

AULC-TALC SIG  
Minutes of meeting  
LSE December 8<sup>th</sup> 2000

## Developing web-based multimedia exercises

Andy Hagyard presented various projects from the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside aimed at producing advanced level French activities for the web. These activities revolve around the use of authentic video clips with accompanying questions (and answers), transcripts and links to related web sites, such as newspaper articles.

Initial exercises were developed on the university intranet (for copyright reasons) using an in-house question design feature. However the second part of the demonstration explored the use of Hot Potatoes (a freely available authoring tool) along with existing on-line video sources as a way of producing useful materials. A tentative example of what can be produced can be seen at <http://www.ulh.ac.uk/ls/staff/ah/hotpots>

Furthermore, any materials produced in this way can be shared between institutions. Indeed, one of the conditions for free use of Hot Potatoes is that materials created must be on a publicly accessible web server. The group then discussed ways in which materials could be shared in the future.

For further information on Hot Potatoes (including free download of the program), go to <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/halfbaked/>

To view the TF1 French news video archive, visit <http://www.tf1.fr/video/news>

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## Developing multimedia web-based exercises

### ***Project 1 - using question design feature on University Intranet.***

This project was partly funded by the WELL project, and partly from an internal Fund for Teaching and Learning Development. The cultural attaché at the French Embassy confirmed that broadcast material could be digitised and used provided it was for educational purposes only and located on a restricted-access server.

### **Purpose**

Designed for Level 1 French Post A-level students. Aims are:

- to improve listening comprehension skills,
- to raise awareness of contemporary issues in France,
- to demonstrate the potential of the web as a multimedia resource.

### **Description**

- Digital video clips from news items, with multiple-choice comprehension questions.
- Detailed feedback provided on all answers, with results stored on the system for monitoring by tutors.
- Link to transcript at end of exercise.
- Live links to related newspaper articles.

## Technical

News clips (approx 2 mins) digitised from VHS source, then converted to Real Media using Real Producer (downloadable from [www.real.com](http://www.real.com)). Excellent compression rate (2 mins = approx. 500kb) but compromise on quality.

Questions produced using prepared templates, but customised in HTML.

## Conclusions

### Advantages

Good question feedback and monitoring.  
Student response was very positive.

### Drawbacks

Time taken to author.  
Templates are restrictive.  
Relatively poor quality of video

## ***Project 2 - straight HTML on University Intranet.***

### Purpose

Designed for final level students of French (following year abroad). These exercises assume greater fluency and are intended to prompt discussion on topics which form part of the final level syllabus.

### Description

- Digital video extracts from TV documentary programs, with a limited number of comprehension questions.
- Answers are provided, but no scoring and no monitoring of results.
- Exercise is "packaged up" with a discussion group and conference room.

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## Conclusions

This project is still in its early stages and cannot yet be properly evaluated. However the exercises are certainly much quicker to create (as less feedback is provided).

## ***Project 3 (still embryonic) - using hot potatoes***

### Overview

The above projects have 3 main drawbacks:

- I. time taken to digitise video,
- II. lack of flexibility of question design templates,
- III. restrictions on access due to copyright regulations.

Recent developments suggest a way in which these can all be overcome, while also allowing opportunities for sharing resources.

Hot Potatoes authoring program is freely available for use in education from <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/halfbaked/> offering a range of question styles with a high level of flexibility and configurable templates (including different language versions). However one of the conditions of use is that the results are published on a publicly accessible web server.

TF1 have begun archiving all their TV news items, both thematically and chronologically, at <http://www.tf1.fr/vod> apparently for at least a year.



A VERY rough mock-up of the sort of exercise that could be produced can be viewed at <http://www.ulh.ac.uk/lis/staff/ah/hotpots>

**Advantages**

Questions can be produced very quickly.  
Video is not copied (indeed this is not possible), simply linked.  
Resources can be shared - scope for collaborative projects.  
Video quality is improved (how do they do it?).  
Requires basic IT literacy but no specialist skills.

**Drawbacks**

Dependency on an external source of material.  
Are there any copyright implications (i.e. should permission be sought to include links in an activity?)