

LOOKING BACK | 報告**JALTCALL 2018: Reflections on the
Learner Development SIG Forum**

Blair Barr, Neil Cowie, Daniel Hougham, & Brett Milliner

On June 10, 2018, the Learner Development (LD) SIG Forum was proud to continue a long-standing relationship with the JALTCALL annual conference at Meijo University in Nagoya. This is a unique opportunity for Learner Development members, as we are the only JALT Special Interest Group (SIG) to stage a forum at this event every year. This year's forum was titled *Navigating Language Development: How are learners evolving with language learning technology?* It attracted a small but dynamic and interactive group of attendees, and it featured innovative approaches for facilitating independent learner development using technology in the classroom and beyond. First, Brett Milliner (*Preparing Language Learners for Extensive Listening Online*) reported on student engagement with extensive listening exercises and listening logs. Next, in his presentation titled *Online Quizzing/Testing with Immediate Feedback through Quizlet, Google, and Flubaroo Add-on*, Daniel Hougham presented survey findings on learners' perceptions of a vocabulary-learning program incorporating Quizlet and online vocabulary quizzes (Google Forms and the Flubaroo add-on). Finally, in a presentation titled *The Many Uses of Quizlet and Co-creating with Students*, Blair Barr demonstrated how one particular group of learners in a university Business and TOEIC class engaged in the co-development of Quizlet flashcard sets for both in-class gamification and independent-study for TOEIC and vocabulary development. Each presentation was followed by a discussion period where participants reflected and shared their own research experiences, puzzles, and questions about learner development using technology.

Brett Milliner, Tamagawa University

Although attendance was small (which was probably a reflection of the early Sunday morning time-slot), this year's LD Forum proved to be my most worthwhile experience of the entire conference. Quite often at CALL related events presenters will talk about the potential of new technologies, whereas, in this forum the presenters drew upon their day-to-day use of online applications in their language classrooms. Moreover, all participants had intimate experience using each application, hence discussions focussed on the practical applications of these tools for language learning, and not on the technology.

To reflect on the individual presentations, I was impressed to see how balanced Daniel Hougham's approach to vocabulary learning has become. Daniel includes both an incidental (using extensive reading) and deliberate learning component that utilizes Quizlet flashcards and regular vocabulary quizzes created in Google Forms (and graded using the add-on, Flubaroo). He also dedicates time to carefully training his students on how to create their own flashcard sets in Quizlet and how to set up a self-evaluation step in this learning process (via the online tests). Daniel is also auditing the effectiveness of these online learning activities, and he shared some encouraging results. So far, his students appear to really like the Quizlet component and they appreciate receiving immediate feedback (conducted via Flubaroo) for their formative vocabulary tests. I look forward to reading some of the research output he is planning concerning correlations between TOEIC test focussed vocabulary study (using Quizlet) and actual TOEIC scores.

Following Daniel's evaluation of student

perceptions for his vocabulary training activities, Blair Barr shared a range of approaches for using Quizlet in the EFL classroom. Some these ideas are shared in Blair's reflection below, but what struck me was that flashcards are not necessarily restricted to vocabulary learning, rather there is potential to use this tool for speaking and listening practice. I was also interested in Blair's creative approaches to getting students to create card sets. When Nation (2013) highlighted flashcards were the fastest approach to acquiring new vocabulary, he also recognized the value of students manually creating each card. One problem I have had when implementing an online flashcard system was how I could make the card creation process more meaningful and how I could train students to utilize some of the affordances of this online, digital format (e.g., incorporation of multimedia, images and example sentences found on dictionary websites such as alc.co.jp).

In my presentation I introduced the Google apps, Google Forms, Google Sheets and YouTube and how I utilize them to manage extensive listening components in my university-level EFL courses (see Milliner, 2016 for an introduction to Google apps; and, Milliner & Barr, 2017 for an introduction to Google Forms-based testing). As members of the audience were familiar with these apps, the presentation focussed on managing the listening component. During the discussion period, important points included how to protect against students cheating with a self-reporting or honesty-based approach, and how to create comprehension quizzes in Google Forms that embed YouTube or PDF media (see Figure 1.).

Carpool Karaoke Quiz

* Required

Please Watch This Video Before You Start The Quiz...



How many Maltesers could Ed Sheeran fit in his mouth? * 25 points



15

30

Figure 1. A listening quiz created by students using Google forms

Overall, I was happy that we had a smaller group attend this forum. As I mentioned in my introduction, all participants were experienced teachers and CALL users, which made for some enlightening discussion concerning the practical application of online tools for language learning. I found myself in the week following the conference looking into how to use Flubaroo, instructing my students on how to create online flashcard sets more effectively and looking into how I can catch instances of cheating (e.g., using sophisticated text filtering in Google Sheets) in my extensive listening component.

To conclude, I wanted to thank Blair and Daniel for the invitation and their well-prepared, insightful talks. Also, thank you to the LD SIG for the opportunity to present in their forum.

