Up The Golden Staircase

—Five Steps Leading Foreign Language Students to Full Competence in the Use of E-mail in Their Target Language—

外国語学習者の目標言語における E-メール使用能力を養成するための 5 つのステップ

Morris J. Augustine

モリス オーガスティン

本論では、外国語教育に E-メールを使用する際の、5 つの要点について議論する。1）教師は、自分の E-メールアドレスを入手し、サーバに接続した後、学生に大学を通して E-メールアドレスを入手させる。2）教師は、目標言語における WWW (World Wide Web) の領域を十分に探索する。3）学生を援助し、各国の同じ言語を学習する学生たちと接触できるように、学生レベルのディスカッション・リストに加入させる。4）教師は、独自の私的ディスカッション・リストを創設し、同じ言語を学習する他国の学生や、目標言語の母語話者とリンクする。5）教師は、独自のホームページを立ち上げる。このページでは、学校、授業や学生の専門領域について説明したり、学生を写真や経歴と共に紹介する。

ディスカッション・リストには、協力体制にある教師が決めた題材についての E-メールやメッセージを送ることができるが、ホームページは、ディスカッション・リストと合わせて活用でき、学生の興味を刺激し且つ有益である。

Introduction

A university teacher with less than superior cyber-skills might legitimately ask why he or she should begin to use e-mail as an essential part of foreign language teaching. In this essay I wish to answer that question in a positive manner, maintaining that most, if not all, foreign language classes can and should use e-mail and the internet as an integral part in the whole course. I wish to argue that not only Communication classes, but also Composition, Rapid Reading, Literature, and even Linguistics and other more theoretical courses as well, can very profitably employ a little—or a lot—of direct student foreign language e-mail communication.

But my aim here is to discuss not the "Why?" but the "How?".　I hope to spread out the

whole rich spectrum of e-mail and internet possibilities, beginning with practical programs which even every freshmen class can quite easily accomplish, and continuing up to the highest and most rewarding levels. If I am successful in showing how these simple tasks can lead, in a year or two, to a wide variety of programs of immensely creative international collaboration with other teachers and their students in many foreign countries, then most of the "Why's?" will have answered themselves.

Of course, when one suggests that university level teachers can or should include the use of e-mail in their teaching of foreign language, this implies that each student must first know how to use a computer as well as how to write, send, copy, receive and reply to e-mail messages in the native language. But the fact is that, since the ubiquitous appearance of portable phones or *keitai denwa* with e-mail and I-net capacities, the vast majority of the students *already have* acquired most of these necessary skills. At my first freshman class meeting a few weeks ago I discovered that only one out of thirty-eight students did not have a *keitai denwa* with an internet connection. In others of my five language classes, the number was smaller, but in every case most students, even freshmen, already had these capacities. For those students who have neither portable phones nor the use of a computer, the above skills can be taught with one or two explanatory demonstration trips to the computer room. A student can, within a single class-period, learn the rudiments. These rudiments are: 1) entering his or her Password and User Name into the university's computer terminal, 2) opening a blank e-mail message with his or her own university e-mail address already automatically inserted, and 3) properly filling out the Sender, Receiver, Copy and Subject lines, and also learning the proper form for writing a very simple English, or other foreign language, letter. Of course the process is even easier when the student is allowed to use his or her own portable phone or a computer at home.

A companion problem which may seem terribly difficult but which in fact is very easy is this: how can each student get an individual university e-mail address, along with a personal User Name and Password? In fact this takes less than a week. It requires only that the teacher direct the student to visit to the department's office and fill out a simple request form. That is really all the teacher and student need do to begin reaping extraordinary pedagogical benefits. Slowly most students will discover, to their great surprise, that the actual *use*—via e-mail—of the foreign language being studied to communicate with another friendly human being is a very powerful tool and motivation for the mastery of the language itself. Perhaps even more importantly, it is a tool also for almost incredible international self-broadening, and for an increase of job opportunities as well.

Most teachers of foreign languages probably already know most of the above information. Whether or not a particular university or a foreign language teacher has actually had the experience of using e-mail in this manner, most have a general realization that the use of e-mail in foreign language teaching offers unique and very important new opportunities. These are opportunities for helping students actually use their budding language skills for live human communication—first with their professor, then with fellow students and finally with students living in other countries and cultures, both fellow language learners and native speakers.

Perhaps some readers will doubt my bold blanket statement that *all* teachers of a foreign language, no matter what their specialty, can benefit from the use of e-mail and the internet. So let us briefly look to some authoritative support, not for e-mail use as such, but for what e-mail does in the context of foreign language learning. In his *Teaching by Principles,* Brown (1994, 16-31) lists twelve "Principles" for teaching a foreign language, of which the culminating one is "Communicative Competence" (29). He declares that real communicative confidence must include leading the students towards use of the language beyond the classroom walls. He concludes by saying, "Some day your students will not be in the classroom. Make sure you are preparing them to be independent learners and manipulators of the language *out there*" (30). Today, for the first time in history, professors of any foreign language can, with relative ease via skillful use of e-mail, make this intimate connection with the "*out there*" an integral part of their language teaching.

Students should be urged to take that important leap from "safe" but artificial use of classroom English, German or Chinese, to actual use of that language in e-mail communication with other living human beings. Of course this process must proceed slowly, from exchanges between people in the classroom, to joining simple Student Discussion Lists for beginners and gradually moving on to not just communication but real friendship with their student "equals" in the given language in other countries.

Nunan (1999) makes the same pedagogical point mentioned above in his *Language Teaching Methodology.* He writes that the content and environment of language learning, "should have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right" (8). With the advent of e-mail and the internet, this all-important, but very gradual process of standing alone can be made an integral part of our classroom instruction.

A more direct testimony for using e-mail as an important part of foreign language teaching comes from three TEST teacher-scholars in the Internet TESL Journal. They

declare with Warschauer, Shetzer and Meloni (2000, 3) that "E-mail. . . [is] the mother of all Internet applications," and go on to add that, ". . .FL teachers are just beginning to sense the impact that this medium is having on their profession" (Warschauer, Meloni and Brant, 1998, 1). The first segment in our presentation aims at outlining five simple but sharply focused steps, the "golden staircase."

I. Five Basic Steps Towards Effective Use of E-mail in Every Foreign Language Class

In this section, my aim is relatively straightforward. The world of Computer Assisted Language Learning, or CALL, is vast, already to the point of limitlessness. Rather than attempt to even sketch a model of this immense world of Rapid Reading, Student Homepages, Discussion Lists, and search of the internet for appropriate information and data to incorporate in articles, term papers, and the like, I simply want to focus on five general steps or modes of employing e-mail in foreign language teaching. Most of these steps have been described many times and in many ways by others in various TESL or FL journals and books. My contribution, however, will be this: a brief outline of what I call the "golden staircase" to a maximally effective use of e-mail. This will be a series of steps leading gradually to the upper echelons of e-mail usage among students and teachers of different countries which will almost surely be of immense benefit—if imaginatively applied—to the teacher of any aspect of a foreign language. Furthermore, I wish to convince teachers that this golden staircase can be climbed by university students on almost any level, and with an ease that might amaze most teachers. What follows shortly is a preliminary sketch of Five Steps or Modes for Using E-mail in the Foreign Language Class.

But first let me mention what is the biggest challenge for many teachers, despite our living in a technologically advanced age. It is getting over the fear and awe of computer use to access the cyber-world. Anyone with more than a passing knowledge of the myriad ways in which e-mail and the internet can be used in foreign language teaching knows that these ways are in fact limitless. They also know that the levels of sophistication in employing them are exploding every day into an ever-larger cyber-universe. But no one either can or needs to learn all there is to know about a subject in order to use it to teach more effectively. This is as true of the using of e-mail and internet as it is of anything else. Anyone can learn all the basic tools and skills necessary within a relatively short time.

UP THE GOLDEN STAIRCASE (Augustine)

Getting over the initial awe at the unknown and plunging in is perhaps the most difficult part. But have confidence and you will most certainly succeed.

