

Checklist: Evaluative Criteria for Computer-Delivered Language Learning Systems

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General description of the program

Name/version _____

Intended users

age

- ☐ children
- ☐ high school
- ☐ college
- ☐ learners with special interests (tourists, businessmen, etc.)

ability level

- ☐ beginning
- ☐ intermediate
- ☐ advanced

Intended use

- ☐ self-instruction
- ☐ textbook/classroom supplement
- ☐ combination of above

Content

- ☐ content likely to be of interest to intended users
- ☐ instructional units logically sequenced
- ☐ lessons build on material presented earlier

Program goals

- ☐ goals and objectives of the program clearly described
- ☐ program capable of meeting the stated goals

Scope

number of lessons or instructional units _____

equivalence in terms of hours, semesters, years of instruction _____

Documentation

- ☐ discussion of program's goals, design, and contents
- ☐ tutorial on program's operation
- ☐ demonstration lesson included
- ☐ lesson plans for use in a course or guidance for individual use
- ☐ research results on effectiveness of the program available
- ☐ information about independent reviews of the program

Customization

- ☐ choices depending on user level
- ☐ users can customize the operation of the program
- ☐ variety of options to support different types of learners

Installation/operation

- ☐ installation instructions clear
- ☐ program easy to install/uninstall

How often does the system crash? _____

Is there a particular action that causes regular crashes? _____

Hardware requirements

type of computer _____

version of operating system _____

memory (RAM) _____

disk space _____

CD-ROM drive/DVD-ROM drive _____

speakers _____

microphone _____

monitor _____

sound card/video card _____

network/browser requirements _____

other _____

Media

- ☐ graphics, video and audio help users to concentrate on content
- ☐ text easy to read
- ☐ audio clear
- ☐ colors and graphics crisp and clear
- ☐ video runs smoothly
- ☐ hypertext links work well
- ☐ animation serves a pedagogical purpose

Feedback

- ☐ users receive quick feedback to responses
- ☐ level of feedback language appropriate for intended users
- availability of feedback (e.g., item-by-item, logical content break, end-of-unit or session, learner-controlled) _____

type of feedback is available

- ☐ indication as to whether response is correct or incorrect
- ☐ invitation to try again
- ☐ hint leading to correct response
- ☐ explanation as to why a particular response is incorrect
- ☐ a "give-up" option
- ☐ directions to relevant part of program for review
- ☐ intelligent feedback depending on learner response history

Evaluation/tests

- ☐ frequency of the tests
- ☐ type of scores is made available to users
- ☐ explanation of test scores
- ☐ cumulative log of scores to track progress
- ☐ recommendations for remedial action given
- ☐ tests and/or test scores can be printed out

Special features:

- ☐ speech recognition
- ☐ system requires initial training

What do users need to do to train the system? _____

How frequently does the system recognize a range of native speech? _____

How does the system react to nonnative speech? _____

How extensively is speech recognition/processing utilized in each unit of the program? _____

function of speech recognition/processing in this program

- ☐ voice navigation
- ☐ pronunciation instruction
- ☐ speaking practice

Developer/distributor

name _____
street address _____
telephone _____
fax _____
e-mail _____
URL _____

Price

individual _____
institutional _____
☐ users likely to get their money's worth

Checklist for listening software**Listening input**

audio

- ☐ conditions against which the audio is played authentic
- ☐ tempo of the sound track natural
- ☐ variety of voices and dialects
- ☐ sound track supported by video or graphics

listening passages

- ☐ passages authentic
- ☐ topics of interest to intended users
- ☐ variety of topics
- ☐ users can choose among several passages on the same topic
- ☐ variety of genres
- ☐ passages of an appropriate length for intended users
- ☐ vocabulary appropriate for the intended level
- ☐ syntax appropriate for the intended level

Listening activities

pre-listening activities

- ☐ program adapts to different levels of users' prior knowledge
- ☐ pre-listening activities that activate prior knowledge

listening activities

- ☐ listening activities emphasize comprehension of the passage
- ☐ listening activities authentic
- ☐ variety of listening activities
- ☐ users have a choice of listening activities
- ☐ activities motivate learners to keep listening

post-listening activities

- ☐ post-listening activities based on selected features of passages
- ☐ features selected for special attention well chosen
- ☐ post-listening activities promote acquisition of vocabulary

