

# BabelChat

## Structured Chatroom Usage in First-Year German Classes

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# Objectives

1. Design Internet chatroom as an interactive, communicative, contextualized writing activity for proficiency oriented first-year foreign language classes.
2. Use the chatroom in first-year foreign language classes and conduct research about its effectiveness.

# Overview

## Language Pedagogy

*BabelChat*, the Foreign-Language Chatroom

Design and Implementation of *BabelChat*

Research in First-Year German Classes

# Language Teaching Methodologies

- Grammar-translation
- Audiolingual method
- drill exercises and memorization
- complete error correction
- teacher-controlled
- Non-traditional methodologies
- lowering anxieties
- communicative, interactive, creative
- language acquisition
- student-centered

# Emphasis on Proficiency

- Help students express their own meaning as early as possible
- Promote active communicative-interaction among students
- Encourage creative language practice
- Use authentic language in instruction

# Emphasis on Proficiency

- Carry out a range of functions encountered in target culture
- Encourage development of accuracy (right error correction strategy and feedback)
- Take students' needs, different personalities, preferences, and learning styles into account
- Promote cultural understanding

# CALL

- Computer Assisted Language Learning
- Instructional, Collaborative, Facilitative  
Tutorial, games, simulations, adventure reading, word processor, dictionary
- Chatroom characteristics
  - Fast, easy communication across the world and cross-platform access
  - interactive and communicative activity, student-centered learning, instructor facilitated not controlled
  - students read, think, write simultaneously; hybrid state (speaking/writing), skill transfer, feedback necessary

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# BabelChat - Requirements

1. Easily accessible on the Web from any type of computer
2. User friendly and easy to learn interface
3. Support for feedback
4. Extensive support for contextualized activities

# BabelChat - Requirements

5. Assistance to students in sentence building
6. Record keeping capabilities with identification of individual students
7. Facilitating instructors administrative efforts with activities and students

# BabelChat - Features and Demonstration

[Start the Demonstration](#)

The demonstration is set up as a writing activity for a first-year German class.

# BabelChat - Features

- BabelChat Web page with Java Applet (1)

# BabelChat - Features

- BabelChat Web page with Java Applet (1)
- Student/Instructor authentication (6)

# BabelChat - Screenshots

**Welcome to the German Chatroom**

 Please login with your chatroom  
nickname and your SSN as password.

Nickname

Password (SSN)

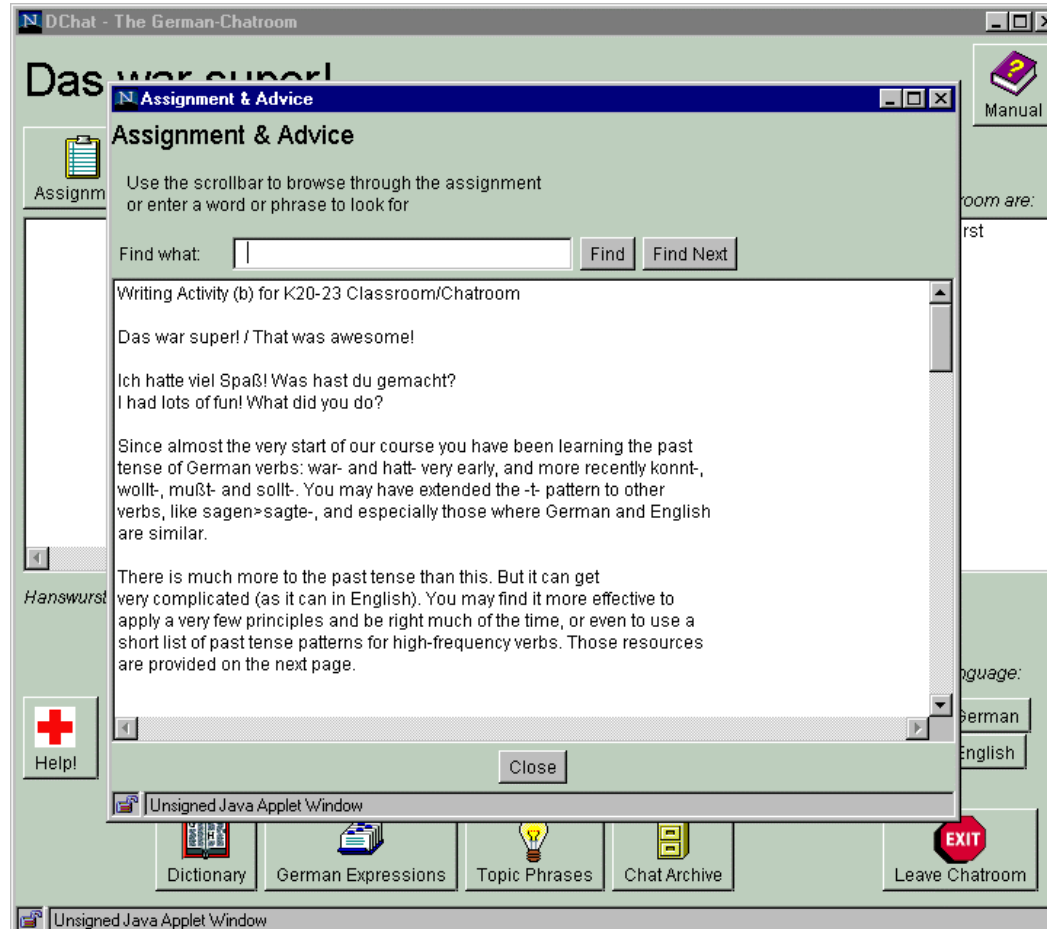
# BabelChat - Screenshots



# BabelChat - Features

- BabelChat Web page with Java Applet (1)
- Student/Instructor authentication (6)
- Support for contextualized activities (4)

# BabelChat - Screenshots



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- Private messages between student and instructor (3)

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# BabelChat - Features

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- Student/Instructor authentication (6)
- Support for contextualized activities (4)
- Private messages between student and instructor (3)
- Support for special characters (2)