As I mentioned, there are about five basic steps towards mastering the basics of using e-mail in foreign language teaching. Making the presumption that one can use the basic text functions of a computer— simple word-processing software, the printer, as well as the word processor's copy-and-paste operations—one is ready to begin to climb this linguistic staircase. The transition from doing this in one's native language to doing it in the foreign language which one teaches may be inhibited more by a mental block than by any real technological challenge.

1. The first step towards sending and receiving e-mail is rather obviously to get one's own e-mail address, be connected to an e-mail server, and to learn the use of the very simple software which opens a blank e-mail page. This software also helps one to compose and send a message and download incoming e-mail messages from anywhere in the world.

2. Since almost everyone already knows this first step, the second one is not very broad, that is actually sending and receiving e-mail messages, beginning to explore the target language internet sites on the World Wide Web, and then joining at least one Discussion List in one's own field of expertise. Since at last count there were over 80,000 Discussion Lists on the Web, and since one can search for exactly the one that suits oneself by going to Liszt.com, the taking of this second step is also a simple, though very important, bit of progress. Only by entering into the daily discussions on a List, involving a limited group of fellow members on a selected subject, can a teacher provide the students with an adequate taste of the possibilities of e-mail.

3. The third step is only slightly more complicated. One needs to join certain Lists that are specially designed to put one in touch with other teachers of one's target language and thus to enter into direct conversation with fellow teachers concerning the best methods of using the magic of e-mail with students. Joining the appropriate Lists will put one in touch with various teachers who are looking for a match-up. That is, a teacher must learn how to establish contact with another teacher in a different country, who also has a class of students studying Chinese, German, English or whatever language is being taught, and who is looking for a collaborating professor with his or her own group of reasonably computer literate students. Later on we will furnish concrete internet addresses where such Lists can be found and where more than ample information on details can be found.

4．The fourth step is to learn that it is both easy and free of charge (visit egroups.com for details) to establish your very own private Discussion List, one that is open only to you and your students and your collaborator and his or her students. Once your own List is established and you have made careful plans with the collaborating professor of your choice—this can of course be a fellow professor in Japan, one in the West, or one in a country with native speakers of your target language—then you are ready to offer a rich fare of discussions on topics of your choice. These discussions will be joined by both the professors and their students, at whatever level of linguistic skill that the teachers decide is proper. The problem, you will discover, is not finding a teaching partner and his or her students, but finding precisely the right one, one who wishes to do the same things as you.

5．The fifth and final step is a good deal more difficult, and may not seem to have anything to do with e-mail. In spite of its difficulty, it is still well within the range of any busy teacher: constructing a Homepage and posting it on the web. Both Netscape Navigator and Outlook Express—as well as various other less-known sources—offer an easy way to make Homepages, one replete with text, pictures, and a multitude of links to other sites. Homepages created by you, and those by your collaborating professor, will bring life to your keypal communication and to your own Discussion List. Here, of course, is where it becomes deeply interconnected with the use of e-mail: its most creative form. A good Homepage for an individual class will contain both interesting photographs and relevant information about the country, city, and unique individual university of each class, as well as introducing each of the students and professors to one another by means of individual pictures and brief biographies. To accomplish all this requires only the use of a digital camera (which every university computer center today is bound to have) and a good deal of effort in constructing and polishing the final version of the Homepage. Then a genuinely creative use of e-mail, especially via Discussion Lists, can begin.

This collaborative use of the Homepage is but one aspect of a class or course's Homepage. These cyber-pages can be changed every day if necessary. Thus they can also serve as an excellent way to keep one's own students informed of everything from homework assignments, to grades, to out-of-class assignments for searching the web.

That is all there is to it. But, as you may have guessed, all this is not quite as simple as it sounds. So, as an aid in the process, we will now briefly describe in some concrete detail how the teacher goes about actually employing the five steps or modes of e-mail use.

II. A More Extensive Elaboration on Concrete Ways and Means of Mounting the Golden Staircase

Having already introduced a step-by-step method for leading students towards the confident and informed use of the foreign language internet and e-mail for establishing communication links with students in other countries to enrich language acquisition, I would like now to turn to more detailed elaboration of techniques, and to some of the problems that may be encountered along the way:

1. Regarding E-mail Use and the Barriers that May Stand in the Way of Getting Started:

The basics of acquiring an e-mail account and learning to use it to correspond with non-natives in a foreign language may sound easy, and they are. But the psychological barriers to actually beginning to do these things can be very great. The truth of this proposition is obvious when one begins to sound out the actual percentages of teachers of foreign language who send e-mail in the language they teach. I know I am still very reluctant to send e-mail in Japanese, though I have broken through that difficult barrier and send messages to friends, colleagues and others, not only in Japanese, but in French, German and Italian as well. I must confess, though, that I do so only with more than a little trepidation. If such is the case for this professor—with over thirty-five years experience in the university classroom—one can imagine the psychological barriers, not just for freshman students but for most teachers of foreign languages as well. Perhaps nothing in this essay is more important than the undeniable fact that most language teachers, even if they themselves write e-mail to native speakers in the foreign language they teach, do not believe that it is feasible to teach their freshman students to do this. It is my intent to convince them that, in this respect, they may err.

Knowing why this is true is of utmost importance here, because it involves both knowing and understanding the fear our students feel, and finding a manner of leading them to realize that the fear is groundless. We, and *a fortiori* our students, are afraid because we are ashamed. We know we ourselves are prone to making many mistakes. Our own possible imperfections in the language we are teaching are a secret many of us are loath to reveal. But the fact is that all teachers of foreign language, to one extent or another, have the same problem. Native speaking teachers as well are all too familiar with the problem, and therefore they never expect perfection from those fearless teachers, much less from

students, who dare to make a few mistakes. The process of leading their students into the wonderful world of international understanding via communication in a foreign language is too important for us to give in to such fears.

It is true, of course, that most teachers of a foreign language in Japan today have achieved an admirably high level of proficiency. But having the courage to put one's proficiency and expertise to the test by entering into collaborative programs with other teachers of the same language—not to mention with native speaking teachers—is courage indeed! Nevertheless, this is a kind of bravery that has come to be a necessity today, and its rewards, to the teacher and the students, are very great. One takes the time to use the language with as much care and accuracy as possible. The result is a giant leap forward in language proficiency, both for teacher and students.

So when it comes time to asking freshmen students to make this same possibly terrifying leap into a new world—as I did only a few weeks ago—the teacher should be personally aware of what he or she is doing. The present effort is to convince teachers that it is not only reasonable but also extremely important to take freshmen and others by the hand and show them that in fact they can—and really must—do this, each on his or her own level.

Many books and articles in professional journals in print or on the web have described step-by-step how one goes from getting connected to a server to actually sending and receiving e-mail, as well as finding and utilizing valuable educational web-sites. Whether the computer's operating system is in Chinese, Japanese or English, the process for carrying out these basic e-mail functions is essentially the same. It is not difficult to install software on any one of these operating systems, thus enabling one to send e-mail in a foreign language whose basic characters are totally different from local ones—whether the characters used are Roman letters, Korean or Japanese syllabaries, Chinese characters, Cyrillic or Arabic script. The internet is amazingly international. Almost anything is not only possible, but even relatively easy. What one does not know about any one of these basics can be easily learned by contacting colleagues who have already done them, and/or one or two trips to a university computer room for information.

It is of course even easier to access the internet in almost any written language in the world. All one needs is to type the address out in Roman letters. The usual formula for most internet addresses begins with, "http://www," and even this formula can usually be omitted. "URL's"—Uniform Resource Locators, meaning the location and address of a source of information on the internet anywhere in the world—end in "de" for sites in Germany, in "jp" for ones in Japan, and so on. Visit one French site and you are likely to

find on that site links to other French sites that can be accessed by a simple click of the mouse. And at these, one will find still other sites, so that, in a single sitting, one can find oneself in the near-infinite world of the French—or any other language—internet. With just these well-known facts in mind, and the knowledge that it is already rare for a Japanese student to not be already "on-line" via his or her *keitai denwa*, is there any good reason for not incorporating an appropriate use of e-mail into any foreign language class?