Listening strategy instruction

- ☐ explanation about the benefits of using listening strategies
- ☐ systematic practice in the use of listening strategies
- ☐ users can see that certain tasks are more easily accomplished when strategies are used
- ☐ choice of listening strategies depending on learning style
- ☐ feedback on the effectiveness of strategy use

Listening tools

links to the written version of passage

- ☐ the whole passage
- ☐ sentence-by-sentence
- ☐ phrase-by-phrase
- ☐ word-by-word

spoken glosses

- ☐ monolingual
- ☐ bilingual
- ☐ hint-type

written glosses

- ☐ monolingual
- ☐ bilingual
- ☐ hint-type

visual glosses

- ☐ images
- ☐ graphics
- ☐ videos

additional resources available

- ☐ online talking dictionary
- ☐ online written dictionary
- ☐ online reference grammar
- ☐ background information
- ☐ cultural notes

Listening interface

- ☐ ease of navigation
- ☐ navigation between audio, activities, glosses, and tools simple
- ☐ navigation between screens fast

playback control

- ☐ users can control the speed of audio playback

playback can be stopped

- ☐ after each phrase
- ☐ after each sentence

timing

- ☐ enough time to complete activities

archiving

- ☐ users' work can be saved
- ☐ users' work can be printed out

Checklist for reading software

Reading input

How authentic is the appearance of the passage?

- ☐ layout
- ☐ fonts
- ☐ illustrations
- ☐ colors

content of the reading passages

- ☐ reading passages authentic
- ☐ topics of interest to intended users
- ☐ variety of topics
- ☐ topics not likely to become outdated
- ☐ variety of genres
- ☐ users can choose among several passages on the same topic
- ☐ length appropriate for intended users
- ☐ vocabulary appropriate for intended users
- ☐ syntax appropriate for intended users

Reading activities

pre-reading activities

- ☐ program adapts to different levels of users' prior knowledge
- ☐ pre-reading activities that activate prior knowledge

reading activities

- ☐ reading activities emphasize comprehension of the passage
- ☐ reading activities authentic
- ☐ variety of reading activities
- ☐ users have a choice of reading activities
- ☐ activities motivate learners to keep reading

post-reading activities

- ☐ post-reading activities based on selected features of the passages
- ☐ features selected for special attention well chosen
- ☐ post-listening activities promote acquisition of vocabulary

Reading strategy instruction

- ☐ explanation about the benefits of using reading strategies
- ☐ systematic practice in the use of reading strategies
- ☐ users can see that certain tasks are more easily accomplished with strategy use
- ☐ choice of reading strategies depending on learning style
- ☐ feedback on the effectiveness of strategy use

Reading tools

links available to the spoken version of the passage

- ☐ the whole passage
- ☐ sentence-by-sentence
- ☐ phrase-by-phrase
- ☐ word-by-word

written glosses available

- ☐ monolingual
- ☐ bilingual
- ☐ hint-type

spoken glosses available

- ☐ monolingual
- ☐ bilingual
- ☐ hint-type

visual glosses available

- ☐ images
- ☐ graphics
- ☐ videos

additional resources available

- ☐ topical glossaries
- ☐ background information
- ☐ cultural information
- ☐ online dictionary
- ☐ online reference grammar

Reading interface

ease of navigation

- ☐ navigation between text, activities, glosses, and tools simple
- ☐ navigation between screens fast

appearance of the text

- ☐ texts preserve their original format
- ☐ texts presented in a variety of fonts and typefaces
- ☐ fonts and typefaces attractive and easy to read
- ☐ illustrations and graphics aid in text comprehension

glosses

- ☐ equal access to different types of glosses
- ☐ glossed items marked unobtrusively
- ☐ glosses cover up text or make it disappear
- ☐ different types of glosses can be customized by users

timing

- ☐ enough time to complete activities

archiving

- ☐ users' work can be saved
- ☐ users' work can be printed out

Checklist for speaking software

Speaking input

general qualities of the input

- ☐ authenticity
- ☐ situational appropriateness
- ☐ cultural appropriateness
- ☐ interest to intended users

topics

- ☐ topics of interest to intended users
- ☐ variety of topics
- ☐ topics logically sequenced
- ☐ users have a choice of topics

vocabulary

- ☐ vocabulary appropriate for the intended level
- ☐ vocabulary organized into well-defined thematic units
- ☐ program focuses users' attention on specific vocabulary
- ☐ vocabulary recycled throughout the program

grammar

- ☐ grammar appropriate for the intended level
- ☐ presentation of grammar logically sequenced
- ☐ program focuses users' attention on specific structures
- ☐ grammar recycled throughout the program
- ☐ grammatical explanations clear

