**How to do COIL course in a smart classroom**

**It’s easy. No need to reserve an incubator classroom anymore!**

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**I.** **[What is COIL course](#Table_of_contents)?**

COIL, an abbreviation of Collaborative Online International Learning, is not a technology, but a new approach to teaching and learning which provides faculty and students the ability to communicate and collaborate with peers internationally through online. Referring to the definition of the handbook of SUNY COIL center, COIL consists of cohorts of students from at least two cultures who work together in shared learning environments by online under the supervision of teachers of each culture.

**II.** **[Why COIL course](#Table_of_contents)?**

In this global world, the occasions our students work and negotiate with people from other cultures are increasing, and the human resources who can effectively collaborate in such a global environment are needed in many fields. COIL course is such a practical course that enables students to enhance their communicative skills and culture learning, interacting and doing projects with peers from other cultures through online.

In my field of Linguistics, the gap between learners’ linguistic knowledge and proficiency (the actual ability to use the language) has been argued, and it is said that only implicit knowledge (unconscious and internalized knowledge) is available for spontaneous speech, but not explicit knowledge of language (e.g. grammar that students learn in class)1. That is, in order to acquire a second language (L2), we need to have abundant experiences of processing natural and comprehensible L2 input and output, just like our first language acquisition. Furthermore, it has been said that the best method of acquiring a foreign language is to go to the country and immerse yourself into the target language and culture for a long time.

However, in reality, all students cannot participate in such study abroad programs. I myself, as a coordinator of summer homestay program in Kyoto, have encountered many students such as those who gave up participating in the study abroad program due to their financial difficulty. Therefore, I have being trying to invite native speakers of Japanese language into my classrooms as many as possible to increase their language use, but it is not also easy logistically and financially2.

In the meantime, I encountered the teaching methodology of COIL that can be a solution. I have implemented JPN-120 Japanese culture course in COIL format in 2012 and 2013 Fall semesters with my international partner school Kagoshima University in Japan, using online communication technologies, such as Google Hangout, Webex and Skype, for our synchronous sessions.

**III.** **[The Merits of COIL course](#Table_of_contents)**

There are numbers of merits for doing the COIL course, and I summarized them in terms of language and culture learning, economic efficiency and development of global cooperative mind below.

3.1 Language and culture learning

3.1.1 Students’ motivations

**-COIL course motivates students, therefore they do not miss classes**

Among many benefits of COIL course, raising students’ motivation for learning may be the most valuable and beneficial aspect we can gain from the COIL course. Every student has a desire to interact with foreign students more or less, and my Japanese major and minor students were looking forward to interacting with Japanese students in Japan through online every time. They were so motivated that even when they got sick and injured they did not miss classes by participating in the synchronous sessions from their home through online. I infer that this is because their international partners are waiting for them beyond the screen and because they need to collaborate in order to complete their projects.

3.1.2 Sustainability

**-Long-term collaboration is possible, if academic calendars fit**

In order to acquire a foreign language, it is essential to use the target language repeatedly and constantly. However, it is difficult to find such occasions outside the classrooms in reality. In the case of COIL course, if both schools’ academic calendars perfectly match, such a long-term periodic collaboration as semester-long or year-long is possible.

**-The relationship lasts even after the course**

Some of my students have their international partners edit their writing assignments form other Japanese classes even after their collaboration in the COIL course. Also, in my COIL course, there was a chance for my students to actually meet with some of the Japanese students of the COIL course at the beginning of our Fall semester due to the Japanese university’s overseas training. I personally feel this in- person communication reinforced the sustainability of their relationship as well.

3.1.3 Quality of interaction

**-COIL course enables hands-on practice of cross-cultural negotiation of**

**meaning**

In regular foreign language and culture course in the U.S., the language instructor is the only native speaker of the target language, or there is no native speaker at all. Under the circumstances, the chances of listening to and speaking the natural target language are limited, and especially speaking tends to be unilateral from the instructor. Also, one could go so far as to say that the students do not really need to communicate in the target language between them because they are all native speakers of English. Further, in these language classes, grammar and words they need to use and the flow of the conversations are often shown to the students in advance. However, in real oral communication, we would not be able to tell what the other person says and what kind of grammar and words we will use. We ought to be able to predict them to some degree, but our predictive ability often somehow does not function properly in case of foreign languages. Therefore, students need to develop their communication strategies such as confirmation, requests, gestures, fillers, paraphrase etc. COIL course can provide hands-on practice of cross-cultural negotiation of meaning to foster such communicative skills and strategies based on actual needs for communication.

