**Teacher Workshop Transcript**

Alright brilliant. So who would like to start? Who would like to start?

I’d start. It’s very easy because I mean, I use video call, Skype or Whatsapp all the time in my personal life but I didn’t use to use it when I was a [Inaudible] language teacher.

Okay. So how about everybody else?

The same.

Umm...

Is video calling is something you use generally but not in teaching?

But Skype... we sometimes do teach via Skype.

Oh yeah, that’s true.

Sometimes in higher level language classes if you have any guest speaker, you might speak to them over Skype.

Okay. Any other thoughts on that?

I think uh...

The existing facility is not terribly suitable for group language teaching. For instance, you don’t have, you can’t have many students together to teach at the moment... Originally, I had another question to ask you because you are talking about it - social media facility. Because, we, I think, are all familiar with our virtual learning environment, and we, I tried our best to use their facility but there is quite a lot of problem. For instance, I do use quite a lot of chatroom which in this case is very similar to using messenger system. Sorry, I mean, I moved away from your video calling...

[Laughter]

We should concentrate on video calling.

Video calling, I think, is just simply... at the moment, the facility is not good enough for language teaching.

Okay.

[In Agreement]

Okay. So, I’m getting a sense then it’s somewhere around here maybe. Yes? So more general use than language teaching yeah? Everyone happy with that? Alright, brilliant. That was easy! I’ll write some notes as we go just to umm... the discussion. Would you like to read out your card?

Game playing.

What?

Game.

So something like Duolingo.

Ah...

Duolingo.

I think many people use that a lot to learn languages yeah.

But probably not with teachers so much. They’re more students...

[Inaudible]

Independent maybe.

[In Agreement]

Self-studying.

Yeah.

Self-regulated learning.

Alright, okay. So we are clear that it is down here cause you guys aren’t using it for teaching but what about general use? Do you guys use it yourself?

I have yeah.

Yes, me too. I am learning French via it.

Okay, so someone say stop when this feels about right.

In the middle.

Oh here? Alright, okay. So game playing, not so, really in teaching.

I think in Chinese, if you’re clever you can maybe use the... how do you call it... the memory card... to try to help remembering characters in...

Quizlets as well isn’t it...

Yes, same as Japanese.

Same in Korean.

[Inaudible] memorise...

Maybe after university level actually, I think that would be more something that you can...

[Inaudible, In Agreement]

I think [Inaudible] we here to talk about our own usage, but I hear that in the States there are some beginner’s language courses that are basically Duolingo. I mean, Duolingo is very good and they are certainly using it for testing, I know there are some major universities use Duolingo for testing like placement tests.

Design-wise?

No no Duolingo...

[Inaudible]

Yeah I know... But... That’s strange, why? Because I’m trying to learn French via Duolingo and...

It doesn’t teach you... Yeah, you’re right. It doesn’t. So maybe it’s for placement rather than...

It’s basic. The sentences that are used are not very meaningful.

It’s confusing as well actually.

So why are you using it?

Good question. [Laughter] So I started because I promised it was a New Year resolution. I mean, I promised a friend some of these things basically so I started. But then the questions they didn’t look very meaningful and the sentences...

Well since they are computer generated so...

[In Agreement]

So even though you might not be using it in your teaching, are you advocating for their use in your teaching? You point to your students...

So, I don’t know if they count Anki and Quizlet for example [Inaudible]

Those are like memory cards right?

Yeah. So my students, I mean, I didn’t tell them about it but they use it all the time, and now it’s like for one of them apparently, for example, I as a student can log in and I’ll get access to everyone else’s flashcards so it’s just incredible cause they have like all this... So yeah, they use it a lot and I encourage it.

So not in classroom but self-study.

Yeah.

You just mention Anki.

Yeah, I’m going to move it up slightly because it feels like you guys are still advocating for this, in a sense, even though you are not teaching with it.

Yeah.

Yeah, okay.

All of the students find these things much more quicker than we do.

Yeah.

[Laughter]

They are teaching you.

[Laughter Continues]

The issue I see... yeah... the problem with Memrise which I also use myself is that, I mean, I think it’s got better now cause I’ve [Inaudible] using it for a long time... to begin with, with absolutely no [Inaudible] you have terrible... cause a lot of these vocabularies attached to them connect with textbooks and there’ll be terrible thing with lots of mistakes and the brilliant things... There was no organisation and now I think that is sorted, I think Memrise is sorted by popularity or something. So it’s got better in that way. I know one of the, one of our very good students putting all the vocabulary from one textbook which is a massive, massive job, and he did it perfectly cause he’s very serious. Cause you learn massive amount by doing it. So now it’s brilliantly sorted, the problem is that the person, student, using it would have to know where to go in Memrise... which were the good things...

There’s a certain level of understanding needs to be there in order to be able to use it...

Absolutely, you got to know which, which, I don’t know what you call it... which area to go to [Inaudible]...

Okay. Should we move on to the next card?

Oh I’m sorry. My card is audio call.

Audio call. You know, like, Whatsapp and Messenger and might even [Inaudible]

Okay, I use them a lot in my personal life, not much in teaching.

Yeah.

Okay, do you want to pass me the card and I will place it...

It’s less than the video call.

Yeah.

Alright, okay. In your personal life less or...

No, no, in the teaching.

So more over here?

Personal life more, yeah.

Yeah, it’s more practical than going around you know...

Yeah.

But then the next one is video message.

Yes.

So that was?

So that was audio call.

The first one?

Video call.

So that’s a live call but a video message will be...

Oh okay, so same being like a text with your video in it. Okay, okay.

So this is video message.

Video message. Yeah.

Didn’t know existed.

[Laughter]

Okay, so [Inaudible] blank faces make me go down here?

Yeah.

I guess, would this not include things like YouTube or some already pre-recorded... considering that...?

