students more willing to voluntarily use it. Furthermore, experience using it in English may contribute to their adoption of it for self-study. During my presentation I was asked about the training I provided for students for this project. As this was not a central component of the course, none was provided. Students were simply shown their class's FBG in class and invited to join by email (with a link for those who were interested). In retrospect, spending a little more time showing students how to use FBGs and troubleshooting several weeks later may have been a worthwhile time investment as familiarity with FB was a key factor for participation.

Conclusion

This project sought to understand what motivated and deterred language learners from voluntarily using an online tool for self-study. A key finding was that students were only willing to join their class's FBG if they already had a FB account. Educators may like to keep this in mind as it suggests that students may be unwilling to use a tool that is recommended for self-study if they have no experience with it. Furthermore, most students who joined their class's FBG did so to improve their English skills and socialise, but their participation was inhibited by their fear of making mistakes in front of others. The main deterrent non-members cited was their concern over privacy, but a fifth would have participated if their peers had asked them to join, highlighting again the importance of social interaction. While only surface-level data have been provided in this report, it is hoped these findings will be useful for educators who are interested in providing their students with a self-study option that helps them work on their language skills in a social way.

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Using Keynote (PowerPoint) in the language-learning classroom

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Abstract

It has been said that Generation Y takes digital technology completely for granted. One innovative way for using technology in the classroom to help keep the attention of students while promoting

second-language learning is to present classroom activities in a Keynote format. This non-technical presentation explored how students respond to instruction in which the teacher uses PowerPoint or Keynote presentations in language learning. It also demonstrated practical ideas and classroom activities utilizing Mac Keynote software (much of which is applicable to PowerPoint software and other electronic gadgets) and how these digital activities can create a positive classroom atmosphere and promote student-centered language learning.

The conference and presentation

It was like touring several different countries; the poster presentations at KUIS Paperless Conference were held in the visually stimulating Multicultural, Multilingual Space (MULC). Each unique area in the MULC is colorfully decorated with architecture, and realia from the various countries that each space represents.

Unlike the vibrant walls of the MULC, most university classroom walls are bare. Fortunately, in the past decade or so, most schools have added monitors for digital media. Using this tool, teachers can bring visuals and supportive text into their classrooms. My poster presentation, held in the China area of the MULC, focused on students' perceptions of teachers using presentation software in language-learning classrooms.

Digital natives

The presentation started with a quick look at Generation Y or the so-called "digital natives". According to Marc Prensky (2001), some of the characteristics of digital natives include being over the age of 30, not wearing a watch and getting news from the internet rather than from print subscriptions. Not surprisingly, the participants at this paperless, CALL conference, though mostly over 30 years old and so considered to be "digital immigrants", were closer to digital natives". They have embraced technology to the extent that they have "lost" their "digital accent".

Next, I highlighted learning preferences of digital natives: Teens and twenty-somethings like to receive information quickly, prefer graphics rather that text, thrive on instant gratification, enjoy games over serious learning and want to multitask (Marc Prensky, 2001). A brief discussion about the myths of being able to multitask followed. Many students study while listening to music, Tweeting and texting. Though some people think they are able to do multiple activities at the same time, research shows that performance suffers overall when people multitask (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010).

In the above context, one advantage of using presentation software for learning activities is memory retention. Research over the past 50 years has shown that in a lecture-based classroom, after two weeks, learners retain 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see in visual form and 50% of that which they see and hear together (Brenner, 1960). This has great significance for university classrooms that are devoid of visual stimulation. Bringing visuals and text into the classroom via presentation software can help students' learning and retention of material.

Results

How do students perceive their classes in which the language teacher uses Keynote (Apple's equivalent of PowerPoint) during the lesson? To gauge my own students' perceptions of presentation software use in their language classes, I prepared a questionnaire that asked 253 Mejiro University students – mine and those of Charles Watson - about their experience when presentation software supplemented the lesson.

The student feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Twenty-two percent of students felt that the use of presentation software in their lesson was "very motivating"; 61% responded that it was "motivating", and 15% were "neutral". Only 2% answered negatively about motivation to study. Students also revealed that they felt more motivated to pay attention in class: Almost 30% responded "very motivated", 60%, "motivated", and only 9% were neutral.

Ninety percent of students felt that the teacher's use of presentation software aided in their understanding of English; 10% were neutral. For understanding instructions, 48% found the use of presentation software "very helpful"; 22% found it "helpful". Twenty-seven percent were "neutral"; only 3% thought it was "unhelpful".

When rating their "overall experience" with the use of presentation software, 41% of the students responded with "very good" and 45%, "good". In total, 85% of the students surveyed had a positive experience with the teacher using presentation software. No students indicated that their experience was negative. The remaining 15% were "neutral" about the experience.

When asked to write about their positive and/or negative opinions on the use of presentation software in the classroom, many students commented that it was fun and interesting. Students wrote that they enjoyed seeing pictures

and videos, as well as listening to the music and hearing fun sound affects. Under negative opinions, 16% left the answer space blank, and 65% percent wrote "Nothing". Six negative comments mentioned eye strain, 7 mentioned that it was troublesome, and 1 responded that using presentation software "used up electricity". Interestingly, several of the students who wrote that it was troublesome were empathizing with the time it supposedly took the teacher to prepare for the lesson.

Application

In the next part of my presentation, I shared the slides that I have used in my classes. Slides for various transitions in the lesson can be used. I usually start class with an overview of what we will be doing that day. An icon for pair work and group work can be displayed to help get students moving into the next activity. The prompts and visuals on the slides help students follow along as the lesson progresses and activities change.

 A lot of the materials teachers use are recyclable. The same is true for presentation software slides. Using clipart or Google images makes it easy to create countless picture flashcards. Text can be added and animated to appear or disappear. I have a stock of grammar timelines that I've used numerous times in oral communication classes. Timers can be created on slide for speed reading and writing exercises. In speed-reading exercises, when students finish their reading passage, they only need to look up to check their time. Shorter one or two minute times can be used to push the students to go a little faster, creating a fun and lively atmosphere in class.

Having most, if not all, of the lesson plan organized on presentation software makes it very easy for the teacher to move through the material. And, no teacher will forget to assign homework.

One piece of advice I had for the attendees at my poster session was to throw out all the rules of typical presentations. I always use 64pt-font size or bigger. I mostly use large photos or clip art and little text, but there are times when heavy text can be used for reading activities.

Closing thoughts and comments

During the discussion at the end of the presentation, participants shared their experience using presentation software in the classroom. Renauld Davies mentioned that he uses an interactive game on iPad Keynote software, which enables hyperlinks, unlike the computer software. His blog has information about taking presentation software one step further to make it more

interactive, <http://eslrenaud.wordpress.com>.

Considering the very positive perceptions that students have for the use of presentation software by the teacher, it would be a great idea to incorporate it into classes. Using presentation software creatively will engage students and help with learning.

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Bio:

I began teaching English in Japan in 1994. My interest in computers led me to use presentation software in my lesson planning and delivery – with very positive results – since 2008. In addition to teaching at the university level, I also teach literacy skills to bilingual elementary students and have taught art and ikebana. I attained shihan Grade 3 in Sogetsu Ikebana in 2000. I feel my interest in the arts complements my use of technology in the classroom.