Daniel Hougham, *Hiroshima Jogakuin University*

I really enjoyed Brett Milliner's presentation on using extensive listening logs. Brett explained how his high-level university students have been given the guidance and autonomy to choose listening texts from websites such as TED, BBC, and YouTube. It was great to see that students were required to record information about their self-selected listening texts and experiences in an Extensive Listening Log, via a Google Form, and were given access to a shared spreadsheet (Google Sheet) where all of this data including their own reflective comments could be seen by the teacher and students. Giving students access to their classmates' responses in this way seemed to be providing them an excellent opportunity to see what their peers were listening to and thinking about, thus creating the right conditions for them to learn from each other's experiences.

It was interesting to learn that TED, YouTube, VoiceTube, and ELLLO were the most popular sources of self-selected listening material among his students. When asked by an audience member how he might adapt the extensive listening activity for lower-level learners, Brett responded that he would guide the students to visit the following three select websites where they can self-select graded listening material suitable for lower-levels: (1) ESL Fast (eslfast.com), (2) English Listening Lesson Library Online (elllo.org), and (3) News in Levels (newsinlevels.com). Providing lower-level students with such a limited but carefully selected choice of websites is arguably providing guided autonomy, which most lower-level students seem to need.

It was also great to learn that his students were encouraged to create quizzes using Google Forms, where they could embed high-quality YouTube videos and images, to aid with comprehension and enjoyment of high-interest content. One example he showed was a student-created Ed Sheeran Carpool Karaoke Quiz (see Figure 1. above) in which a student had embedded an image of Maltesers to aid with comprehension of the question "How many Maltesers could Ed Sheeran fit

in his mouth"? Encouraging students to use Google Forms in this way was an excellent example of applying one of Hubbard's (2004) five principles for CALL learner training: Give learners teacher training and enable them to take responsibility for their own learning.

My own presentation was on the topic of Online quizzing/testing with immediate feedback through Quizlet, Google, and Flubaroo add-on. I talked about how my 1st-year low-level Japanese university students were given some basic technical and strategic training in the use of Quizlet to study word cards using a variety of engaging activities, and were given weekly vocabulary quizzes with Google Forms and Flubaroo. The course-improvement survey results I shared suggested that learners find Quizlet very useful and easy to use, and that they want to continue using it in the future.

After my presentation, attendees raised some important questions for discussion, including the question of whether I have found that my students actually use Quizlet independently. Although I have collected plenty of student study data which shows that many students do use Quizlet sets to complete assigned activities for homework on their own, I have found that only a small number of students continue to create their own Quizlet sets and use them to study English and/or other subjects independently outside the classroom. This discussion prompted a shared realization among a couple of participants that there is a need to conduct interviews with students who have become successful independent Quizlet users to find out more about their Quizlet usage patterns and habits and how they became proficient at using it. The discussion also solidified my realization that there is a need to create better learner training materials—screenshot tutorials in particular—which will make it possible for students to more quickly learn how to create and study using Quizlet to achieve their study goals independently, outside the classroom. It also solidified my awareness of the need to focus on helping students improve their TOEIC scores, using Quizlet with TOEIC materials, and the need to investigate the

relationship between the use of Quizlet with a TOEIC word list and TOEIC score gains.

I also enjoyed a really stimulating presentation by Blair Barr who similarly shared some cutting-edge strategies and techniques for helping Japanese university students take more control of their learning. Blair talked about how he uses Quizlet to increase participation among his students, in particular, he adjusts the options within Quizlet study sets so that they are editable by certain classes. He then gets his students to collaboratively edit a shared Quizlet study set for homework, which he then checks for accuracy before class. It was really interesting to learn that, to enable this activity, Blair puts each students' first name (on the definition sides of each card, respectively) in a set so that each student knows which card to edit and can do so in an orderly fashion. Once the set is created, his class could use it in a variety of ways including playing a variation of Quizlet Live called "11". "11" is a variation where all teams must stop when they get to 11 points, so that all other teams have more opportunities to participate and finish the game (Brandl, 2017).

I greatly enjoyed participating in the LD SIG Forum at JALTCALL in Nagoya, and came away with many good ideas on how to use powerful tools—Google Forms, Sheets, and Quizlet in particular—to promote class participation and enable learners to take more control of their learning. Although the number of attendees was not large, discussions with them turned out to be one of my most intimate and useful experiences at the conference.

Special thanks to Blair Barr for organizing the LD SIG forum again this year.

Blair Barr, Tamagawa University

As usual, I really enjoyed taking part in another Learner Development SIG Forum. This year, I got to watch presentations by Brett Milliner and Daniel Hougham before giving a presentation about my own learners Quizlet usage. In this reflection, I would first like to review the presentations by

Brett and Daniel, as well as present some lingering questions that I have about their experiences. After that, I will try to summarize my own presentation, and then end by showing some other points that came up after my presentation.

