

# ENHANCING LANGUAGE LEARNING WITH THE GONG WEB VOICE SYSTEM

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The paper introduces the Gong system. It is a web-based voice communication tool. At a basic level of operation, it allows people to communicate using text and voice over the Internet. People such as students and teachers can participate in different discussion boards in the system. Inside these boards they can leave text and voice messages and they can also listen to and reply to messages from other people on the boards. In addition, groups of participants can talk to each other using real-time text and voice chat. The whole or part of the chat conversation can be recorded, which means others can listen to or reply to the conversation after the chat is finished.

The system offers great assistance to language learners with its advanced features such as selective word/phrase playback, voice speed-up and voice slow-down. Given an English voice message and its transcript, the system allows people to play a single word or a phrase by simply selecting the word(s). The speed of the voice playback can be adjusted based on a words-per-minute measure. Language learners can evaluate their own listening comprehension by changing the number of words spoken per minute.

Apart from English the system also supports the input, display and storage of various languages such as Traditional and

Simplified Chinese, Japanese and more. Different languages can be shown alongside each other in the same text message. In addition, the system supports the Chinese Mandarin Pinyin and Chinese Cantonese Yale romanization systems. People can easily insert one of these two romanized forms of Chinese words within any text message.

The Gong client software can be used as a standalone program and/or as a component on a web page, and therefore works within any learning management system (LMS). It allows basic integration with various LMSs such as Moodle, which is an open source LMS. The system startup parameters can be used to configure the appearance, interface language, user logon information and course. When being used as a component in a web page, the system provides an easy-to-use scripting interface for real-time communication between the web page and the Gong component. The component can be hidden so that users do not know it is present. As a result, any LMS can use the Gong component to enhance its functionality with the various features offered by Gong.