Title: Utilizing Emerging Technologies and Social Media to Enhance EFL Learning

Summary (for the conference program):

This symposium examines the potential of emerging technologies -- including Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), hand-held devices (smart phones, iPods, iPads), and iBooks -- to approach ubiquitous language learning. Case studies focusing on higher education in Japan show how these communication technologies could improve language acquisition in EFL and ESL contexts.

Abstract (for vetting the symposium proposal):

This symposium proposes to examine the impact and potential of communication technologies in learning EFL. Case studies focusing on higher education in Japan show how mobile technologies and social media could improve language acquisition in Asian EFL contexts and beyond. Teaching with sound pedagogies and communication technologies, accessed by computers and hand-held devices, can bring about better outcomes through ubiquitous language learning. Impacts can span from better language comprehension to active involvement in learning communities generated in cyberspace. This symposium will thus detail how these emerging technologies are utilized to reform EFL classroom practices. The international presenters, based at five different universities, will theoretically and practically examine factors for successful EFL learning with emerging technologies. M-learning can generate contexts for active learning, with learners as agents and creators rather than spectators or recipients of knowledge. We will particularly examine a) how to implement m-learning in institutional settings, b) what makes learners willingly use mobile devices and become involved in social contexts they themselves generate, and c) how teachers can help learners with scaffolding to develop agency as individuals who voluntarily engage with the social context. Among the emerging technologies demonstrated are Social Media, such as Facebook and Twitter, media players like iPods, tablet computers like iPads, iBooks Author for interactive, illustrated, multimedia artifacts that students can also create, and blended e-learning using a content management system and smart phones for m-learning. These studies will shed light on motivational attitudes towards these technologies for language learning, and measure how these tools have impacted L2 acquisition. Presenters will conclude with suggestions and welcome questions on how emerging technologies can be more effectively used in teaching EFL, ESL, and communication.
Symposium on Utilizing Emerging Technologies and Social Media to Enhance EFL Learning

International Association of Applied Linguistics
AILA World Congress, August 11, 2014
Brisbane, Australia

Professors Hiroyuki Obari, Takeshi Sato, Stephen Lambacher, Kazunori Nozawa, and Steve McCarty
This symposium examines the potential of emerging technologies -- including social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), hand-held devices (smart phone, iPod, iPad), and e-Books -- to approach ubiquitous language learning. Case studies focusing on higher education in Japan show how these communication technologies could improve language acquisition in EFL and ESL contexts.
A Blended Environment with m-Learning: Impact on EFL Skills

by Hiroyuki Obari
Professor, Aoyama Gakuin University
A year-long study sought to ascertain whether or not a blended learning environment incorporating m-learning could help Japanese undergraduates improve their English skills. Various emerging technologies and materials will be demonstrated, along with several empirical studies indicating their effect in improving students’ CASEC and TOEIC scores.
Analyzing Successful Mobile Learning for EFL

by Takeshi Sato
Professor, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology
Presentation Summary

Factors for successful mobile-based EFL learning are examined from three perspectives: how mobile learning is implemented in educational institutions; how teachers scaffold learners to help them develop agency as individuals using this technology; and what makes learners willingly use mobile devices and become involved in contexts they themselves generate.
Using Social Media to Enhance Second Language Learning

by Stephen Lambacher
Associate Professor, Aoyama Gakuin University
Social media is gaining popularity among educators as a tool to boost learning in and out of the classroom. After reviewing how social media is being used in educational settings around the world, the presenter reports on how he is using Facebook to improve the English skills of his Japanese undergraduates.
Project-Based EFL Learning through e-Book and Video Creation

by Kazunori Nozawa
Professor, Ritsumeikan University
Technology-Enhanced Language Learning implemented since 1998 is augmented by Project-Based Learning since 2012, with the theoretical background and one case reported in this presentation. EFL students chose to create either an interactive eBook as an individual project using iBooks Author or a promotional video as a small-group project using iMovie.
Ubiquitous Language Learning
from Mobile Internet
to iPod to iPad

by Steve McCarty
Professor, Osaka Jogakuin University, Japan
Ubiquitous language learning has progressed from mobile phone Websites, which the author first made in 2000. From 2004, first in the world, all incoming Osaka Jogakuin University students received an iPod stocked with faculty-created listening materials. Podcasting student-generated performances was an "effective practice." Since 2012, students use an iPad with Wi-fi and faculty-made interactive e-books.