

The Newsletter of SANAKO UK www.sanako.co.uk

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Technology a Revelation for Language Learning Pedagogy?

By René Koglbauer, President Elect, Association for Language Learning, UK



Language teachers have been used to 'simple' technology in their classrooms for a long time; such as tape recorders for playing listening comprehensions and recording their learners' oral examinations. I remember how gratuitous my colleagues and I were when we got one of these new tape recorders that had a timer. How much easier was it to play an extract of a listening comprehension to a class and rewind to a particular place on the tape; a technological development that supported the teachers in using tapes more effectively.

Over the last decade or so, technology has made its way increasingly into language classrooms across the United Kingdom. Schools spent enormous amount of money on technology, particularly on data projectors and to a lesser extent on interactive white-boards. After the initial excitement, the phrase "death by PowerPoint" was coined and with it an increasingly amount of talk-and-PowerPoint delivery

could be observed. Those of us that were lucky and had access to an interactive white-board could make their grammar teaching much more exciting by moving parts of speech around. Some even asked the learners to come up and have a go. A revelation? Not really, flashcards were replaced by a series of PowerPoint pictures ...

"Technology should be used as a tool that enhances the language learning process."

But when language teachers started to have access to the World Wide Web in their classrooms that started changing the day-to-day teaching: for the first time, language teachers did not have to travel to France, Germany or Spain every summer holiday to fill their suitcases with artefacts to introduce 'authenticity' into their language classrooms; they could just search a French, German or Spanish newspaper for a relevant article and/or introduce a new topic with authentic pictures, video clips, blogs, etc from the target language country. A first revelation and a revelation that an increasing number of language teachers has been exploiting in order to make their day-to-day language classes more exciting and the experience real for their learners. Language teachers across the country experimented and are still doing so nowadays. Instead of a PC, teachers might be given iPads or any other kind of tablets these days but what has not changed is their eagerness to trial new gadgets, play round with new software and experiment in their classrooms in the hope that

learners are motivated and eager to learn languages. The language teacher community, known for its social gatherings, conferences and networking, has found through social media and blogging easy and cheap ways to not only stay in touch and support each other but also to share practical ideas; a revelation for 'informal' continuous professional development for the language teaching community.

However, I still would argue that technology must not be used JUST for the sake of it and its motivation factor alone. Technology should be used as a tool that enhances the language learning process. Technology plays a vital role in giving our learners the authentic language and culture experience that is needed to become a well-rounded language learner. Linguistic progression has to be the key aim of every learning opportunity in the languages classroom. Therefore, when using technology the planning must focus on the linguistic progression, rather than the gadgets and software that will assist this progression. This is the real revelation of technology: a technology-enhanced language pedagogy!



•René Koglbauer is currently Director of the North Leadership Centre at Newcastle University. René is also Director of Network for Languages North East and will take up his two-year presidency of the Association for Language Learning in September 2014. @Rene_Koglbauer

Would you like to motivate your language students outside the classroom?



There are many arguments in favour of autonomous learning for students at HE level. The first of which, is that it makes students much more efficient, effective and focused and also vastly increases their motivation and enthusiasm when they return to the classroom.

In particular, language students benefit from autonomous learning as 'language learning depends crucially on language use' (Little 2012) so those learners who 'enjoy a high degree of social autonomy in their learning environment should find it easier than otherwise

to master the full range of discourse roles on which effective spontaneous communication depends' (Little 2012). The popular **Sanako Study** range of language laboratories support HE autonomous learning by allowing for independent study outside of a classroom situation. Deployed as a site licence, the Study 1200 language lab is accessible by students on any PC or laptop on the University's network through the innovative Study Lite software. Students are therefore able to practice their speaking and listening skills or any other exercise created by the tutor, either from saved classwork or their own chosen sources, thus seamlessly combining both tutor led & autonomous learning activities to improve language skills.

For more information on how Study 1200 can benefit your University, contact David.Binns@sanako.com

Reference: Little, D. (2012) Learner autonomy and second/foreign language learning. LLAS Centre for Languages, linguistics and Area Studies, University of Southampton



The picture shows the TANDBERG IS6B that was installed in the old building in the 1970s.

In the early 1970s, Sanako-Tandberg installed the IS6B open reel language lab at Kirkwall Grammar School in Orkney, which at the time was state of the art technology. With features such as monitoring, intercom and group conference, the system proved to be very popular with teachers and pupils alike, so popular in fact that it remained in regular use for over 30 years. When the new school building opened its doors in January 2014, a new era of language learning began. The current equivalent of their old lab, the **Sanako Study 1200** software language lab, may have replaced the IS6B, but continues Kirkwall's proud tradition of using technology as an integral part of language lessons. Many people will remember such language labs from

their school days but the latest Study software is a far cry from such rigid and formal environments. Study 1200 integrates closely with any online or course book resources you already have or use.

Mr Ben Pesci, a languages teacher at the school says "The vocab tests are really easy to create and the kids really like the instant result. Voice insert is also super useful for speaking exam practice (I can pre-record all the potential questions for all levels) and is really the feature that was not possible with the old Tandberg language lab. Otherwise, it offers the same possibilities along with far more. I use the messaging a lot (less disruptive than speaking to the kids while they are working) and the

Orkney goes digital - Study 1200 arrives at Kirkwall

"Kirkwall Grammar School has a fantastic new building and an enthusiastic languages department. Installation and training went very well and I look forward to working with the school for many years to come. There was over 30 years of reliable service with the old IS6B lab" says Paul Redhead, Business Manager of Sanako UK.

screen control options are cool. Creating remote playlists is also great as students can choose between different activities and my involvement is minimal but I am always in control".