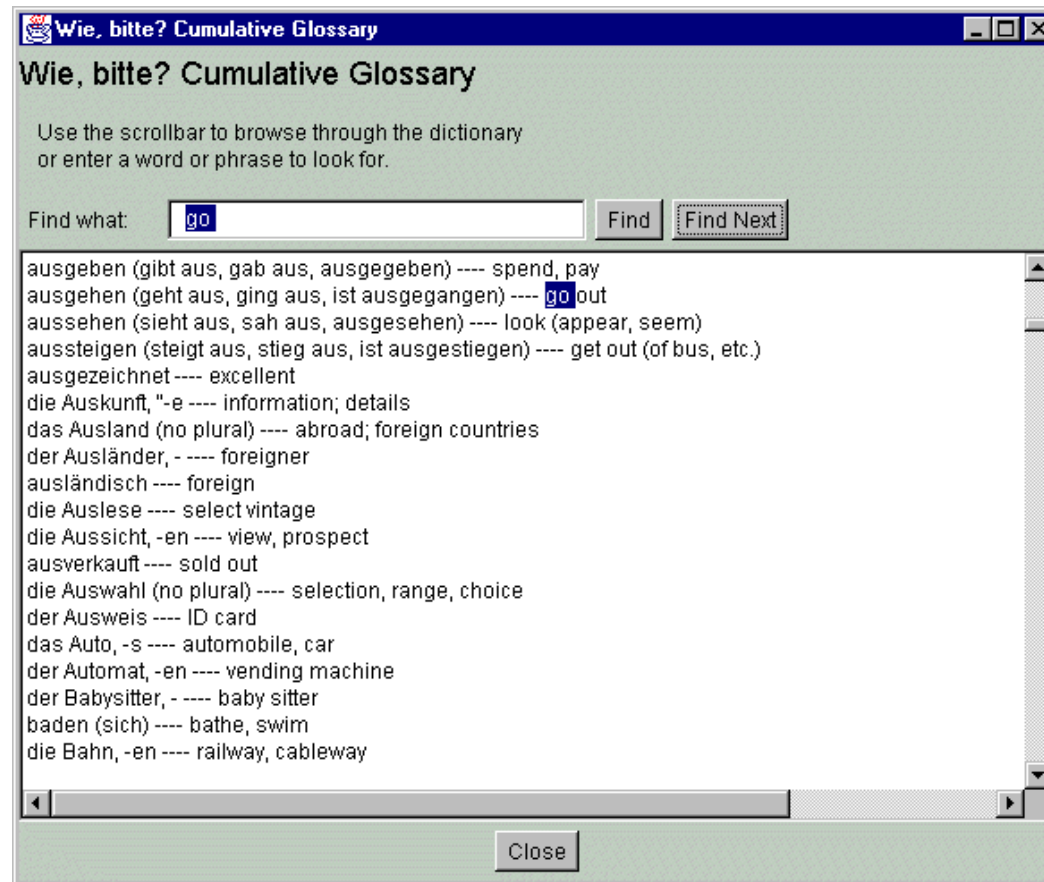
# BabelChat - Features

- BabelChat Web page with Java Applet (1)
- Student/Instructor authentication (6)
- Support for contextualized activities (4)
- Private messages between student and instructor (3)
- Support for special characters (2)
- Localization of screen language (2)

# BabelChat - Features

- On-line dictionary (5)

# BabelChat - Screenshots



# BabelChat - Features

- On-line dictionary (5)
- General foreign language phrase/word list (5)

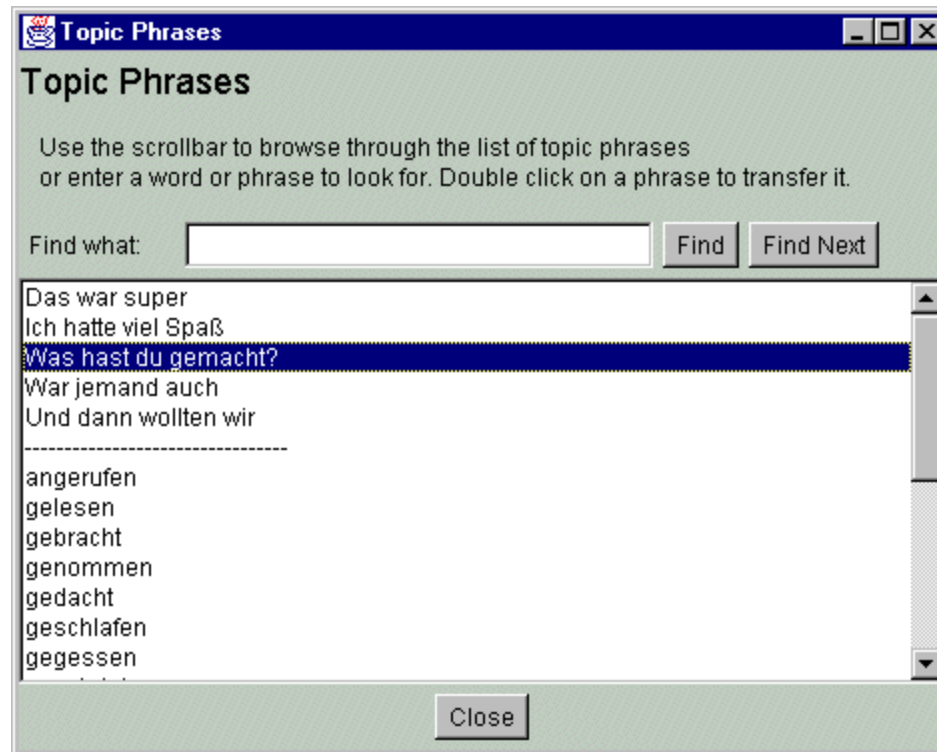
# BabelChat - Screenshots



# BabelChat - Features

- On-line dictionary (5)
- General foreign language phrase/word list (5)
- Special phrase/word list for current activity (4, 5)

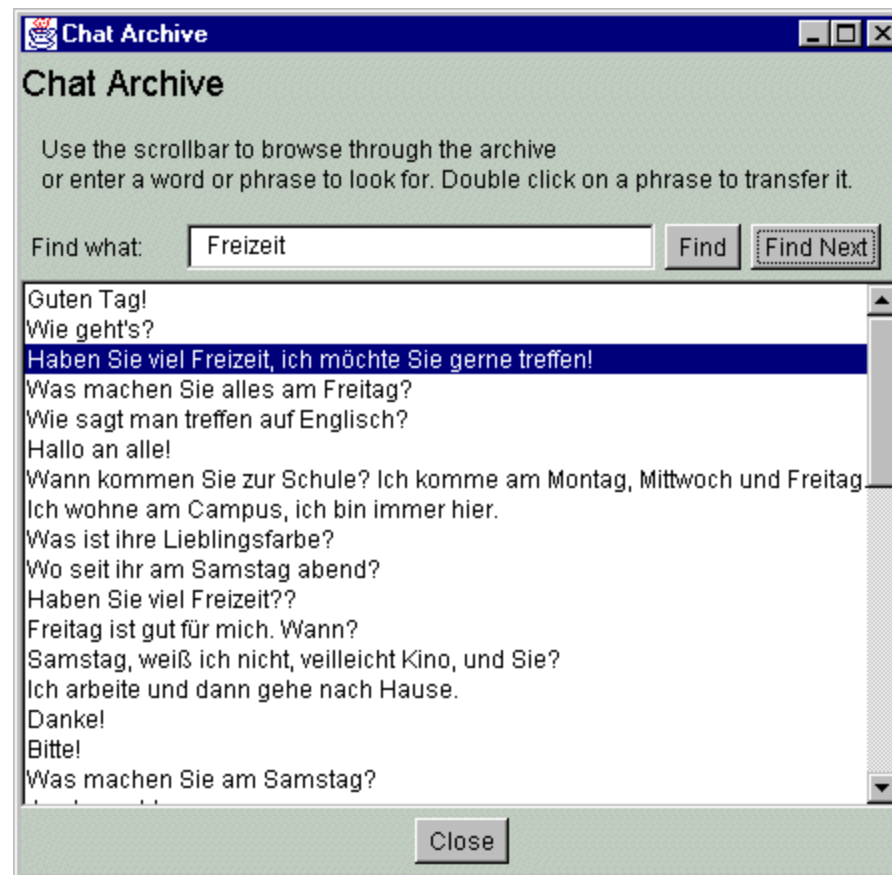
# BabelChat - Screenshots



# BabelChat - Features

- On-line dictionary (5)
- General foreign language phrase/word list (5)
- Special phrase/word list for current activity (4, 5)
- Archive of corrected student writing (5)

# BabelChat - Screenshots



# BabelChat - Features

- On-line dictionary (5)
- General foreign language phrase/word list (5)
- Special phrase/word list for current activity (4, 5)
- Archive of corrected student writing (5)
- Instructor Administration Web Interface (7)

# BabelChat Administration Demo

Babel-Chat - Course Administration - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Freightliner Corporation

File Edit View Go Favorites Help

## BabelChat - Course Administration

Options

- Online Help
- Course Info
- Chat Settings
- User Admin
- Chat Log
- Chat Tools
- Activities
- Log out
- Display Parameters

### Activities

**Current Activity** Topic2  
Going to the restaurant.

The following is a list of all activities that are stored in the course context. You can scroll through the list of activities, set the current activity, create, modify and remove and activity.