Speaking activities

- ☐ speaking activities simulate real-world interactions
- ☐ activities challenging and fun
- ☐ activities progress from mechanical drills to open-ended responses
- ☐ activities require integration of linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic skills
- ☐ speaking activities contextualized
- ☐ variety of activities
- ☐ users have a choice of activities

What is the quality of the speaking prompts? _____

- ☐ examples for the activities to be performed

responses allowed

- ☐ only one
- ☐ more than one

Speaking strategy instruction

- ☐ program explains why the use of communication strategies can be helpful
- ☐ systematic practice in the use of communication strategies
- ☐ users can see that a task is more easily accomplished when a particular communication strategy is used
- ☐ choice of communication strategies depending on learning style
- ☐ feedback on effectiveness of strategy use

Speaking tools

online tools are available

- ☐ reference grammar
- ☐ monolingual dictionary
- ☐ bilingual dictionary
- ☐ talking dictionary
- ☐ thesaurus
- ☐ sociolinguistic and cultural notes

Speech interface

- ☐ speech interface user-friendly

speech recognition (SR)

- ☐ pedagogical goals of the program could be achieved without SR

tasks associated with SR

- ☐ creating a sentence with audio and/or visual cues
- ☐ conversing with the system (conversation changes depending on response)

Feedback from SR

- ☐ Is the feedback from SR correlated with how well something was said
- ☐ feedback relies only on learners' own assessment
- ☐ users can record and compare their responses with correct models

- SR program provides feedback on accuracy
 - ☐ in responses chosen from a closed set
 - ☐ in open-ended responses
- archiving
 - ☐ users' work can be recorded and saved

Checklist for writing software

Input for writing activities

- input provided in order to contextualize writing tasks
 - ☐ written texts
 - ☐ listening passages
 - ☐ videos
- ☐ input at the appropriate level of difficulty
- ☐ variety of input
- ☐ users have a choice of type of input

Writing activities

- ☐ writing tasks have counterparts in the real world
- ☐ tasks at the appropriate level of difficulty
- ☐ tasks culturally appropriate
- ☐ writing prompts clearly and concisely worded
- writing prompts specify
 - ☐ an audience
 - ☐ a function
 - ☐ a motivation for writing
- ☐ choice of writing tasks

Writing strategy instruction

- ☐ explanation of the benefits of using writing strategies
- ☐ program offers systematic practice in the use of writing strategies
- ☐ users can see that certain writing tasks are more easily accomplished when strategies are used
- ☐ choice of writing strategies depending on learning style
- ☐ feedback on the effectiveness of strategy use

Writing tools

- macro-aides available
 - ☐ online templates for brainstorming writing tasks
 - ☐ online templates for organizing the writing tasks
 - ☐ online samples for imitation

micro-aides available

- ☐ online bilingual dictionary
- ☐ online thesaurus
- ☐ online grammar reference

editing aides available

- ☐ online spell checker
- ☐ online grammar checker

Writing interface

- ☐ enough time given for task completion
- ☐ program can save successive drafts of users' work
- ☐ users' work can be printed out
- ☐ program can keep track of user queries
- ☐ program includes a network component for group work or peer editing

