Using free Web-based Tools in the LOTE classroom

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The digital version of this presentation with a description and samples of the various tools is available online.

Please go to the following website:
        http://teachertechnology.wikispaces.com

Technology is becoming a very vital part of our lives. In this digital age, we should make use of these technological tools in our classrooms. More and more schools are adopting technology as a resource for teaching. Some tools can be used for instruction and some can be used to assess the knowledge gained by students.

However, we need to face the reality that not every teacher is provided with a technology-equipped classroom. In such cases, teachers will have to find some resources on their own. There are many free web-based tools that are available on the Internet, which can be easily integrated into lessons and are accessible to everyone.

In the foreign language classroom, these tools can be a great asset. Students can use these tools to express themselves in oral or written form in the target language. Teachers can use these tools to create reading and listening activities and can also use them for collaborative activities.

In this workshop, participants will learn how to incorporate technology into language instruction. They will be introduced to some free web-based tools that they can use in their classrooms. Ideas on how to use these technological tools will also be presented. These tools have been successfully implemented in the foreign language classroom.

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Google Apps for Education

GOOGLE APPS EDUCATION EDITION

Google offers educational institutions an education edition of its applications. This edition is free of cost. More and more schools and universities are using these apps, thus saving space on their servers and providing their students and teachers with a platform for collaboration and communication. The education edition includes the following apps:

- Gmail - http://mail.google.com
- Google Calendar - http://calendar.google.com
- Google Docs - http://docs.google.com
  - Docs
  - Spreadsheet
  - Presentation
- Google Talk - www.google.com/talk
- Google Sites - http://www.google.com/sites
- Google Video for Education - http://video.google.com

OTHER GOOGLE APPS

- Google Groups - http://groups.google.com
- Blogger - http://www.blogger.com
- Picasa - http://picasa.google.com
- Google News - http://news.google.com
  - Google Noticias España - http://news.google.com/news?ned=es
  - Google Noticias México - http://news.google.com/news?ned=es_mx
  - Google Actualités France - http://news.google.com/news?ned=fr
  - Google News Italia - http://news.google.com/news?ned=it
  - Google News Deutschland - http://news.google.com/news?ned=de
  - Google News China - http://news.google.com/news?ned=cn
- iGoogle - http://www.google.com/ig
- Google Maps - http://maps.google.com
- Google Earth - http://earth.google.com
- Google Reader - http://www.google.com/reader
- Google SketchUp - http://sketchup.google.com
- Google Translate - http://www.google.com/translate

GOOGLE SEARCH

- Google Web Search - http://www.google.com/
- Google Image Search - http://images.google.com/
- Google LIFE photo archive - http://images.google.com/hosted/life

- [Google Book Search](http://books.google.com/) - http://books.google.com/
- [Custom Search Engine](http://www.google.com/coop/cse/) - http://www.google.com/coop/cse/

Digital Storytelling

Digital Storytelling is a method of telling a story using digital tools. It is interactive and includes one or more multimedia tools.

Digital Storytelling Tools
The following tools are freely available on the Internet and can be used to create digital stories:

VoiceThread: This tool is a great way to combine visual and oral collaborative presentations. Students can describe or explain visual presentations by recording their voices. The voicethread can be embedded in the school or class website.

OurStory: : Create a timeline with photos and words and collaborate with other students.

Mixbook: Create an online book with photos and words.

Tikatok: Another great tool to create a story book about anything. Add photos or images and type your story.

Scrapblog: Create a digital scrapbook or a scrapblog. Add photos and music.

Flip: A tool to create a digital scrapbook.

Digital Storytelling Resources:
The following websites will help you to learn more about digital storytelling:

DigiTales: The Art of Telling Digital Stories

Center for Digital Storytelling

Examples of Digital Storytelling

Educational Uses of Digital Storytelling

Sharing Culture Through Digital Sotryteling

Digital Storytelling

Digital Storytelling: Electronic Portfolio

Podcasting

Click on the link below to learn more about podcasting:
Podcasting in Plain English

Podcasting Tools:
The following tools are available on the Internet and can be used to create podcasts:

Podomatic: A great tool to create podcasts.

Gabcast: With this tool, you can create podcasts and audio blogs by recording your voice using a telephone. You call a toll free number and record. This makes it very convenient to record from anywhere.

Odeo: A great site to find podcasts. It also has tools to create and share podcasts.
Odeo Podcasts for LOTE

Audacity: Although this is not web-based, it is a free tool that can be downloaded. It is a simple open-source tool that can be used to create podcasts.

Poderator : If you have already created a podcast, you can publish it using poderator.

PodcastPeople: This is not a free tool but it is another tool to create podcasts.