All Activities

Find your way through the big city!  
Going to the restaurant.  
Your friend from Germany is coming!  
On your way through Germany.

Set as current Activity    Modify Activity    Remove Activity

   Create New

Matthias Lampe, you have been logged in since Thu Oct 07 14:47:19 PDT 1999.  
Page generated: Thu Oct 07 14:52:24 PDT 1999

# BabelChat Administration Demo

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File Edit View Go Favorites Help

## BabelChat - Course Administration

Options

Online Help

Course Info

Chat Settings

User Admin

Chat Log

Chat Tools

Activities

Log out

Display Parameters

### Edit Activity

**File name** Topic1

**Author** Matthias Lampe, Bill Fischer

**Keywords** Germany Directions City Transportation

**Language Level** Beginner

**Languages** German Spanish French

**Title** Find your way through the big city!

**Description** Discuss with your classmates how to get from your home to school. Explain which means of transportation you take.

**Activity Assignment** Topic1.hints Edit Upload...

**Activity Phrases** Topic1.phrases Edit Upload...

**Activity Checklist** Topic1.checklist Edit Upload...

**Comments** This is a test activity!

Update Information Cancel Undo

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Page generated: Thu Oct 07 14:52:41 PDT 1999

# BabelChat - Features

- On-line dictionary (5)
- General foreign language phrase/word list (5)
- Special phrase/word list for current activity (4, 5)
- Archive of corrected student writing (5)
- Instructor Administration Web Interface (7)
- Chat log for instructor/research analysis (6)

# BabelChat Improvements

- Automated, intelligent chat agent
- Self-assessment tool
- Multiple chatrooms for different groups
- Multi-language support
- Different chat environment (Comic Chat, Chat Circles)

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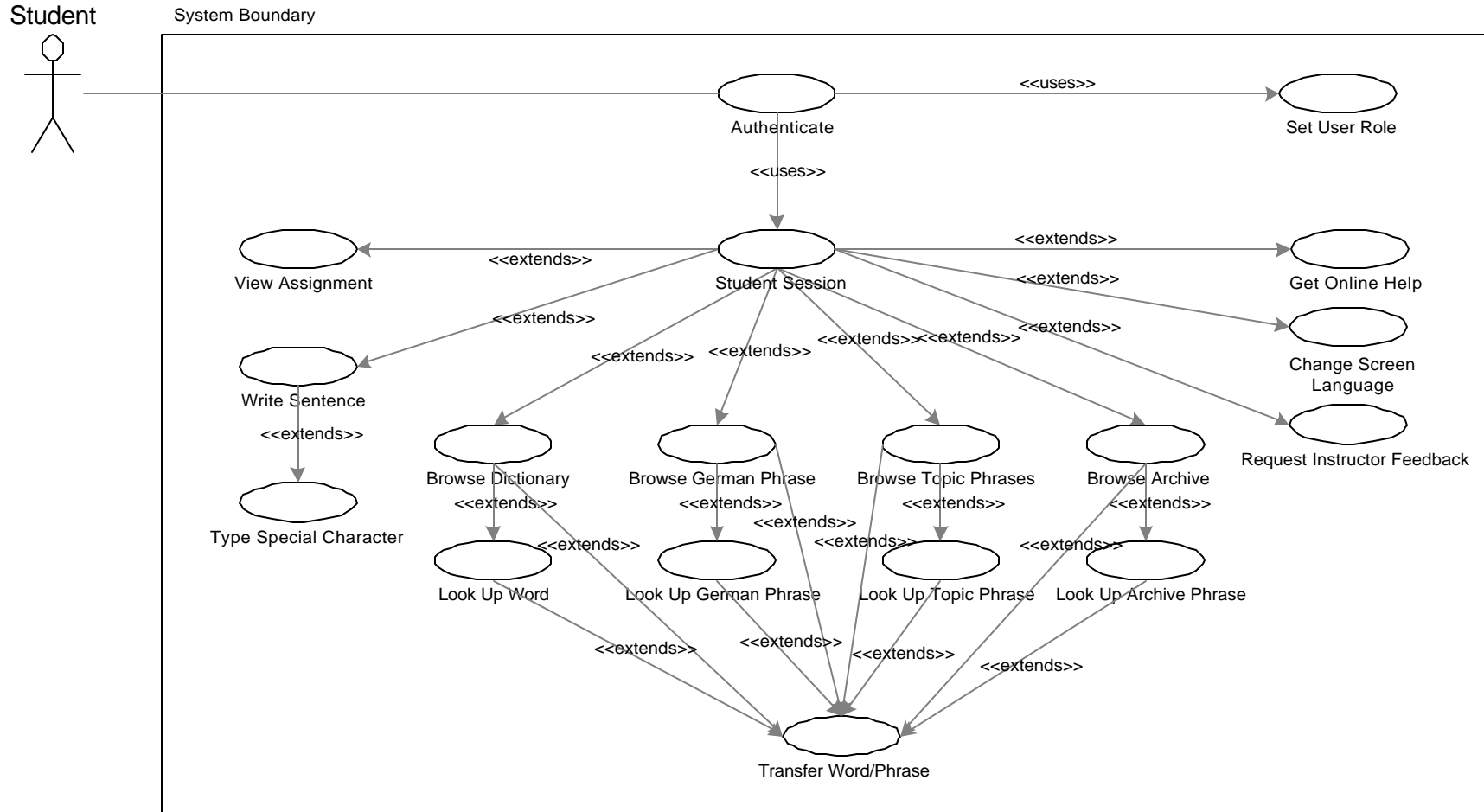
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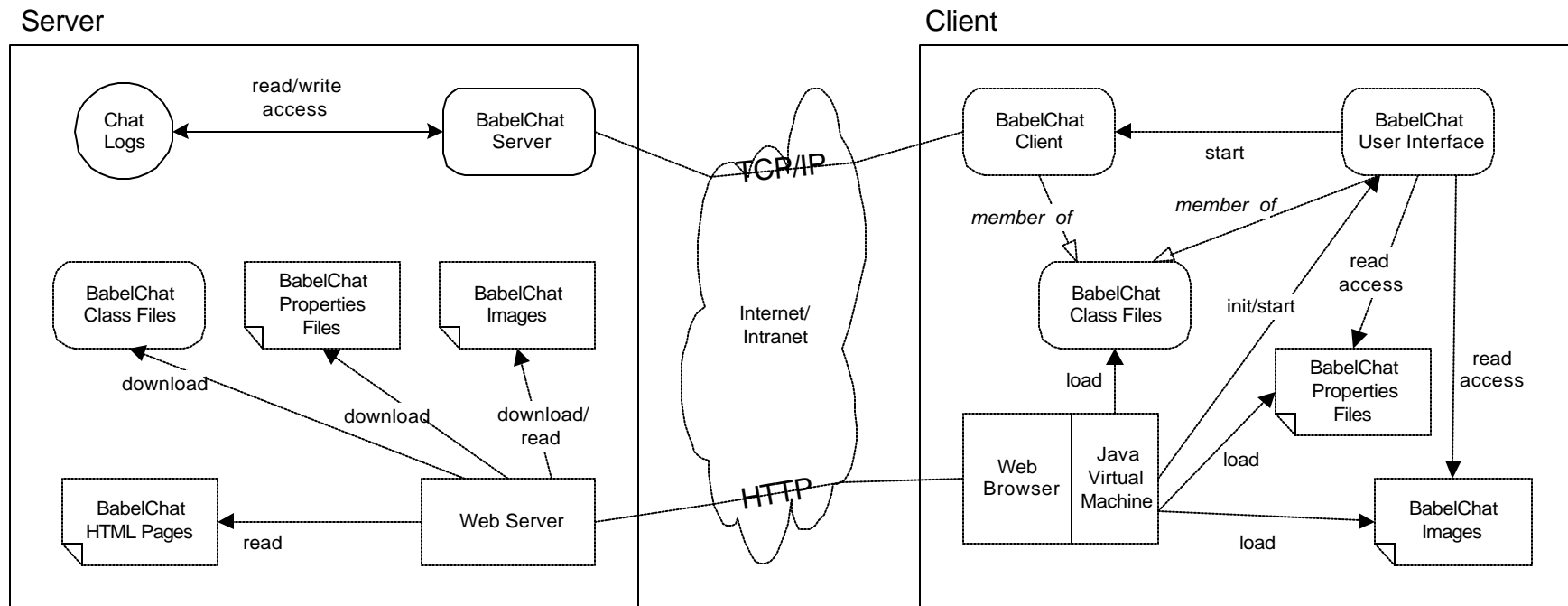
# Technical Feature Overview