**-COIL course enables students to observe non-verbal behaviors**

Another beneficial aspect of having synchronous sessions with international peers by online would be that students can observe the partners’ non-verbal behaviors. According to Birwhistell (1979), 65% of information is conveyed non-verbally in our face-to-face conversation. That is why, we sometimes miscommunicate and feel insecure while communicating by telephone and e-mail. However, it is hard to teach such non-verbal behaviors in lectures, and most of the language textbooks do not mention about them. I think the best way for students to learn such non-verbal behaviors of target language and culture is to make them notice the non-verbal behaviors. Therefore, I made full use of my COIL course for that purpose. For example, my students had to write their journals every time after the synchronous sessions, and one time, they mentioned about Japanese students’ laughter in their journals. They thought that the Japanese students were making fun of their poor Japanese language because Japanese students laughed whenever my students asked their questions in Japanese. However, the laughter was the unconscious kind of laughter for the Japanese students, and they were actually trying to show their embarrassment to my students’ questions by laughing off since the questions were ones that had never crossed their minds before. I took this issue and discussed it in my class, playing back the recorded session. It was a really good chance for my students to notice the so-called “mysterious Japanese smiles,” and they realized that they could easily misunderstand each other not only because of the foreign language, but also because of the non-verbal behaviors.

**-Students can learn individual differences within a culture.**

I used to teach Japanese culture course in lecture style and I have had a sense of discomfort to present Japanese culture and society only through my view. COIL course enables me to provide multiple informants of the target culture with individual differences, so that students can avoid learning the culture stereotypically or with some biases.

3.1.4 Feedback

**-Synchronous sessions are recordable to feedback**

One of the problems of in-person interactions with international peers in class is that there is no way to play back the individual interaction that each group or each student had. Communication by online is superior to in-person communication in its facile reproducibility. You can record and reflect back individual synchronous sessions easily if you choose a communication tool with its recording function. For example, some of the online tools such as Webex and Google Hangout have such a recording function that enables teachers to play back the students’ interactions when their students did not understand well and when teachers evaluate and give feedback on the interactions. Also, students can easily play back and review what they spoke during the synchronous sessions by themselves.

3.1.5 Teaching paradigm

**- Teaching paradigm shifts from teacher-centered teaching to leaner-centered learning.**

By doing COIL course, the time students actively and subjectively think and act in the classroom increases, and students become the center-players of the class. On the other hand, the teacher becomes a backside player in the COIL course. Students learn from their classmates and international peers as well as their teacher, and time that students talk in the class increases, which is desirable for language learning.

Lecture style of culture course may be more efficient for students to get the same amount of knowledge, but it is meaningless if students are not listening to you or if they are not motivated. In COIL culture courses, students can decide what to do for their project from their own interests and questions, and therefore the organization of the course may be more complex and fluid than normal culture classes. Also, sometimes you do not have the answers to their research questions. Yet, at least you can think and learn together with your students and can assist your students to find necessary information for their research.

3.2 Economic efficiency

**-It is free, and eco-friendly**

There are many excellent free online communication tools these days. As long as you use such free online technologies, it is free to meet with the people from other culture(s). It is also eco-friendly, saving jet fuel and CO2 emission.

**-*One-on-One interaction* is possible for free**

When inviting guests physically from outside, it is difficult to secure the number of people you want. However, in case of COIL course, once you find a class with right number of students for your class size, even one-on-one interaction is no longer a dream.

