

Does Internet Really Help? Examples and Evidence from Japanese Language Classes
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Miyuki Fukai, Columbia University (mf2249@columbia.edu)
 Keiko Schneider, Southern Methodist University (kschneid@smu.edu)
 Yasuhiro Omoto, University of California, Berkeley (yomoto@nihongoweb.com)

Brief description of the presentation

This presentation discusses examples of technology-enhanced instruction in the Japanese language classroom and its effect on students' learning and motivation towards learning Japanese. The examples include two Internet-based newspaper projects and a use of course management tool.

I. Background of Internet and Technology Use Study

1. Pilot study: Survey study in Northern California (December 2001-January 2002)
2. National survey: Nation wide survey study (April and May 2002)
 - Teacher's environment for computing and Japanese capability, including technical support
 - Availability of computers at school for class use
 - Technology-related projects completed in class
3. Interview study
 - What is the teaching environment? (institution's size, how many classes, computer situation, etc.)
 - How helpful is Technical Support?
 - How were the computers used?
4. 2nd National survey: Nation wide survey study in 2005
 - (1) teacher's and students' physical environment
 - (2) technical support
 - (3) recommended web sites
 - (4) technology-enhanced projects
 - (5) training in technology

II. Discussions from Internet and Technology Use Study

1. Most teachers are actively engaged in Internet and technology-related projects in class. More projects are mentioned.
2. Teachers are actively engaged in technology-related professional development activities
 - Teachers believe that the projects had positive effect on students' learning and motivation towards learning Japanese. -> Students become more interested and take more active role
 - Not only asking teachers, but questions to students and achieve triangulation.

III. Studies

1. Internet-based newspaper project
 - Overview
 - 10 fourth-year Japanese students at a large Midwestern state university in Spring 2003
 - Read online newspapers, discussed them in class with classmates and by e-mail with native speakers, and published a class newspaper online
 - Data collected from pre- and post-project questionnaires, transcripts of in-class discussions, students' writing assignments, and e-mails
 - Result 1: Students' perceptions

Table 1. Items with the Best Five Positive Change in Mean Scores.

	Item	Pre		Post		Post-Pre	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
28	Motivated to learn more about my own culture and community by project	3.33	1.41	4.22	.83	.89	1.36
8	More chances to read and use authentic Japanese in project	4.33	1.00	5.00	.00	.67	1.00
29	Motivated me to think critically by project	3.89	0.78	4.56	.53	.67	1.00
10*	Project not worth time and effort	1.78	1.09	1.22	.44	-.56	1.01
11	More control over learning by using the Internet	3.56	1.01	4.11	.60	.55	1.13
13*	Feel isolated in project	2.44	1.42	1.89	.78	-.55	1.13
16*	Project very frustrating	2.11	1.45	1.56	.88	-.55	1.42

We now know about [Reading] Tutor, we know about other things...there're other ways, other than the classroom to keep up with things. You don't have to wait for the Chinese character list to read something. You're not as dependent on the classroom. (Interview with Julie on 02/26/03)

In class, well, when we talked about e-mail messages, when we talked about our opinions, we could discuss what partners thought about, so, I think I got to know [my classmates] well. (Interview with Hoon on 04/23/03, translated from Japanese)

Table 2. Items with Negative Change in Mean Scores.

Item	Pre		Post		Post-Pre	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
21 More careful about grammar when writing to pen pal	4.44	0.73	3.89	1.27	-.55	1.01
1 Enjoy writing Japanese more on computer than by hand	3.67	1.00	3.56	0.88	-.11	.93
3* More afraid to contact people by e-mail than in person	1.89	1.05	2.00	0.71	.11	.60
5 Feel part of community through e-mail exchanges	3.89	1.05	3.78	0.97	-.11	1.05
19 Able to use words/expressions learned in class in the project	4.33	0.71	4.22	0.67	-.11	.93

When I write e-mails, I'm more conversational than, say, if I'm writing an article. (Interview with Kate on 05/01/03).

Writing e-mail to his partner was "not something for school" (Interview with Luke on 05/02/03).

"[Community could have been built] maybe if we had a chat room on our newspaper web page or something like that, or discussion board" (Interview with Mark on 04/29/03).

