

# Training or Reflexive Practice for Language Teachers about Textchat

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The concept of a Learner Corpus (Granger *et al.*, 2002) is well known among the TALC community. Learner corpora have been used in a variety of situations related to language teaching or in the study of language learning (Belz & Vyatkina, 2009). However, learner corpora consist only in learners' productions without any description of the learning context, and are not centred on interactions which took place in these situations, situations in which not only learners are involved.

In order to extend the span of research and teaching applications in online language learning situations, the concept of LEarning and TEaching Corpus (LETEC) has been developed (Chanier & Ciekanski, 2010; Reffay & Betbeder, 2009). The LETEC corpus incorporates in a structured way the data which reflect the activity of participants during the online course (learners, teachers, natives, etc.) and also the pedagogical settings (such as the learning design), and, where applicable, the research protocol (design and output such as questionnaires, interviews, etc.). Thus, the learner data can be analysed in context. In addition, relevant issues can be discussed amongst the whole research and teaching community because the LETEC is meant to be publically available. The corpus designers have taken into account the international standards, inter-operability, ethics and open access requirements for the access to the corpora repository (Mulce repository, 2011).

In this paper, we would like to present one possible application of the LETEC in teacher education (O'Keeffe & Farr, 2003) with a focus on a specific communication tool, namely textchat. Many research publications have shown the benefits of this CMC tool and its effectiveness in language learning (Chun, 1994; Tudini, 2003). Nevertheless, there is a lack of studies which address "how" language teachers could evaluate or reflect on their textchat sessions (e.g. using textchat logs) in which their learners and themselves interacted.

Our presentation will be centred around a case study, the LETEC Favi (Yun, 2011). The Favi (Français académique virtuel international) project was conducted between years 2005 and 2009. Its objective was to develop French as a foreign language learners' linguistic and communication skills at the advanced level in an academic context through textchat activities. Logs corresponding to 34 one-hour textchat sessions were collected and, firstly, assembled as a simple set of ASCII texts. Although research publications have been made out of partial analyses of this set of data, we found problematic elements in terms of the scientific validity and the general applicability of our work. Consequently, we decided to structure these data with other elements of the learning situations as a LETEC. We are now in the process of re-analysing textchat sessions with the freeware Tatiana designed by researchers from the CSCL (Computer Supported Collaborative Learning) community (Dyke *et al.*, 2009).

During the presentation, we will first show the characteristics of the structured corpus by comparing it to its original corpus in the text format. Then we will explain the procedure we followed to use the structured corpus in association with the target trace analysis tool. We will exemplify certain interactional features of the corpus Through quantitative and qualitative analyses. These include the density of turns of the utterance in a session, the frequency of turn-taking of each subject, the contribution of the tutor's utterances, interaction patterns and so on. This study will describe how foreign language teachers who are interested in text chat

activities may use trace analysis software to analyze and then build upon their own activities in order to foster the learner interactions using chat tools.

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