Students have really improved both listening and speaking skills by becoming more active and engaged in the course book material and online content since Study 1200 was installed. The transition to digital has been a smooth one and Kirkwall Grammar School looks forward to a digital future.



Fun and games

By Marie O'Sullivan, **The LanguagePoint**



Every time I hear Arsenal manager Arsène Wenger speaking, I'm reminded of something one of my former pupils said to me. He was surprised that someone who could speak such good English had not managed to improve his accent in all the time he's been living in England.

It is a little strange, I admit. It's understandable that if you learn a language from a book and never practise speaking yourself, pronunciation will suffer in the move from page to speech. Yet Wenger speaks English all the time.

Searching for yet another way to encourage pupils to repeat aloud and therefore practise pronunciation (and I'm thinking of reluctant, self-conscious teenagers in particular) can be frustrating, as the same activities and games can get boring. But a while ago, we collected some fun ideas at The LanguagePoint which require little or no preparation, most of which will bring lively repetition to learning. Some you'll already know, others will be new to you – why not take a look and add a couple to your bag of classroom tricks!

You'll find them here:

http://thelanguagepoint.com/english_collections/show/Tips%2521_Simple_Classroom_Activities

– and as ever, we're always open to new additions!

Sanako Language Labs arrive at Minsthorpe Community College

By Jennifer Read – Curriculum Team Leader – Modern Foreign Languages



Information Technology clearly plays an important part in the lives of all young people growing up in the 21st Century. At Minsthorpe Community College we clearly recognise the need to keep up with the latest developments and harness their benefits in order to enhance Learning & Teaching in every classroom and for every learner.

The Modern Foreign Languages team are always seeking out new ways to improve the experience of our learners

and help them make more progress. Technology plays an important part in this and staff are always keen to experiment with a range of materials and resources in their lessons. Speaking a foreign language is, of course, a major challenge for our students and towards the end of the summer term 2013 we decided to research the advantages of Language Lab software and equipment in order to build confidence with speaking skills in French and German.

Sanako came highly recommended and Sanako Study 700 was installed in one computer suite during the summer holidays. Since September 2013 we have regularly used these new facilities with a range of KS4 groups and as a team we have benefited from some excellent bespoke training from Paul Taylor. The students genuinely enjoy their time in the language lab and can easily articulate its benefits for their learning. They talk about an increased confidence and enjoyment

when it comes to speaking French and German. The various functions of the system are easy for both teachers and students to use and aid both peer and self-assessment and enable the teacher to easily differentiate and monitor student progress. We particularly like the instant messaging and voting functions. Also the ability to 'listen in' to a range of students is invaluable. The possibilities really do seem endless! Teachers feel completely in control of the whole group without even moving from the front of the room! We are hoping to expand our use of Sanako Study 700 across more ICT suites next academic year. This is only possible due to the validation of its benefits by both teachers and students alike.

News in brief

We are delighted to have launched a promotional video for Pronounce! We went to Leeds Metropolitan University in May to see how students liked using the software to improve their pronunciation and received fantastic feedback for the easy-to-use system.



You can watch it at www.sanako.com/pronounce and if you are on Twitter, you could win an iPad air by sharing the video and using [#whatwouldyouscore](https://twitter.com/whatwouldyouscore)

We invite you to have a look at our new blog **Tea and Teaching** focusing on how technology can enhance your language lessons, whether you teach English, French, Spanish, German, Elvish or Klingon! We publish regular articles and resources about language teaching & how it intertwines with technology today.



The blog is run by Marie O'Sullivan: "I am passionate about supporting language teachers from around the world and sharing ideas for our hugely demanding, yet rewarding profession! From classroom teacher and Director of Language College to creator of The LanguagePoint and Acting Communications Office of NALA, I have many years' experience in tackling the challenges we face daily in teaching."

www.sanako.com/language-teaching-blog/

Introducing, **Sanako Sign Lab** – designed for teaching sign language with three unique features using webcam: Watch and Speak, Watch and Repeat and Watch and Record Audio Commentary for lip reading activity. If you are interested in Sanako Sign lab or want to find out more, contact david.binns@sanako.com for further details.



Events

20th June – TILT show, The Sixth Form College Solihull

The popular TILT show is coming to the West Midlands on 20th June. Hosted by The Sixth Form College, Solihull the day will focus on using IT to maximise the effectiveness of your language lessons with Lisa Stevens guest speaking. After feedback from our previous events indicated that the 'Hands-on' sessions were the most popular aspect of the TILT shows, we have increased the amount of 'Hands-On' activity throughout the day. We are looking forward to another great event!

To be kept updated check www.sanako.com or email sylvie.hall@sanako.com

26th June – TILT show, Callington Community College

We are delighted to bring the TILT show to the Cornwall region for the first time on 26th June in partnership with Callington Community College.

20-23 August – Eurocall, University of Groningen, The Netherlands

The European Association for Computer Assisted Language Learning (EUROCALL) is an association of language teaching professionals from Europe and world-wide, which aims to:

- promote the use of foreign languages within Europe and beyond
- provide a European focus for the promulgation of innovative research, development and practice relating to the use of technologies for language learning
- enhance the quality, dissemination and efficiency of CALL materials and related activities
- support Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

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