

Using **online student response system** and **discussion forum** to assist student learning of linguistic courses

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Outline

- Background
- Online student response system (Socrative)
- Discussion form (Moodle)
- Student feedback and reflection
- Teacher reflection



Introduction & Background

- **Linguistic courses:**

Lexis, Morphology and Semantics,

Psycholinguistics and Second Language Acquisition

Comparative Language Studies

- **Nature:**

Theory-driven, full of abstract and difficult concepts,
hard to understand, needing concrete examples

- **Number of Ss: 30-120**



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Challenges faced by the teacher

- **Motivate** and **engage** students in the 3-hour lecture
- **Explain** “difficult” and “abstract” linguistic concepts
- **Find** plenty of concrete linguistic **examples** to illustrate abstract linguistic theories or concepts
- **Interact** with students & **elicit** their feedback in a relatively large class



Solution 1

- Using an open & online student response system:
Socrative (www.socrative.com)
- Easy Registration for T and no registration for Ss.
- The system accommodates both **desktops** and **mobile devices**
- Report in Excel to be sent to the T
- **Simple question types:**
 - 1) yes or no question
 - 2) multiple-choice question
 - 3) short-answer question



Example 1: **eliciting** linguistic examples from students (lecture task)

- English is a language of high ‘productivity’ with the following word-formation processes:

Coinage, Borrowing, Compounding, Derivation

Conversion, Blending, Clipping, Backformation

Acronym/Initialism

A Socratic short-answer question on English word-formation processes:

- ****Can you list a couple of new words in English or in your mother tongue?***



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Screen shots from the T's desktop

The screenshot shows a Socrative quiz interface. At the top, the text 'socrative' is partially visible. A red box highlights the text 'ROOM: 775689' in the top right corner, with a red arrow pointing to the text 'To be entered by Ss in order to log in' on the right side of the screen. Below this, there are tabs for 'Recent' and 'All'. The main content area is titled 'Select a Quiz' and lists several quiz questions. The first question, 'Can you list a couple of new or relatively new words in English?', is highlighted with a red box. Below it are other questions: 'New words', 'Modification of input', and 'Task 3: Please list a few key words/phrases to illustrate the features of the audiolingual method'. At the bottom, there is a question: 'Your view of how different theories account for L1 acquisition'. In the bottom left corner, there is a logo for 'The Education University of Hong Kong Library' and a disclaimer: 'For private study or review only. Not for publication or further reproduction.'

socrative

ROOM: 775689

my quizzes

Recent All

Select a Quiz

Can you list a couple of new or relatively new words in English?

New words

Modification of input

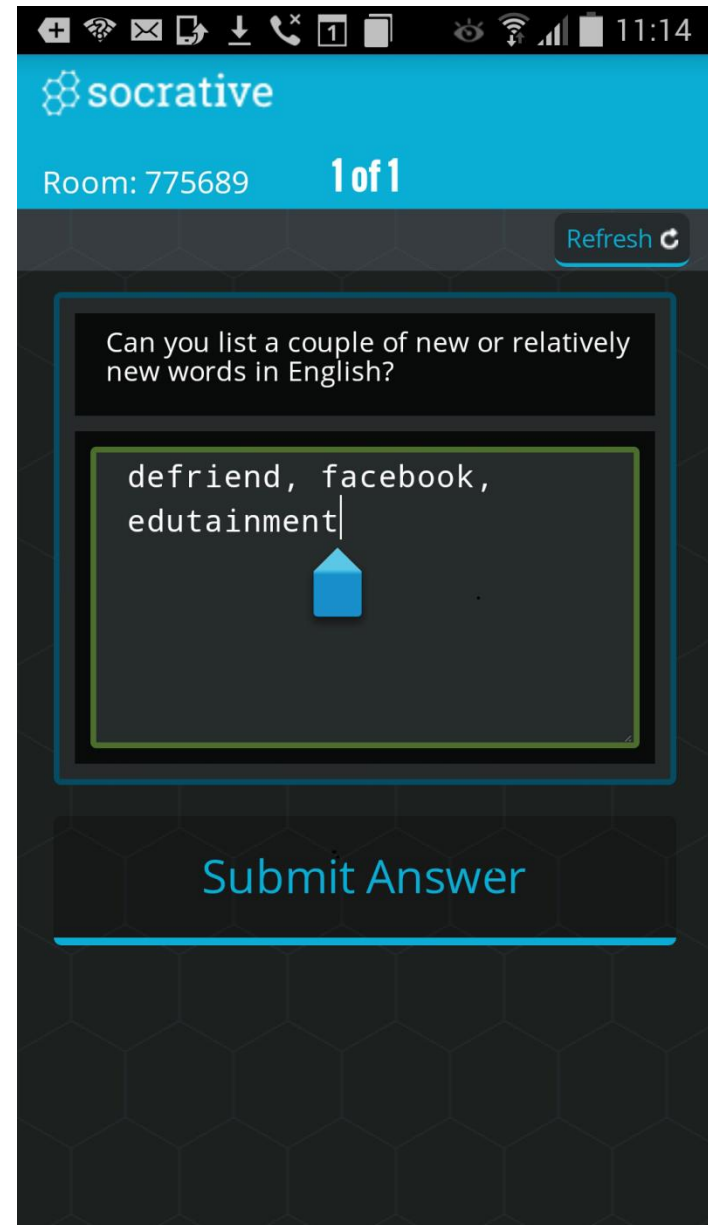
Task 3: Please list a few key words/phrases to illustrate the features of the audiolingual method