3.3 Development of students’ global mind and attitude of cooperation

**-A sprit of cooperation can be enhanced between classmates and international partners through collaborative projects in COIL course**

One of my worries to American students is that they look solitude. They sometimes don’t even know their classmates’ names at the end of the semester, or they don’t try to help each other without encouragement from the instructor. I had a feeling that they were just looking at their teacher during class and trying to get help only from their teacher. It is probably because I have seen many Japanese students who ask questions to their classmates rather than their teachers and try to help one another especially before exams. Thus, in regular language courses I always set up activities that need collaboration with classmates, such as skit making and video making, to let them know and learn one another, changing their partners each time. COIL course also can be such a great place to enhance students’ attitude of cooperation, and the cooperative attitude can be brought out even internationally. In my COIL course, I partially adopted joint grade system and tried to foster their cooperative attitude for their international group projects. I will explain about the joint grade in the later section for evaluation (5.4).

**IV.** **[The Bottlenecks of COIL course](#Table_of_contents)**

Since I have explained benefits of COIL course in the previous chapter, I will point out the potential weak points of COIL course here.

4.1 Temporal constraints

One of the biggest barriers in implementing COIL course is time difference. The time related issues are vital and difficult to change for us, and therefore it is not an overstatement to say that the temporal constraints decide what we can do. There are four types of time related issues we face in designing COIL as below.

4.1.1. Academic calendar

As you know, each country and each school has a different academic calendar. For example, universities and colleges in Japan start in April and have semester system, whereas in the U.S., schools start from the end of August or early September, having semester, trimester, and quarter systems depending on the school. In our collaboration with Kagoshima University, Japan, we had two months of temporal overlap in Fall semester, and only one month overlap in Spring semester, excluding exam periods. At this point, we figured out that we could only have a partial collaboration, so we chose the longer Fall semester to implement the course without hesitation. In our case, the collaboration started at the beginning of October and ended at the end of November. Thus, SJSU class spent one and half months for the preparation of the international collaboration, while our international partner’s course was a year-long course. so they started their preparation from their Spring semester.

4.1.2 Daylight Saving system and time difference

Some countries have a daylight saving system like the U.S.A (except Hawaii and Arizona state), and some countries do not have such a system including Japan. Thus, there is 17 hours time difference during daylight saving period, and 16 hours difference outside the period respectively between Japan and California. This system difference regarding daylight saving between two countries brought us to set up more than a 2 hour-long class, so that we could share at least one hour each time in our classes.

4.1.3. Length and number of times of a class

Rules of length and number of time of a class per week are also different from country to country. In case of Japan, all subjects in college and universities are held only once a week for 90 minutes without any exception, whereas in the US it is rather flexible. Considering all the temporal constraints above, I set up my 3 units COIL culture course on Wednesday between 3:30-6:00pm, which was between 9:30-12:00am or 8:30-11:00am on Thursday in Japan. However, the international partner’s class was 90 minutes between 9-10:30am in Japan, so the actual temporal overlap were one hour between 5-6pm(US) and 9-10am(Japan) during daylight saving period, and one and half hours between 4-5:30pm(US) and 9-10:30am (Japan) outside the daylight saving period respectively.

4.1.4 National holidays and school holidays

In addition to the temporal constraints above, we also need to take respective national holidays and school holidays into our consideration. In our case, during Fall semester, SJSU had Thanksgiving holidays and Kagoshima University had a University foundation day, which also affected our class schedule. At this point, we figured out that we could implement our synchronous sessions 8 times at maximum during Fall semester.

Like thus, COIL course is greatly influenced by the temporal constraints, so you could better start your planning from careful examination of respective schedule. The temporal constraints above decide the freedom of planning and degree of collaboration with your international partner. When you have many temporal constraints, you need to selectively choose what you can do and what you should do together internationally in relation to the goals of the course and other courses of your curriculum.

4.2 Technological constraints

**-If internet connection is poor, online communication becomes choppy and unclear**

Ethernet provides us a better internet connection than Wi-Fi. However, our school’s smart classrooms have only one available Ethernet port in front of the classroom. Therefore, when you want to use multiple computers for your synchronous sessions in the smart classrooms, we can’t help using Wi-Fi such as SJSU premier (recommended) and SJSU Campus. Yet, the communication using Wi-Fi sometimes becomes choppy and unclear. For the further tips on how to get better Wi-Fi service inside our campus, see <http://its.sjsu.edu/resources/wireless-tips/>

On the other hand, incubator classroom and next generation classroom have many Ethernet ports inside the classrooms. In order to use incubator classroom and next generation classrooms, you need to apply for it in advance, writing your statement of purpose and teaching plan every semester. These classrooms have movable chairs, tables and laptop computers for each student, and on top of that, you can get meticulous technical help from the staffs throughout the semester. However, you need to bear in mind that the computer at the podium in the incubator classroom is too old to play Youtube videos and to run the latest communication tools.