- TCP/IP client-server architecture
- Object-oriented design
- Implemented in Java 1.1
- Architecture neutral and portable
- Centrally stored, no installations
- Localization Features

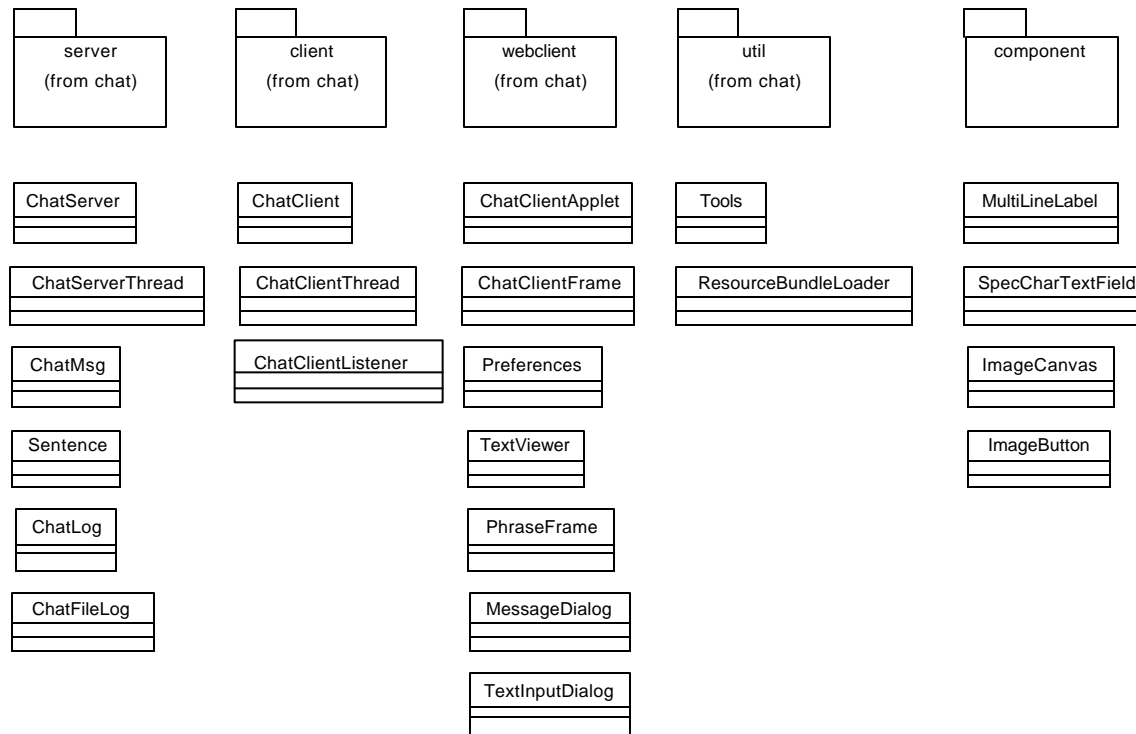
