Title	My personal experience with using the CALL classroom
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Citation	サイバーメディア・フォーラム. 2015, 16, p. 38-39
Version Type	VoR
URL	https://doi.org/10.18910/70395
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My personal experience with using the CALL classroom

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1. First impression of CALL classroom

My first impression of the CALL classroom was that it was a self-learning station for language learning. Many universities in Japan had invested into CALL labs where different language learning programs were installed into the hardware computers. However, the usage rate of those language lab CALL classrooms had been rather low because it was difficult for many students to motivate themselves to access the language labs regularly. The only time CALL classrooms was fully utilized was probably at the end of the semester where students had to complete a certain number of self-learning hours on the computer or to complete assigned language programs on the hardware computers before taking tests. My first experience with the CALL classroom was about 10 years ago as a language learner. I had to listen to some recordings and completed quizzes in order to receive credits for my French class. To sum up, my first experience with the CALL classroom as learner was not so positive because I felt it was not efficiently utilized as a self-learning language center.

2. First teaching experience with CALL classroom

Unlike my experience as a language learner, my first teaching experience with the CALL classroom was rather positive. Prior to entering Osaka University, I had about four years of teaching experience using the CALL classroom. After my first lesson in the CALL classroom, I knew there is no going back to the traditional blackboard classroom because CALL classrooms are so promising at providing different useful tools for teachers. During those four years, I was teaching a number of large size English writing classes. The central monitor system of the CALL classroom was the ideal tool for circulating and collecting materials, monitoring students' work progress, and giving feedback.

3. Current teaching experience with CALL classroom

Similar to my first teaching experience with the CALL classroom, my current experience with teaching in the CALL classroom at Osaka University has been very positive. The central *Calabo* system increases class efficiency by reducing the amount of teacher labor time and increasing students' study and on task time. For example, in the traditional blackboard classroom environment, teachers need to prepare handouts for distribution in class. In the typical classroom, teachers on top of the class textbook often prepare supplementary handouts. Therefore, electronic distribution of class materials not only save time from printing and preparing the handouts, it also saves time from physical distribution of paper handouts. In addition, cutting down paper handouts also creates a more ecological paper-free classroom. On the other hand, in the traditional non-CALL classroom, students have to print out homework prior coming to class and need access to printers and stationary goods. It becomes a burden for some students who do not have printer access at home. As the result, students need to make additional trips to university computer labs prior

going to class. It is time consuming where students could have spent more time on studying the content of the class. Therefore, the modern CALL classrooms provide an easy solution for teachers to devote more teaching time to the class and individual students as well as for students to devote more time to the actual studying and preparation of the class. Finally, CALL central monitor system increases teacher's class performance because it speeds up the change over time between activities due to easy collection and distribution of work as well as better monitoring of students' work process.

Currently, I teach all my English speaking classes in the CALL classroom. The central *Calabo* system is a handy tool for students to practice individual monologue tasks, as well as pair and group conversation activities on earphones. In my standard English speaking class, I conducted the following activities:

First, students were placed into pairs using the random pairing function. Students did free talking time for five minutes on pre-assigned topics. This random pairing of conversation ensured that students had the opportunity to talk to as many different students as possible in class. The random pairing is an ideal function for the Japanese university classroom as many Japanese students are shy and unwillingly to proactively approach other students for conversation activities. Using the random pairing, students spoke to their partner as if they were talking on the phone. It was both informal and relaxing as students did not have to worry about talking face to face with their partners. Students' pair conversations were also automatically recorded on the central monitoring system for evaluation and grading.

Second, students were instructed to practice cartoon narration using a software called *Movietelecom*. *Movietelecom* is an easy to use device for recording monologues. Students recorded their own narrations and then listened to their own narrations as well as narrations by their classmates. Between the repeated recordings, students received peer feedback on their on fluency, accuracy, and vocabulary performance. A checklist was used during peer feedback to increase the production of details. After receiving comments from peers, students listened to their own recordings and prepared for their second narration. Finally, students narrated their monologue for the second time on *Movietelecom*. This repeated narration on the computer enabled students to learn explicitly from the comments of their peers as well as learning implicitly from listening to narration made the other students.

4. Final remarks

To sum up, I have had experience with the CALL classroom both as a learner and a teacher. Unlike my experience as a language learner where I only used its self-learning function hardware, my experience with teaching in the CALL classroom had been more positive. The CALL classroom is useful for circulating and collection information, monitoring student work progress, and giving feedback. CALL classroom also increases class efficiency by reducing teacher labor time and increasing student learning time. Finally, examples of using CALL classroom for teaching speaking were introduced.