

Do-It-Yourself Websites for University Teachers

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Abstract

Information technology had already been dramatically transforming education when the COVID-19 pandemic pushed the rate of change to hyper-speed. Chalk and talk was quickly replaced with PowerPoint presentations, classroom projectors, YouTube lectures, and virtual attendance on Microsoft Teams and Zoom. The vast potential of the World Wide Web, meanwhile, has largely been ignored. In this paper I explain (a) what I have been doing with my university website for the last 23 years and (b) how the next generation of teachers can take full advantage of the Internet's resources.

How do students learn to speak a foreign language? How can teachers facilitate that process? These are the questions that teachers ask themselves as they plan their classes. Each time they walk into a classroom, they need to have a plan, a Lesson Plan. It might be as simple as covering certain pages in a textbook. It might include some supplementary materials that are explained on a printed handout. When I was working at the Nagoya Y.M.C.A. English School (1978–1992), coordinators made these decisions for all the instructors. Our textbook, *Modern English* (published by Seido Language Institute) was a series of ten volumes. Each of the ten units in a volume began with a dialog or a short narrative. That was followed by lots of oral drills. At the end of each lesson

there was a listening comprehension lesson (NOT in the textbook, only on audio tape) which concluded with lots of questions, followed by short answers. All the textbook dialogs, narratives, and drills were on audio tape, and a lot of class time (part of it in a language lab) was spent listening to and mechanically responding to those tapes.

After graduate school (1992–1996) I started teaching at Aichi Gakuin Junior College and University. There was a lot more freedom than at the Y.M.C.A. Individual teachers chose the textbooks for their classes and taught each lesson as they saw fit. I chose NOT to use a textbook. I wanted the content of the students' conversations to come from them, rather than have them mimic a textbook. I wanted them to decide for themselves (a) what to say and (b) how to say it in English. That is what people do in real conversations. Without a textbook, of course, their lessons depended entirely on my Lesson Plans. For the most part I stuck to a simple plan (Blair, 2011, 132–133). I put the students into small groups of 3 or 4 people and gave them a topic to discuss.

Self-Introductions	Family and Relatives	Personal Memories
Television	Movies	Music
Language Use	Communication	Reading
The Environment	Nature	Natural Disasters
Work and the Economy	Neighborhoods	Cities
History	News Events	Crime
Art	Fashion	Love and Marriage
Food and Diet	Sports and Exercise	Health and Medicine
University Studies	College Life	Education and School

Students prepared at home by writing a 90-word paragraph on the assigned topic. These paragraphs helped them start their discussions. To keep the conversations going they asked each other follow-up questions, which they recorded in their Group Report. I collected their questions, rephrased most of

them, and added questions of my own to create a List of Questions for each of these topics. These lists became a student(-and-teacher)-generated resource for the students that came after them. Each year the lists would be revised, updated, and made available to students.

Source Documents and Webpages

At a conference in 1999 I attended a workshop that taught the participants how to construct simple webpages that could be uploaded to the Internet. I walked away from that conference with a template for an educational tool that was to become more and more powerful over my next two decades of language teaching and beyond ... into the coronavirus era of paperless, online teaching. As a full-time university teacher, I was able to establish my own website on the Aichi Gakuin University server. The process was very simple, involving a minimum of paperwork, completed with the kind help of the staff of our computing department. What started as a single homepage evolved over the years into hundreds of webpages linked together and externally to other sites into a formidable website. Each of those webpages have descended from the original template, mimicking the biological process of evolution—reproduction and mutation.

I created my website with and have continued to use a Classical Mac computer and very simple software. Even today I rely on an old i-Mac, which I purchased from a colleague who was retiring. The source code for each webpage has been copied and pasted from the source code of previous webpages into a Simple Text document. Whenever I double-click on a source document (example on the next page) the computer file opens as a text file, revealing the source code.