Your view of how different theories account for L1 acquisition

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Screenshots from the Ss' mobile devices



Collective answers shown in the T's desktop

socrative
1

ROOM: 775689
Live Results

FINISH

Dashboard Quiz in Progress... Refresh

3/1 students answered

Show Names Hide Answers

defriend, facebook, edutainment [▶ hide](#)

tweeting, facebook, whatsapp, twitter, tumblr [▶ hide](#)

tweet, selfie, twitter, whatsapp [▶ hide](#)

Example 2: A quick **check** of students' understanding of abstract theoretical concepts (lecture task)

- Students were introduced **5 different types of motivation models** for language learning in a lecture

A Socratic multiple-choice question:

**Which type(s) of motivation underpin(s) your learning of English, Mandarin, Cantonese or other languages?*

A) Intrinsic

B) Extrinsic

C) Integrative

D) Instrumental

[Student output in Excel](#)

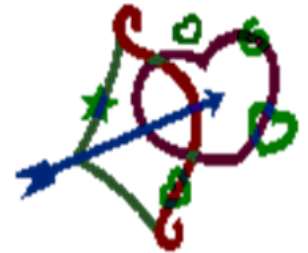
E) Resultative

Example 3: **Engaging** students in deep learning with a touch of fun (tutorial task)

*Task 4 **Similes and Metaphors**

Suggest or coin some metaphors or similes to describe love. Then write a love letter to someone you love using these metaphors or similes. |

Metaphors or similes for love



Student output in Excel

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Solution 2

- Using **discussion forums** to conduct online lessons
- Students need some time to **digest** complicated concepts introduced in lecture
- They **discuss**, **collaborate** and **cooperate** with each other and collectively conduct a **group task**
- Easy to arrange and easy to use



Design principles for online lessons using discussion form on Moodle (1)

- Make sure students receive **sufficient input** (lectures, selected readings and online resources) before conducting online lessons
- Make sure to provide very instructions:
 1. Number of tasks
 2. Instructions for each task
 3. Possible ways of collaboration
 4. Deadline for posting student work

Design principles for online lessons using discussion form on Moodle (2)

- Give students timely feedback after receiving their work online
- Example: **Comparative Language Studies:**
(8 f2f sessions + **5 online sessions**)



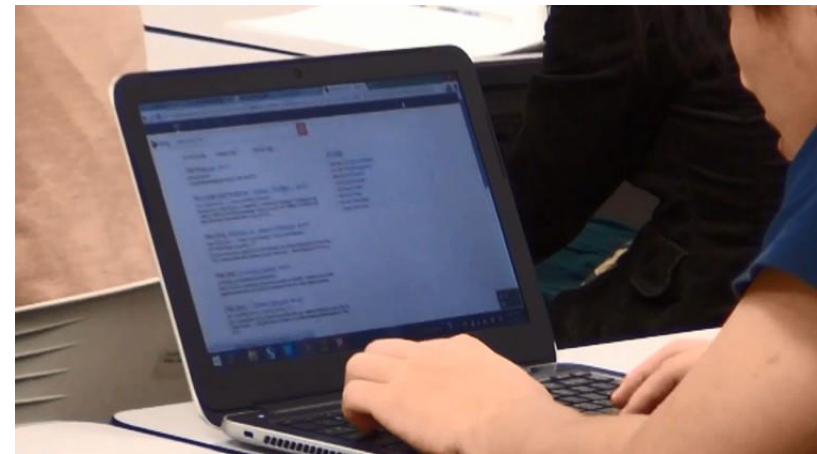
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Student feedback and perspectives on using student response system

1. **Deepen understanding** of the concepts through **searching, sharing and discussion**

“...., quite often we only have fragmented understanding about certain concepts, with mobile devices, we could easily google all the relevant background information and to make our ideas more concrete and integrated in discussion.”