Oh, okay...

No, because if the social nature of this is that somebody is going to be delivering it to another person while YouTube is more of a public broadcast kind of system.

I see, okay.

I mean, I usually use this personally...

You mean like Instagram or something like that... Yeah, but I wouldn’t use it for my students as a teaching tool...

Okay, okay.

Nyet.

[Laughter]

Alright, so I’m going to inch it across a little bit there cause of that comment I think... so, some familiarity with it but not really....

I mean you could have a mini-lecture though, you could do that. I mean if you could have a, had a one minute lecture you could it. [Inaudible]

Exactly.

Okay.

It could be a really nice way of teaching them pronunciation...

Exactly, yeah.

So my card is direct message like Whatsapp and Messenger. I don’t use it in my teaching but in my real life we use all the time, and students use all the time, between students to discuss assignments.

We do use it in teaching a lot.

Yes.

Because in our, I mean it’s not social media because the platform we use is the virtual learning environment, our web learn... is a function called chatroom... so we have [Inaudible] apparently use for during the vacation period for students who live in the States or in... we organise one particular time we having revision lesson together. So yeah. The problem is you have to type really very fast, you have to answer question... If your group has 10 people, teachers in...

[Laughter]

Exhausted after an hour of teaching... 2 weeks holiday after that.

[Laughter]

Like live chat, is that the same as this?

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Oh, I see.

[Mixed Chatter]

In Chinese, certainly in English also.

Maybe one more thing, for our year-abroad students, we have our, each other’s Whatsapp numbers so we actually text in the target language. Only when it’s in an emergency, obviously, we shift to English but, yes, I think it is a tool.

Alright, I’m feeling moving a little more there?

Yeah.

In this case I use it quite a lot. What you call it? In Chinese we call it... WeChat... I use a lot of WeChat because you can’t use Facebook in [Inaudible]... everywhere.

[Laughter]

And they even created a group called “Kan Gang” so with my name... [Inaudible]... group chatting.

[Laughter]

I’m going to slide this here, if anyone’s got any... protests? No? We happy with that? I’m going to put a note about the fact that you that on your VLE as well as that is interesting. Alright! Next card?

It says stories, for example, Instagram stories and Snapchat stories. I never used either of these for teaching. I use the, I used to use Instagram for photos maybe. I don’t use social media anymore now, but... yeah, so. My case [Inaudible]. Maybe other people...?

[Mixed Chatter]

I use it a lot for both, for personal use and also... So I keep in touch with people, you were saying, with Whatsapp with the students. I keep in touch with them in Iran with Instagram for example, we message each other. Actually it helps because I can see their pictures too and see what they are up to.

[Laughter]

But you are using the direct text messaging functionality... Ah, okay. So in particular, we’re talking about stories which is these kind of, like, pre-recorded little video, just vignettes or something like that aren’t they? So, okay.

Not for teaching so much.

Not for teaching. Okay. Anything else? Okay, I readying my blu tack.

[Laughter]

We will go with that then. Brilliant. Okay, next one.

Next one is comments. Instagram comments or sub-tweets.

Sorry I was just thinking of Trump or whatever he’s doing...

[Laughter]

Trolling or something.

Is that where you...

No, no. I was just putting it down.

[Laughter]

Very bold.

I don’t use it at all for language teaching really. But I, having said that, I think, I know students who read the comments in Persian and long tweets in [Inaudible] and they learn from that. So, I don’t use it but they do it.

Okay.

Yes, [Inaudible]...

I think they self-correct the comments.

They get very excited when they understand what a politician says in the target language, they really enjoy it.

Okay, fantastic. So how about yourselves generally then? So, I’ve got the sense that it’s about here in teaching where it’s kind of about advocating for it but not actively engage in it, but in terms of general use, do you guys comment a lot? Do you read the comments?

I do.

No, I try to avoid.

Try to avoid the comments?

Yeah...

[Laughter]

Alright, so, is it somewhere near game-playing? Something like you advocate for and use it a little bit. Yeah? Okay. This isn’t very scientific obviously so you...

[Laughter]

So next one is chat-bot, for example Messenger/ Twitter.

So those are kind of automated agents, conversational agents, that... you might speak to and they will reply or that’s a machine replying.

Oh, okay.

Yeah.

[Mixed Chatter]

What kind of thing? What kind of thing?

A chat-bot is a, I guess it’s just a computer which, you interface to it, the way you interact with it is through natural language. So you might type “hello, how are you?” and it will process that... Like Alexa or Siri or something like that.

Ah, okay.

In all languages?

Yeah.

Umm... I don’t know if it exists in all languages, I can’t see the reason why not.

It’s kind of Alexa-like.

So what is it? I’m not... Is it so you don’t feel lonely or practice alone or?

There’s a spectrum.

[Laughter, Mixed Chatter]

Yeah, sure it would be.

If you had a huge database like [Inaudible] Chinese drama, you can put that into it.... [Inaudible] any problem, you can type in or speak [Inaudible]...

You doing yourself out of a job there though...

[Laughter]

But I think, that is a trend. Yeah?

Right. Okay. In terms of your current practice, I think you’re possibly right but, in term of your current practice it’s not too [Inaudible] doing now.

[Mixed Chatter]

It will be quite, quite useful.

Down here? [Inaudible]... you don’t even use it personally? No one’s got Alexa? No one’s got anything like that? No?

I always thought Alexa is such a good way to... learn language.

Learn language yeah.

Yeah.

Brilliant, alright, okay. So a lot of enthusiasm for that so I’d put...

[Laughter, Inaudible Chatter]

Is there a kind of online, very similar with [Inaudible]...

Alexa...

Go “hey Google” and then it finds certain things.

Yeah, but I’ve never done it in Turkish that’s why...