To view the webpage I only have to click and drag the source document to my computer's Internet browser (Internet Explorer). Then the computer file opens and appears in a separate window as a webpage. You can think of the source document as a blueprint for the webpage. The browser reads it and constructs the webpage. I click back and forth between the two windows as I revise the source code. Saving the new source code and reloading the webpage shows me what the revised page looks like at each step of the revision process.

Source Document	Webpage
<pre> <html> <center>Television</center> <p>Actors and Actresses:
How many can you name?
Who is your favorite? <p>TV in General:
When do you watch TV?
Do you watch it with your family or alone? <p>bold
<i>italics</i>
<u>underline</u> </html> </pre>	<p style="text-align: center;">Television</p> <p>Actors and Actresses: How many can you name? Who is your favorite?</p> <p>TV in General: When do you watch TV? Do you watch it with your family or alone?</p> <p>bold <i>italics</i> <u>underline</u></p>

Example 1: Source code and text

Example 1 presents a simple sample of (a) the source code for a short List of Questions with some individual words added to the bottom and (b) the resulting webpage. Anything enclosed in angular brackets is an instruction. These instructions do NOT appear on the webpage. Some of them occur in start-stop pairs. A slash mark at the beginning indicates a Stop Instruction.

Once a source document is uploaded to a server, students can access the

webpage anytime, anywhere with their SMART phones, tablets, and laptops. With only these few instructions similar lists and even full texts in paragraph form can be created and spiced up (bold, italics, underlining).

By convention the filenames of source documents end in “.html” (examples: index.html for an index page, contact.html, etc.). FTP (file transfer protocol) software is needed to upload these source documents to a server. I have continued to use the same software that I began with back in 1999, a simple program called Fetch. Anybody with access to a server can create source documents and upload them to the Internet. Full-time university teachers typically have access to their university server, so let’s get started.

Starting a Website: Homepage Profile

You probably want to begin with a homepage (also called a top page or index page). It might include (a) one or two paragraphs introducing the website, a short personal profile, and (b) lists of degrees held, academic positions, publications, conference presentations, current classes, and some contact information. Perhaps you will want to spread this information out over a few pages. In that case, you can link the pages together into your own little mini-web.

Source Document	Webpage
<pre><html> <p> ... my publications
 ... my contact information </html></pre>	<p>... my <u>publications</u> ... my <u>contact information</u></p>

Example 2: Links from text to another webpage

The example above illustrates the source code for links from text within one webpage to the top of another page. In the source document I have put the text that will appear on the webpage in bold letters to separate it from the instructions. Instructions, of course, do NOT appear. Notice also that bold letters in the source document do NOT appear as bold letters on the webpage ... unless you enter instructions to that effect in the source code.

The Start Instruction for the link contains the URL address of the source document to which you are linking. The first part is the university server address (www3.agu.ac.jp). This is followed by folders nested within folders. Vincent Ssali is a full-time teacher with a folder for his website (~vicks62) on the AGU server. Now that I am retired, I have moved the core of my website into a folder on his site (jeffreyb). Within the jeffreyb folder is a source document (contact.html) with my contact information and another folder (research) for source documents concerning my research activities, including an index page (index.html). The source documents are text files, but could just as easily be image files, audio files, or video files.

As a final touch to your profile, you might want to insert a photo. Image files for photos and all other digital images, even those that are embedded in

a webpage have their own URL address on the Internet. Their filename is the last part of the address and ends in an extension (.gif or .jpg depending on the format). Start Instructions for image links will locate, download, and embed the image into any webpages that contain those links. The source code also controls the horizontal and vertical dimensions of the embedded image.

Source Document	Webpage
<pre><html> <center> </center> </html></pre>	

Example 3: Image linked to a different image

The photo (newBlair.jpg) in this example, is linked to an older photo of a younger me (Blair.gif). Students that click on the embedded newBlair photo will see Blair.gif as a bare image, with the size and proportions dictated by the image file itself (not the link). Embedded photos are quite often linked to their own source document, thus producing the photo in its original size (usually larger) and proportions.

