**Title:** A METHOD OF TEACHING

**Abstract:** A method of teaching uses a computer network. The method provides an electronic medium such as a diary for entry of a submission by a student. The submission is accepted over the computer network and amendments made to the received submission. The amended submission is sent over the computer network back to the student.
A METHOD OF TEACHING

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to teaching foreign languages and, in particular, to a method of teaching a foreign language using an electronic diary.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

When teaching students to be more proficient in a language that is not their first language, there can be many methods and systems used. Computers can be used with appropriate software in a self-study environment, without interaction between student and teacher.

However, self-study is far less advantageous than a system in which a teacher can interact with a student and provide feedback and corrections.

This invention is predicated on the premise that it would be advantageous to teach a language, whether it is a first or second language, through a system whereby a student can use an electronic diary to provide written submissions to a central or remote location. The student's input could then be checked or graded and the student could be provided feedback according to proficiency in and understanding of the language.

OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide a method of teaching which uses a computer network to provide written or verbal submissions to a remote location. At the very least, the invention provides an alternative to previously known methods of teaching.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

According to one aspect of the present invention, there is disclosed a method of teaching using a computer network, the method including the steps of:

(a) providing an electronic medium for entry of a submission by a student;

(b) accepting the submission over a computer network;
(c) amending the submission; and

(d) sending the amended submission over the computer network to the student.

Preferably, the electronic medium is an electronic diary, into which the student may enter comments or thoughts in the language, such as the English language. Preferably, the submission comprises those comments or thoughts.

The submission may be entered in the medium by any suitable means, usually via one or more computer peripherals, the most common being a computer keyboard and a mouse. Alternatively, the submission may be entered via a microphone or mobile phone, PDA or other suitable portable electronic device including wireless devices.

It is further preferred that the submission is made periodically by the student, preferably on a daily basis or on a daily basis during weekdays, for example.

The computer network is preferably the Internet, but other computer networks may be used, including local area networks and intranets. The student may use any suitable means to send the submission, and may require a browser such as Microsoft Internet Explorer 6 or higher. Preferably, the student's transmission is secure and may be read or heard only by an authorised person, such as the teacher assigned to that student.

The submission may be accepted over the computer network in any suitable way, such as through an appropriate inbox which may be accessible by the assigned teacher.

The submission may include a written or verbal submission or a combination of written and verbal submissions. Verbal submissions may be entered through any suitable means of recording sound in a suitable format to be saved using suitable software and sent over the computer network.

The amendment of the submission is preferably carried out using a set of predetermined criteria. For example, the criteria may view the submission on the basis of correct spelling (if written), correct grammar and correct common language usage. Preferably, the amendment distinguishes between each different criterion, such as by showing spelling corrections in a first way, showing grammar corrections in a second way and showing correct usage in a third way. Punctuation
may also be considered, for example. Striking out, highlighting and underlining are examples of distinguishing different criteria.

The amendment may take the form of a verbal response to the submission, sent over the computer network to the student. Optionally both a verbal response and written amended submission may be sent over the computer network to the student.

Optionally the submission may also be graded, for example, to provide a score out of ten. If different criteria are used as set out above, each criterion may be separately graded.

An overall grade may be given to a particular student on the basis of proficiency in the subject being taught. A student may be elevated to a higher grade if improved proficiency is shown. Improved proficiency in the subject being taught may be shown through improved grades on submissions and/or achievement of a particular grade for a particular submission such as an on-line examination.

Optionally, students may be grouped according to their proficiency in the subject being taught and may interact with one another in a virtual classroom. Such interaction may include sharing of information and chat rooms.

In the preferred form, the written amended submission includes a marked up version of the submission of the student, with the amendments made in respect of spelling, punctuation, grammar and common language usage. Furthermore, the amended submission may include an example as to one possible correct version of the submission. In another preferred form, the amended submission may include comments from the teacher as to possible ways of improving the use of the language, as well as encouraging comments in applicable cases. The comments and/or marked-up version of the submission may be entered verbally or as written text or as a combination of the two.

Preferably, the submission and the amended submission are stored in the electronic medium so that the student may review the original submission and the amended submission for comparison purposes and to increase the understanding of the language by the student.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE DRAWINGS**

Figure 1 is a screen shot of a sample submission made by a student in an electronic diary according to the method of the present invention; and
Figure 2 is a screen shot of a sample amended submission after return to the student from the teacher according to the method of the present invention.

**BEST MODE OF CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION**

In a preferred embodiment, the method of the present invention is used to teach the English language to students who do not have English as a first or primary language. However, the present invention is not limited to this, but may be used for teaching another language which is not the first language of the student. It is also envisaged that the method of the present invention may be used to teach a language to a native speaker of that language. It is also anticipated that other forms of teaching can be accomplished using the method of the present invention.

The users of the system of the preferred embodiment are a student and a teacher in circumstances where the teacher is at a location remote from the student. The student is an individual who is attempting to become more proficient in a language, whereas the teacher is proficient in that language.

The method provides an electronic diary on a computer connected to a network which is preferably the Internet. The student enters a submission in the diary, as seen in Figure 1. Preferably, the student makes an entry on a daily basis. The submission may take any form, but is preferably a composition, or an assignment or the like. There may be particular requirements for the length and/or nature of the entry, for example the number of words to be entered. The diary entry may be amended from time to time by the student before being submitted and delivered over the Internet to the teacher, via an inbox or similar arrangement.

The submission may be written in the form of text entered into the diary or may be a verbal submission, or a combination of both written and verbal entries. Verbal submissions can be recorded using a suitable means such as a microphone connected to the electronic diary and software that captures and stores the verbal submission in order that it may be sent over the computer network.