# Use Cases



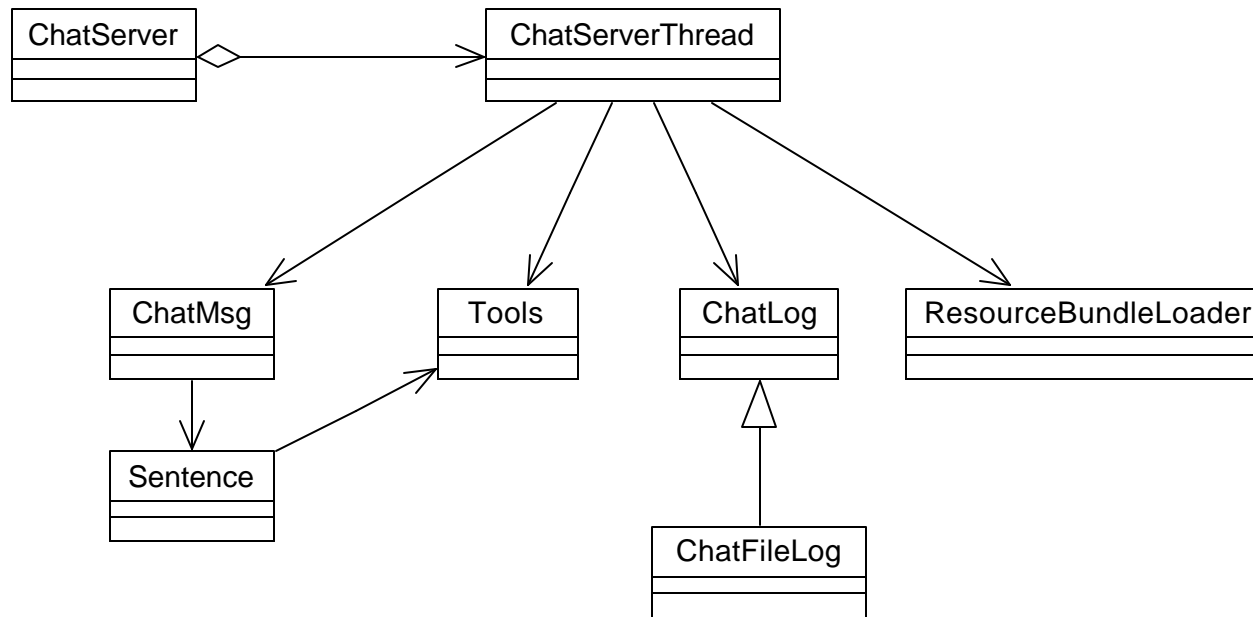
# System Architecture



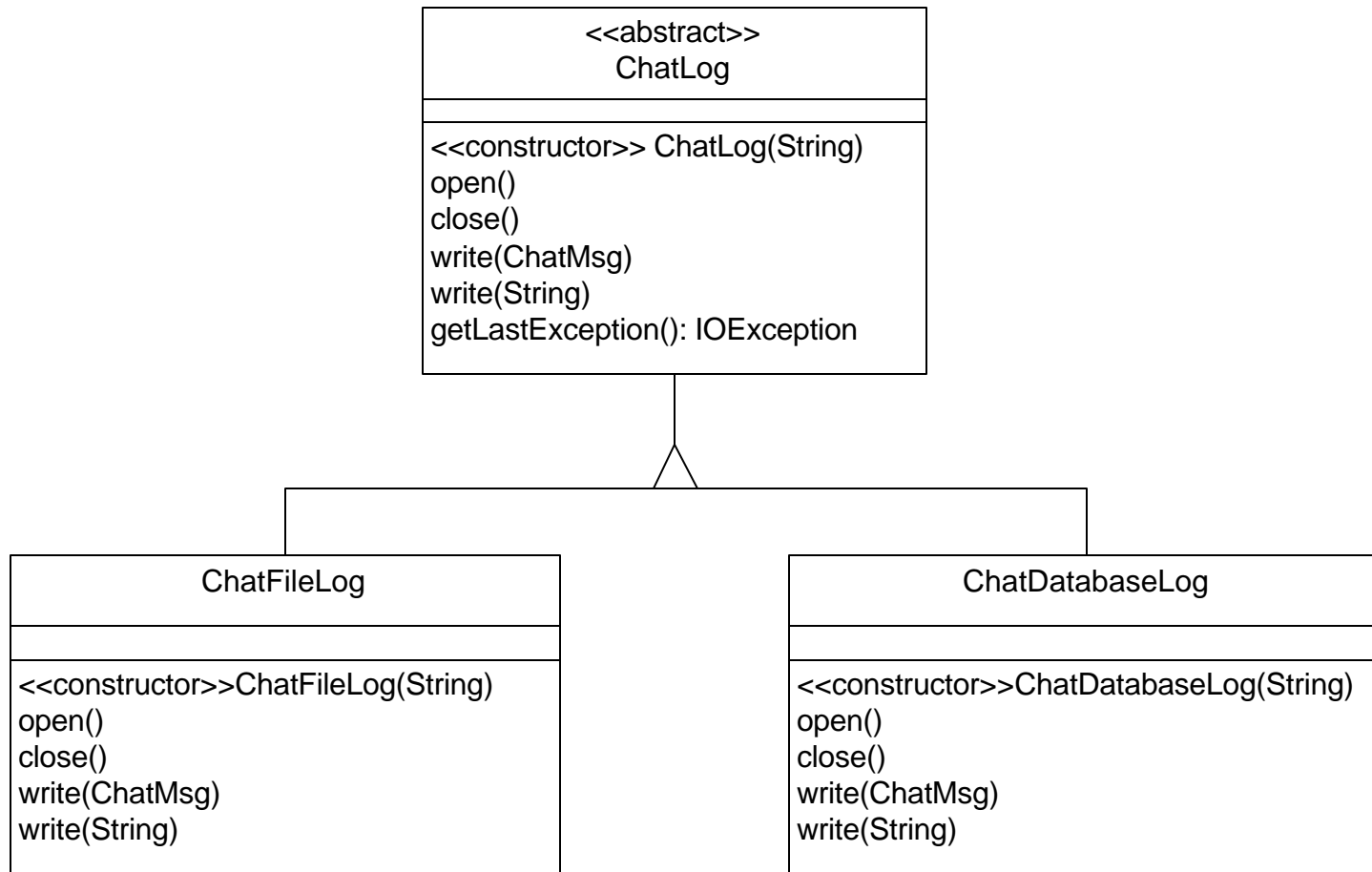
# Packages



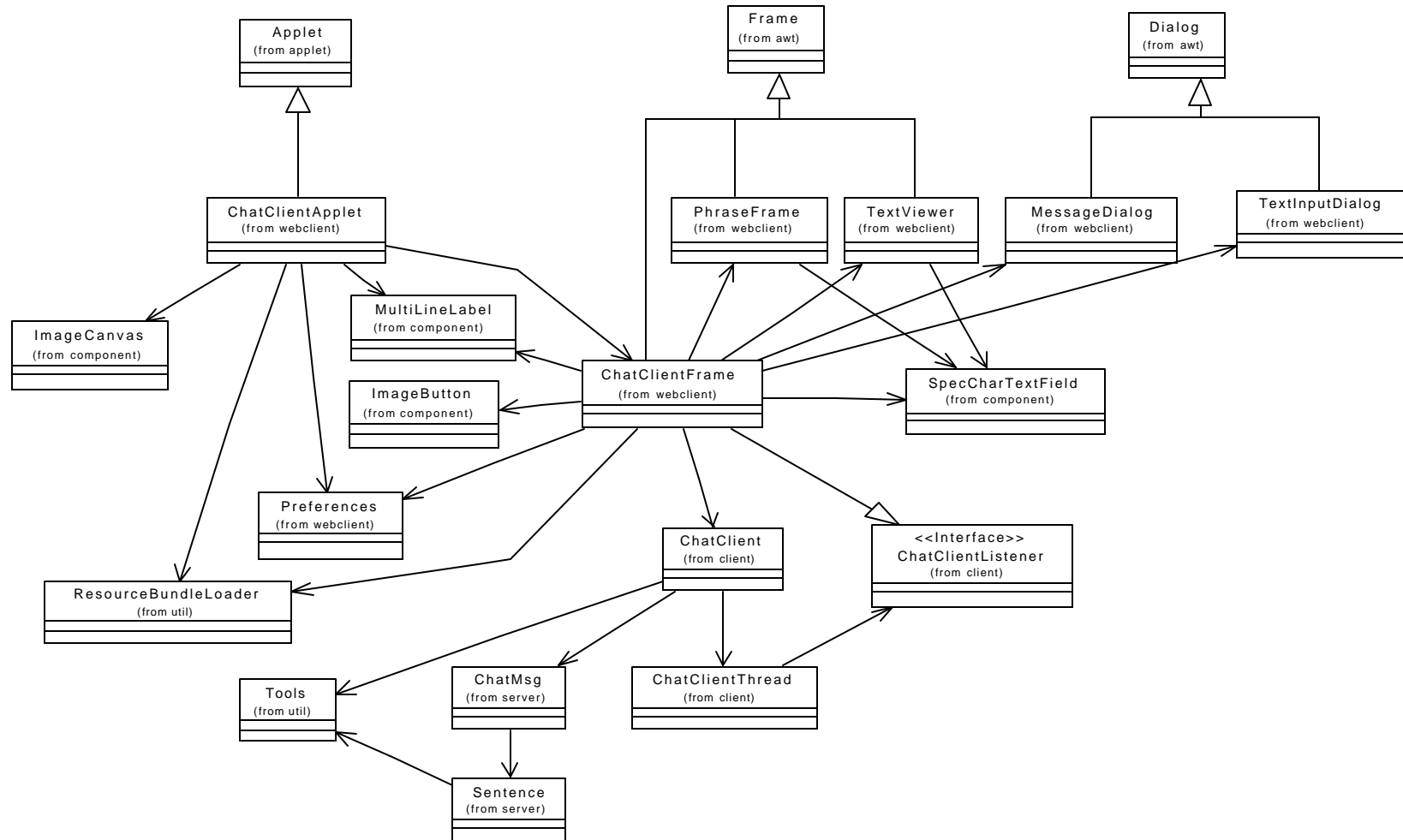
# Class Diagram (Server Side)