Once you have uploaded your mini-web to a server, you may think that you have reached the “top”. In a sense, you have. Sadly, this IS as far as the few teachers that have websites typically get, a tiny cul-de-sac on the World Wide Web. Check it out: (1) ask your colleagues if they have a website and then (2) try accessing them. Do any webpages appear in a Google search? Near the top? What keywords will bring them to the top page? Soon you will come to realize

that these websites have only scratched the surface of their potential use in education.

The power of the World Wide Web is in its external links, transforming websites into launchpads. You have complete freedom to link the images and text on your webpages to the full range of files on the Internet: text files, image files, audio files, and video files.

Superhighway or Copy Machine?

The Internet is often described as an Information Superhighway. Indeed, it is. Yet it is important to note that the information speeding down the many branches of this highway consists of copies of computer files. In other words, “the World Wide Web is both a *decentralized* digital library ... and a *global copy machine* (Blair, 2006, 212).” The Superhighway distributes digital copies of text, image, audio, and video files from servers to computers all over the world. People do NOT actually visit a website or webpage. They get copies of the blueprints, the computer files that produce whatever they see and hear on their computer. Those source documents remain on their computer for some time. The sights and sounds are reconstructed from the documents whenever users click on the related links or icons.

Many webmasters intentionally restrict the links on their site to internal links. They want to keep their “visitors” from wandering off the reservation to other websites. Most educators, on the other hand, are trying to expand each student’s world and broaden their outlook. “Expand your world through English” was an advertising slogan that we used at the Y.M.C.A. It would seem natural then to use external links to launch ourselves, our colleagues, and our students into cyberspace ... to get us outside of our Ivory Towers.

Before we leave our Ivory Towers, however, let's explore the tower itself, the university website. A great deal of information is stored on each university's website. Navigating such large sites and accessing the information that *you want* can be a problem for you and for your students, maybe even for some of your colleagues. The solution, however, is simple ... create links to that information from a prominent location on your website.

One website that teachers at Aichi Gakuin University often use is called WebCampus III. I became familiar with it during the spring term of 2020. Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, all three of our campuses were closed. My only contact with students was to send weekly messages to each class via WebCampus. Their classwork came back as responses to those messages. Regular use made me keenly aware of its many functions in an increasingly paperless working environment. Teachers now use it to post syllabi, office hours, and grades. The university uses it for a wide range of announcements, including the lists of students in each class and the results of students' class evaluations. Teachers respond to the evaluations by posting their comments online.

I have two main pages on my Webfolder: (1) the Webfolder Index and (2) Online English Lessons. They both come up at the top of a Google search for "jeffreyb", making them excellent locations for links that provide quick access to useful webpages. My students bookmark the Online Lessons and use them every week. I have placed a link to the Top Page of WebCampus III underneath those Lessons. On my Webfolder Index I have placed links to some useful information, including (a) the Meitetsu bus schedule between Fujigaoka and the Nisshin Campus and (b) faculty introductions for the Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences(教養部)and for the Faculty of Letters(文学部). These shortcuts alleviate the need to navigate a convoluted maze of links from the Top Page of the AGU website to that information.

Links to Academic Papers

Various systems of citation have been developed for printed publications to give credit to original work and to help readers to go back to original sources. Anyone who wishes to track down and verify academic source material goes from the in-text cite to the full-text citation in a reference section at the back of a book or the end of an article, just a matter of flipping pages. Then they must locate the publication itself, ordering it or finding it in some library. This presents a much greater challenge. Links on webpages can streamline this process. Let's start by considering a list of publications like the ones posted on most university teachers' websites.

At Aichi Gakuin Junior College (later the Junior College Division of AG University) I published articles in *The Faculty Journal*. It came out annually and copies were distributed to university libraries all over Japan, where, I suspect, they only gather dust. Hoping to increase my readership, attract some interest, and maybe even get some feedback, I posted the full texts on webpages in my Research Folder. A link from the word "Research" near the top of the Website Index led to the folder's index page, which listed my publications. The title of each article was then linked to its full text. People from the four corners of the Earth were able to read the articles and respond. A Russian linguist, for example, was thrilled to find that I had discussed "interlanguage". Her colleagues, it seems, had never heard the term. These kinds of keywords buried in webpage texts get picked up by search engines such as Google and Yahoo.

The Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences(教養部) has two faculty journals. The present article is in the one devoted to language issues. The volumes of *Foreign Languages & Literature* since 2005 have been posted on the AGU website. I no longer have to post the full text of my articles. My department has already done that. I simply link the titles on my Research index page to the

department's Goken Kiyō webpage. Unfortunately the Junior College Library only posts the index page of each volume of its faculty journal on the Internet. I have, nonetheless, linked the volume numbers of my junior college article from my Research index to those index pages.

Source Document	Webpage
<pre><html> <p>Blair (2023). Do-It-Yourself Websites. Foreign Languages & Literature, 48/1, pp. 31–54. <p>Blair (2003). <u>Research and Process Writing</u>. The Faculty Journal, 11, pp. 94-106. </html></pre>	<p>Blair (2023). <u>Do-It-Yourself Websites</u>. <u>Foreign Languages & Literature</u>, 48/1, pp. 31–54.</p> <p>Blair (2003). <u>Research and Process Writing</u>. <u>The Faculty Journal</u>, 11, pp. 94-106.</p>

Example 4: Links from references to university publications

I encourage all university teachers to create similar links from reference sections and in-text citations in their lectures and publications to any source material on the World Wide Web. The bottleneck in this instantaneous system of citation is the infinitesimal number of teachers that have websites with links to their publications.

Like a Global PowerPoint Presentation with Links

Now let's return to the classroom and teaching materials. Teachers often supplement whatever textbook they are using with short presentations and

handouts. PowerPoint has become immensely popular for both business and educational presentations. As an alternative to PowerPoint you can post outlines or the text of your presentations on webpages. That way they are available to you and your students anytime, anywhere. They can be projected onto classroom screens or viewed on computer tablets or cellphones. You can print them up to pass out to students and, if they lose them or just lose track of them, they themselves can print out replacements. You can link your texts to informative webpages, such as Wikipedia (see Blair, 2008). You can use hyperlinks to import images, change the dimensions to fit the size you want, and embed them in the text. This is exactly what the World Wide Web was designed to do.

To link or not to link that is the question! Competent webmasters know how to restrict access to the webpages, images, and other files on their website. They can, and some do, prevent links to some pages directly, because they prefer people enter at a top page and then navigate using the links provided on their site. Teachers at Aichi Gakuin University can link to WebCampus III, for example, and (after entering our passwords) proceed to specific pages. We cannot, however, link directly to those same pages.

For many, perhaps the vast majority, of us teachers the purpose of having a website is to distribute information and ideas as far and as wide as possible. We love to have people bookmark and link to our pages. The more links the better. A great number of links may even push some of our webpages to the top of a search on Google, Yahoo, and other search engines. We understand and accept the true nature of the World Wide Web, that it is a global copy machine.

Link Permission

Linking to webpages seldom presents any problems. The use of images, including photographic images, on the other hand, is a very delicate matter (see Blair 2006 for a detailed discussion). Some webmasters obtain permission to use photos or works of art on their site, yet fail to take any precautions that would protect them from being copied. The computer of anyone who views a webpage with that image, of course, has downloaded a digital copy of it (the image file). Modern computers allow users to produce an icon and save the image simply by clicking on the image and dragging it to a folder or the desktop. The webmaster and the artist have then, in effect, lost control of the image, because these copies can easily be uploaded to servers or attached to e-mails.

Photographers, artists, and the webmasters that see one of their images embedded in your webpage might react as though you had “stolen” it, thinking that you had uploaded a copy to your server. It may be difficult for them to realize that the copy that they see on your webpage is on *their* computer (stored separately from the source document for your webpage) and was distributed by *their* server. Even after that realization sinks in, they might accuse you of “stealing” their bandwidth. The solution is simple ... remove the link.

