Going Paperless with Mobiles | Pitfalls & Benefits!

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The Set Up: A eTextbook in your pocket or textbook in your bag? How successful can a digital English language course harnessing smartphone apps & eTextbook technology be for both students and teacher?

Online Links & Mobile Apps Used

Class One | Conversation Class | eTextbook + 1 APP

22 1st Year Students | Combined Science Faculty | 1 Weekly Class

*Smartphone use was centred on eTextbook use & recording/uploading/listening of audio files through **SoundCloud** App.

*Students used their smartphones to make notes, either through audio recordings / or input on their smartphones.

*Students created account & downloaded **SoundCloud** app.

Course Aim: To see how well an eTextbook course using one additional mobile app could work for a general conversation class.

Class Two | Podcast Class | Textbook + 2 APPs

32 2nd Year Students | Humanities Faculty | 1 Weekly Class

*Smartphone use was centred on recording/uploading/listening of audio/video files through mobile apps.

*Students used their smartphones to record their written work and then upload via **SoundCloud/Wordeo** apps so classmates could listen/watch.

*Students created account & downloaded **SoundCloud/Wordeo** apps

Course Aim: For students to create their own English podcast to be uploaded (both audio & PDF) onto the **Hirodai English App**.

The Course

1: Each week = 1 Unit from the eBook.

2: Most weeks students had homework to record via their smartphone.

3: Students would upload their audio assignments for teacher/peer review.

How well did the apps work?

***SoundCloud** work very well. Easy to record, upload and then review. Students enjoyed using this app.

***Wordeo** was less successful. Students spent much longer on making a 'perfect' video.

*The **eTextbook** was easy to download, but screen size & difficulty in inputting data was a problem.

The Course with World Cup Countries

The course was divided into 4 x 3 weeks

1: ENW Podcast - review & report.

2: Individual Podcast - 75 Words / 2mins

3: Groups - 100 words each / 4-6 mins

4: Groups - 125 words, questions, hand-out with activities / 6-8 mins

Conclusion, Feedback & Student Podcasts

Pitfalls & Benefits

PITFALL 1: The biggest hurdle yet to be overcome is inputting data directly onto an eTextbook.

PITFALL 2: Mobile apps are still designed to be an 'extra' to a textbook.

BENEFIT 1: Student feedback was encouraging. Both classes enjoyed using the apps - especially SoundCloud.

BENEFIT 2: Cost & Convenience. Digital is cheaper than paper. eTextbooks can be constantly upgraded - extra information & activities can be downloaded easily.

Student Podcasts can be accessed via the free:

HIRODAI ENGLISH APP

[On iPhone & Android]

Summing Up | My Subjective View

The course that worked best was Course One - as it was the simplest. Students could put their smartphones down & concentrate on speaking activities as the technology did not interfere.

However the students in Class Two had more fun with the recording, uploading & peer reviewing aspects of the course.

It is encouraging that students seem to embrace mobile apps, but a 100% digital course will likely be more successful using a tablet.

Student Feedback | Course 1 + Course 2

	RESULTS
Q1: Did you enjoy the digital course?	YES 89% NO 11%
Q2: Was SoundCloud app easy/ok/difficult?	41%/33%/23%
Q3: Was using an eTextbook easy/ok/difficult?	38%/57%/5%
Q4: Was Wordeo app easy/ok/difficult?	23%/31%/46%
Q5: Smartphone or Tablet for digital course?	S - 57% T - 43%
Q6: Which do you prefer:	
(A) English course with paper textbook €15	9%
(B) eTextbook on tablet €10	32%
(C) eTextbook on smartphone €5	59%