▪ Result 2: Students' performance

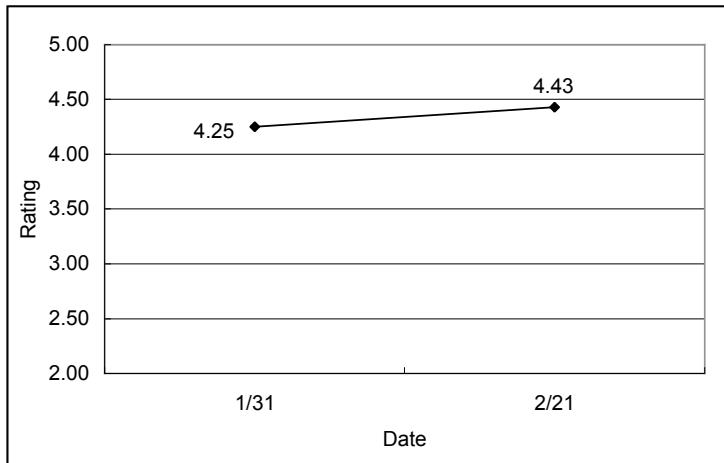


Figure 1. Average performance rating of writing assignments

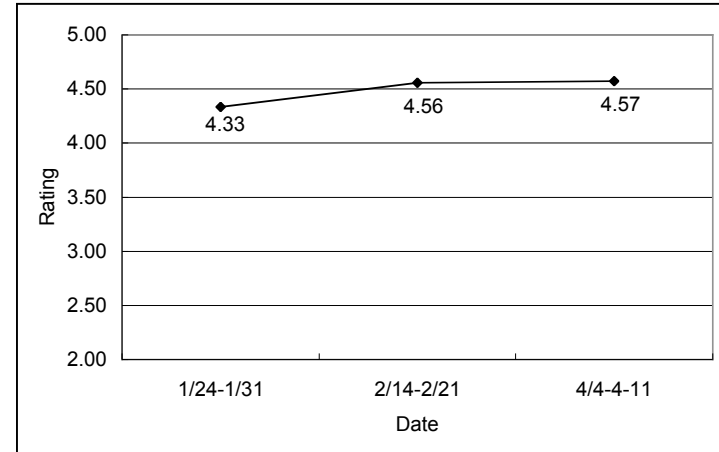


Figure 2. Average performance rating of e-mail messages.

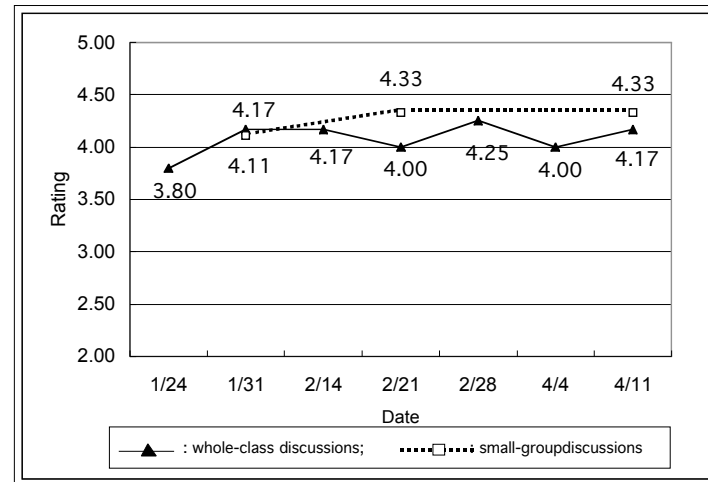


Figure 3. Average performance rating of in-class discussions

2. Blog project
 - Overview
 - 8 second-year, 6 third-year, and 10 fourth-year Japanese students at a private university on the east coast in Spring 2006
 - Maintain blogs in Japanese about topics of their choosing and/or course assignments
 - Data collected from post-project questionnaire (1 Likert-scale items and open-ended questions)

Table 3. Summary of Blog

	2nd (N=8)	3rd (N=6)	4th (N=10)
Total number of posts	32	59	70
Number of posts per student	4.0	9.8	7.8
Comment-post ratio	2-3	2-3	2-3
Who commented? (# per post)	Class/Instr.	1.1	0.4
	Outsiders	0.6	1.7
	Own	0.4	0.6

- Result: Students' perceptions

Table 4. Mean Scores of 2nd-, 3rd-, and 4th-Year Students.