The submission is preferably secured so that only the assigned teacher may view the submission. This may be effected by any suitable software. The teacher may then review the submission and amend it.
Figure 2 shows an example of a diary entry that has been received by the teacher, reviewed and amended. It can be seen in Figure 2 that the teacher has reviewed the text entered by the student in English for spelling, grammar and common usage. Other criteria may be used as appropriate to the nature of the submission. Any suitable method of indicating corrections may be used by the teacher such as striking out, highlighting and underlining and any combination of such methods. Separate methods of indicating corrections may be used for indicating different criteria. The teacher may include a correct version of the submission.

The teacher may include comments and/or words of encouragement to the students with the amended response. These comments may be verbal or written or both.

The amended submission is then forwarded to the student over the network or Internet.

The amended submission may also be returned to the student in the form of a verbal amended submission. In this case the teacher enters a correct version of the submission via a suitable means such as a microphone connected to the computer network together with suitable software that captures and stores the verbal data in order that it may be sent over the computer network. A combination of both verbal and written amended submissions may be sent by the teacher to the student.

The software used in connection with the method of the invention may enable the student to hear the amended submission aurally, if the student’s computer has a sound card and suitable means to hear the recorded sounds such as speakers or head phones, for example. Alternatively, the sound of the amended submission may be downloaded to a suitable portable electronic device such as an MP3 player, PDA or mobile phone to listen to at a later date.

The grading preferably includes information such as spelling, punctuation, grammar and common usage. For example a grade out of 10 may be given for each or any of spelling, punctuation, grammar and common usage. Further, an overall grade may also be given by the teacher to the submission.

Students of a particular proficiency in the language may be grouped together in a class. Students may improve their grade of class by achieving appropriate grades in submissions or through on-line examinations. A virtual classroom may be set up for the students to interact one with another in chatrooms or to exchange class notes or other information.
The approach taken by the present invention is a unique way of encouraging the student to use, practice and improve naturally spoken and common usage of the language that they are learning.

Throughout the specification, the word "comprise" and its derivatives are intended to have an inclusive rather than an exclusive meaning unless the context requires otherwise.

The foregoing describes only some embodiments of the present invention, and modifications obvious to those skilled in the art can be made thereto without departing from the scope of the present invention.

**INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY**

A great many people around the world are required to learn a foreign language; in particular English as a foreign language. It will be appreciated by a person skilled in the art that the method of the invention has widespread applicability as an improved method of teaching languages and English as a second language. The method provides an improved means for students to learn languages on a day to day basis and for teachers to respond likewise.
The Claims

1. A method of teaching using a computer network, the method including the steps of:
   
   (a) providing an electronic medium for entry of a submission by a student;
   
   (b) accepting the submission over a computer network;
   
   (c) amending the submission; and
   
   (d) sending the amended submission over the computer network to the student.

2. A method of teaching according to claim 1 wherein, the electronic medium is a diary.

3. A method of teaching according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein, the computer network is the Internet.

4. A method of teaching according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, the method is used to teach a language.

5. A method of teaching according to claim 4 wherein the submission is amended in respect of any one or any combination of spelling, punctuation, grammar and common usage.

6. A method of teaching according to claim 4 or 5 wherein, the language is English.

7. A method of teaching according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, the submission is entered verbally.

8. A method of teaching according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, the submission is amended verbally.

9. A method of teaching according to any one of claims 1 to 6 or 8 wherein, the submission contains verbal and written elements.

10. A method of teaching according to any one of claims 1 to 7 or 9 wherein, the amended submission contains verbal and written elements.
11. A method of teaching according to any one of the preceding claims which includes awarding a grade or grades in respect of the submission.

12. A method of teaching according to any one of claims 4 to 6 which includes awarding a grade for at least one of spelling, punctuation, grammar or common usage of the submission.

13. A method of teaching according to any one of the preceding claims which includes grading students according to proficiency.

14. A method of teaching according to claim 13 which includes elevating the student to a higher grade upon improved proficiency.

15. A method of teaching according to any one of the preceding claims which includes facilitating interaction with more than one student in a virtual classroom.

16. A method of teaching according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, the submission is entered and/or received on a suitable portable device such as a mobile phone, PDA or other wireless device.

17. A method of teaching according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, the submission is securely entered and transmitted so as to be accessible only by an authorised person.

18. A method of teaching substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 1 and 2.
My name is Jon. I am learning English. English language is difficult language for me to learn.
I not studying English long time now, just little bit only.
I try hard every day write my diary entry. I like to writing in my diary. I get more improve each day becos I practising.

Figure 1 – Sample Diary Entry by Student.
- Circles shows were student can electronically save and submit their entry.

Figure 2 – Sample Marked Diary Entry
- The upper right circle shows the corrected Diary Entry.
- The upper left circle shows the Diary Entry as it would look written with correct grammar.
- The lower left circle shows comments for improving language.
- The lower right circle shows sample grading of the diary entry.
**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

**International application No.**
PCT/AU2005/000397

**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**

Int. Cl. "G09B 5/14, 5/06, 19/04, 19/06"

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

Derwent WPAT, Espacenet, USPTO: teach, learn, educate, instruct, online, internet, network, web, virtual, e-learn and similar terms

**C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT**

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<td>X</td>
<td>US 6470170 B1 (CHEN et al) 22 October 2002 whole document</td>
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[X] Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C  
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* Special categories of cited documents:
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**Date of the actual completion of the international search**
28 June 2005

**Date of mailing of the international search report**
13 JUL 2005

**Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU**
AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE
PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA
E-mail address: pct@ipaustralia.gov.au
Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929

**Authorized officer**
Mani Ramachandran
Telephone No: (02) 6283 2233

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