Oh, it’s like, you can try it in Siri too.

Yeah.

[In Agreement, Mixed Chatter]

I didn’t know.

Ask her “who am I?”...

“Sorry, I can’t help you”...

[Inaudible] useful... “How do you do that?”

Alright, wonderful. So chat-bots don’t necessarily have to be audio though. They can be text and so on.

Yeah.

[In Agreement]

We happy with that one? Okay.

And, I have got audio message - Whatsapp, Messenger. Yup.

Yeah, people do it a lot these days.

Yeah, so many.

[Laughter, Mixed Chatter]

I’ve seen my students actually doing... sending audio messages, no, they say it’s quicker to do it audio than...

I asked the same question to my students and they don’t and I notice Italian people tend to do it...

Italians do it all the time to send [Inaudible] message. But WeChat is good because it actually keeps it under one minute right? So yeah. But then the result is that you get like ten messages... [Inaudible]

[Laughter]

With my Italian friends in China, so yeah.

Koreans... Spanish people are really good at doing audio messages.

Well you don’t have to be good, you just have to talk...

[Laughter]

I’m not good at typing, cause when I’m walking, because people want to know things... when you have to walk and text, so I just talk. But yeah, I wouldn’t use it... I use it a lot in my personal life but I don’t use it at all, I wouldn’t use it at all in my teaching.

[Inaudible]... on a Tuesday when she’s walk [Laughter, Inaudible]... “I’m just walking to the bus”.

[Laughter]

So no one has sent, like, a pronunciation guide or anything like that to a student or... anything like that at any point?

I think we are kind of becoming aware of it. Slightly learning this technique but actually it’s said that this would be really nice way to teach them pronunciation.

Okay.

But we’ve already parked [Inaudible] anything they want to learn on our website.

[In Agreement, Mixed Chatter]

They are so involved in social media as Gil said, maybe in the teaching we want to do something different instead of... because that’s what they do in their private life anyway.

[In Agreement]

Do you feel like there are, this is [Inaudible] now we are talking about [Inaudible], but do you feel like the students are sending audio messages to each other to help each other [Inaudible]

I doubt it.

[In Agreement]

Okay.

I think there is, I know our students have, you know, a group like a social group in Facebook apart from [Inaudible] to pass on information that’s all, not really language learning...

I mean, by definition, the students are not native speakers right, so I think they would [Inaudible]... spend much time. It would involve recording it right? You might have a conversation with your friend in Chinese but you’re English so you wouldn’t trust someone else’s pronunciation right?

But if they communicated with, not their peers but with the people, native speakers, then I think they can use the way... I mean communicating, but then also they learn language very actively.

Okay. I’ve placed it here cause some of you do use this clearly, maybe not too much in your course...

Not teaching.

Yeah?

Unfortunately, we don’t have a group of students. They will tell you much better how they use.

Yeah, well, we did do that in March but I’m just intrigued as to [Inaudible]. Next one.

The last one, I have got feeds - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram.

Yeah, these are the news feeds you get when you log on to these sites. The long, algorithmically decided...

Yeah.

So what’s it called again, I’m sorry?

Feeds.

Oh, feeds okay.

Also when you post something...

[Inaudible] don’t use in teaching. Sometimes, but nothing like that.

Okay.

Sometimes yeah.

I mean, we... I’ve never done that. So teaching through social media... the only thing I can think of is our virtual learning environment how much we... very much like an answering machine...

Facebook thread, is it like a Facebook thread?

Yeah.

Or is it... Is that different or is that a part of that one?

It’s kind of like the aggregate of everybody’s activity, you know like if you log on to Twitter, you see a huge load of tweets like in a row... [Inaudible] If you log on to Facebook in your homepage, you have...

Oh I see, I see what you mean.

And it’s usually some opaque algorithm deciding what you see, so it’s kind of like an aggregate of contents.

I use Facebook sometimes, I mean...

[Inaudible] all those...

Yeah. In my teaching.

Oh really? Okay. How do you do that?

If it’s a topic like... it’s happening right now - let’s say [Inaudible] about the election. Because in Facebook you can find some of the information, so I use that. And how people react and...

Okay, alright. So I’m going to move this up slightly.

But do you have... Are your students all Facebook friends or...?

Well, you got to be.

What I’m doing is, I’m not using it through Facebook but I’m using that material from Facebook.

You’re extracting the material [Inaudible]. Oh okay, that’s interesting.

Print it out.

Yeah, exactly.

I’m going to place... Is everyone happy with it here? So everyone kind of generally use it but not that much in teaching? Alright, I’m just going to write that about...

But you’re right, I’m not using... not via Facebook, that would be [Inaudible]

[Mixed Chatter, Laughter]

Print out.

I was about to mention a name, but a [Inaudible]... a colleague of mine, he used to be friends... all, with a lot of undergrads, well, sometimes problematic undergraduates on Facebook, so that she could tell if they were partying too much.

[Laughter]

We had one girl, yeah, she was complaining that she was getting stressed. She is stressed right and didn’t have enough time, she couldn’t organise her time but it was clear on Facebook she was just going out all the time. So that was useful.

I don’t have a snooping card.

[Laughter]

Alright. I’m almost out of time so I’m going to move on to the next activity but I think that was really interesting. I wish I had brought some of the ones that the students did to compare and contrast. There was definitely more being used as you probably have already said yourselves for learning than you guys use for teaching. That’s clearly the case. I also really think that it is interesting as well that you have a lot of familiarity here but perhaps [Inaudible] incorporate that. Like we kind of knew that didn’t we, that’s kind of the reason why we are here in the first place. So that’s fascinating. Thank you very much. Any comments or questions about that before we move into the next activity?