Here are several steps that you can and should take to avoid any suspicion of wrongdoing and assure people that you are a responsible webmaster. (1) When you find an image on another person’s website that you want to link, look for an e-mail address. Send them a message requesting permission to link. (2) At the bottom of your webpages, post the URL addresses of all image files that you link and label them either “used with permission” OR “permission pending”. (3) Link the phrase “permission pending” to a webpage that requests permission and explains the non-commercial nature of your website. (4) In a prominent

location on your Top Page(s), post a request for people to contact you directly with any questions, comments, or *criticisms*. (5) If anyone does criticize a link to one of their webpages ... remove it promptly and notify them that you have done so.

Source Document	Webpage
<pre> <html> <center>Links</center> <p>Images—Used with Permission
www.xyzgallery.com/...
Images—Permission Pending
www.abcgallery.com/... </html> </pre>	<p style="text-align: center;">Links</p> <p>Images—Used with Permission www.abcgallery.com/...</p> <p>Images—<u>Permission Pending</u> www.abcgallery.com/...</p>

Example 5: With permission OR permission pending (with link)

On the Lists of Questions mentioned above (page 33), I often tried to include a few links to interesting webpages that had related information. If the webpage also contained some images, I would make a point of embedding one of them in my webpage in order to form a pair of links: one to the image and another to the webpage. The main problem with links to external webpages is that “they go dead without any visible sign of their demise” (Blair, 2011, 136). Indirect links, like those to a webpage (see Example 2 above), are activated only when you click on them. Unless you check those links on a regular basis, you cannot be sure that they still work. The source document may have been moved, removed, or renamed. Direct links to embedded images, on the other hand, are activated whenever you open the related webpage. Unless the link has gone dead, the images appear automatically. An empty image tells you that something is

wrong (Blair, 2006, 212), that you should check all links to that website and, if necessary, repair them. If they cannot be fixed, then you can remove them.

In 2002 I expanded my website to include students' work for a seminar class (Blair, 2003). I taught second year junior college students to locate information from multiple sources on the Internet, to synthesize the information into a coherent report, and to communicate their findings to a world-wide audience by posting it on a webpage. Their in-text citations were linked to the original sources of information (external webpages). If they could find a suitable image from the same website, we embedded it in their report. Full citations in their reference section contained authors' names, the date the webpages were posted (or last updated), and titles. Those titles were linked to the webpages. Underneath the reference section came a list of image links separated into the two sections described above: used with permission OR permission pending.

I would help students request permission to use the images and send the requests from my own e-mail account or by posting a letter. The most common reaction was no reply. Those links remained in Permission Pending. Only a few webmasters declined the request for permission, for a variety of reasons. The reasons were interesting and some quite unexpected. The owner of a website called Photographs of the Day was posting photographs that had been donated, and he wanted to protect the photographers' property rights. I cut all my links, but the fact that I (or anyone else) could link to the photos demonstrates that they were, and I assume remain, completely unprotected. Another webmaster felt it would be too troublesome to keep track of who he had given permission to and how those images were being used. The website of a world-famous cartoon character stated that written permission was required, so I wrote ... only to be informed that permission was *never* given. The company representative did not include in his reply any warning or denial of the request, instead he seemed completely unconcerned about a link. It seemed the requirement for

written authorization was simply a formulaic addition meant to preserve the company's standing to sue in a court of law if any outside entity profited from use of the image. A dolphin expert at another website was willing to allow links to images on his website but noted that the image in the student's report was of a different species from the one she was writing about. I cut the link and explained the problem to my student. Yet another webmaster suggested that I copy his image and upload it to my university server, rather than link it. I explained to him the reason I preferred an image link to taking full possession of the image. The direct link provides a visible warning that corresponding indirect links have been broken.