Brett Milliner's presentation introduced us to online Extensive Listening diaries that he has set up for some of his more advanced English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes. Students were required to choose online materials to listen to on a regular basis, and then, after listening, they were required to complete a Google Form with details and a summary of the listening. This information would then be stored in a shared location for students to use as a potential database of listening materials. This way students could find materials that other students enjoyed. I thought this was an interesting resource for students, but I was left with one lingering question about cheating the system. I would suspect that some students would simply copy summaries from the resource and then submit these as their own work without strict teacher reviews. However, Brett also showed us how his students are creating Google Form quizzes based on listening/video materials that are embedded in the online form. I was excited by this idea, and I see great potential that these quizzes could provide the teacher with an increasing set of listening content that could be used to confirm comprehension. I have started to consider using such student-generated online content for some of my own classes. I look forward to learning more about Brett's experiences with these online quizzes in the future.

Next, Daniel presented a course-improvement survey from his students about their use of Quizlet in his classes. Being a frequent user of the online flashcard sets myself, I am always interested in what findings Daniel has to present. As expected, he finds that students are satisfied with the vocabulary learning program he uses in his classes. In his class in particular, he uses the flashcards to generate quizzes for learners to review the learning from Quizlet. After watching Daniel's presentation, I realized that it would be interesting to do some student interviews with learners about

how they actually use Quizlet outside of class. I personally find that it is a tool that students enjoy using in the class, but they do not necessarily make use of it on their own time (Barr, 2016). I would love to learn more about this at an individual level.

Finally, I presented on my own implementations of Quizlet. In particular, I was talking about how my students use it in a more advanced class on Business Issues and TOEIC. In this class, students are expected to do TOEIC self-study, which means much of this work becomes homework. As a part of their self-study, every student in the class must contribute to shared sets of Quizlet vocabulary flashcards online. Basically, I use the appendix of the assigned TOEIC textbook (*Successful Keys to the TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test 3 4th Edition* by Mark D. Stafford) to create Quizlet sets with vocabulary from each unit. Each week, the students must contribute to a Japanese-English card set and a gap-sentence card set. These contributions are due two days before class, so that I can lock students' editing privileges, then review and edit their contributions. Once finalized, we can use the set in class to play games in class, such as Quizlet Live. In addition, the sets become a resource for students to refer to again and again, even after the class is complete. The students really enjoy doing these exercises as I often get requests to use the material in class more. One student, in particular, attributed a 200-point jump in his TOEIC score to this vocabulary resource. I have not done an evaluation of student's data to uncover any support for such claims, but it would certainly be an interesting research project to carry out.

After my presentation, I got a lot of interest from the participants. In particular, there was interest to learn more about the different kinds of flashcards sets I have created over the years. Although I only presented about word-translation and gap-sentence flashcard sets in the presentation, I ended up showing other kinds of sets that I have created for different classes, such as question-response cards (e.g. <https://quizlet.com/197527832/qa-fh2-unit-02-flash-cards/>) that I use in speaking classes. Participants

also showed a great deal of interest in audio sets (e.g. <https://quizlet.com/296110006/qa-fh2-unit-02-audio-flash-cards/>), where I record a question on one side of the card and provide a sample answer to the question on the reverse. I hope to be publishing more about these in the future.

I would like to thank everyone who took part in the forum at JALTCALL 2018. I realize that it was a small crowd, and I think I have learned that we really need to incorporate the tools presented in the title for future forums at JALTCALL. This is a high-tech crowd with specific interests, so we should really cater the forum to that in the future. That said, it was still an enjoyable and interactive group, so I hope everyone got something from the experience. I certainly will be looking into student-generated listening quizzes for the future.

Neil Cowie, Okayama University

I have been attending JALT CALL conferences since about 2005 and always come away with many practical ideas to use some form of digital technology in my classes. This year was no exception and the LD SIG Forum in particular was extremely helpful. In reflecting on the three talks, rather than focus on one at a time I'd just like to make a few general comments which apply to all.

It seemed to me that there was a common cycle which underpinned each of the three teaching approaches. Firstly, each teacher would select a digital tool or resource (i.e., listening websites, Quizlet, Google Forms) and show their students how to use it; then, the students would 'play' with the tool or resource in order to see how it functioned and what uses they could make of it for their language learning; once students knew what to do with the tool or resource they would then 'add value' to it (give commentary on a listening website; create their own quizzes; create their own vocabulary lists) and share with their classmates.

I think this cycle of show, play, add value, and share can be a really powerful way for teacher and

students to collaborate to create a rich learning environment for all. The students benefit as they have access to their classmates' work; and the teacher benefits as they can be the recipient of a great deal of useful materials which they can recycle into future lessons. I think a challenge for the teacher is to curate these materials and add even further value by critiquing what students produce. This could also be done by the students themselves in one form or other; although they are already working hard!

Digital technology has an amazing number of affordances to allow students to work in a self-regulated manner, to construct their own meanings, and to reflect on what they have learned. Technology is also ubiquitous, usually free, and of a very high quality. Like any teaching tool, technology can be used inappropriately, but the LD SIG Forum showed innovative and effective ways to use it. Thanks!

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