Tips for Teaching with CALL: Practical Approaches to Computer-assisted Language Learning
(Book Review)

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Tips for Teaching with CALL: Practical Approaches to Computer-assisted Language Learning
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Most teachers are interested in introducing technology to their students to assist them with opportunities to learn English. Yet, some of them may be easily intimidated by technology and/or need practical hands-on techniques for using CALL (Computer-assisted language learning) with their students. Moreover, they need to know how as well as why while benefiting from CALL.

The book “Tips for Teaching with CALL: Practical Approaches to Computer-assisted Language” introduces CALL to English language teachers and students by providing practical techniques and tips as well as the rationale for using any specific CALL activity with their students.

While discussing the websites, software and the practical techniques, the authors raise awareness the rationale behind such techniques by summarizing the current research related to the use of CALL materials.

What impressed me first about the book is how it is organized. Chapters are devoted to specific skills such as Vocabulary and Grammar, which I believe is a very convenient way to present activities. Moreover, the introduction entitled “What is CALL?” presents a precise and awareness-raising explanation of what CALL is and what roles teachers and computers play while guiding students.

Chapter 1 introduces CALL materials for Vocabulary teaching such as WordSmart, Vocaboly and Gerry’s Vocabulary Teacher.

Chapter 2 focuses on Grammar and presents the websites such as ESLgold and Chemnitz Internet Grammar, and the software such as Understanding and Using English Grammar and Newspaper Editor.

Chapter 3 deals with Reading with the help of CALL materials on the websites such as ESL Reading and Adult Learning Activities and the software such as Longman English Interactive 3 and Issues in English.

Chapter 4 addresses another skill, namely Writing, by presenting materials from Easy Writer, Linguistic Funland and other websites and software.

Chapter 5 deals with Listening by introducing the readers into popular websites such as Randall’s ESL Cyber Listening Lab and ELLLO: English Language Listening Lab Online, and the software such as Rosetta Stone and Longman English Interactive (LEI) 3.
Chapter 6 exemplifies the activities that can be used for Speaking and discusses the software including *Speech Works 4* and *text-to-speech* applications.

Chapter 7 addresses the issue of communication tools that will help students learn English. Popular tools such as *Microsoft® Windows Messenger™*, *Nicenet* and *forums* such as *UsingEnglish.com* are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 8 discusses how technology and communication tools can be applied to content-based instruction.

It is important to note here again that each chapter not only introduces websites/software in order to help students learn English but also equip teachers with what research says about the use of CALL materials. Better still, each chapter is ended with a special section presenting guidelines while selecting CALL for the activities they are planning to do.

The book, however, seems to have ignored some of the very useful tools/websites that are available on the Internet. I would have liked to read about, in Chapter 4, the use of Blogs and Wikis, especially PBwiki (Kilickaya, 2008), which I think lend themselves to collaborative writing; see the inclusion of the popular website “WordChamp” in Chapter 1 (Kilickaya, 2007), which is very useful for vocabulary learning and teaching. Moreover, another chapter on *Online Teaching and Learning* which discusses the use of tools such as WiZiQ (Kilickaya, in press), Dokeos and Moodle would be very beneficial. A small discussion or a set of links about virtual learning (Second Life), Mobile Learning and Simulation Gaming would be highly appreciated.

Tips for Teaching with CALL: Practical Approaches to Computer-assisted Language Learning really does contribute to English language teaching and especially ELT methodology and materials design, in that it helps language teachers be aware of the materials and activities that are offered by CALL. I suggest any teachers interested in CALL have this extremely valuable book together with the ones by Dudaney and Hockly (2007) and Erben and Sarieva (2008) as they complement each other in terms of discussion of specific tools, research findings and step-by-step instruction.

### References