4.3 Students who are unsuitable for COIL course

**- The students who are exceptionally shy and an extreme perfectionist are not suitable for COIL course.**

While most of the students get motivated and show their mental growth after the course, I had two students who were not able to complete the course in the past due to its practicality of the COIL course. They arethe students who are exceptionally shy and an extreme perfectionist.Both of them got stressed out after the synchronous sessions with international peers and were not able to finish their research projects. The former student hesitated to show his face on the screen and seldom talked with the international peers. Since Japanese people are used to shy persons culturally, the Japanese female students kept trying to talk to him, saying “*kawaii (cute)*” and “*Daijyoubu* (“You are alright”) to him, but he kept covering his face with his hands through the entire session. In his case, he gradually got used to the online communication toward the end of the semester, but it took more time than I expected. The latter student completely gave up preparing for her individual sessions with her international peers due to her extreme nervousness. I encouraged her that she did not have to speak perfect Japanese, referring to myself as an imperfect non-native speaker of English, but her situation did not change. From these two cases, I learned that I had to warn at the beginning of the course that the COIL course is somewhat risky for certain types of students. I participated in international COIL conference held in New York in Spring 2013, and to my surprise, there was a presenter who said exactly the same thing as my thought. Thus, I realized that it was a common view among the teachers who experienced COIL course, and I reconfirmed the importance of prior warning and more careful explanation about the nature and the goals of COIL course to our students.

**V.****[Designing COIL course](#Table_of_contents)**

Here, I will explain how to design your COIL course with some examples and options.

5.1 How to find your international partner

The first step to design COIL course is to find your international partner. If you have personal friends or family members who are teaching in the target culture, they would be the best candidates. If you don’t, I would recommend you to check your university’s academic exchange partners. To check the SJSU’s international partnership, please click the link below.

<http://www.sjsu.edu/studyabroad/programs/semester_and_year_programs/sjsu_bilateral_programs/index.html>

Some schools need academic exchange agreement and permissions from Chair, Dean and President of the school to do collaborative online classes. In my case, I have been doing US-Japan Future Forum with Kagoshima University for the last 3 years and I have known the director of the university’s north-America center, so I asked him to find a class to collaborate with my Japanese culture class by online. Then, a representational culture class volunteered on the side of Kagoshima University, and the relation is still continuing up to date. Also, the university needed an academic exchange agreement for doing the COIL course, and we exchanged the agreement before the implementation. To see the procedures of establishing official partnership, please click the link below.

<http://www.sjsu.edu/studyabroad/information_for_faculty/establishing_exchange_programs/index.html>

In addition, if you have not met with the international partner, I would recommend you to meet with the partner teacher and students in person in advance. In my case, I applied for a grant and went to see the teacher and the students in Japan before the implementation.

* 1. Collaborative design of COIL course

The next step is to design the content of the COIL course. As I stated in the

previous chapter, what you need to check first and foremost is the temporal constraints between the two schools. The details were already explained in 4.1 Temporal constraints, so please refer to the section. After estimating the schedule, you can decide the goals, content and activities of the course with your international partner. When you design your COIL course, you need to ask yourself regarding the following five points. 1) Which course do you want to transform into COIL course? 2) How long do you want to collaborate with your international partner school? 3) What languages do you want to use? 4) How do you want to collaborate internationally? and 5) How many students can you teach?