I mean, I’m old and I don’t use Twitter at all, actually I kind of used it very very briefly to complain about something. But my issue... I’m feeling slightly anxious cause God there’s so many things to choose from. Yeah, that’s partly why I don’t use social media more cause these things... What do kids now use? What... it just seems like one thing is popular one moment and the next moment, no one is using it. So that’s the kind of anxiety I’m feeling... God there’s a lot of different pieces of paper I’d be printing. What would be the most efficient thing to start me in?

Well, I guess that’s what we are trying to find out as well. I mean, and also, the interesting thing is these are [Inaudible] and not specific apps, and one app can do most of these things really, and then we can amalgamate them in ways and adopt them into the fabric of everyday life. Anyway, should we move on to the next activity then? Alright, okay, so what I have prepared is a series of insights which the students kindly provided for us in March. We’ve got six of them in total. Each one has kind of a rough theme, so I did kind of an analysis of the kind of the data we got out of that - what people were talking about. Each one has a rough theme, a quote that kind of talks about that theme and on the back there is a design space symbolised by the dotted line, is a place where we can start talking about how that might actually look, how it might actually... some ideas about what you want to do if you are trying to incorporate that into courses. Does that make sense? Alright so. I have produced a couple of these. So let’s start with... number one. Can everyone, can everyone read that okay? I have some other copies if other people want individual copy.

Are these in regards to teaching also or just, like, the number one is just for life in general?

Using social media... yeah... in a learned language. So all these are in a learned language context.

In a learned language.

Learned language.

So what’s everyone’s initial thoughts of that?

Can we have another one facing this way?

I’ve got smaller print-outs here. One over there as well? I have got a rainforest worth of....

[Laughter]

What’s stickers? Like a word bubble?

Stickers is like a big emoji.

Yeah.

A big emoji.

[Mixed Chatter, Laughter]

Pretty much. They are sometimes animated as well.

Oh yeah.

[Mixed Chatter, Laughter]

I’ve seen those.

[Mixed Chatter, Laughter]

So, how that can be related to teaching and learning? If they [Inaudible]... A word, even a word can sometimes be interpreted differently. But this has more meaning than just a word. You know people are possibly going to react very differently with the...

[Inaudible] stickers and emojis they value possibly in language teaching. Okay.

It’s like so intriguing that young people pick up emojis that like are relevant to the context which I am always so amazed. I mean, even as a native speaker, I can’t find out emojis stand for this, but then learners can choose what emojis they think...

Another think I noticed is... issue of generation gap.

[Laughter, Mixed Chatter]

Two generations out.

[Laughter]

That some people, these young people find it very strange, very funny, I don’t... I can’t find any funniness in it.

So that’s a cultural problem because of the...

Do you mean stickers and emojis? Really? I love them!

[Laughter]

Me too! I love them! I’m younger than you are but...

[Laughter]

Possibly. When you received one, somehow how that matches your feeling doesn’t mean the person who send you had the same sort of feeling or slightly different. That’s what I think.

I mean, the difference, it can be as big as the generation gap.

How it’s not funny.

Cause definitely Line has got a lot more stickers and I really love them.

[Mixed Chatter, Laughter]

Cause there’s certain apps that certain people from certain culture use which generally has a lot more stickers than others right? So if you use, say, Facebook Messenger, you don’t have that many varieties of stickers as opposed to, say, Kakao or WeChat or Line, where generally people who use it, use a lot more stickers so, as someone who learns that language, you tend to mimic what you see people doing and I think that’s how that helps in that sense.

Well, I think that’s interesting, going back to this quote specifically...

I think it might be my quote to be honest...

[Laughter]

Oh I apologise. I thought they were all you now... So specifically, there is a question... we talked about this, what type of learning is happening here and... where the student is facilitating the conversation with the use of stickers and emojis, continuing the conversation if not necessarily grasping or learning words or new ways of communicating but there... what’s the value in that? That’s something that you guys will have to fill me in on today. Do you think this is a valuable way of... would you like to incorporate this into your courses?

What do you mean by valuable or not valuable?

I hope that you might be able to help me with that.

Because the point is that you all have to understand the young people’s culture because the mentality... how they think is a part of their lives. So maybe we have to learn.

Yeah, these Japanese people are using it all then Japanese students should know that right to understand how to use them right to write like a native.

You’re right.

Part of the language become another language. I think one of my students showed me an artist that is going to create a language just using art. And they tried to translate that for me, I think it’s not terribly sophisticated either.

[Laughter]

It was a piece of a work. I mean it was supposed to be an article.

There is a set of emoji too which have my dialect.

Oh!

Which dialect?

Osaka. We produce a lot of comedians like [Inaudible].

There is, I think, a group that meets every year to decide what new emojis are made. It’s a fascinating world. Who decides what emojis [Inaudible] and obviously being Japanese is a heavy weighted... I think there is like 56 Japanese-specific emojis, something like that in the last count?

[Laughter]

I think there’s 3 UK.

[Inaudible]... the Turkish “i” emoji here.

[Laughter, Mixed Chatter]

So I’ve flipped this over now to talk about kind of rough design space now. So, what we [Inaudible] for the design space is like, what could we do with stickers and emojis. What are these possibilities. So I have jotted down some options there, you can imagine having a surge of activities or we can imagine stopping students from using stickers and emojis or we could imagine just letting it happen and setting it as part of a normal way people communicate in these social media. So thinking if you were trying to use social media in our courses, where would you feel like you’d lie in this design space and what would you be most comfortable? Does that question make sense or was it confusing?

What do you mean where?

Yeah, so, between actively encouraging uses of stickers and emojis, avoiding them, preventing them... like what. What do you feel...

We would have a difference in Japanese, which carries some cultural aspects of the language.

But would you feel that you need to teach them in a classroom or you could just leave students to, kind of, learn it on their own?

They can just do it by themselves.

Occasionally.

