A Digital Recording Suite

Trevor Shanklin, Ph.D.
Director, LARC Language Labs

La Paz: Feb. 10, 2007

Foreign Language Students

Fall '06

Thai
Vietnamese
Latin
Hebrew
Filipino
Portugese
Chinese
Russian
Arabic
German
Italian
Japanese
ASL
French
Greek
Mixtec
Spanish

Student Use: Spring 2006 by Language

Spanish
Japanese
French
Chinese
Port
German
Italian
Arabic
Russian

Student Use: Fall 2006 by Language

Spanish
Japanese
ASL
French
Chinese
Port
Italian
Arabic
German
Russian

Class Visits: Fall 2006

Class Visits: Fall 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Visits</th>
<th>Fall 2006</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
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Class Visits: Fall 2006

() = Instructor Orientation
Digital Recording Suite

- Audio Recording: Goldwave/ Audacity
- Video Recording (ASL) Logitech/ I-Movie
- Oral Proficiency Assessment LARCStar (Open Source)
- Recording Skype: Japanese 321
- Recording Studio

Survey of Two Chinese 201 Classes
Fall 2006
December 11
N = 30

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Speak</th>
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*SDSU: Did your semester end soon?*

*Teuda: at school? no no, until 23*

*SDSU: 23... what? 23...23... years old? oh... 23rd day, *

*SDSU: School ends, on the the 23rd of this month?*

*Teuda: yes... twenty... twenty third, no wait, twenty second, I don’t know hahaha*

Survey of Two Chinese 201 Classes
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Japanese Skype Project
Fall 2006
December 4
N = 12

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Question 1: How has using the Skype program improved your Japanese speaking skills?

It has helped me understand what level of Japanese I need to be at to talk to each individual Japanese person and that the Japanese people do use less complicated structures and words to accommodate one’s lack of knowledge. (#7)

6 positive, 2 neutral, 3 negative
Question 2: Why did you like or not like talking with your partner?

Well, I like the idea of being able to speak to a Japanese native. It keeps me up to date with common terminology and expressions used in everyday conversation. (#1)

7 positive, 1 neutral, 3 negative

Question 3: In which way was Skype helpful (or not) for practicing your speaking skills?

For me, it was nice to have the speaking be a requirement because then I was guaranteed to do it. I am not that confident in my speaking, so being able to practice was very nice. Of course, it was helpful that my partner and I had topics given to us. It was hard to get started since we were both nervous, but the topics allowed us to just start talking. (#12) +

3 positive, 2 neutral, 6 negative

Question 3: In which way was Skype helpful (or not) for practicing your speaking skills?

Sometimes it is difficult to hear the speaker on the other side due to technological problems. Also, the time difference made it difficult to setup a good time to speak to my Skype partner. (#2) -

3 positive, 2 neutral, 6 negative

Question 3: In which way was Skype helpful (or not) for practicing your speaking skills?

Well, outside of this assignment, when I talk to Japanese friends or my girlfriend on Skype it is great. We converse and I can learn new words and phrases. I really like the program. (#9) /

3 positive, 2 neutral, 6 negative

Question 4: What did you learn most from your partner(s)? - For example: new words, new expressions, information about Japan, Japanese culture, new grammar, nothing

New grammar and common words used in conversation. Also I learned about student life and local attractions. What was most interesting for me was seeing how we thought differently about different subjects in a culturally based way. (#8) [4/11 culture]

Question 5: What conditions affected your performance in speaking Japanese?

4/12 = topic (+)
3/12 = time (-)
2/12 = vocab (-/ +)
2/12 = fluency (+)
Media Types:
- Picture
- Audio Clip from Other Media
Media Types:

- Video Clip from Other Media

Media Types:

- Italian 101

Workshop for Faculty on 4/28 and 5/5, N = 11

<table>
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Workshop for Ling 550 Students on 4/10, N = 14

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Ease of Use / Value as Teaching Tool

Workshop for 35 Ling 550 Students on 10/19, N = 19

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Representative Comments

- Workshop 1: I like the fact that you can use different types of input for testing. This gives the instructor a lot of flexibility in using this software.
- Workshop 2: While there is a mild initial learning curve, I believe that with more experience this would become a valuable teaching tool.
- Workshop 3: Starting up was confusing. Once I learned how to use it, it is a wonderful tool. This is much better than the old school tape recorder style of testing. (1, 4)

Pilot Testing: Summer/ Fall 2006

- Test 1 (N = 14): Technologically reliable, 7/14
  Did not complete test
  - Upgrade to 2.5.1:
    - Message about which questions were answered at end of test
    - More time (20 minutes)
    - 9-digit username allowed

- Test 2 (N = 50) All students completed test

Upgrading to 2.5.1

- The student gets a message about which questions were answered at end of test
- More time (20 minutes)
- 9-digit username allowed
Implementation 3
Fall 2006

- Continued Pilot Testing: 21 instructors with folders on server/ 4 high school teachers; SDSU Ling Student
- Dissemination
  - CALICO review
  - CLTA Jamboree
  - SWALLT
  - ACTFL
  - CLTA
  - CATESOL
  - LARC Principles of Testing Workshop

Typical Concerns

- “According to ... IT people, the required settings that allow LARCStar to be functional raise safety issues such as allowing malevolent people to access your personal data (passwords, user IDs, credit card info,...).”
- However: LARCStar record control has to be downloaded to a computer only once. After the installation of the VRecX Control, Active X downloads can be turned off.

Where to Download

- http://larclab.sdsu.edu
- Click on Online Tests
- Click on Instructor Login (Through LARC)
- Click on Download (Download to your server and configure)

Further Thoughts

- LARCStar is an online test to assess speaking skills, and can be used in traditional, blended and distributed learning.
- In my experience, digital recording tools are underutilized in language teaching.
- This framework creates a context to intelligently discuss assessment rubrics for oral proficiency/ speaking skills/ pronunciation.