5.2.1 Which course do you want to transform into COIL?

You can create a completely new course for COIL, but it is easier to choose a course to transform from the existing ones. By choosing an existing course, you can smoothly draw an outline of the COIL course. In my department World Languages and Literatures, there are roughly four types of courses, and they are 1) Language courses, 2)Literature courses, 3) Culture courses and 4) Linguistics courses. I think all of them can be transformed into COIL courses, but especially the first three types of courses can be more easily transformed into COIL course because they tend to exchange opinions and to discuss cultural differences. In my case, I chose my Japanese culture course as the COIL course in relation to my students’ language competence and the existing international collaboration. For example, in JPN25B intermediate Japanese language course I teach, I invite a group of Japanese students from Japan for a month. No matter how much online communication tools are developed, there is no doubt that an in-person communication is better than any other tools to create a strong bond between students. Also, my students’ language competence is not as good as they being able to discuss on Japanese literature in Japanese language. As a result, it seemed to me that the Japanese culture course, which is a required course after completing the JPN 25B, is the most suitable course for the COIL course.

5.2.2. How long do you want to collaborate internationally?

Whether you collaborate fully or partially with your international partner is basically decided by the temporal constraints. As long as the both academic calendars perfectly fit, you can implement a full-time collaboration. However, even so, you still can choose partial collaboration in relation to the goals and objectives of your course and other courses (i.e. curriculum).

In my case, I could not help doing partial collaboration due to the temporal constraints between Japan and the US, so the first 1.5 months of the COIL course were spent to let my students prepare for the international online collaboration, and the last few weeks of the semester were used for students’ group presentations of their research. The preparatory activities included a technology session, self-reflection, and motivational activities for the international collaboration. In order to let my students reflect themselves on their culture and personality and to motivate them to do international collaboration and group projects, I used Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale and Milton Benette’s “Becoming Interculturally Competent Toward Multiculturalism”(2004). We also read Senko Maynard’s “Japanese communication: Language and Thought in Context” (1997), in which she emphasizes that we all need to balance out ourselves between society and individual regardless of our cultural differences, such as group oriented vs. individualism. Furthermore, we did some case studies using D.I.E method to consider why such misunderstandings and conflicts occurred between Japanese and Americans.

5.2.3 What language(s) do you want to use?

Regarding the language used for COIL between two countries, there are three options: target language, English, and both. Depending on the type of the course you chose for COIL and students’ language competence, you need to choose the language(s) you will use. When you connect two **language** classes to collaborate, we cannot help but use both languages to be fair for each class. In that case, for the first half of the class, students use the target language, and they use English for the latter half, or they also can switch their language they use each time. In my case, the class in Japan was a representational culture class and the students were not English majors, so the main language naturally became Japanese, not English. Also, if you really want to focus on the content, not language, you can choose English as a common language for their communication.

5.2.4. How do you want to collaborate with your international partner?

This question is a to-the-point question in designing your international collaboration, being related with the goals of your course and the formats of your collaboration. In our case, it was a two-month long temporal collaboration, and our courses were culture courses using Japanese language as a common language, so we decided to let our students mutually use their international peers as informants for their research regarding Japanese and American cultures. Also, with regard to the formats of online collaboration, we agreed to set up synchronous online sessions each time and shift the formats from whole class level to group level, and individual level in stages. The first two whole class sessions were spent to introduce each school, area, group and research topic. Then, from the third time, we shifted to small group unit sessions, and the international teams were formed based on their research topics. The first group session was used to get to know one another. At the beginning, both students talked in awkward atmosphere, not only because they were shy, but also because they were not used to such online conversations in Japanese language for my students. But, as time progressed, they came to have a lively conversation, calling one another by nicknames and learning greetings in their international partners’ dialect. My students helped one another when they were not able to find words and expressions and when they cannot understand what their international peers said. Generally, students needed several group sessions until they were able to speak in more relaxed manner. We gave students cultural interview tasks as practices in the first two group sessions. They were on hygiene and proverbs that represent their partner’s country and they like. The last two sessions were used to interview each other on their research topics. At the end of semester, we assigned them to have an individual synchronous session with their international partner they chose, outside the class as a final assignment.

As for the number of students per group for their project, it seemed to me that groups of 3 students worked better than groups of 4 and 2 students. It is because, groups of 4 looked hard to reach a group consensus and to make a presentation together, whereas groups of 2 no longer function as a group if one person is absent from the class. Students need to discuss and help one another when they decide what they research and present and when they talk with international peers online. Also, you need to take the number of international peers into your account when you decide the number of students per group, because online communication tools restrict the number of attendees. Regarding the communication tools, I will explain in 5.3 more in detail.