Making Grammar Patterns and Meaning Visible

At the beginning of the third millennium two new platforms made their debuts on the World Wide Web: Wikipedia in January 2001 and YouTube in February 2005. They have brought a massive amount of new content to the Internet and encouraged free linking to their resources. Wikipedia maintains the high quality of its text and images through a flexible and chaotic editing process. YouTube takes a much more *laissez-faire* attitude, but the algorithm for its search engine tends to push higher quality content towards the top. This gives educators new powerful tools to replace dictionaries, flashcards, and grammar books—the traditional tools used to transform English vocabulary into meaning for foreign students.

Standard **dictionary definitions** provide short, awkward explanations of individual words. When space is available, the inclusion of even a few pictures and sample sentences greatly helps elucidate their meaning and usage. Unlike printed media Wikipedia does not have to worry about space. Lengthy articles

can be subdivided and linked together, or to other related articles. Images can be sized down and embedded, then blown up with a click to reveal more detail. Similar Wikipedia articles in several languages are also just a click away.

Grammar rules are often equally obscure, unless they include a liberal dose of sample phrases and sentences. Vocabulary study books with sample phrases and sentences that include their translations (see Blair, 2020) are probably the most effective printed materials available to Japanese students. Hyperlinks to YouTube videos allows written phrases and sentences to be translated to visual images rather than written words in the student's language. In other words, the direct visual association between (a) written nouns and (b) objects represented by **flash cards** has been expanded to include the actions described in sentences. Flash cards can be replaced by **flash videos**.

Source Document	Webpage
<pre><html> <p>A family went on a long trip.
The children played a simple game. </html></pre>	<p>A family <u>went</u> on a long trip.</p> <p>The children <u>played</u> a simple game.</p>

Example 6: Links from text to a YouTube video

The YouTube video in Example 6 has been linked to the verbs of a pair of sentences. This emphasizes the central role of verbs in the meaning and the structure of sentences. The video is 32 minutes and 55 seconds long in its entirety. The two links take students to specific locations within the video: (a) one at 3 minutes and 40 seconds (in the middle of the family's trip) and (b) the

other thirteen seconds later (when the game begins).

Now recall my mention of the oral drills that I used at the Nagoya Y.M.C.A. English School. The sentences used in the drills provided a grammatical context for vocabulary and reinforcement of important sentence patterns. Yet a rich story context could greatly have aided retention of the material, especially if it had been supplemented with the visual imagery available using videos.

Micro-Patterns within Macro-Patterns: A 4|X Framework

English sentences (and those of the vast majority of written languages) are written as a linear sequence of words. It seems reasonable, therefore, to consider how best to remember linear sequences. Take, for example, the following sequence of selected numbers from 1 to 13.

1 3 5 6 8 10 12 13

This is not just an arbitrary pattern. It occurs in music: a major scale. You can play a C major scale on the B string of a guitar with one finger by pressing these frets. It is perhaps easier to remember the pattern if you break it down into three 4-fret parts. Placing your index finger on the first fret, you press 1 and 3 (ring finger). Then move the index finger to the fifth fret and press 1, 2 (middle finger), and 4 (pinky). Finally, you move the index finger to the tenth fret and press 1, 3, and 4. Instead of remembering these eight positions, you can reduce the cognitive load on your memory by remembering three positions and three finger patterns.

1 3 // 1 2 4 // 1 3 4

There is an additional advantage, flexibility. You can recombine the parts into several different patterns. Two of the three patterns can be used to generate a minor scale.

1 3 4 // 1 3 4 // 1 3

The three patterns can also be rearranged to generate an Andalusian scale.

1 2 4 // 1 3 4 // 1 3

As an added benefit for guitar players, the three patterns can be played on three adjacent strings, allowing the hand to remain stationary and each finger to be assigned to a single fret. The pattern for a C major scale would look like this, with the index finger (1) assigned to the fifth fret on the G, B, and high E strings.