Let’s say you create a social multimedia programme for language learning. Would they, would you allow them to use this to express some kind of... answer?

I would say yes because they are set in... Japanese young people do use them so, yeah. Correct use of emoji could be important.

Is it something you feel like you would be comfortable teaching?

Teaching? I would love to teach!

[Laughter]

Teach culture. Maybe depending on the culture, sometimes you can [Inaudible]. I will ask you all, what does this mean to you? This emoji?

Thank you.

Praying.

Thank you and praying? In Japanese, sometimes this is apology. So sometimes it is not easy. You have to be very careful... what does this emoji mean.

[Mixed Chatter]

It’s not just emoji. Previously, they use little, like, dots and...

Yeah, emoticons.

... yes before. And they still use it.

They have evolved haven’t they?

I need to, I mean, there are three or four really popular Korean emoticon with symbols which I need to teach them because there’s no other way for them to understand it... interact with young people so... I teach them that this means crying, this means sorry, this means giggling. It’s good to use it when you are talking with people to sympathise or to show empathy. So I think showing empathy is very important aspect of communication. So if you do anything, you don’t, like, sound okay when you sound really serious.

And I think proper use of emoji and stickers could allow students to make more friends during their year abroad or whatever. So if they don’t know, they may lose a chance they get.

I think it’s about teaching them the cultural aspect of the language that you are teaching as opposed to giving lectures on it... Because the reason why I use emojis is because I, like, can’t be bothered to read most of the things that’s written or I have a general understanding of what’s going on, it’s just that I don’t know how to respond. So that’s when I use emojis. So I guess, to a certain extent, it helps with the comprehension but not being able to respond in an intelligent manner or something like that.

It’s a way of maintaining presence in a conversation without having to...

Exactly.

I think it’s a way of facilitating the flow of the conversation. You know, just, yeah. Even in the language that you speak, you know even in English sometimes, you want to respond you just put that [Inaudible].

That’s very interesting; so I use them to express myself, and I… my friends choose certain ones which look like them.

The face emoji...

[Inaudible]

Maybe you can [Inaudible] like the, body language... You know, for communicating, like you don’t teach these, but it’s, you know...

It’s kind of [Inaudible] if you put an emoji like, you know, responding to... if you don’t it, even if you are there you don’t really feel like you’re listening to the conversation.

I mean, it’s stating the obvious, but social media is highly abbreviated language isn’t it? So you need to substitute things for facial expressions. And there’s also this... the other strange thing is it’s real conversation but written down right, so, and again so... and that’s why you need to substitute facial expressions cause it’s not letter writing like where everything is written down. You’re saying something sarcastic and you need to, you need the recipient to understand that it is sarcastic. So [Inaudible], whereas in a letter, the context will tell you whether it is sarcastic or not.

But it is interesting that you said “I use emoji because I don’t know how to react”. For me, it’s just the opposite. I do react and sometimes... yeah.

I think another thing, if you look at the Facebook... early stage of Facebook, you know, the idea of like... Now if you see there’s several options. [Inaudible]... that’s because, I think, they did it because like is a possibility that carried this kind of still developing. Now, it’s become almost like a kind of language so that’s why they [Inaudible] more either crying one, laughing one whatever, sad one...

It’s to allow better empathy.

[In Agreement]

Okay, I’ve got 25 minutes left and I wanted to... this I wanted to cover later on, so let’s move on to number two - informal registers or slang words on social media.

I’m sorry I have to leave. Thank you very much.

You’re welcome. Thank you for coming. So read that quote.

[Laughter]

Okay, I see a lot of nods.

[Laughter]

Yeah, okay. Well, should we just go straight into discussing how this might work and flip it over to some ideas that I came up with... were, maybe you could source a collaborative dictionary of social media slang from students. So it’s kind of similar to what we were talking about emojis as well [Inaudible]. But also, how do you negotiate authentic communication on social media versus the requirements of formal learning? There seems to be a slight tension in that and one suggestion might be role-playing or [Inaudible]. If we could talk about that a little bit, what are your thoughts about that tension?

I mean, again, this is a generation issue. So if you’re talking to people, like anybody, as a teacher, you might be uncomfortable. [Inaudible] they don’t know how to react on social media [Inaudible]. But there’s a big gap... So they have to, I mean, my generation has to learn first to understand the frequently used terms.

So you feel like if you were using social media to teach them that you would be less equipped to be able to teach the students the form of registers and that’s that. Okay.

[Inaudible]

I think this is a problem for languages are hierarchical, in the sense that, if that’s a certain culture that requires a respect of elders and people with authority than it becomes very difficult to implement this in the classroom because you’ll be so confused as to how you’re going to address your teacher after that. Like, you want to be slightly informal but you’re uncomfortable... I mean even... Being an Asian myself, like, I find it difficult to be very informal even in English to people who are older than me just because, like, it’s just not how we grew up. So, I mean, I get that it will be interesting to see how this would be implemented, but I really doubt it’s... it could be put into practice. At least, not for the languages that I know. It’s very difficult for... I mean, there’s an informal style and then there is a casual style and maybe this could still pass around the informal bit, but the casual bit is something that it’s probably a no-no...

You learn it by practising in the outside... [Inaudible] it would be easy to use classroom time usefully. I mean, just go away and use social media...

[Mixed Chatter]

I think the way we do it here at the OI is usually, first year, because first year we have to teach the standard language and then they go to a year abroad. Actually when they come back, that is getting very interesting. That’s the time where students... exactly, try to use the informal style as well. Then that’s the time we can really show...

They do learn this colloquial language very quickly. They also complain because, as a joke, because almost all the teachers are female and then they say, “you taught us how to speak like a woman”.