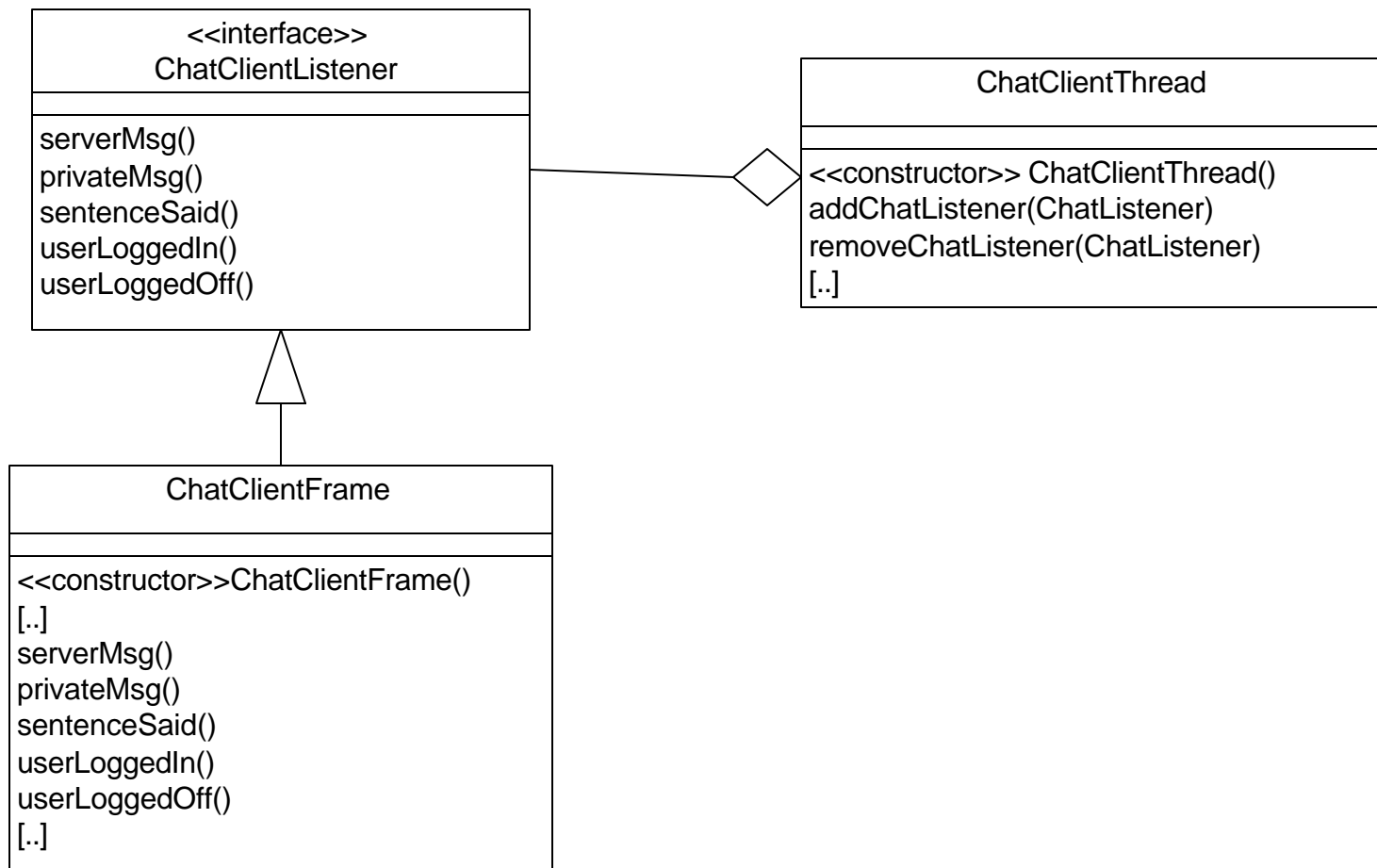
# Abstract *ChatLog* Class



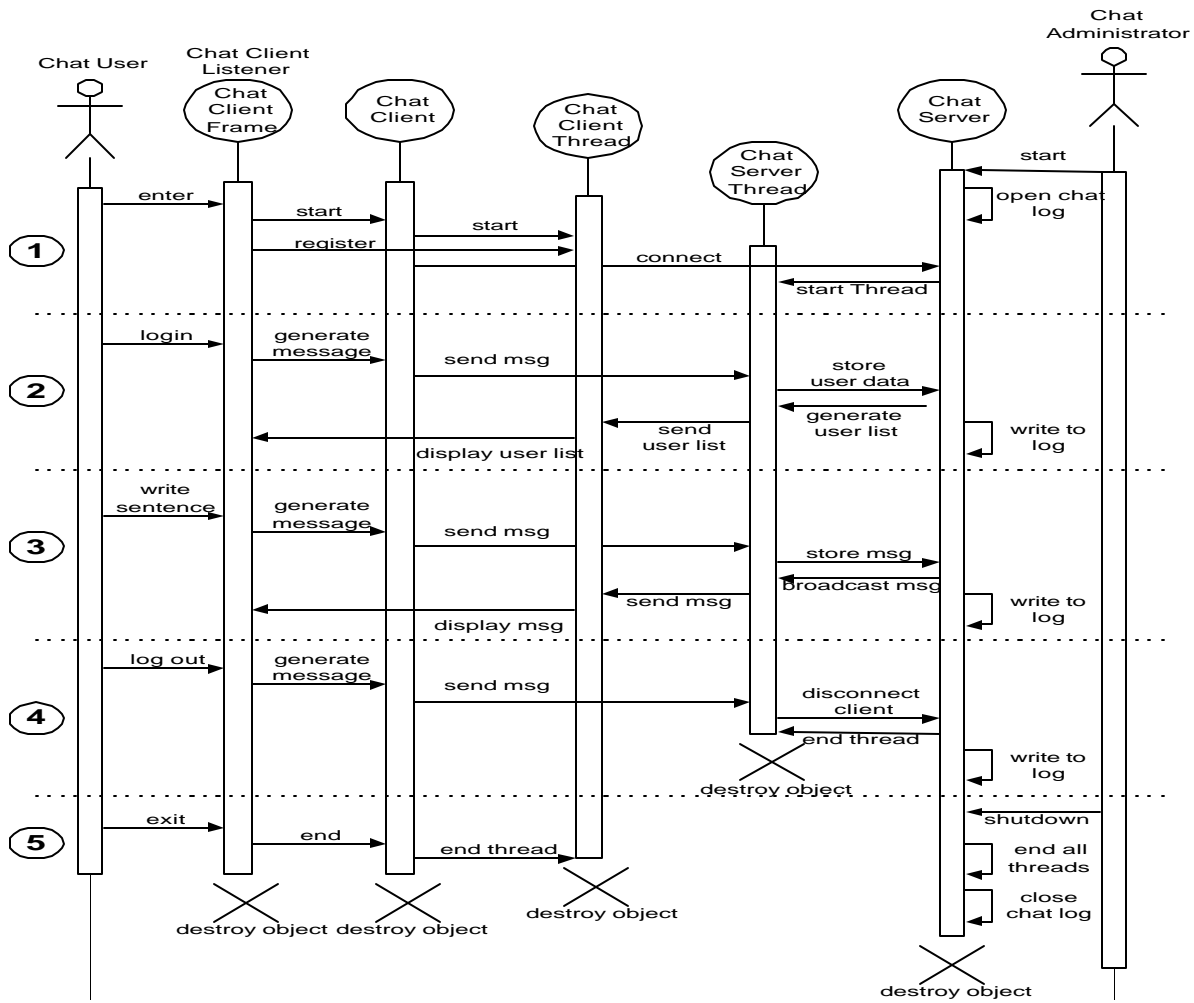
# Class Diagram (Client Side)