	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	frets
E	1		3	4	
B	1	2		4	
G	1		3		

Three finger patterns played on 3 strings

Likewise the sequence of words within a sentence is arranged in small (micro) patterns within the larger (macro) pattern (Blair, 2014, 109–112). This can be visually displayed (see next page) in a table with four columns (4☒).

Source Document			
<pre> <html> <center><table width=90% border=1 cellspacing=3 cellpadding=5> <th colspan=4>4☒ Sentences</th> <tr align=center> <td width=22%>S ☒</td><td width=22%>V ☒</td> <td width=22%>O/C ☒</td><td width=22%>+A ☒</td> <tr align=center> <td>A family</td><td>went</td><td>&nbsp;</td> <td>on a long trip
by car.</td> <tr align=center> <td>The two children</td><td>played</td><td>a simple game</td> <td>along the way.</td> </tr></table></center> </html> </pre>			

Webpage			
4☒ Sentences			
S ☒	V ☒	O/C ☒	+A ☒
A family	went		on a long trip by car.
The two children	played	a simple game	along the way.

Example 7: A table that illustrates grammar patterns

The words and phrases within the framework of the table can, of course, be linked just like any other text. You can emphasize certain words or even letters by putting them in italics and/or bold print. You can, in addition, accent certain parts of the 4☒ framework with background colors. I often use a white background for tables to make them stand out from the light gray (#dedede) background of my webpages (easier on the eyes than bright white). For headings I use a light blue (#ceffff) background, except for the V☒ slot. To emphasize

the central role of this slot, I use a bright yellow (#ffff00) background. The six-digit code for html colors, by the way, is written in hexadecimal. Each two digits from 00 to ff represent the intensity of each primary color (red, green, and blue) used in additive mixing. The details are beyond the scope of this paper, which is being printed in black and white. For more information and to see the colors themselves, please go to www3.agu.ac.jp/~vicks62/jeffreyb/color.html.

When webpages are printed in color the background colors are ignored and printed as white. If, however, you copy a webpage and paste it into a document those colors will be preserved. When you print the document, the colors will appear. This copy-and-paste procedure also provides a great way for you to insert tables into your printed materials.

Going Global, Going Paperless

During the spring term of 2020 our campuses were closed, because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. I was not able to talk to my students in person OR live online. My only contact with them was to send weekly messages. I decided to write up a lecture each week and post it on my website. In the Fall term my students were back in the classroom. I continued to revise and to use the lectures in class along with adlibbed comments. Sometimes I inserted notes into the lectures and wrote them out fully at a later date. Using the share function on Microsoft Teams, I was able to show each day's lecture to online students and simultaneously project it onto a screen at the front of the room. If students had trouble seeing the screen, they have been able to read the lecture on their cellphones, tablets, and laptops. When class was over, they could go to the webpage to review the lesson. Every lecture included a description of the day's practice activities (the lesson plan following the lecture). The lecture

and follow-up activities have all been completely transparent and available to students and the cyber-public twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. When students have had questions, I was able to refer them to information on my website.

At present academic-oriented websites (except for Wikipedia and standard reference materials) are a tiny, balkanized collection of cul-de-sacs in cyberspace. Even with the power of a search engine, locating what you want is often like searching for a needle in a haystack of printed trivia and self-advertising. Audiovisual lectures on a myriad of topics, on the other hand, are readily available, TED Talks being perhaps the best known. YouTube has accumulated an astounding collection of interviews and lectures. I have been particularly interested in the advice of English teachers and polyglots (Blair, 2016). One of my webpages (www3.agu.ac.jp/~vicks62/jeffreyb/SLA.html) summarizes ideas that I think may be of value to eager students and overworked colleagues: advice about learning a foreign language that can energize them. The click of a hyperlink can bring guest speakers with a diversity of viewpoints into classrooms, providing inquiring minds food for thought.

For hundreds of years academia had relied on books and libraries to preserve the ideas of mortal human beings. The Internet gives us a more flexible space where ideas can reproduce, mutate, and flourish just as any biological species does ... a process of competition and evolution.

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Points of Contact

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