2. The Best E-mail Handbook for the Language Teacher and Learner—and TESL:

Probably the best short book which can lead the professor and/or the student through the necessary steps towards use of international e-mail and the internet is *Internet for English Teaching* by Mark Warschauer, Heidi Shetzer and Christine Meloni, published by TESOL in the year 2000. This is an improved and expanded version of an earlier work by Warschauer alone called *E-mail for English Teaching* (1995). In its less than 200 pages, the new book rapidly takes the teacher through creative ways of using e-mail in a self-contained classroom—between student and student as well as student and teacher. Then it goes into the much more intricate, but still quite easily usable discussion of the cross-cultural uses of e-mail exchanges of many kinds between people of foreign countries, both fellow learners of the target language and native speakers of that language. The key to beginning this process, for English students at least, is the Student Lists, to be discussed below. In addition to the ten separate Discussion Lists for students, there is also a very valuable Discussion List for teachers—the TCHR-SL—as well.

The book goes on to describe the many possibilities of keypal exchange and collaboration, both between relatively independent students as well as more structured cooperation between matched classes and teachers in two, or even more, different countries. It continues by describing how teachers can establish their own private Discussion Groups, and also many other possibilities which I have not enumerated above.

For example teachers can establish their own Web-Board, that is, a cyber-space Bulletin Board, where any student, or other person, can post any message about an acceptable topic, and receive answers or begin debates on any subject of genuine interest. A number of such Web-Boards already exist, and they can be used by any teacher or class. Then there are the almost infinite possibilities offered by Chat Rooms, where students can enter into any of almost numberless discussions going on, precisely on the subject which the individual student finds most interesting. Chatting can also easily be carried on between two individuals. All they have to do is establish a time agreeable to both parties and use easily

available free software to enter into a back-and-forth discussion. An alternative is a chat between two whole classes, including both students and their teachers. But that can easily become too cumbersome. Small groups are more effective. Even tele-conferencing is possible. In this advanced setting for high level students, a small group of students and their teachers actually see and hear their foreign collaborators live. But this requires a speed of transmission which most Japanese universities do not yet have.

Finally, this remarkable book introduces the reader to a number of other major internet resources for use by the language teacher. I will mention only a few of the ones I like, and allow the reader to check out the others, and decide which is best fitted for his or her own use.

Dave's ESL Cafe is no doubt one of the most inventive of sites for teachers and their students of English. Simply go to http://www.eslcafe.com. Among the twenty-two sub-pages you can click on, you will find a rather vast array of serious subjects such as Pronunciation Power, Phrasal Verbs, Keypals, Chatting and Discussion List possibilities, as well as lots of fun and games and a complete spectrum of possibilities for personal contact with both teachers and students.

Another worthwhile site listed is the http://www.egroup.yahoo.com. This is a very important site for a professor, his or her students and collaborative teachers and students in other countries, as will be described below. Then there is schMOOze University (http://schmooze.hunter.cuny.edu:8888/). There are also valuable descriptions of a large number of extraordinarily successful ongoing collaborative projects between two or more universities around the world. These descriptions are excellent in that they give the teacher a glimpse of the incredible variety of possibilities available to both language teachers and students via e-mail and the internet. But these sites are only the tip of a huge iceberg which is growing every day, and unless teachers prepare freshmen by teaching the rudimentary skills, such marvelous collaborative programs may remain forever beyond the reach of even one's best students.

It is significant that the publisher of both this book and its predecessor is TESOL, or Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc., a professional organization founded in 1964. It is not to be confused with another very important organization, TESL (Teacher of English as a Second Language), which also figures prominently in the book under discussion, especially its Discussion List, TESL-L. This list has in fact rapidly become a *sine qua non* for using the internet and e-mail for foreign language teaching, at least for the teaching of English. To join the TESL Discussion List, simply send a message

to, Listserv@cunyvm.cuny.edu and, leaving the Subject line blank, write in the Message Box, "sub TESL-L," followed by your first name and your family name, without the quotation marks (" "). This subscription and others like it will open up a whole panorama of subsidiary Lists and other services with almost limitless information on every aspect of teaching English as a second language.

Since the book itself is often hard to get in bookstores, one should order it directly from TESOL at 1600 Cameron Street, Suite #300, Alexandra, Virginia 22314, U.S.A. To find TESOL and other language learning and teaching sites on line, go to http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/links/. Here you will find an incredible array of links to over fifty sites on every aspect of language teaching.

The TESL-L is, of course, not the only major organization or professional Discussion List, for either English or other languages. In Japan there is JALT, or Japan Association of Language Teachers which one can access at http://www.jalt.org/newindex.html, and of course there are numerous other excellent organizations that contribute greatly to the study and promulgation of the latest theories, research and techniques for the teaching of all of the major languages being studied and taught throughout the world. But in terms of its size, scope and the diversity of its programs, the TESL-L seems to be in a class by itself, and it contains much information that is very helpful to teachers of other languages as well. This will become more apparent when we look at its web-page and the other multi-faceted locations in the world of cyber-space, which its web-page provides. Although *Internet for English Teaching* is primarily for English teachers, it provides valuable information on getting in touch with teachers of other languages and so launching collaborative programs of student e-mail exchange and/or "keypals" (pp.39-44).

Any teacher of the major Western languages can find a perpetual list of teachers desiring keypals and more substantial collaboration between their students and such a teacher. The International E-mail Classrooms Connections organization (http://www.teachng.com/iecc/) is by far the best place to search for any kind of collaborative program with a professor and his or her class for any European language. The first step is to join their Discussion List. To do this simply send an e-mail with no Subject-heading to IECC-request-@stolaf.edu and in the Message Box write one word, "subscribe," or simply "sub" (without the quotations marks) followed by your name. Send this message from your university address, so that it is known that you are a *bona fide* university teacher.

There are many sources for acquiring keypals for your students, and most of them offer the advantage of making it possible for the student to leap out of a monolingual, mono-

cultural world "in a single bound." However, I would *not* recommend that the language teacher turn to them for a first or even primary starting point. In fact, although they are all good, I would recommend that students not be introduced to these sites until they have cut their foreign-language-e-mail teeth, so to speak, in a more limited, controlled and step-by-step manner. Once matured in the wonderful world of foreign language e-mail, students should be encouraged to reap the rewards of their new internationalization by freely visiting such e-mail sources for keypals and Discussion Lists. Teachers should always be given a salutary warning, however: unmonitored sites where keypals and Discussion Lists may be available can be either very unsavory or even dangerous in various ways. The ones I have recommended, and many many others, are monitored and safe.

Warschauer *et al's Internet for English Teaching* also gives the following list of safe, monitored, education-oriented freelance sources for keypals, either for individual students or for whole classes. Most of these are for English only, but several offer opportunities for, or links to, other European languages as well:

- *E-pals.com* Classroom Exchange. (http://www.epals.com/ offers individual penpals from around the World, not only English but French, Spanish, German, Portugese and Japanese as well.
- *Englishtown* (http://www.englishtown.com) has a keypal club for individual English learners.
- At *Keypals Club* students can find and correspond with keypal students from around the world in many languages (http://www.teaching.com/keypals/).
- *Linguistic Funland* (http://www.linguistic-funland.com) lists ESL teachers looking for penpals. They will also list your own class and desired kind of collaboration.
- *Tower of English* (http://members.tripod.com/-towerofenglish) lists individual English learner keypals. (p.39).

Since this list is only the tip of the iceberg, no teacher should worry about the constant availability of foreign keypals. Many of these sites include services for languages other than English, but for teachers of less common languages, using one of the search engines in the target language should put one in touch with a wealth of academic keypal sources for almost any language. There is no doubt therefore that *Internet for English Teaching* is an truly necessary *vade mecum* for the ESL teacher at least, and much help for teachers of other foreign languages as well.

