



Program	MindGame
School	Lexis Language Learning Centre Granada Spain



School profile

Lexis is a language school with 400 students, 80% of whom are under 18, mostly teenagers. The school has seven networked computers in the self access centre and two more which are wheeled between classes. MindGame was first installed in the self access centre in January 2000.

MindGame review:

Jacqui Williamson, the Director of Studies, chose MindGame for the school and explains how the program is being used...

"The self access centre used to be stocked with paper-based materials including 3,000 self-correcting exercises, but we found that our students don't like doing things on paper. The computer has a tremendous attraction and they will spend far longer on a computer-based activity than they will on paper-based exercises. We therefore decided to give much more prominence to electronic materials.

"The students spend one lesson every three weeks in the self access centre and we focus on three areas: information search where we use the Internet; we have Tense Buster for grammar; and for vocabulary we chose MindGame. MindGame of course also helps with aspects of grammar.

"Teachers use the program in different ways. Most of them tend to use MindGame for consolidation of the areas they have been working on in class. (For example, if they have been teaching the simple past, they refer students to MindGame Lower Intermediate where they can revise the simple past of irregular verbs.) I prefer to use the program to preview what I am going to use in the next class. So, rather than use it to revise irregular verbs, I will use MindGame to pre-teach them.

"Students love MindGame. Actually, given that the program is quite repetitive, it amazes me how much they love it and for just how long they will play it! We ask them to play against each other rather than against the computer - the result is a brilliant silence in the computer room and it is clear that very earnest learning is taking place.

"We haven't done any serious studies on learning outcomes from MindGame, but I know that they learn a tremendous amount. The computer allows students to work at their own pace which leaves the teacher free to go round and help students with particular problems. In a normal class there is a risk of losing the students at the top and the bottom while you concentrate on the bulk of students in the middle. With MindGame you can cater for all students by setting activities appropriate to their level.



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"I haven't yet used the authoring, but I am now thinking of doing so. I want to help students with phrasal verbs, so I'm going to create a game with phrasal verbs on one side and non-phrasal equivalents on the other. Another area teachers have been asking for in MindGame is sentence-level activities. I have therefore suggested to teachers that they use the authoring component, but they tell me that they don't have time. In fact, I think that it is quicker to create an activity in MindGame than it is to make a paper-based worksheet - but there is a psychological barrier to overcome.

"I believe that, in general, interest in authoring is growing. I run a teacher-training course at the University of Granada and teachers have told me that in the next semester they would like to focus on authoring, so I'll definitely get to grips with MindGame authoring before then!"

MindGame is so popular at Lexis that after two years students had completely worn out the CD-Rom, and the school had to write to Clarity for a replacement!

Many thanks to Jacqui Williamson of Lexis Language Learning for sharing her experiences of MindGame with us.
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