# *ChatClientListener* Interface

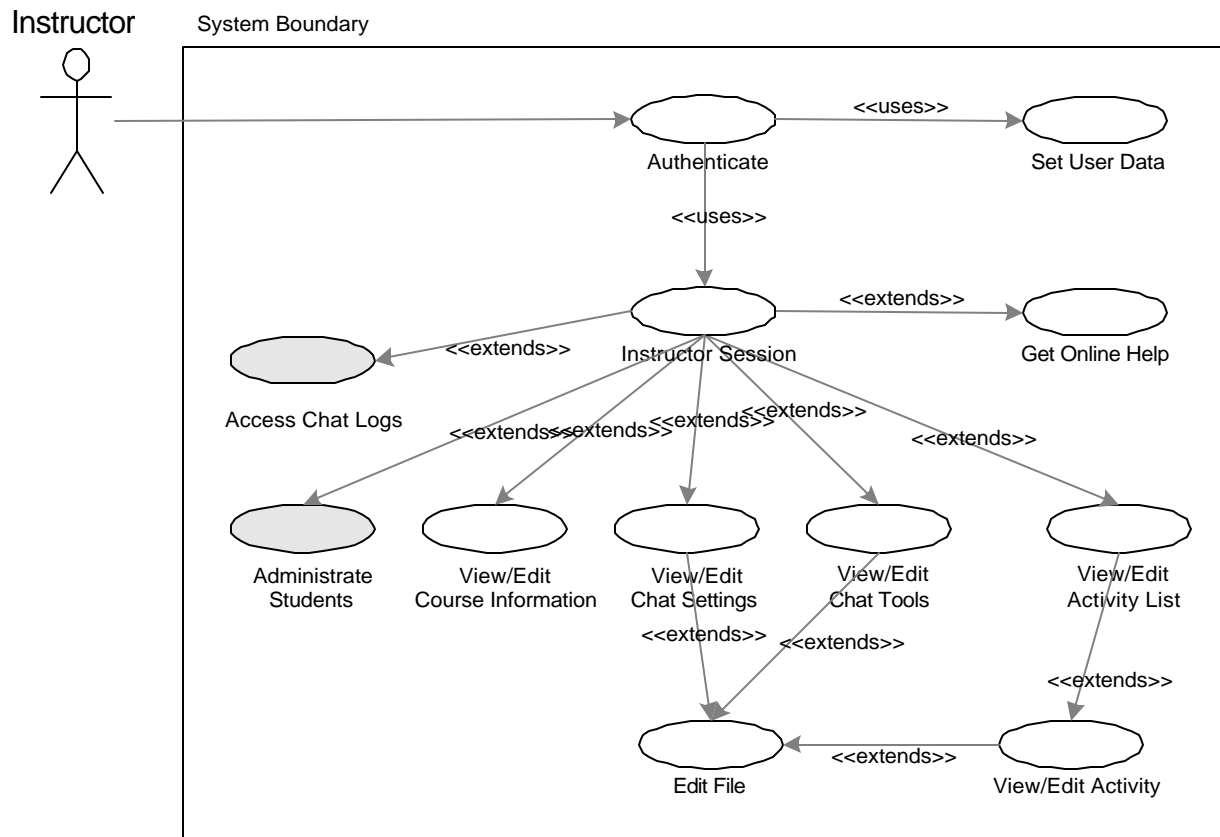


# Client-Server Communication

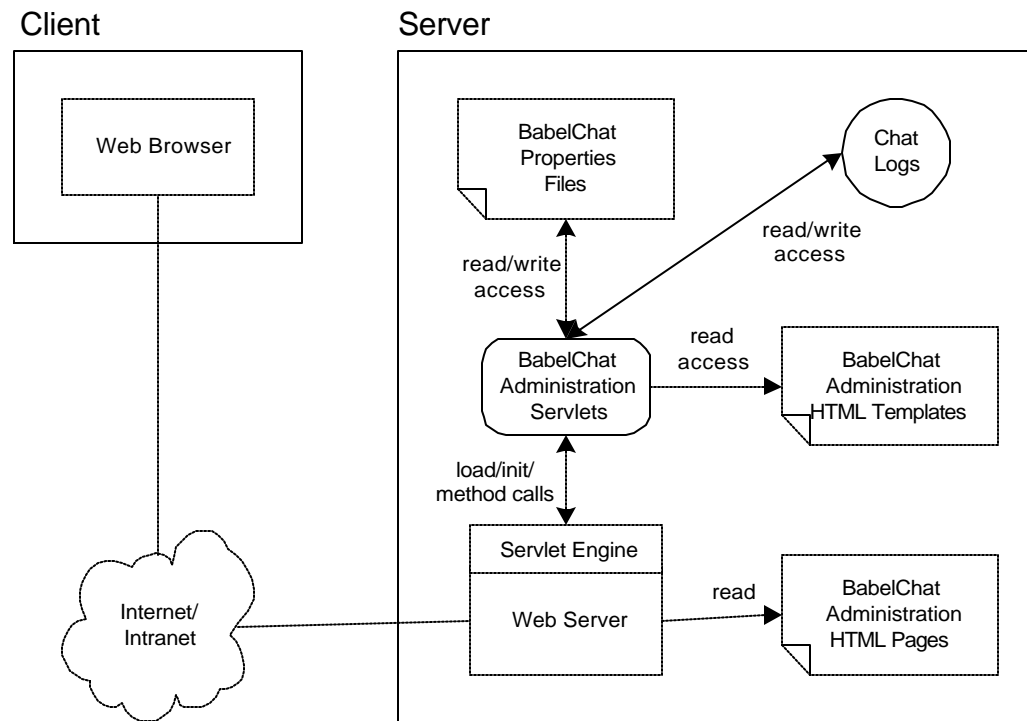


[Enlarge Diagram](#)