3. How to Actually Introduce the Student to Foreign Language E-mail and its World:

But we have pulled ahead of ourselves. Now we must draw back and suggest a simple one-two-three process for leading Japanese university students on any grade level to take the momentous, and often terrifying step, of writing and sending his or her own first foreign language e-mail. It's simple, really. No student in a university is incapable of doing it.

The first step, of course, is to have each student get his or her own *academic* e-mail address from his or her own university. As we have already noted several times, very many already have private e-mail addresses, and these can be used for many of the purposes of foreign language teaching. However, it is very important that students also have an address from their own particular university. Why? Because some steps along the way can only be taken *through* a bona fide university teacher—part-time or full-time—*for* a *bona fide* student. No one without an academic e-mail address, for example, is allowed to join the Student Discussion Lists. Joining these Lists, or something like them, is a very important beginning step to nurturing the student totally lacking in confidence along the way to comfortable use of foreign language e-mail and finally to actually sending messages to real live human beings and to receiving them in return.

We must be honest. Not every student will, at the end of the course, find using his or her foreign language e-mail skills to be the means to leap beyond cultural, national and linguistic isolation and fall in love with warm genuine communication with someone living in a different world. But please do not doubt this: if properly initiated, most of the students will in fact—to one degree or another—have at least a good taste of precisely this world and this mind-opening experience.

Such a process, in order to really flower into comfortable international communication, will take most students more than a semester, probably more than one year. But if and when it does happen, they will have accomplished something that, until now, less than five percent of Japanese students *ever* accomplished. Like the small percent of those who actually travel extensively abroad, they will reach the ultimate goal, the Valhalla of every foreign language course: seeing the beauty of other peoples and their cultures. They will see and feel firsthand that their own culture is but one of many rich and friendly cultures. In other words, they will take the first steps towards becoming international people. They will begin to "feel at home" in communicating with "foreigners" in a "foreign language." Unconsciously they will become aware that the word "foreigner" is itself a serious misnomer. They will realize the truth of what, 2000 years ago, Tacitus said: "*Nihil humanum mihi alienum puto.*" "I believe that nothing which is human is foreign to me."

Shepherding our students into entering into the New World of using a foreign language to communicate directly with people of other countries, languages and cultures may well completely surpass in importance merely the learning of a foreign language. It may literally change the world of our grandchildren. It is difficult to believe—though alas sometimes it happens—that anyone who speaks on intimate terms with an individual of a different tongue and culture can really be convinced that such a person is worthy of anything less than fully human treatment. In other words, it is no exaggeration to say that the tools offered by the internet and e-mail can lift foreign language teaching and learning to a new level for most students. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that it can change the world. Of course foreign language teaching has always had this internationalization as its goal. But until the age of cyber-space, the plain fact is that only a relatively small percentage of university students of a foreign language had ever actually succeeded in really leaving the comforting nest of their own narrow language-based world. Today, e-mail, Homepages, and Discussion Lists can lift language learning to what it always was at its best: the fundamental reformation of the individual into a citizen, not of a nation, but of the world.

Now, after such a lofty, but not purely fanciful, flight, let us return to the hard earth of ways and means. As I have said before, even freshman students can *use* a foreign language to communicate with other human beings. But once the student has his or her own university e-mail address, where does the teacher begin? Once again, the procedure is as simple as one-two-three: 1) the class is taken to a computer room and each student is given what may or may not be his or her first hands-on feel of a computer, keyboard, mouse, word-processor, and e-mail software. Within a single 90 minute period, a freshman class can be taught to turn the computers on and off, click on the e-mail software, write the teacher's e-mail address on the first line, add name, class and section on the Subject line, and in the Message Box compose a few sentences, in the proper letter form of the target language, a message to the teacher. Each student can then be helped to actually send the message, and the following week can learn to download the teacher's brief answer, and then reply to the teacher's answer. Magic! But still, for most, unconvincing! Still unreal, still artificial, still relatively meaningless! At the risk of belaboring the obvious, allow me to spell out in detail how, in my opinion, things should proceed from this point.

The next step is to have each student do the same thing for homework. That is, he or she goes to the computer room alone—or perhaps uses a personal *keitai denwa*. The machine is turned on, the e-mail software is opened and a new message is composed in proper form

and sent. But this time, the message is sent to a fellow student partner whose name and e-mail address he or she has received in class. Then on the CC or Copy line the teacher's name and address are written. One more easy step has been taken. Of course both partners answer each other's message and send off a copy to the teacher.

Grammar and the niceties of the language are relatively unimportant at this stage. The fact is that I have found that composing and sending e-mail to *real, living* persons is perhaps the best mode of teaching the student to take great care with all the fine points of the language.

Vocabulary, tense and the like for only a four or five line message are within the reach of every freshman, with the aid of only a dictionary at most. Once a message is composed and sent and his or her partner's message is received. answered and a copy sent to the teacher, the student has had a solo flight and can now take wings.

All the messages from each student are carefully placed in individual folders created by the teacher on his/her computer. These folders can be created on *Outlook Express* or other e-mail software. In these folders—each class should have a main folder, with each student having his or her own private sub-folder—the teacher stores the messages of every student of every class. The folder for each student should have the student's name and e-mail number as its title. At the end of the semester and of the year, the sum of all the many kinds of messages constitutes a significant percentage of his or her final grade. But since this e-mail part of the course is only a relatively minor part of the course in Communication, Rapid Reading or Comparative Culture, the e-mail portion of the grade is also a relatively minor portion of the final grade.

When the first message comes in from another student, first a brief answer—a line or two is fine—is immediately sent to the student by the teacher, using the "Reply" function. Then the student should be asked to make a brief reply to this reply. In this way, with the sending of only two very brief messages, and the receiving of one from the teacher, the student has been taken through the whole gamut of sending and receiving foreign language e-mail. Then when the exchange of e-mails by paired students are written, replied to and copies sent to the teachers, each student is close to "free flight."

The student's messages, when received by the teacher, are simply dragged over from the "In-box" to the student's folder and dropped there. The whole process of receiving, very briefly answering and then filing one student's message can easily be done in less than one minute. If a teacher asks each student, of say three different classes, to write at least two short messages, the whole process of answering and filing each student's homework in the

permanent folder file should take little more than an hour or two. But the following should be taught *unfailingly* from the beginning: each student must put his or her name and class title on the "Subject" line. That way, even before it is opened, the teacher knows into which folder it is to be dragged and dropped.

With this introductory series of steps, the hard part is over. The next steps require no answers from the teacher, just dragging and dropping of various kinds of student messages into their folders, where they will stay until time for final grades. The final part of step one requires one more trip to the computer room will be necessary. But this third trip can be made during the third month of the course and it can be the final trip of the semester. The other classes can be devoted to the main subject of the course, whatever that may be. This final trip to the computer room—carefully scheduled and reserved in advance—involves helping the students to join the Student Discussion Lists.

4. The "Student List" or SL Project:

When a student becomes a member of one or more of these SL's, he or she will immediately be in touch with hundreds of students of English as a foreign language in many countries from around the world. These SL's are carefully constructed so as to begin with novices and then advance to much higher levels. Everyone, including the teacher, must begin by joining the Intro-List. After a week or two on the Intro-SL, the student can then put his/her Intro-SL membership on "no-mail" and subscribe to ever more advanced, and more interesting, but still quite simple, SL's. The Chat-SL is the next step for less advanced beginners, the Discuss-SL is for slightly more advanced beginners. There are some eight other more specialized Lists, such as the Sports-SL, the Music-SL, the Movie-SL, the Event-SL and others. In each of these Discussion Lists, each student receives almost daily messages from around the world. The student may or may not want to read all of the fifty -odd messages he or she receives in a week. Reading ten or so messages may suffice. Once read, a carefully worded written reply should be sent to the messages he or she finds to be of personal interest.