[Laughter]

The only way that I could actually see this being implemented in real life is if they have people of the same age and they could communicate with them and maybe that’s something that can be facilitated but other than that I don’t know if it is possible for you to have that sort of interaction with your teacher... it just doesn’t seem...

You could print something out, you could print something out right and discuss it as a kind of text but...

That will be a very formal setting as oppose to...

Actually, I have a very interesting experience with that. They kept asking me swear words in Turkish...

[Laughter]

... and I’m not very good with swear words and then there was this lovely girl in the classroom saying, “can I prepare a list of swear words?”...

[Laughter]

... The sweetest girl in the classroom and I thought the most hardworking one, and I thought, “okay, but you have to show it first to me”. So basically the student initiated that and I had a quick look and, wow! Yes. But they wanted to have that input, so yeah, I let it happen and I told them, “promise me not to tell anyone”. So maybe these kind of... because they ask for it, and maybe it is important because they want to know if people say bad things to them...

They need to.

... They need to know yeah.

They need to know.

But as a teacher, I don’t really need to teach them.

[Inaudible]

Oh god!

Because the experience is what happen.... you know, after you learn in textbook, then we just... in their second year, before they went to China in the past, they had to read Chinese literature. That can be anything, it can be swear words, it can be anything. And then they just, I think, learn to read in a dictionary, because once you... I think before the use of social media, computers, they... the traditional dictionary you can understand old I am... I have been working here for over thirty years. When they start, they open one page, they check every single word on that page in a dictionary, they still couldn’t understand a word about what are they talking about, and they just cry, “what is the point of learning?”. So that’s why I actually have to write something, which is not in the dictionary that [Inaudible]. But I didn’t put a lot of really violent [Inaudible]...

[Laughter]

... but that was a really [Inaudible]... It’s normally textbook words... So that’s usually a bit closer to whatever you’re... because if you read, you ask people to read a little bit then you can get something. It’s not formal-informal but [Inaudible].

So I think it is a very good environment, because sometimes, you know, even if you give them a dictionary definition of all these, like, swear word, the [Inaudible]... even if you hear the definition, you don’t know, but if you are kind of exposed to real situation of some sort then you can get a very good [Inaudible] if this is a good word or bad word and so on. So maybe a good place to learn these... the real aspects...

The interesting thing about... going back to the tension between authentic communication and formal learning... a space that’s for them and a space that includes you as well. You know, if there’s a very different modes of being... yeah okay. So...

Can I... I need to leave... Can I just ask one question because I guess you are expert in social media or general media? And maybe it’s not exactly relevant but it will be relevant in the future. I am very interested to know the law about how to use material on social media. I use it for my research actually but maybe people also use it for... For instance, there is copyright, I know if I want to quote, how much I can quote from... but I’ve been told different opinions. For instance, because I work on cultural expressions on media, so... for instance, I was following writers and artists, there’s nothing really political at all - just activities. So for instance, if I want to take a poem, if a poet put a poem on his social media, somebody said “since it is public, then I can use it. There are no law against that”. Or if they put a picture, for instance, I can use it and I can even publish it, include it in an article. Do you know anything about that?

I know about social media, but that’s more of a law I guess.

There is law?

There is... I think, my instinct would cite difference from platform to platform cause when one person publishes on social media, they’ve already agreed to certain terms and conditions [Inaudible] media that they publish. Most often, it is the platform itself.

The platform you mean, like, Facebook?

Like Facebook for example.

In Facebook, I follow many, several poets and novelists on Facebook. So how much I can take because sometimes they would publish something from a novel that is still in press... So... But, like, it is public. So, for instance, I can quote it. Is there... Can you direct me later maybe I’ll, can, email you to certain...

I can have a look into it but I can’t say I am an expert on...

I think Twitter is kind of public domain, so you can use Twitter.

Everything there I can use, can I?

But then there is an intellectual copyright and property and some of that... it’s not as simple as... yeah...

I know...

... but then, I’m also pretty certain that any law is only as valid as it is enforceable, so if you just print this off in your slides or in your lecture then...

No in publication...

In publication. Oh right. Oh sorry I missed that part. There’s probably a little bit more [Inaudible]...

Yes, do you know where I can know about... Is there fixed rules about this or not yet?

[Mixed Chatter]

You can look at the terms and conditions of the platform...

Okay, thank you very much [Inaudible]. Thank you so much... I have to leave.

Alright, okay. Time to blast through one more? Is everyone okay with just continuing with another one?

Thank you very much.

It’s a bit longer, two quotes this time. So this is referring into connotations in social media... So with this quote, we are kind of trying to understand actually how the best way of putting people together on social media to make it the most productive for everyone... If that’s... How we combine people of different abilities and how we combine groups of people and that kind of thing, which is a practical concern if we are going to be thinking about how we are going to roll this out. So in the back there... this is just a random idea, might be... You know, what would it be like if we have large groups of mixed abilities. What would that look like? Say, a kind of large WeChat group or something. What would it look like if we had, also, small groups of similar ability? And also how could we structure that best for learning. I mean, what are your thoughts on that? Has anyone experimented on this before or...?

Well, real, I mean, real learning is generally going to be mixed abilities right? Because you’ve got somebody who knows languages and somebody who doesn’t right [Inaudible]. So, if it is two people with the same ability it’s just going to be practise rather than learning alright? Yeah, more or less. If the person doesn’t know more than you, than you’re not learning right? You can practise but you’re not going to learn [Inaudible].

I mean, I’m curious to find out how this would work, just without social media in the general classroom setting. If you have students of different learning abilities, how do you actually manage to [Inaudible]... because that might be something that could be somehow implemented within a social media setting for it to work? I’m interested in general... like, right now you have two students or four students and they all have different abilities, how do you manage to go in that class and make sure that someone, everyone gets out of the class with something in [Inaudible].

Is it a question for...?