Checklist for vocabulary learning software

Input for vocabulary learning

basis for the choice of vocabulary included in the program

- ☐ frequency
- ☐ association with a particular topic or topics
- ☐ association with a particular textbook

vocabulary appropriate for the intended users in terms of

- ☐ level of difficulty
- ☐ interest
- ☐ usefulness

Vocabulary learning activities

- ☐ activities challenging and fun
- ☐ users have choice of difficulty level
- ☐ activities relate new vocabulary to vocabulary previously introduced
- ☐ users have a choice of activities

vocabulary learning activities offered

- ☐ repetition of the word
- ☐ recognition/matching activities pairing the word with its native language equivalent
- ☐ pairing the word with its target language synonym
- ☐ pairing the word with its target language antonym
- ☐ finding the related word in a list
- ☐ pairing the word with a picture
- ☐ pairing a word with a video
- ☐ listening to the word being pronounced and finding it in a list

production activities

- ☐ giving the target language equivalent for a native language word
- ☐ finding the right word to describe a picture
- ☐ finding a target language synonym for a word
- ☐ finding a target language antonym for a word
- ☐ putting a word in the appropriate semantic group
- ☐ producing derivationally related words (e.g., noun from a verb)
- ☐ using the word in a sentence
- ☐ games

Vocabulary learning strategy instruction

- ☐ explanation of different kinds of mnemonic strategies
- ☐ explanation of why the use of certain strategies can improve retention of vocabulary
- ☐ systematic practice in the use of mnemonic strategies
- ☐ users can see that a task is more easily accomplished when a mnemonic strategy is used
- ☐ users offered a choice of mnemonic strategies depending on their learning style
- ☐ feedback on whether the use of a particular mnemonic strategy was effective or not

Vocabulary learning tools

- ☐ vocabulary search engine

glosses provided

- ☐ monolingual
- ☐ bilingual
- ☐ hint-type
- ☐ examples of usage
- ☐ visual
- ☐ audio
- ☐ video

Vocabulary learning interface

vocabulary search engine

glosses provided

- ☐ monolingual
- ☐ bilingual
- ☐ hint-type
- ☐ examples of usage
- ☐ visual
- ☐ audio
- ☐ video

Checklist for software to teach pronunciation

Pronunciation input

words presented

- ☐ in citation form only
- ☐ in different contexts
- ☐ suprasegmental features included in the program
- ☐ intonation included in the program
- ☐ native-speaker models include a variety of voices and dialects

Pronunciation activities

- ☐ activities well-sequenced
- ☐ activities challenging and fun
- ☐ activities progress from easier to more complex
- ☐ users have control over selection of activities
- ☐ opportunities to review the material

tasks associated with the use of speech recognition

- ☐ reading one word at a time
- ☐ filling in a blank in a sentence
- ☐ reading from a selection of several words
- ☐ reading one sentence at a time
- ☐ reading from a selection of 2-5 sentences
- ☐ reading from a selection of 6 or more sentences
- ☐ creating a sentence with audio and/or visual cues

Pronunciation interface

speech recognition system reaction to nonnative speech

- ☐ recognizes despite mistakes
- ☐ asks for repetition
- ☐ does not recognize
- ☐ recognition system robust to various disfluencies
- ☐ recognition system sensitive to ambient noise

feedback recognition system provides

- ☐ correlates with how well something was said
- ☐ relies only on learners' own assessment
- ☐ users can record and compare their responses with correct models

mistakes in learner responses are marked and displayed

- ☐ accuracy of vowels and consonants
- ☐ accuracy of speech rhythm and timing
- ☐ accuracy of intonation contours

method by which visual pronunciation feedback presented

- ☐ speaker's face
- ☐ vocal tract
- ☐ spectrum information
- ☐ speech waveforms

Checklist for software to teach script

Script input

basis for selection of characters

- ☐ frequency
- ☐ topic association
- ☐ textbook association
- ☐ information about the history of the writing system
- ☐ general description of the writing system and its distinguishing features

Script learning activities

characters (or symbols) practiced

- ☐ in isolation
- ☐ in combinations
- ☐ in meaningful sequences
- ☐ from the more simple to the more complex
- ☐ characters (or symbols) presented earlier are recycled throughout the program
- ☐ variety of activities
- ☐ users have control over choice of activities

Script strategy instruction

- ☐ program explains what techniques are helpful in learning to write the target language script
- ☐ program provides systematic practice in the use of these techniques

Script learning tools

- ☐ characters (or symbols) linked to their pronunciation

links to glosses

- ☐ monolingual
- ☐ bilingual
- ☐ images
- ☐ video

Script learning interface

- ☐ program shows stroke order of the characters or symbols
- ☐ animation of how characters or symbols are written
- ☐ search engine