The student may also choose to send personal messages directly to an individual student, using the sender's personal e-mail address that always appears on the message. The student will know of course that all fellow members of the group are also beginners in the art of real communication in English as a foreign language. So the professor will give coaching on how to write *interesting* messages, from five to ten lines long, so as to elicit an *interesting* response. It should always be remembered that these Student Lists are NOT

for experts in the target language but for beginners. Yet they are real exchanges between real students in many countries. And most importantly, they provide each student with the experience he or she needs to confidently enter into the more elaborate and more personal collaboration between that class and the students of another class in another country.

Joining the Students Lists is extremely easy. All you have to do is simply to go to http://www.latrobe.edu.au/www/education/sl/sl.html via the browser. There you will be told how to gain approval for your students to take part in the Student Lists. Then you will send another message to Kyoto Sangyo University's Tom Robb (trobb@cc.kyoto-su.ac.jp), the man who is one of the three founders and operators of this unique service. In your message give Professor Robb the number of students, their level and the name of their university. He will send you approval to allow your students to join the Student Lists. The teacher is also enrolled in the TCHR-SL and will get mail telling how he or she can solicit advice from other teachers whose students are also participating.

NOTE WELL! Be sure to use an address connected with your university when you write for approval, since only university students are allowed on the Student Lists. As mentioned above, within a day or two after applying to Professor Robb, the applying teacher will receive permission to have his or her students enroll themselves in the Student Lists. The next step is to take the students to the computer room and lead them all through a very simple procedure for joining the Intro-SL, the first and necessary step towards joining any of the others. At that time you will help your students: a) download a blank e-message and address it to listserv@latrobe. edu. au, and b) leave the Subject line blank, and in the Message Box write, "sub Intro-SL Keiko Tanizawa" (without the quotation marks). Have each student write his or her own first and last name on the same line as the "sub" or subscription request.

The students will almost immediately receive, in their own university e-mail mailboxes, a notice of Student List membership, along with about two pages of directions and rules. These directions will tell them: 1) how to send a message *to the list they have joined* (e.g. address the message to: Intro-SL@latrobe.edu.au) and 2) also how to send messages *to the List Controller*. NOTE! These two addresses are different and serve very different functions. The first address is only for sending messages to all the other student members of the List all over the world. The second is for asking the List Controller to perform special services such as temporarily suspending the receipt of all List Messages ("no-mail"). In this case one must simply write, "INTRO-SL nomail" (without the quotation marks), and mail will be stopped till a new message is sent saying "Intro-SL mail". Similarly, one sends

messages to the "listserv" address above in order to "unsubscribe" from a list and to subscribe to another one. Send such messages to listserv@latrobe.edu.au. Put nothing on the Subject line and in the Message Box write, "unsub Intro-SL" (with no quotation marks). In the same message one can unsubscribe from one SL and, on a separate line, subscribe to another.

These Student Lists are, in my opinion, by far the best way to introduce all students to the thrill of seeing one's own message appear on the List where it will be read not only by all fellow students but by hundreds of other English language learners all over the world. Other Discussions Lists, such as those available through Epals.com, also have similar services for students of many different foreign languages, including Japanese as a foreign language. Sooner or later, if the student strives to write interesting messages with clear opinions and/or clear questions, he or she will have the even greater thrill of receiving a personal answer, sent by one student but received by all the members of the List, who found this student's message worthy of an answer. This student is now a new potential cyber-friend, probably in a foreign country. Friendships made in this fashion may last for years, continuing through private conversations using each other's e-mail addresses. Even the unskilled freshman student can experience this pleasure, one that is nothing short of momentous in its possibilities for the student's future practical use of English, for his or her internationalization, and even for future prospects for a good job after graduation.

Students should contribute about one message, of five to ten lines, each week, either in answer to some other student's message or one stating interesting individual information or opinions to all the members of the List. The professor can be an important stimulus by providing for discussion some topic or topics each week and suggesting that each student express his or her own opinion in a message to the List. A good message not only states a fact or opinion but also ask concrete questions on the matter being discussed. This, if well written, begs for a response.

Now, having hopefully made clear both the manner and meaning of joining and using Student Lists and their immense importance as a step to actually using the new language for real communication, it is necessary to point out some of the drawbacks and negative sides as well. First, good students might find the initial messages immature and boring. Secondly, for the two months around the first of April, the messages received are likely to be overwhelmingly from Korea, China or other Japanese universities, with few from Western countries. This is simply because this is the time of year when most Western universities are winding down their academic year, while those in the East are just

beginning. The professor should anticipate this problem and point out that messages from other Japanese universities and other Asian countries can be a valuable way of comparing life and activities at these institutions.

Students should also be told that a majority of messages from Asian universities show how English is an important language for the students of the whole world, and not just for students from America, England, and other countries where it is the native language. Finally, the teacher should remind the students that these SL's are just a way of warming up in the *real* use of English for genuine communication. It should be pointed out that in the second semester students, overseen by their professor, will be paired with students from a single class, in a foreign country, and it is then that far more personal and interesting exchanges will be made, both with an individual keypal and especially through the new and personal Discussion List. Such a List will be set up with only the students' own classmates and professor and the sister class and its professor in another country. Now it is time to talk about these pinnacle opportunities for serious e-mail collaboration which open up wide new vistas or means for superior use and teaching of a foreign language.

5. Effective Use of Keypals, Homepages and Personal Discussion Lists:

a) **Keypals:** Gongluski, Meloni and Brant succinctly state the "pedagogical benefits of E-mail for the language learner. . . . [E]-mail augments what one can do in the classroom, since it provides a venue for meeting and communication in the foreign language outside of the class"(1). The authors reach the real medulla of foreign language e-mail usage when they declare, ". . .it is indispensable to encourage FL learners to practice communication with each other, in spite of their formally imperfect language, in unscripted, unrehearsed contexts. Only in this way will students learn how to function in the language as they will eventually need to do in the foreign culture" (11). Using e-mail to establish a personal, one-to-one correspondence between two students can take many forms, and each one has its own advantages—and disadvantages. The first exchange of e-mail in a foreign language should be, as I have already pointed out, between the professor and each individual student. The next logical and easy step is to assign pairs of students in the same class to write a few messages to each other as "keypals."

Now let us begin to discuss the important and interesting step of initiating a keypal program with students of another class, in another school, and in a foreign country. Actually, there are many different ways to either assign keypals to students or to show them where they can find their own. They can do this by visiting various internet sites such

as Dave's ESL Café, or many "Bulletin Board" sites, where they can answer letters posted, and where they can strike up a keypal relationship.

The much more interesting and fruitful way, however, is to find a collaborating teacher and class by joining the IECC-HE List. There, one can advertise for and find the right teacher with the right number of students to be one's collaborator. It will then be from that teacher's students that keypals will be assigned. But this major step forward may very well be reserved for the second semester. Taking the student through the basics described above, including the Student Lists, will usually be more than enough for a semester.

Already in the first semester the teacher should have made use of the IECC-HE List to find a counterpart in a foreign country who wishes to have his or her students enter into a keypal relationship. Ideally, both teachers should send all the names and e-mail addresses of their students to each other. But before actual keypals are assigned, the two teachers should have carefully planned a whole program of cooperation, of which keypal exchange would be only one integral part.

Once each student has been assigned a keypal, the first genuine person-to-person use of the foreign language to communicate with another individual of a differing culture can and should begin. Each keypal should be required to send at least one letter a week to his or her keypal. Since usually the corresponding class and keypal are focused on acquisition of the same foreign language, neither the Japanese student nor the paired South American, Greek or Italian student is likely to have a great deal of either skill or confidence in using the target language. Inevitably the result is often that, after one message or two, there is silence on one end of the link.