Yeah. I mean, I was going to say it’s exactly what’s happening in real life in the classroom actually. We have students who are at different levels. What I’m doing, I use a lot of pair work and group work in my classrooms and if I notice that the students are working always with the same groups, I somehow create a different tactic like numbers or match things. So I make sure that they don’t work always with the same students. Cause I think that’s important.

Why is that important?

I think from time to time, because they have different abilities, there are things that they can share... they actually support each other. I don’t think that, I don’t think that weak, what does weak student mean? I’m sure that he’s strong at, or she is strong at certain points. So I like this helping each other and, especially, I mean, all of us we are trying to create an environment where the students feel safe anyway. So they don’t mind actually changing partners.

So it’s [Inaudible]

Exactly, exactly.

So why is the ability [Inaudible]... Because sometimes, I think, when there... you will use the word “chemistry” because while in the group, they can create a very positive... helping each other... The strong one will help the weak one. Even if the chemistry is not right, even if a group of similar learning level, all the students actually can be quite damaging to each other.

[In Agreement]

In someone else’s class recently, I had a complaint that the teacher was putting the strong students and the weak students [Inaudible] together and so the weak ones felt, “well, I know you’re putting me with the strong because you think I’m weak”. I mean, this is happening week after week, so that person felt humiliated...

This is really interesting.

Creating a safe environment. That’s why with social media, I’m not sure, I mean when I read this, I was thinking, “am I creating an environment in the social media, I mean... But in the classroom, obviously, we are creating that environment and...

Taking what you said and relating it to their having chemistry I can imagine it’s quite obvious to tell when chemistry is happening between, within a group, in a classroom. Less obvious to imagine how we would capture that or understand that in a social media context. But there will be a way, because if it’s happening... it will be happening. But I guess we need to understand...

Yeah, I think, social media one thing is, like, you could be a little bit safe if you are not, like, an active participant. So you don’t know how to... you can learn from other people by just observing... But in the real classroom, you may feel a bit [Inaudible]

[In Agreement]

But we never force students, I mean, it’s encouraging but not forcing.

Well that’s another thing as well isn’t it? Yeah, like, the lurker in your group chat of fifty people and not saying a thing but still benefitting from it. That’s quite a unique [Inaudible] of social media...

Without being noticed that you are...

Can get creepy though.

[Laughter]

There is a specific number where it is not creepy... I think it’s between four and eight people in a group, it’s creepy, if some of them aren’t talking, but as soon as it goes beyond that it’s just [Inaudible]

[Laughter]

Okay, right. Last one then. I’ll skip a few of these and we’ll go for... I want to talk about... quite a big... idea. I mean, the quote is just a general one but really... the general point is about incorporating social media in the classroom. The quote... it’s a general quote and it won’t surprise you... we have been talking about it the whole, all day. But I want to take a different slant on this. I want to talk about assessment and evaluation and all those metrics and stuff like that, that [Inaudible] is necessary for you guys to do your jobs. If we are talking about incorporating social media into curriculum, we need to talk, need to understand a way of measuring that and assessing that, and thinking about how we can actually value...

Here in Oxford?

You mean, basically the value of social media [Inaudible]

Yeah. And I know the classic, the classic metric where they... “this level, we did social media, levels increased”. You know that makes sense, but how do we do that with social medial? So you can ignore all these ones really, let’s just go straight into we might think about integrating assessment with social media. So one of the ideas that I came up with randomly would be peer assessments, as long as that’s something you do much?

You mean students....

They mark...

They mark each other’s...

Oh, marking each other’s works.

Yeah.

Sometimes they do, but they tend not to like it.

Okay.

[Laughter]

Why don’t they like it?

Cause they feel quite embarrassed I suppose.

Don’t want to be criticised by others.

[Mixed Chatter]

It increases shame in British people I think.

That’s specific for, like, languages [Inaudible]. Cause for every other subject, generally if you don’t know it’s fine but I think for languages it’s different because you don’t want to, you don’t want to be seen as though you’re speaking like an infant. I think that’s where most of the trouble is - you don’t want to be seen, like, you’re talking like a child. Especially when you are just starting to learn the languages, you don’t form sophisticated sentences, like each sentence has five words and you’re happy with that but you don’t want people to know that you have five sentences with five words each and [Inaudible] and that’s your essay.

Yeah, I see.

I think, sort of like, using situational knowledge and understanding, the pragmatic aspects [Inaudible], these things could be quite difficult to take as a paper exam, but in social media, you can actually understand... kind of find ways to assess their real understanding of the situation and the language altogether.

Another thing that social media presumably... you can’t write essays on social media...

You could but it’ll take you a long time.

[Laughter]

I heard that some Japanese students in Japan now, is writing essays or reporting using their phone...

Really?

... and that’s a big issue [Inaudible].

Just to be clear, are you talking about teachers assessing students? Other kind of automatic assessment, kind of, computerised assessment or...

Assessment has to take place, doesn’t it? And really, what’s the best way doing that for social media whether that’s teacher’s assessment or automatic or...

[Mixed Chatter]

Yeah, And like... and actually it might be worth just talking really quickly about what your current understanding of how you would assess the kind of conversations, the informal conversations that happen on social media. So where would you assess that [Inaudible]... Are you incorporating those into your assessments at all?

We haven’t... I mean, I certainly I have never tried so that’s a very honest opinion... I have to think of what sort of thing I can assess via social media. So that’s why I am asking, “can you write texts”?

You could assess a print-out of the conversation, couldn’t you?

[In Agreement, Mixed Chatter]

... the common thing.

I mean, the thing is we really always just need social media. The thing is, like you said, like, texting... what we can, what I’m doing in my classroom is, like, leaving notes like fridge notes. You write, we write notes on the fridge for example. It’s the same. Instead of writing a Whatsapp message, I’ll create a situation where the students write to each other, “okay, I’m leaving, can you... don’t forget to buy the milk.”. But again, it’s just informal and it’s a real setting so it doesn’t have to be social media, but yeah, of course it can be social media.