5.2.5. How many students do you want to accept?

Since it is not so easy to estimate exactly how many students will enroll in your class, I recommend you to restrict the number of the students to enroll the COIL class in advance based on my experience. In my case, 30 students enrolled in my first COIL culture course, but from the second time I restricted the number to 24. The reason why I restricted the number of students is that I found it difficult for me to manage 30 students in the COIL course, reading 30 students’ journals and homework every time. In addition, in my case, my international partner and I agree to make 8 groups respectively in advance, so 24, multiple of 8, seemed to be the optimal number of students for me.

5.3 [Technologies](#Table_of_contents)

5.3.1 Synchronous international collaboration

When you choose communication tools for COIL course, you need to check the following five points. One is whether it is free or not. You can find free and good quality video communication tools nowadays such as Skype, Google hangout and Face time, so there is no reason for you to choose paid ones. Also, if you have a communication tool specified and paid by school, you should use it. But, when you use the communication tool specified by your school, you need to check whether or not students can host the online meetings by themselves, which is the second point you need to check. For example, I tried to use our school’s communication tool Webex for my COIL course first in the technology session, but I found that students were not able to host their online meetings with Webex, so I gave up using Webex for my students’ group sessions and individual sessions. The third point to check is the number of attendees per meeting. Some communication tools charge depending on the number of the attendee even though advocating its charge-free service. As far as I know, Google Hangout is the best in this respect allowing us to invite 10 simultaneously at maximum for free. The fourth point is simplicity of operation, and this may have the utmost priority for you in choosing your communication tool. In this respect, Skype is the best. Last, whether or not it has a recording function can be an important factor as well, especially for language classes. I made the comparison chart on the features of these five points between Webex, Skype and Google Hangout for your reference below.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Free?**  **Student can host?** | **The number of attendees per meeting** | **Simplicity of**  **operation** | **Recordable?** |
| **Webex** | NO. | Up to 3 people  including host. | Relatively complex, although  much easier than Elluminate/Collaborate | Yes, but limited. |
| **Skype** | Yes. | Up to 2 people  including host | Very simple | NO. |
| **Google Hangout** | Yes. | Up to 10  including host  You can see everyone’s face on the screen. | Simple, but more complicated than Skype | Yes and Limitless, if you  use Google Hangout  on air connected with  Youtube. |

I do not explain how to use Skype here because it is the most popular and simplest tool ever. Also, with regard to Webex, you can get help from your university helpdesk, so I will explain only how to use Google Hangout On Air below. We adopted Google Hangout On Air for our students’ group synchronous sessions as a result of the comparisons above. The biggest advantages of the On Air are its free and limitless recording function and the highest number of attendees among all.

**Google Hangout On Air**

(http://www.google.com/+/learnmore/hangouts/onair.html)

In order to use Google hangout On Air, you need to follow the following steps.

1. Make google account, if you do not have

2. Search google hangout on air site and open the site

<http://www.google.com/+/learnmore/hangouts/onair.html>

3. make google plus account, if you do not have

(click join google+ button on the upper right corner and register)

4. Verify your Youtube account (to connect between google hangout on air and

your youtube account, your phone number is necessary to verify)

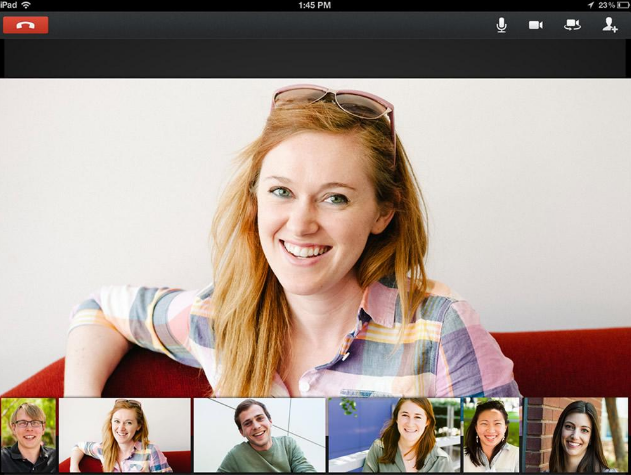
1. If you open the Google Hangout On Air website, you will see blue square

button, visit Hangout On Air, then Click the button.