This inevitable problem should be foreseen by the teachers and proper remedies agreed upon. For example, when one week passes without a reply from a keypal, this should immediately be reported to the delinquent student's teacher. Students should all be made aware that they are dealing with another fallible human being. It should be pointed out that it is just as impolite and callous to fail to answer a keypal's message—however uninteresting or almost illegible—as it is to fail to answer someone's "hello" when passing an acquaintance on the street or on campus. If both teachers stay alert, however, this problem can be minimized and not only are embarrassments avoided, but many wonderful relationships may bloom. Imperceptibly the student's confidence, excitement and—incredibly perhaps—his or her quality and accuracy in using the foreign language will have made great strides.

b) **Homepages:** What if, as soon as one's student is assigned a keypal from a foreign

country, that keypal's photo and brief biography were to appear instantly, as if by magic, on the internet, accompanied by photos, biographical sketches and e-mail addresses of all the other students as well, plus pictures and brief descriptions of the student's city, university campus and foreign language professor? Surely such immediacy of information plus the added attraction of pictures would stimulate the interest and curiosity of one's students. Learning to use this extremely valuable aid to foreign language e-mail communication is not nearly as difficult as it might appear.

Helping students to create their own Homepages is also an extremely useful endeavor for more advanced classes. Students of two classes in two countries can vastly expand the extent of their collaboration via the creation of such simple individual Homepages. In their article (39-46) in CALLING ASIA (Lewis, ed. 2000), Christiana Gitsaki and Richard Taylor take the reader through the rudiments of how this can be done in an amazingly short time.

Teacher Homepages can serve many functions, including that of being an advertising medium for prospective collaborators in many countries. Michael Furmanovsky of Ryukoku University, in his article (235-238) in the same conference proceedings, CALLING ASIA, describes the vital role that individual language teachers' Homepages can play in finding collaborators, developing e-mail programs and actually carrying out very exciting collaboration between students of the same language in different countries. HTML (Hypertext Markup Language), the relatively simple language of all that appears on the internet, is not as difficult to learn and use as one might imagine. As a matter of fact, the following bare -bones set of HTML commands are all that is absolutely needed. At the head of every Homepage, the HTML must begin with the following three commands, which every browser understands, and every page on the whole internet contains:

〈HTML〉

〈HEAD〉 (A Head might be "My Very Own Homepage"). This will not appear inside the page but at the top line.

〈TITLE〉 ("My Kandai English Class").

〈/TITLE〉 (A "/" always tells the browser that this is the end or finish of whatever follows it).

〈/HEAD〉

〈BODY〉 (Just as it implies, here begins the real meat of the Page. It can go one for as many pages as the author wishes).

〈/BODY〉

〈/HTML〉

Of course these tags are just the basics. One will need tags for paragraph breaks, letter size, colors, photos, and much, much more. A really professional Homepage requires many hours, days, and weeks of patient work to produce and polish. But a simple Homepage is within the reach of almost anyone. For a step-by-step guide to constructing a Homepage, go to Annabella's HTML Help, at http://www.geocities.com/~annabella/html. The good news is that both the Netscape Browser and its major competitor, Microsoft Explorer, offer software that will actually almost write your Homepage for you. But there are drawbacks, that cannot be explained here, to taking this shortcut.

Once your Homepage is put together, replete with photos of each student accompanied by a brief biographical sketch, plus pictures of the student's campus, city and perhaps picturesque highlights of his or her country's scenic or architectural wonders and its citizenry, you are ready to contact your university's server, or to ask a computer-adept friend to help you mount your first Homepage on the university's server, and hence on to the internet itself . Now both you and your class are readily available to literally anyone in the cyber-world. And of course your collaborating teacher and class will have their own Homepage as well.

This step, though not absolutely necessary, is an incredibly valuable aid towards making your collaboration with the teacher and class you have chosen. All of a sudden the collaboration becomes vivid, vibrant and exciting for both your students and those of your sister class. And with your two Homepages easily accessible to both your own and your fellow professor's students, the world of keypals can be greatly expanded and solidified. Now in addition to the student's assigned keypal—usually chosen in a willy-nilly fashion and so one who might turn out to be less than perfectly matched in language ability, interests, and lifestyle—your student can be encouraged to search out other interesting e-mail companions. Students should at this time be encouraged to write to anyone who seems to share common enthusiasms and interests. Thus, the required weekly e-mails, with copies submitted to the professor, can be a much more stimulating and profitable exercise for the student. But still the basic requirement of one letter or more per week to the original keypal should remain in place.

c) **The Private Discussion List:** Now we come to the summit of the e-mail mountain, the Personal Discussion List. Such a list can be set up (free of charge!) between you and your sister class and fellow teacher. It is not at all difficult to achieve. Simply go to http://www.groups.yahoo.com and follow the simple instructions as to how you can set up your discussion group. You and your partner professor will be given a space where you can

subscribe the names and e-mail addresses of yourselves and of all your students. You will give your group a name you have created (one of my Discussions Lists for Kansai University was called KU-MU, for "Kansai University-Marshall University"), declare that List is closed to outsiders, and you are in business. Now comes the opportunity for a multitude of creative collaborative endeavors. But such cooperation must be preceded and accompanied by careful planning and coordination between the two teachers. The range of possibilities is almost infinite. Probably, for a relatively low-level group of students of a given foreign language, the teachers would be well advised not to get too ambitious too quickly.

Each professor might lead off with a one-page message describing the country, culture and/or customs of the students in the class. Then both teachers' students would be instruct- ed to write individual supplemental messages on the same theme. This of course will trigger a host of questions and comments by members of the sister class. One of my collaborators was a teacher at a university in Greece. My own students had many questions and comments on her description. The same was true for our own contributions for the Greek students. Those students' responses were lively, with questions and comments on what they had read about Japan, about our students, about Kansai University, about students' study and about university life and the campus itself.

Now the real discussion is about to be launched. Students can address their individual messages and comments to the sister school students who raise the most intriguing issues or ask the most interesting questions. Other students will submit e-mail questions or offer disagreements to their fellow keypals' opinions. I found, in my own experience of using Discussion Lists, that the students were amazingly polite and considerate with one another and that many were often genuinely excited and appreciative of the new opportunities for international communication which were suddenly open to them. Many students wrote me unsolicited letters of appreciation, thanking me for opening up a whole new enriching world of communication possibilities and friendships for them.

Now it is time to raise the curtain just a little on some of the myriad forms which such e-mail and Discussion Lists can take. Many experts have written about cooperative projects of many types. One good example is that of Katherine Isabella and Jonathan Reinhardt described in an article in the book, *CALL Environments: Research, Practice and Critical Issues* (Egbert, Joy and Hanson-Smith, Elizabeth, 45-53). These two teachers go into detail describing a course that takes the skills we are discussing to a very high level. They called the course AISEI (Applied Information Science and Environmental Issues). It

involved a close collaborative study carried on between one whole Japanese university (Miyazaki International College) and other foreign universities on environmental questions. For example, "Students conducted research and collected data on paper use within the college community, later sharing their findings via e-mail with ESL students in an intensive English program in the United States" (48). This, of course is but a small portion of the whole project.

Another good example is far less complicated, but perhaps more impressive in that it involves an on-going collaboration between two schools over several years. In *Virtual Connections*, (Warschauer, 1995) Professor Rick Kern (131-133) describes an on-going collaboration between French language students at one of the United States' best universities, the University of California at Berkeley, and the Lycee Frederic Mistral in Fresnes, France. Professor Kern contacted the editor-organizer of a book published by students at the French high school entitled, *L'Histoire, Mon Histoire*. He suggested an e-mail collaboration with her students on the subject of history in general and the personal histories of the students on both sides of the Atlantic, both of whose backgrounds were very international. "I contacted Madame Contrapois and proposed an e-mail exchange between the high school students and my French students at Berkeley. Like her students, mine were of diverse backgrounds and origins. How might their family experiences of immigration and acculturation be similar? How might they be different?" (131). The project has grown to involve several departments at Berkeley and two classes at the French high school. It will continue for some years.

On a less exotic level, one of the most common variants of the cultural exchange described above is to assign teams of students to search the internet for information on a given subject of mutual interest—anything from global warming, to international competitive sports such as World Cup Soccer, golf or tennis, to problems such as worldwide drug abuse, AIDS, domestic, school or street violence or perhaps some problem quite relevant to their own age group, such as teenage or unwanted pregnancy. The subject possibilities are almost limitless. Three or four students from each participating university can collaborate via private off-List e-mail concerning sources they have located on the subject. Of course, books as well as internet sites could be used, but only internet sites are likely to be available to all members of the team.