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2. Encouraging (shy) Ss to answer questions and increase their motivation

“If Dr. Ma raises a question in class without using Socratic, maybe only a few students will respond. Now, since we can remain anonymous when giving responses, I think more students are willing to share.”

“...for some shy and quiet learners, the tool provides a way for them to share their ideas, which I think can help increase their learning motivation.”



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3. Help the T check Ss' understanding

“We submit our responses to Socrative and the teacher gives us feedback. In graduate study, what’s important is to let the teacher know that you are learning in a right direction and I don't think there is a more efficient way to do it than using such a response system.”



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4. Engaging Ss more in the learning process

“And the atmosphere of the classroom is better. When it comes to the part with use of Socratic, I become more energetic. It helps me to concentrate.”

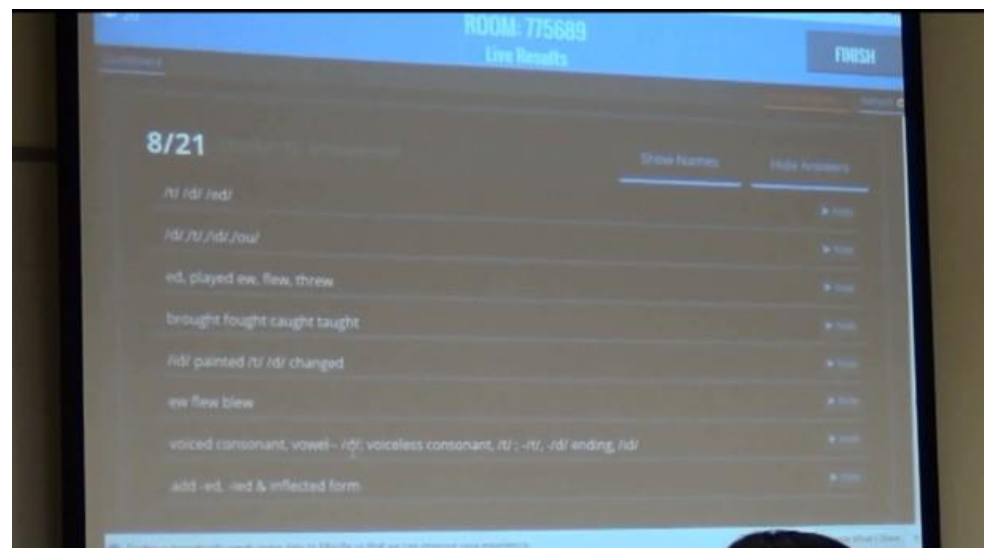


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5. Help to bring out different perspectives from different students (HK, mainland, foreign)

“...sometimes some students’ oral presentation is hard to understand. Submitting in written form can help make sure each individual response is clearly conveyed and conveniently shared.it is quite interesting to see how Mainland Chinese students, Hong Kong students and foreign students view “love” differently.”



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Student reflection of online sessions (1)

- “The online sessions and group presentations have provided us opportunities to have **critical thinking** and to **share our ideas.**”
- “The questions of online sessions are closely related to the knowledge that we learnt in the lectures and they require our **in-depth thinking.**”
- “For example, some tasks are about **classroom application**, which are **useful and practical.**”



Student reflection of online sessions (2)

“We have received different ideas from others since we have meaningful discussions among our group-mates when completing the online sessions.

“Authentic and localized examples are shared in the group presentations, which are valuable in helping us to understand the two language systems.”



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The teacher's reflections (1)

1. Start with **simple technologies** and be **flexible** with students' willingness to participate or not
2. Time-consuming (max. **3-4 socratic tasks** in one three-hour session)
3. Give students **opportunities to speak or comment on each other's work** apart from collecting answers via socratic or discussion

The teacher's reflections (2)

4. Help the T to **check Ss' learning progress** and **collect more live examples** for future use
5. Help the Ss to ***search, share and discuss*** in order to engage in learning and enjoy the learning process
6. Technology will not change pedagogy; **it only helps T to deliver the pedagogy** (more effectively)