Resources on how to create a podcast:

Making a Podcast

Podcast Tutorial: Create a podcast using iLife (Mac users)

Audacity Tutorial for Podcasters (PC and Mac users)

Podcasting Tools

PoducateMe: Practical Solutions for Podcasting in Education

Learning Through Listening

Social Bookmarking

Social bookmarking is a way in which you can save and organize the links to your favorite websites to a bookmarking site and access it from any computer anywhere. In some social bookmarking tools, users can organize their bookmarks by tagging them and in other tools they can organize them by putting them in specific folders.

Users can also access the bookmarks stored by others, thus giving it a social touch. People can collaborate by saving links related to a specific topic into the same account.

For LOTE teachers and other educators, social bookmarking tools can be used to create a set of interesting websites for specific topics. If there is an Internet-based project, teachers can create a page with links to specific websites that the students should access in order to research the information. Teachers can collaborate with their colleagues who teach the same subject or level and bookmark links to the same page, as and when they find them. This will create a large database of resources that can be accessed and used by the whole department.

Click on the link below to learn more about social bookmarking:
Social Bookmarking in Plain English

Tools:
The following tools are some of the social bookmarking tools available on the Internet:

del.icio.us: A social bookmarking tool that lets you save your bookmarks and sort them by tags. You can also use their tag tool, which makes it easier to bookmark.

Backflip: Another social bookmarking tool. However, in this tool, you can save your bookmarks or your favorites in different folders.

Shelfari: This is a very nice way of displaying your favorite books. You can create a virtual bookshelf. It is a social network, so you can share your bookshelf with your friends. You can display books that you have already read or are reading presently, as well as books you plan to read or a wish list.

Clipmarks: With this tool, you can save clips of information that you find on websites. So instead of saving the whole website, you are only saving the information you want from the website.

Furl: Another bookmarking tool.

StumbleUpon: A great platform to find articles and resources on different topics. You can rate the articles to help future viewers. The articles are categorized by topics.

Resources:
The following websites will help you to learn more about Social Bookmarking:

Social Bookmarking: A General Review

Social Bookmarking

Collaboration tools

Tools for Collaboration:

Wikis in Plain English

Wikispaces: A great way to collaborate with others. In fact, the information for this workshop is being presented using wikispaces.

Wikispaces for Educators: As part of their commitment to help educators, wikispaces helps teachers by giving away free wikis for K-12 teachers.

WetPaint: A very easy-to-create wiki.

pbwiki: A collaboration tool to create wikis.

Writeboard: Create web-based text documents collaboratively.

Google Docs: Another site to collaboratively create word documents, spreadsheets and presentations.

Zoho: Another application in which you can create documents, spreadsheets and presentations on the web. In this way, your documents are stored on the internet and can be accessed from any computer anywhere.

ePals Global Community: A wonderful site for electronic "pen-pals". They have email and blog tools.

IECC: Intercultural E-mail Classroom Connections: Another site to link up with electronic "pen-pals" and create cultural collaborations.

Skype: A great videoconferencing tool. It is a free tool. The software has to be downloaded to the computer.

VoiceThread: This tool is a great way to combine visual and oral collaborative presentations. Students can describe or explain visual presentations by recording their voices. The voicethread can be embedded in the school or class website.

Ning: Create social websites and networks.
Example of Ning: The Global Education Collaborative

Jottit: Helps to create quick and simple websites for users.

Scribd: Allows you to publish and share your own original documents, thoughts, ideas and stories on the internet for free.

WizIQ: This site provides a platform for teachers and students where they can teach and learn from each other in a virtual environment. The site also provides a lot of good educational content.

Meebo: Allows you to access and communicate with friends and family using your own Instant Messaging service from any computer with an internet connection, even if that computer does not have your specific service like MSN Messenger or AOL Instant Message downloaded on it.

OurStory: This is essentially an online album. You control the content and provide access to people you want to share your stories with.

Moodle: If you have ever wanted to create your own online educational courses then this site may provide the ultimate solution to achieve that goal. You will not be alone as plenty of help is available to Moodle members.

Games

Tools to create Games:

ClassTools: Create your own educational activities and games. You can create arcade games based on the vocabulary and grammar that is taught in class.

Game-O-Matic: Create your own educational activities and games.

Smile: Provides templates for language teachers to easily create interactive activities and exercises.

Classroom Game Templates: Download PowerPoint templates.

Toy Theater: An excellent site that provides all kinds of educational tools for teachers to create their own interactive lessons in Art, Music, Math and Reading. Puzzles and Playsets can also be created. The Art section can be used for FLES projects.

Presentations

The following tools can be used to present slideshows, projects, reports, etc.:

SlideShare: Upload your PowerPoint slideshows to this site and make them accessible to your students. An excellent way to share your slides and presentations with others.

Zentation: Allows a PowerPoint presentation to be accompanied with your synchronized narrative video on the side so that the PowerPoint presentation is wholesome and more effective for the viewer.