Once the students have pooled their information, they collaborate in the writing of a very short description of their findings and send it to the Discussion List. This report should be replete with the URL's or addresses of the major internet sites they found especially useful,

so that all the other students can visit these sites as well if they so wish. All member of the List are invited to send their comments or questions.

Each student can be a member of one such collaboration group. Each group can report its findings in a one-page report to the whole List. Then every student should be invited to send his or her comments and opinions or questions to the whole group. It would be wise for the teacher to require that every student send one such comment to at least one of the group reports.

Strictly speaking, such collaborative efforts need not involve a private Discussion List. Messages can be sent to every member of the group by simply adding everyone's name and address in a class to the "CC" or copy line. Each response can be done the same way. But this is clumsy, so Discussion Lists and class Homepages are the royal road for such collaborative efforts. It is at this point that two teachers are ready for an almost limitless variety of creative collaborative projects. Literature or Rapid Reading classes in two different parts of the world can discuss individual works. Their students on different sides of the world in completely different cultures can work together to send reports on an individual work to the Group and have them discuss it. Teachers can send "trigger" messages to both student groups for discussion. Whether the foreign language class is Composition or Communication, a truly rich and enriching program can be elaborated to fit the exact needs and preferences of both teachers and their students.

Some classes may center around a single international topic. A professor may find a partner, as I did, to engage in cross-cultural discussion. Our cross-cultural ponderings were focused on the theme of "Love, Marriage, and the Family." Other classes have joined successfully in the *virtual* exploration of world famous cities such as Tokyo, New York, Montreal, Paris, Berlin, Rio de Janeros, Athens, Moscow or Beijing, since so many students today take an active interest and joy in travel.

Another possibility pregnant with potential is to collaborate with students from more than one university, and in more than one country, in one Discussion List. Imagine having classes and professors from China or Korea join already engaged classes from Japan, the U.S.A. and Europe. With skill and ingenuity, committed and creative teachers can—and often have, as Warschauer tells us—produce truly amazing results which are extremely valuable in cultivating the internationalization of their foreign language students.

Now we have covered, however briefly and sketchily, the whole gamut of major modes for using e-mail and the internet to transform foreign language study from dull, plodding memorization and application of grammatical rules and vocabulary into a dynamic *use* of

that language which brings together students of many lands in the exchange of information, and more importantly still, in the transcending of cultural and national boundaries to make warm and genuinely personal friendships. As has been pointed out before, students who employ this process of using e-mail and the internet coupled with a foreign language are precisely the kind of people whom major companies today in almost every land are looking for, not to mention governments who are in need of international expertise and personnel. So there are enormous potential pragmatic benefits for the students as well as educational, social and experiential ones already enumerated previously.

But we still have only scratched the surface of CALL, even of the one CALL area which focuses on e-mail, internet, Homepages and Discussion Lists. I would like to conclude this sketch by becoming very concrete for a brief moment. That is, I would like to list a few of the Homepages which focus on e-mail and the teaching of foreign languages. The list of such sites that I will offer and briefly describe is admittedly a subjective and very limited one. These sites will, however, open the eyes of the teacher to the vast stretches of that part of cyber-space dedicated primarily to the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Some of them are incredibly lengthy and complicated. Several are closely tied to professional language-teaching societies, especially those connected with Japan. Some, however, are more personal. Some may stress the broader reaches of the CALL field, whereas others focus relatively narrowly on keypals, Bulletin Boards, Discussions Lists and collaborative student projects. If the reader can take the time to actually explore them on the internet, however, he or she will get at least a glimpse of a vast world which is beckoning every single teacher of foreign language, offering him or her an opportunity to begin with freshmen and slowly to progress up the ladder to graduate school students in what is fast becoming an absolutely essential tool, not just in teaching foreign languages, but at the same time, teaching even the freshmen to begin *using* their foreign language for the only purpose for which any language exists in the first place: communication and friendship between people.

III. Places to Begin: A Few URL's that Can Open the CALL World Up to You

We have already several times emphasized the fact that the field of Computer Assisted Language Learning, or CALL, is an almost literally infinite field. The number of books, articles—printed and/or available at various sites on-line—and web-sites devoted to this subject run into the thousands, and are being added to every day. Here we are focused on

a relatively small segment of this important, rich and enriching field: the use of e-mail by students and teachers in the day-to-day teaching and learning of any foreign language. Even in this small piece of the CALL cake, there are literally hundreds of books, articles and, particularly, web-sites or Homepages that deserve your careful attention. Its seems like a fitting way to end this brief survey of a only a few of the most important modes of using e-mail in language teaching to list and briefly describe just a handful of the most important resources that are of particular benefit to the teacher.

A. Journals, on-line or in-print: Journals devoted solely to using e-mail and to the whole field of CALL can be subscribed to, either in printed form or on-line. *Computer Assisted Language Learning* is one such journal. It can be subscribed to by accessing http:// www.szp.swets.nl/journals/journals-choice.html. Even better is the purely electronic, TESL-EJ, or Teaching English as a Second Language: The Electronic Journal. Once again Tom Robb figures prominently in both the inception and the operation of this excellent and very professional academic journal. Information on how to subscribe, without cost, to the TESL-EJ can be found at: http://www.kyoto-su.ac.jp/information/tesl-ej/index.html.

B. Some Especially Useful Individual Homepages: Professor Tom Robb has not only personally been involved in the foundation of the Student Lists, but also his own Homepage, called simply "Tom's Page" (http://www.kyoto-su.ac.jp/~trobb/), gathers together a truly amazing amount of information of all kinds concerning the use of the internet and e-mail for the teaching of any foreign language. In the no less than forty sub-pages linked to this Homepage one can, to give a few examples: 1) learn the fine art of intensive reading in a foreign language, both on and off the net, 2) learn from their creator all about the Student Lists, 3) find a list of more that twenty useful web-pages for learning and teaching foreign languages, 4) find the web-pages which will teach one how to make homepages, 5) show how students can be taught to make their own Homepages, 6) learn how to use movies and e-mail to teach a foreign language, 7) learn the fine art of skillfully using many different kinds of search engines, an art necessary for students in different countries and classes collaborating on a common project and 8) read a series of some eleven articles written by Robb for professional journals on the art of using e-mail and the internet for teaching language. And there is lots more. Tom's Page is almost a one-stop shop for learning almost every facet of this vast e-mail and foreign languages subject.

Since the readers of this journal are primarily Japanese, the Homepage of Professor Kenji Kitao of Doshisha University might be especially useful. This is true partially because most of its sub-pages are in both Japanese and English. But the reasons for

recommending it go far beyond that point (which in fact may be a drawback for Japanese students, who would certainly gravitate to the Japanese parts and thus frustrate the very purpose of using the internet for learning a foreign language). Professor Kitao's Homepage (http://ilc2.doshisha.ac.jp/users/kkitao/) has various exciting features. In the fifteen odd sub-pages there is an excellent list of on-line journals concerned with teaching foreign language and his TEFL library of virtual books which are specially chosen as the best for both professors and students to access and read. Also his list of classes and classroom materials, and his Study Groups and Study Abroad sections are full of valuable informa- tion. He works hand in hand with his wife and fellow Doshisha professor, Kathleen Kitao, who also has a wonderful Homepage.

I would like to briefly describe only one more page: lov-e (http://lov-e.com/TOPICS. html), by Robert Seltman. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of Lov-e.com is the thoroughness with which he introduces the teacher and student to the internet itself. In this one section alone, in its thirteen separate linked pages, he leads the reader by the hand to the art of surfing the net, to the basics of creating one's own Homepage, the dangers lurking on the net for both teachers and students (such as viruses, cookies, privacy problems and more). But there is much, much more for both teacher and student. There are also thirteen links devoted to Global Issues that are carefully selected to appeal not only to Japanese students but are excellent treatments of topics which can serve as a very fine source for collaborative study and discussion between a Japanese class and another one in any Eastern or Western country, including countries where English is the native language. These subjects include global warming, waste and recycling, gender issues, peace and conflict, human rights, and many others.

