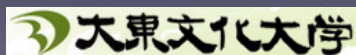December 3, 2016
National University of Singapore

CLaSIC 2016

Endangered Teaching Skills Behind Flooding Technologies

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In this session⋯

· Recent development in Japanese EFL
· Some critical views about the effects of technology in learning
· My concern about the recent flood of technologies in Japanese classrooms

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Digital developments in Japanese EFL classrooms

Promote learning and teaching?

Edgar Dale

"Like every shining new gift, these devices may dazzle one so that he cannot see clearly."

(Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching, Revised Edition, 1954)

Any art of teaching being lost or forgotten?

Previous research

- Students reporting higher motivation

- Teacher observation that students were more engaged

- Learning outcome or effects?

"Screens In Schools Are a $60 Billion Hoax."

- Several studies producing critical results of pedagogical benefit of technology

- The greedy side of the whole deal

"Is It Time To Ban Computers From Classrooms?"

· Study carried out at West Point

· Comparison of the effects of computers

· Under three different conditions
  · A ban on all devices
  · Unrestricted use
  · A tablet, face-up, on one's desk

"Is It Time To Ban Computers From Classrooms?"

· Students who were allowed devices **Worse performance**

Students who were banned from using devices

Possible reasons

· The distracting effect of the devices

· Computer devices as inferior tools for classroom learning

· Effect of the devices in class on the teaching styles of the instructors

Japanese schools under difficult circumstances

· Huge class size

· Students with behavior problems and learning disabilities

· 'Monster parents'

· No overtime wages, working at home

· Club activities

Introduction of English to elementary schools

- Traditionally EFL from middle schools

- Too late to start at middle schools?

- Opposition was overcome
  - Publishers, conversation schools, temporary employment agencies

English at elementary schools

- From 2011
  - once-a-week activity for grades 5-6

- Revision of the Course of Study

- From 2020
  - formal subject for grades 5-6
  - once-a-week activity for grades 3-4

Off topic but a few words…

- Hasty decision

- No necessary and thoughtful preparation

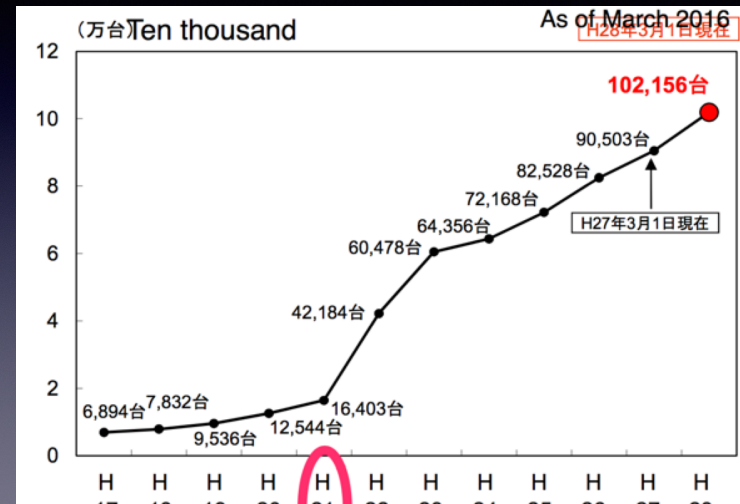- Still much opposition among teachers

Smartboard in place of teachers?

- Strong drive force for smartboards

- A remark by a former official

- "Nothing to worry"?

- Smartboards to the rescue!?

Hard to believe…

- Someone in charge of a nationwide project like this

- A shallow notion of teaching and learning a foreign language

- A simple and optimistic view of teaching aids and tools
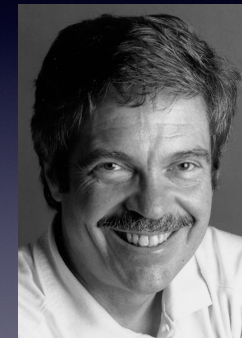
Rescue succeeded?

Rescue succeeded?

- Does it guarantee?

- If teachers are not confident enough to pronounce English in front of pupils, …

Alan Kay

"Any problems the schools cannot solve without computers, they cannot solve with them."

More screen devices at schools

· More LCD projectors and smartboards began to be equipped in middle and high schools.

· The ministry's "The innovation of teaching and learning at school using the latest technology"

· Expanding ICT market in education
  · 15.5 times by 2020
  · profit of 116 billion yen

Changes in classrooms

· More teachers began to display information through ICT devices

· In my case
  · didn't totally switch over to the new media
  · kept on using both traditional and new media

"To use or not to use, that is the question."

· Harmful effect of being forced to use the new media

· The teacher's remark on the use of LCD projector during his demonstration at a seminar

· If not given the best choice of media, the best instruction not possible

Horizontal display

· Blackboards provide better horizontal view

· More suitable for displaying multiple pictures horizontally

Horizontal display

Easy addition and flexibility

- Blackboards' ease of use and flexibility
- Add information anywhere with ease
  - No need to struggle with menus and commands

Better demonstration of new vocabulary

- Introducing and displaying new vocabulary
- Easier to demonstrate the relationship between the sound and the spelling

Answers to the questions at the beginning

Do digital screens promote learning and teaching?

�');' Availability alone does not enhance teaching or learning

➡ "In the end, technology can amplify great teaching, but great technology cannot replace poor teaching."

Is there any art of teaching being lost or forgotten?

➡ Teachers need to be knowledgeable about both new and traditional devices

➡ Flooding new technologies in classrooms and pressure to use it makes it difficult to hand down the wisdom

To wrap up⋯

· New tools or technology should not simply replace the old ones

· Make the best choice of appropriate aids for a given need

· Never fear to ⋯
  · try new things and aids
  · give up on unsuitable media

References

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· Seed Planning, "Trends and Perspectives of Educational ICT: Smartboards, Educational Tablet Devices, Digital Textbooks and Other Educational Solutions, 2017" (http://www.seedplanning.co.jp/press/2016/2016112801.html)

Thank you.

If you are interested, the slides will be posted to my blog later.

www.awajis.net