Empressr: A great site that helps you easily create stories you want to tell using multimedia tools.

Spresent: An alternative to PowerPoint.

Thumbstacks: A powerful tool that helps create all kinds of presentations which can be shared with others easily.

Zoho: Another powerful tool that helps create all kinds of presentations.

Voicethread: Allows you to share pictures and videos and have friends and family comment on them through audio, video or even through script while everybody is accessing the same page. Collaborative projects can be created using this tool.

Viewbook: Be inventive and create your own original art and designs using this tool.

VCASMO: This site helps to create multimedia presentations for professionals and amateurs.

Assessment

Assessment Tools:

EasyTestMaker: Helps create tests and quizzes easily.

Quiz Center: You can create and grade quizzes given to your students. Everything is done online.

Puzzlemaker: Helps to create all sorts for puzzles for all subjects. Create different puzzles like crosswords, wordsearch, Scrambled words, etc., based on the vocabulary taught in class.

Polls/Survey Tools:

Zoomerang: Helps to create all sorts of surveys quickly using over 100 templates.

Survey Monkey: Helps create surveys quickly.

PollDaddy: Helps create polls and surveys for any website you may have so that you can get good feedback regarding traffic to your site and receive comments that may be useful to make improvements.

PollEverywhere: Helps you conduct "live" polling and receive feedback from people visiting your site in real time.

Quimble: Setup your own polling question(s) instantly and get feedback.

Photo Gallery

The following tools can be used to display your photos:

Flickr: Excellent site to share and manage your photos online.

BubbleShare: Great site to share and manage your photos. It also allows you to add talk bubbles, sound, video and even make calendars and photo albums.

Shutterfly: A great service if you ever wanted your photos transformed into print, on mugs, T-shirts or mouse pads and delivered to your doorstep. This is not a free service but it is reasonably priced.

Animoto: You can create your own professional quality videos by using this web application. Just select your own videos, pictures and music and let Animoto help you with the rest.

VUVOX: Instantly create your own high quality multimedia stories using this application.

CooiIris (PicLens): Provides a 3-D wall of videos and images that the user can click and explore at any time.

Picasa: Manage all your photos here, fix things you don't like in a photograph and even share them with others.

Search for photos and images:

Teacher Tap: Public Domain and Copyright -free, Open Source and Student Use Images and Media: This site provides a list of links to websites where you find images and media that are copyright-free.

Flickr: Creative Commons: This site enables you to share your original creative material with others while allowing you to easily protect your material with varying degrees of copyright.

FreeFoto.com: Provides photos for non-commercial purposes for both online and offline use.

Picsearch: Helps users search for specific types of pictures on the web. The site is family friendly as it filters out offensive content. Once you select the image, you are directed to the website where the original copy of the image is available so that you can then ask for permission to use the image.

Tag Galaxy: This site provides a really cool way of exploring specific categories of pictures from the Flickr website. You have to be careful about using this site with your students as it is not filtered.

The Realia Project: Excellent site for foreign language teachers and students because it provides faculty-reviewed material and encourages teachers and students to contribute their own material with the goal of learning more about other cultures.

iStockPhotos: Not a free site. Photos range from $1 - $20. This site allows users to buy and even sell original photographs on the web. Currently, there are over 3.2 million images to select from.

PLEASE NOTE:

COPYRIGHT ISSUES
To avoid any copyright infringement, always read the 'Terms of Use' section of the websites you visit to get photos and images. It is also very important to educate students about copyright infringement. The following sites provide information you can use to help explain this important issue to your students:

- Copyright and the Internet
- Copyright Kids: Great site for explaining copyright to kids.
- Copyright: Another great way to educate students.
- U.S. Copyright Office
- A Teacher's Guide to Fair Use and Copyright
- Classroom Copyright Chart
- The Copyright Site
- Creative Commons
- Public Domain Music

Organizers

Tools to help organize and display your assignments, your ideas, schedule, etc.:

Assign-A-Day: Helps teachers create an online calendar to post assignments so that students and parents can stay informed by viewing the day-to-day homework, due dates for assignments and test dates.

Calendarios Web: Embed a Spanish calendar in your website or your Quia site by pasting the embed code.

Google Calendar: An online interactive calendar that helps one manage all of life's activities and schedule events, appointments and assignments all in one place.

Calendars.Net: An interactive calendar that can even be shared with others and which can even be translated into other languages.

ePrintableCalendars: A great site that allows users to print out and use all sorts of charts, calendars, timetables, etc.

CollegeRuled: Helps create tools that enables one to stay organized.

Graphic Organizers:

MindMeister: Enables one to make "mindmaps" online by brainstorming with others in real-time or all by yourself. The final product can be posted online for others to enhance and improve the existing model.

