rainfall and evaporation of water from soil.
4. They help stabilize the world's climate by storing large amounts of carbon that would otherwise contribute to climate change.
5. These ancient forests are home to millions of forest people who depend on them for their survival - both physically and spiritually.
6. These forests also house around two-thirds of the world's land-based species of plants and animals. That's hundreds of thousands of different plants and animals, and literally millions of insects - their futures also depend on them.
7. These magnificent ancient forests are under threat.
8. More than 87 human cultures have been lost in Brazil alone; in the next 10 to 20 years, the world could lose thousands of species of plants and animals.
9. This is a critical situation, but there is a last chance to SAVE these forests and the people and species that depend on them.
10. It's up to us to change our world.

**APPENDIX 6 (a)**



**Lecture given by an Officer of the Center for Marine Conservation (CMC)  
at a USA Conference about Water Pollution**

1. There is a water plague and the problem is plastic; mainly the disposable items that persist in the environment nowadays.
2. Due to the light weight plastic products easily find their way to waterways where they float and/or drift.
3. There plastic trash acquires a more dignified name: Marine Debris.
4. Not all marine debris is plastic, but more than half is, according to the Center for Marine Conservation (CMC).
5. During the 1996 USA Coastal Cleanup, 61 percent of the trash collected was plastic, including more than 600,000 cigarette butts.
6. Plastic trash comes from drainages, roadways, parking lots and storm drains; some of it accumulates in the watershed but most of it continues downstream to the ocean.
7. CMC estimates that the total trash dumped at sea annually is 14 billion pounds, more than double the US fisheries catch of 6 billion pounds per year.
8. During the mid-1980s, the growing aquatic trash problem was obvious. There were numerous occurrences of medical waste washing up on beaches and the news showed marine animals dying on beaches as well.
9. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) was tasked in 1987 with a data-gathering mandate and, with the national marine environmental organization CMC, created the Marine Debris Information Office.

**APPENDIX 6 (b)**

1. In an effort to reverse the situation CMC has been developing a number of projects.
2. As part of these projects, CMC organized an annual Coastal Cleanup in 1986.
3. This has become now an international effort, growing from 2800 volunteers in Texas the first year to 300,000 in 55 US states and territories and more than 90 countries.
4. Volunteers are provided with trash bags, check-off lists, gloves, T-shirts and picnics.
5. Participants who volunteered during the USA cleanup filled out data sheets as they filled up garbage bags, categorizing the composition of retrieved marine debris.
6. Combing almost 6,000 miles of beach, riverbank, harbour and wetland, US volunteers collected almost 3 million pounds of trash during the 1996 event.
7. Alabama's contribution consisted of 1,962 people collecting 30,412 pounds of trash over 96 miles.
8. One day each year, people are encouraged to devote a few hours and give back just a little bit to Mother Earth by joining hundreds of thousands of others worldwide for the Coastal Cleanup.
9. The purpose of this Coastal Cleanup is threefold: To remove debris from the aquatic environment; to increase public awareness and encourage involvement in the issue; and to collect data about the amounts and kinds of debris.
10. The collected data is used to provide information for each state to develop regulations and outreach programs.
11. The Alabama Department for Economic and Community Affairs serves as the local coordinator and information clearinghouse while businesses, community groups and municipalities help sponsor the event.

## **APPENDIX 7 (a)**

**Seminar given to Environmental Activists in Australia about Illegal Logging**

1. Illegal logging occurs in all types of forests, from Brazil to Canada, Cameroon to Kenya and from Indonesia to Russia.
2. Illegal logging destroys nature, damages communities and disrupts trade.
3. This practice mainly exists because of increasing demand for timber, paper and derivative products (including packaging), a trend which is likely to continue in the future.
4. Illegal logging can also happen when forests are cleared for plantations such as oil palm.
5. But not all wood removal is due to trade. In fact, 40% of wood taken from forests globally is used for basic energy needs such as cooking and heating.
6. We all know that illegal logging is a major problem in the Congo Basin and the Amazon.
7. However, what is less recognized is the fact that the problem also occurs in countries such as Canada and even in Europe. For example, up to 45% of the total harvest in Bulgaria stems from illegal harvesting.
8. Let's see now what illegal logging is: Illegal logging is the harvesting, transporting, processing, buying or selling of timber in violation of national laws.
9. This definition also applies to harvesting wood from protected areas, exporting threatened tree species, and falsifying official documents.
10. Less obvious acts of illegal logging include breaking license agreements, tax evasion, corrupting government officials and interfering with access and rights to forest areas.
11. Contributing to illegal logging is frighteningly easy. It is as easy as stepping into a wood product retail store and purchasing a chair or a table whose origins are unknown.
12. This chair or table could be potentially made from timber that was illegally cut or exported.

13. If it is easy to contribute to illegal logging, it is also easy to contribute to stopping it.
14. One way to do this is to ask for good wood, that is, wood that has been obtained through legal practices.
15. This way, consumers can exert pressure on the timber industry to adopt more environmentally and socially friendly practices.

## **APPENDIX 7 (b)**

1. We all know that illegal logging is a significant global issue. It degrades forest environments, contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and

reductions in biodiversity. It also results in a loss of government revenue and deprives local communities of ownership rights and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

2. Globally, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development estimates that 5-10 per cent of global industrial round wood trade is illegally harvested.
3. The proportion can be greater in some high risk countries where it accounts for between 20-90 per cent of timber production. This means a loss of assets and revenue in developing countries of up to US\$23 billion every year.
4. The World Bank estimates that illegal logging costs the global market more than US\$10 billion a year and reduces government revenues by about \$US5 billion a year.
5. It is estimated that around \$400 million of suspected illegally sourced timber and timber products are imported into Australia each year.
6. The main products of concern are wooden furniture, paper and paper board, wood based panels, sawn wood, doors and mouldings.
7. It is therefore in Australia's interests as a responsible member of the global community, to protect plant and animal life, health and the environment and to reduce the depletion of exhaustible natural resources that are threatened by illegal logging.