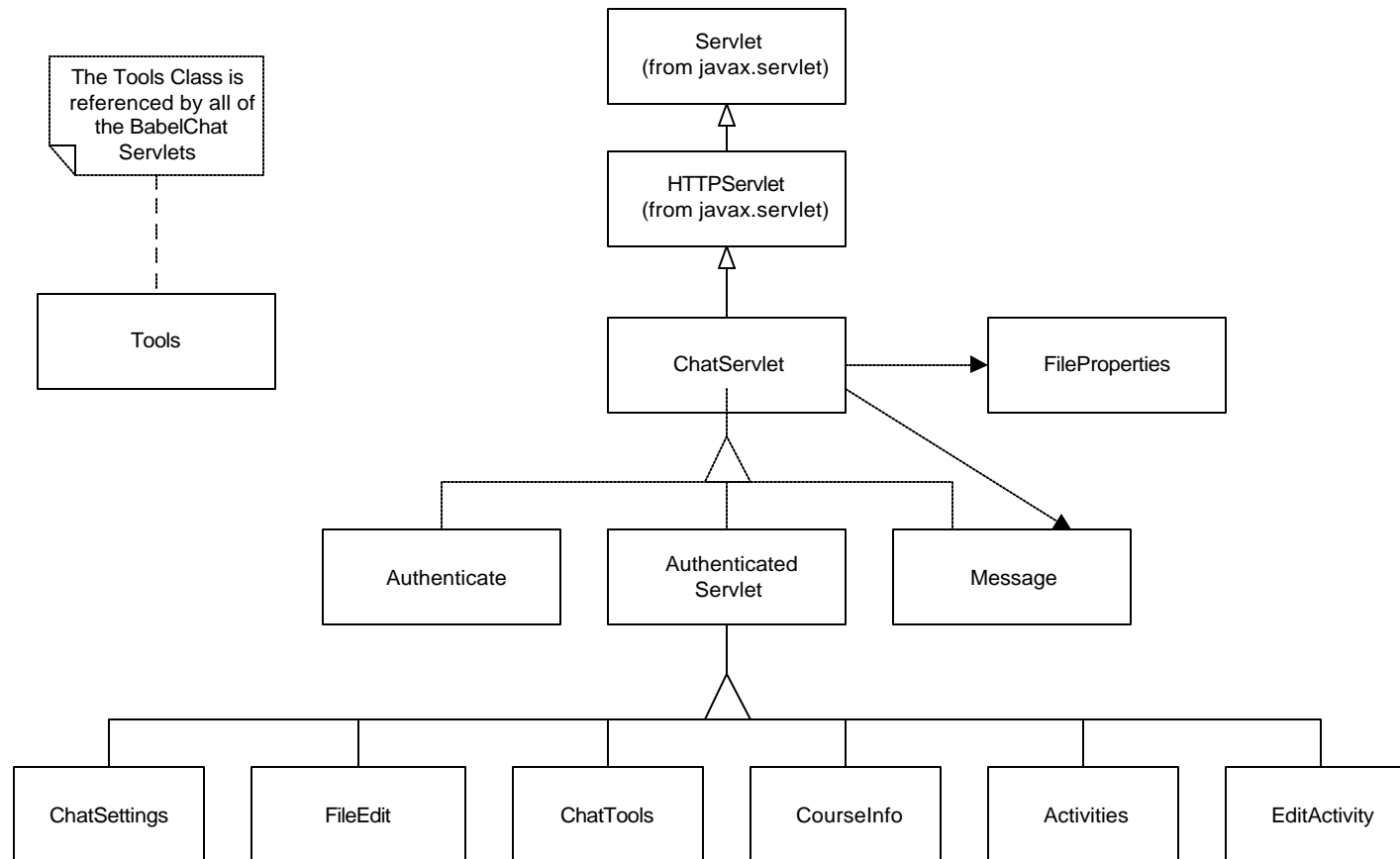
# Administration Use Cases



# Administration System Architecture



# Administration Class Diagram



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# Research about BabelChat

- **Subjects**

First-year German classes of Spring term 1999, n = 65

- **Methodology**

Chat/Paper group, grades as measurement, hypothesis test analysis

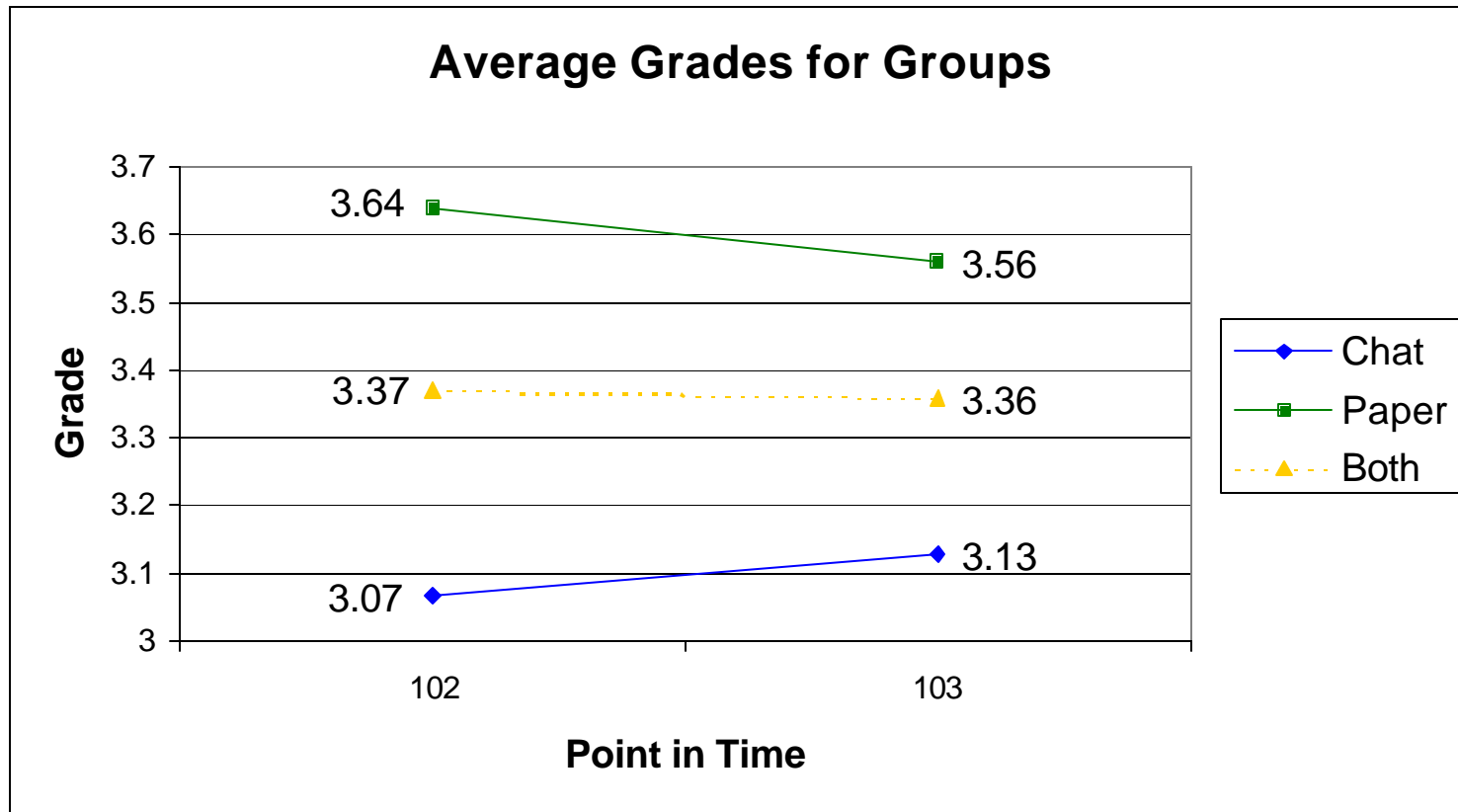
- **Procedures**

demographics, in-class and out-of-class chat activity

- **Confounding factors**

high drop-out rate (38%) reduced subjects to 15 in chat and 25 in control group, short period of time

# Results



# Conclusions

- Tentative results do not show that BabelChat is more effective than traditional paper activity.
- BabelChat provides a tool and framework for further research in the use of CALL, including observation of students' language use and learning

# Contact Information

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