Social Annotation for Language Learning

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The Challenge

- To establish a common space for collaborative work among students as well as sharing feedback from a tutor
- A lack of appropriate online resources for Japanese at Intermediate level onwards and also many online platforms are not compatible with Japanese scripts
- Most students nowadays have a tablet or a laptop to work on and are also moving away from paper-based materials, boosted by the arrival of the pandemic
- Diverse ways of delivering lessons and engaging students online were also challenged during the pandemic
- To provide multimodal materials

"Talis Elevate gives a wider opportunity to all students to accommodate their different styles and preferences of learning while promoting their interpersonal skills."

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The Solution

- Customised text, images, videos, and audio were uploaded to comment on, to translate, to label, and/or to answer questions either individually or collaboratively depending on the task
- Also, students were asked to correct others' comments if there were any errors and/or alternative answers where appropriate
- Talis was used as an in-class activity, as a part of asynchronous tasks, and/or as homework.
- I gave feedback and/or explanations to students' contributions.

The Results

- By using Talis, shy students, who don't normally like to answer orally in-class, had more opportunities to contribute in collaborative activities, maybe because students can see other's answers to have some assurance first (*I will follow it up that they didn't just copy answers!*)
- Students are more actively engaged with the same task previously given on paper and also they seem to happy to ask questions for further advice
- Students are encouraged to contribute more generally as there are some peer pressures, i.e. it becomes obvious to a certain extent who will contribute more and who won't
- Online activities are more accessible, allowing students to download, or make notes for themselves digitally. Students no longer have issues with forgetting handouts given in the previous lessons and so on (i*t is even possible to access resources from their mobile phone if they don't have a portable device as an emergency solution*)
- It is easy to track who does and who doesn't actively do homework/asynchronous activities
- By sharing my feedback or explanations on common mistakes via Talis, this saved me from repeating my comments compared to when students' work was handed in individually
- By giving multimodal resources, I can accommodate a variety of learning preferences

The Future

I will continue to use and expand resources in Talis Elevate for its strong feature of collaborative work which initiates conversations/discussions further while students are working in-class.These informal conversations/discussions are also important to consolidate their understanding. Talis is brilliant for any part of the lesson planning (e.g. ice-breaker, consolidation, scaffolding, problem solving, critical thinking etc) while students are learning an interpersonal skills such as discussion, negotiation, co-operation etc. Certainly I will promote Talis to colleagues to expand their method of delivering lessons.

We'd like to thank Mikiko Kurose for providing this case study on her use of Talis Elevate.