Another major segment of linked pages is one devoted to Disney cartoon movies, from Bambi to Alibaba. These treatments are also excellent material for discussions between collaborating classes. Since these movies are already familiar to most students, and since the language is simple and direct, they make excellent reading as well as excellent sources for discussions between both keypals and collaborating classes.

Last but not least is the section that deals with what Seltman calls Teen Topics: Sex, Violence, Drugs, Love, Music, Current Events and others. One of the most attractive elements of Seltman's page is its highly sophisticated use of all the gimmicks which make internet sites exciting and stimulating: motion of all kinds, flashing signals and signs and much more. These links are all quite simple and short. Hence they are ideal for freshman classes just beginning to get their sea legs on the rough seas of reading and writing in a

foreign language.

Conclusions

We have tried to offer both the reasons and the methods for teachings students to employ e-mail and the internet in a variety of ways in the *genuine* learning of a foreign language. No class in a foreign language is really authentic unless it contributes directly towards having the student actually *use* that language to communicate with both native speakers and with other users of the target language as a means to communicate with people who cannot use the student's native language. This is doubly and triply true today, when international travel, global business, movies, music and television are all saturated with the wonders of peoples of other countries and their many accomplishments. E-mail and the internet are the natural—if not the necessary—mode for raising foreign language teaching and learning to a totally new and exciting level.

So essential has this new resource become that it is my contention that NO student of a foreign language should be deprived of the introduction to e-mail use in the target language, even if it is on a very rudimentary level. As we have seen, this use is simple enough, and exists at every level of language learning, so that the teacher can employ it within the classroom, between teacher and student, as well as between student and student. This can take the form of the simplest sentences, messages of only two or three lines. Even at this level the accomplishment of actually sending and receiving e-mail in a language other than one's own is little short of magical.

But once this easiest of levels has been reached, there is no reason to stop there, and every reason to reach for at least the next level or two: joining Student Lists, and writing to keypals who have the same proficiency as the students themselves. For more advanced students, through the doctoral level, there is literally no limit to the pedagogically superior challenges which e-mail and the internet can offer.

But now, in closing, a few qualifications are in order. First we must admit that the range of universities in Japan is very great—from those who accept students with extremely low English ability to those of a very high order. This is even more true in the case of languages other than English. For the lower half of these universities' students it is not realistic to expect freshmen English students—much less those in other language course—to rise very high on the levels of e-mail accomplishment delineated above. In spite of this fact, however, I personally would insist that even the least accomplished of these freshman English classes

can in fact be taught to become comfortable in the exchange of e-mail messages in the targeted foreign language. This is simply because only the most simple sentences are enough to begin the *real* use of this language to communicate with other language learners, not just in one's own country but in other countries as well.

And if the learning of the targeted language continues for as long as two years, the unique thrill of communicating with both students in many countries and even with native speakers within a carefully prepared context is certainly possible. The resources of the CALL internet have grown so vast that, with a little patient searching, the teacher of almost any level of class can find a teacher in another country who is eager to collaborate.

But a further qualification, already alluded to, must be reiterated. Of course, no class will have 100% of its students eager enough to actually desire to enter into genuine human communication with people of a foreign country—using the "foreign" language of that country! In every university in every country a significant percentage of foreign language students will be interested only in doing the minimum work necessary to fulfill a require-ment, or simply to pass a foreign language course. Nevertheless, it has been my experience over several years that even those students have much to learn from acquiring the ability to compose and send foreign language e-mails to real people, and to receive answers. Once they have acquired the minimum skills, which really requires only a few weeks, even the laggards enjoy getting an answer to a letter that they wrote, even one written under duress. Make no mistake! Foreign language e-mail is not a panacea. Neither will it set all students afire with zeal for international communication and mutual understanding among peoples. By its very nature it is a tool rather than the central object of almost any language course. But it has become a necessary tool, one which cannot be replaced in its uniquely desirable results by any other means.

Of course there are many more advanced resources available on the internet for teaching and learning English than for any other language. I confess my ignorance of e-mail and internet sites for students of languages such as Chinese, Korean and Russian. But I am certain that similar services can be found for these languages as well as for others.

References

Brown, H. Douglas (1994). *Teaching by Principles: An Interative Approach to Language Pedagogy*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall Regents.

Egroups.com. Yahoo Groups. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on March 25, 2001 at http://groups.yahoo.com/local/news.html.

Englishtown Talk to the World. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on March 30, 2001 at http://www.englishtown.com.

E-pals. com Classroom Exchange. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on March 30, at http://www.epals.com/.

Furmanovsky, Michael (1999). Keypals in Intercultural Communication: Using Teacher Homepages to Design an Email Exchange Project. In Paul Lewis (Ed.), *CALLING ASIA: The proceedings of the 4th Annual Jalt CALL SIG Conference*. Kyoto, Japan, 1999, pp. 235 -238. *The Japan Association for Language Teaching*.

Gitsaki, Christina and Taylor, Richard P. (1999). Helping Students Create an English Homepage. In Paul Lewis, (Ed.), *CALLING ASIA: The proceedings of the 4th Annual Jalt CALL SIG Conference*. Kyoto, Japan. *The Japan Association for Language Teaching*.

Gonglewski, Margaret, Meloni, Christine, and Brant, Jocelyne (2001). Using E-mail in Foreign Language Teaching: Rationale and Suggestions. *The Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. VII, No 3. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on March 25, 2001 at http//iteslj.org/Techniques/Meloni-Email.html.

Hunter College, City University of New York, SchMOOze University. Retrieved from World Wide Web on March 17, 2001 at http://schmooze.hunter.cuny.edu:8888/.

International E-Mail Classrooms Connections. Retrieved from World Wide Web on March 23, 2001 at http://www.teachng.com/iecc/.

Isabella, Katherine and Reinhardt, Jonathan (1999). Web Integration: A Model for Task-Based Learning. In Joy Egbert, and Elizebeth Hanson-Smith. *CALL Environments: Research, Practice, and Critical Issues*. Alexander, VA: TESOL.

Japan Association of Language Teaching. Website. Retrieved from the World Wide Web. March 22, 2001 at http://www.jalt.org/newindex.shtml.

Kern, Rick (1995). Class-to-Class Connections. In Mark Warschauer (Ed.) *Virtual Connections: Online Activities & Projects for Networking Language Learners*. Honolulu. University of Hawaii Press: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.

Keypals. com. A segment of Teaching.com. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on March 30, 2001 at http://www.teaching.com/keypals/.

Linguistic Funland. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on March 29, 2001 at http://www.linguistic-funland.com.

Nunan, David (1999). *Language Teaching Methodology: A textbook for teachers*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Ramsden, Annabella. *Annabella's HTML Help*. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on March 25, 2001 at http://www.geocities.com/~annabella/html.

Sperling, *David, Dave's ESL Café*. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on March 17, 2001 at http://www.pacificnet.net./~Sperling/.

Student Lists. Lloyd Holiday and Thomas Robb, owners. Retrieved from World Wide Web on March 24, 2001 at http://www.latrobe.edu.au/www/education/sl.html.

TESL/TEFL/TESOL/ESL/EFL/ESOL Links. Retrieved from the World Wide Web on March 21 at http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/links/.

Tower of English. Retrieved from the world wide Web on March 15 at http://members. tripod.com/-towerofenglish.

Warschauer, Mark. (1994) *E-Mail for English Teaching.* Alexandria VA: TESOL.

Warschauer, Mark, Shetzer, Heid, Ramsden, Annabella. *Annabella's HTML Help.* Retrieved from the World Wide Web on March 25, 2001 at http://www.geocities.com/~annabella/ html.di, and Meloni, Christine (2000). *Internet for English Teaching.* Alexandria VA: TESOL.