[In Agreement]

I have another negative point to make. If, let’s say, all your... you create something wonderful people will use it regularly yeah? I mean all the students and the teachers if you create a programme on social media for people to use... Don’t you think you’ll create a lot of work for us?

[Laughter]

That’s why I am including us all in the conversation.

[Laughter]

I don’t want to have a middle of the night answering my students...

Yeah.

No, but this is a very real practical thing you are saying... Yeah, no.... you’re right.

But you know, like, having chat-bot, like, situation is to have less burden than... isn’t it like to give...

I think that’s also important if you want to create something like this, putting your senses into it. Like, what we say, with emotional intelligence and so on. So I think, the whole day, if we are going to [Inaudible] on social media... that was, we only see our students only, let’s say, two hours a week sometimes. That time is so precious. You know what? I’m sure you’d agree with that. That time, I don’t want to talk about social media. I really, because, they are there, I want them to touch the pen, write down... because I want them put in motions, and repeat with real people, so I don’t know. But I agree, this could be self-regulated learning outside classroom yeah...

Yeah, because... away from classroom, that way when you look at [Inaudible]... therefore my question is “are you going to create more workload for us?”

[Laughter]

Like Duolingo, I do in fact... but it’s not social media right is it or is it? I mean, you know, Duolingo is like a computer game - you move through levels right? And that goes back to what I was saying earlier, I know... I think someone at Harvard used Duolingo for their placement tests. If that, I don’t know if that counts as what you’re... You know, that would be an assessment right? That would be social media assessment, that sort.

Yeah, I guess automated assessment [Inaudible]...

Exactly, automated assessment.

Yeah, yeah. But then the things being assessed through Duolingo isn’t the same thing as what would be assessing through some kind of social media.

No, no, no.

[Inaudible] Duolingo...

Yeah, yeah. So I think... just generally what do you currently do [Inaudible]. Do you, do you actually have an assessment or coursework or a roundabout, informal text conversation between people? Is that something you currently do?

No.

[Inaudible] Oxford... we’re very traditional.

[Laughter]

Letter-writing is it?

I’m telling you the truth.

In certain class, I, well, ask students to do portfolio, and in that portfolio students can do whatever they want to do, there’s no.... their self-defined goal and if they want to be more familiar with the use of social media, they could do it, and I don’t really teach how to do it but they can show us maybe and then... what I have to teach them is the critical awareness about how they use it or language differences, in that way maybe those could be I guess.

Probably in Oxford, I mean like, probably like almost all universities right is the final exam... is high intellect... I mean, hopefully, high intellectual essay writing right. So social media would be, I mean I’m not saying it’s great to do it but the problem, actually one problem is that a lot of students would love doing it but we also always have a constant problem... “this isn’t in the exam, why are we doing it?”. That would be a huge issue I think.

Yeah.

[In Agreement]

Maybe the only place we are doing that a little bit is in our speaking exam. One component in the speaking exam’s about... you give a situation and the student has to... and then maybe you can talk about advantages and disadvantages of social media... but it’s about social media, not... that’s the only...

I do think Korean, and it’s probably similar to Japanese, the speech style is very important, how you speak and that’s not actually in speaking exam but it’s in the grammar exam and how you find register and actually... it’s quite difficult to have that [Inaudible] knowledge and check, but if you, kind of, make it more social media settings and things, then maybe it’s easier way for them to learn and assess. I mean, it’s terribly important how you speak to this person, that person and that can be taught much more, you know, [Inaudible] informal and natural situation and [Inaudible], you basically imagine a scenario and check, but that’s a bit unnatural [Inaudible]...

Transfer that kind of activity. This one’s a bit more natural...

So bringing it back to the oral exam that you were talking about, we used to do that back in Singapore where there was a reading component, and certainly either a picture conversation or they give you a situation and you talk about the situation. And what my ministry did some time, about ten years ago, they switched it up. So what they did was instead of having, like, a picture conversation or being given a situation to talk about, they generally had a long video clip that they played and then you described or explain whatever this video is about, or whatever this video was talking about, or something like that. So, I don’t know if that’s a use of social media but that was, back in the day, that was new to us, in using new forms of available resources as opposed to, like, the old pictures and words and things like that...

Okay.

As far as, like, using social media goes, I think, if there was a component for coursework, maybe that could be a potential area for using it. I don’t know how...

So a coursework component as opposed to like a final exam.

Cause I don’t know if this would fly in most places to be honest. Like I don’t know if a lot of [Inaudible] see that as a rigorous form of assessment, but if it was part of, like, a 5% coursework or whatever it was, they would be more willing to let that, you know, go under the radar; it doesn’t take up too much of [Inaudible].

We don’t have coursework at Oxford, that’s the problem. Well except one essay, they write one extended essay but yeah.

And I think it’ll certainly help them to interact with friends in the other country, and in this way they can pick up different things and...

I mean, the thing is, yeah, some students are happy to do things beyond the course right and some things some kind of acknowledge, and yeah, so some, so sometimes you do some... you think about doing something really useful and entertaining and they just say “well, don’t need to do it for the exams”... so yeah.

[Laughter]

I think [Inaudible] don’t like work [Inaudible]... begin with a database but do it in a way that you can ask it any questions and it would be able to answer you. I mean, this [Inaudible]...

I think that’s far beyond my abilities.

[Laughter]

I do like that idea. So yeah, we’re already five past the time we said we’d finish, and I’m going to be sticking around for a bit longer, I think, if anyone wants to continue the conversation, but, just to say thank you all so much for coming and giving me your thoughts and ideas. I’ll...