	2nd (N=8)	3rd (N=6)	4th (N=10)
1. Important to be able to use a computer	5.00	4.67	4.70
2. Feel comfortable using the technology	4.75	4.33	3.50
3. Using computer to learn Japanese is too much trouble	4.50	3.83	3.70
4. Enjoyed reading the blog this semester	4.00	3.50	3.20
5. Enjoyed writing a blog entry (entries) this semester	4.25	3.83	3.40
6. Wish to continue to use blogs to study Japanese	4.00	4.00	3.40
7. Using blogs was usually very frustrating	3.38	3.50	3.00
8. Knew my classmates better because of blogs	3.00	3.67	2.60
9. Reading and writing blog posting made me feel part of a community	2.88	2.83	2.50
10. Feel the blog serves a forum for sharing.	3.38	3.83	3.20
11. Blogging motivated me to think critically.	3.13	3.17	2.60
12. Writing postings in blogs in Japanese helped to learn self-expression	4.13	4.00	3.40
13. Blogging gave more chances to read and use authentic Japanese	4.13	4.00	3.60
Mean	3.88	3.86	3.29

Table 5. Summary of Open-Ended Questions: What Learned from Blogging

		2nd	3rd	4th
Japanese	Casual style	3	1	
	Self-expression	1	1	1
	General	1		3
Relationship	In class		1	
	Outside class			3
Technology		3		1
Blog culture			3	

How to write quickly and clearly to express myself in Japanese --- such as the entry I wrote about being a working student (0206)

I was able to read a few "authenticity Japanese" blogs---which was interesting. I also learned about Japanese blogging culture. (0302)

I was surprised that strangers actually read and commented on my writing, so I guess I learned that blogging really can bring people together. (0408)

Table 6. Summary of Open-Ended Questions: Positive Opinions

Can:	2nd	3rd	4th
Write freely	4	3	2
Practice writing		1	2
Read others' blogs	1		2
Receive comments	3	2	2

Like expressing myself in Japanese on web (0201)

The chance to get comments from people I don't know (0302)

Reading classmates' blogs (0410)

Table 7. Summary of Open-Ended Questions: Negative Opinions

	2nd	3rd	4th
Takes too much	2	2	3
Don't have topic/ability to write	3	2	2
Feel pressured to write	1	1	2
Don't know technical stuff/it's too much trouble	1	1	4

Sometimes I had nothing to say. (0202)

It takes some time to write, read other people's blogs. (0303)

I felt pressured to do it even when I didn't want to, and I had to give myself a bad grade because I didn't do it (0402)

Question:

How do Internet and technology-related projects help improvement of Japanese language skills and cultural understanding?

- 1) Increase student motivation
- 2) Opportunities for actual use

IV. New Activity: Podcast

1) What is podcast?

Internet radio program played with personal computer and mobile devices. Application to listen in personal computer need not be iTunes. Mobile device need not be an iPod.

Possibility and why it is exciting

- The main component is audio file whereas most web page creations and blogs are written language.
- Unlike listening only activities, students can publish their speaking work.
- Unlike traditional Internet radio, subscription makes it easy and automatic to update the contents.
- Enhanced podcasting (with chapters) can add images (that can be written language in text) at specified timing without increasing file size too much.
- Students can be anywhere to access the audio/video file and complete an assignment. They don't need to go to the lab and access course management system or use computer if they have a mobile device.
- It can be reached to wider community outside of classrooms.

2) How can you set it up?

1: Use your own web space (possibly with help of software)

- Create a web page about the podcast
- Create RSS feed (an XML file)
- Upload the audio files and the feed file
- Submit the podcast

2: iTunes U or other institutional support

3.Podcasting hosting service

<http://www.podshowcreator.com/>

- * Podcast audio, video files
- * Unlimited podcast feeds
- * Unmetered bandwidth
- * Unlimited subscribers
- * Upload content via web browser or FTP
- * Security - password protect your Podcasts and PodPage with extra fee
- * Personal URL and Personalized "MyPodPage"
- * Subscriber and download stats
- * Geographic Download Activity Stats (Country, region, city, state, zip)

SMU Japanese Program site (thanks to SMU Tower Center grant)

SMU JAPANESE PROGRAM PODCASTING PAGE

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Podcasts

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3) Activities so far

1: 3-minute cooking shows

2: composition recording

Students record and listen each other's (lab activity and homework)

3: Listening materials feed (kanji reading, kanji sentences, katakana list, dictations, verb conjugations, etc.)

In the future, possibly

1: class recording

2: 先生の独り言

3: クラスの日記

4) Students' reaction

Next session at 4:15 in this room is about podcast. Please stay.