Gliffy: Similar to MindMeister, however, more useful for technical drawings and flow-charts. Multiple users can enhance and contribute towards refining the diagrams and non-verbal ideas.

Bubble.us: Another site that allows users to brainstorm online.

Comics

Tools to create comics:

makebeliefscomix.com: Create your own comic strips using this application. You don't have to be an artist, just drag and drop and add text. You can create reading activities for the LOTE class by creating a comic strip. Students can be assessed by making them create comic strips based on the vocabulary and grammar that they learn in class.

ToonDoo: Create your own comic/cartoon lessons using this application.

Kerpoof: Create animated movies, artwork and other educational stories using this application.

Bubblr: This application helps you to create comic strips using real photo images from Flickr.

Mashups

Mashups Tools:

Mag My Pics: Make your own professional-looking magazine using this application.

FakeMagazineCover: Use over 600 fun templates to make up your own magazine covers using your own digital photographs.

Pageflakes: Personalize your own web page using this application.

ANIMOTO: You can create your own professional-quality videos by using this web application. Just select your own videos, photos and music and let Animoto help you make it appear professional.

FLEKTOR: A site similar to 'YouTube' but allows the users to also create and enhance the content with online tools.

VoiceThread: This tool is a great way to combine visual and oral collaborative presentations. Students can describe or explain visual presentations by recording their voices. The voicethread can be embedded in the school or class website.

mixercast: This is a great site that helps the user transform their ideas into reality and market it to the world using the internet.

Mapping

Tools to create maps:

Wayfaring: Helps the user create their own custom map of any place in the world indicating places to go to or see. Interestingly, once the initial map has been created, other online users can build upon the original map and add to the content from their own knowledge about the place.

CommunityWalk: Similar tool that helps create custom maps and has the same social component where maps can be updated and edited by others. This application also allows users to add multimedia.

Mapwing: This site helps build a virtual tour of any place, which you can share with anybody.

Google Maps: This is an extremely powerful and interactive tool that can give you information, pictures, directions and more about almost any place on earth. It is more powerful that the 'yellow pages and white pages' combined. You can also view what a street or neighborhood looks like before you get there.

Video

Tools for Showcasing Videos:

TeacherTube: This is an excellent site where teachers can post educational videos created by them and where students and anybody else who is interested in learning about a topic can view them. These videos can be embedded into websites and blogs.

blipTV: If you ever wanted to have your own TV show, then this site offers you a chance to manage and market your creation for free. If your show is a big hit then the revenue generated is shared between both parties on a 50/50 basis.

MotionBox: Private video sharing with friend and family. Unlike other sites like 'YouTube', where videos are available to everybody, here you can decide who will have access to your videos.

5min: The creators of this site believe that everybody has something they may be good at and can teach others. They offer this site to post 5-minute videos of some skill or knowledge that could help someone and make the world a better place.

BubblePLY: Allows users to 'bubble-in' text on videos similar to the way text bubbles appear next to people and animals on cartoons.

Generators

Tools that generate a widget:

AutoMotivator: Helps you create motivational posters using your own photos or from existing ones on the site. You can enter your own motivational text and print out the final product.

Voki: Helps you to place an animated person or animal on your website who will say whatever you want like a greeting or welcome message in your own voice. You record your voice using a microphone or upload an audio clip. You can also use preset voices and then type whatever you want the voice to say.

Cool Text: Helps you create graphic texts for any purpose. The site has a lot to interesting graphics to choose from and a lots of options for font and colors.

Web 2.0 Badges: This site provides all sorts of badge designs. The user can select the badge they like and enter any message they want to convey like 'Smile' or some slogan.

ClustrMaps: Provides a world map for your website and displays the location of the people who visited your site using a colored dot. The HTML code that is generated needs to be embedded into your site.

Maps.amung.us: Same service as ClustrMaps, however, this application keeps updating itself 'live' in real time.

Newspaper Clipping Generator: Really cool idea for anybody who may want to create their own message on a newspaper. You simply type your message in the text window and click "generate" and your message will appear on a newspaper that you can print out.

Official Seal Generator: Create your own official looking seal using the tools on this site. You can save the image. There is also an option to buy the seal printed on a magnet.

Wordle: This tool generates word clouds from words that you provide.

Tools for Educators: Provides a vast array of printable worksheets and resources for educators. You have to see it to believe it!

Contact me

My name is Seema Sumod. I am a Spanish teacher. I teach in Plainview-Old Bethpage Middle School in Plainview, Long Island, New York.

As part of my personal commitment to continue learning about new instructional tools, ideas and concepts, I recently completed a Masters program in Computers in Education (Educational Technology). The experience helped me a lot to integrate technology into my teaching.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me.

Gracias,

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CERTIFIED
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