1. You will see home, Hangout On Air and Video Hangout on the upper middle.

Click Hangout On Air. Video Hangout is very similar to Skype.

1. Click start a Hangout On Air.
2. Give the title of the meeting, set up the start time and duration by clicking Later and write your attndees’ google email addresses in the audience space.
3. The notice will be delivered to your audience’s google e-mail account. The audience need to open the notice in the email to joint the video session.
4. If you want to record the session, you click the recording button. The recorded session will appear in your Youtube account and Google Hangout home later.



**<Warning!>**

When you use Google Hangout On Air, you need to watch out the following points.

1. Google Hangout On Air and Video Hangout are different things.

Therefore, the person who is using Google Hangout On Air and the person who is using Video Hangout cannot communicate each other.

1. Google Hangout used to have a calling sound like Skype, but it does not have

the calling sound anymore. So, it is hard for you to notice that you have received the notice of invitation unless you check the email frequently. In case of On Air, the notice comes only to the invitees’ google email, whereas in case of Video Hangout, you can see the invitation by looking at + sign near the bell sign on the upper right corner of your email account or Google Hangout home.

1. Since the service of Google Hangout started, the features of Google Hangout

have been greatly changing over two years. The description above is the one as of today, May 1st 2013, so I strongly recommend you to check in advance.

5.3.2 Asynchronous international collaboration

International collaboration can be achieved not only by synchronous videoconference and chatting tools, but also by asynchronous online communication tools such as emails, Facebook, and LMS (Leaning Management System). In my case, for the first COIL course, we shared a LMS by incorporating the Japanese students’ names and emails into our SJSU LMS (**You can ask this operation to E-Campus staffs, only by giving them the list of international peers**). However, what I found after the first COIL course is that the Japanese students seldom looked at or used the SJSU LMS because they were not used to using it. Instead, the students including SJSU students were using FACEBOOK and emails to do their asynchronous international collaboration. If you do not mind handling many notification mails from Facebook, I think Facebook can be a great tool and a place for students to exchange their information and to share their collaborative work since many young people are familiar with using Facebook regardless of their nationality.

5.4 Evaluation

Evaluation is one of the toughest issues to collaborate between countries since each country has a different grading system and philosophy for grading. Even though they use the same ABC letters for grading, the values of ABC are quite different from one another. As far as I heard, Europe has the strictest grading tradition (I heard that C is a fairly good grade in European countries), whereas Japan has more optimistic grading tradition (C is not a good grade). Grading in the US would probably be located between the two. Also, even being in the same country or school, teachers have different grading policies.

In case of partial collaboration, you do not have to worry about grading between countries because the length and goals of the course, and the final product are different. In my case, the Representational Culture course in Kagoshima University was a year-long course, and the synchronous sessions were used as one of their news gathering activities, and they finally made videos for TV broadcasting (<http://vimeo.com/63064183> password: 11110000). For us, the Japanese Culture course is one-semester-long course and the synchronous sessions were used to interview Japanese students on my students’ research topics on Japanese culture and society such as education, religion, job hunting, etc, and they finally gave presentations in class per group and wrote their papers individually. Thus, we could not find any reason to grade our students together between two countries. The only similarity between us regarding grade was that both of us adopted joint grade for our students’ group projects. I provided my students a Rubric for the contents, slides, and flow of their group presentations and gave them a joint grade basen on the Rubric with comments. To the group presentations, I made my students evaluate other group’s presentations (Peer review) and their own presentation (self-evaluation) as well. What was interesting is that some students evaluated other groups as strictly as I did, while some students graded others’ presentations so optimistically, probably taking account of their personal relationship first. I also noticed that self-evaluation and teacher’s evaluation are sometimes fairly different. I do not think that the difference itself is not bad, because we often cannot evaluate ourselves objectively, but I felt the need to elaborate the Rubric more. I also checked the process of collaboration inside the groups by their journals. I was able to observe what kind of problems were occurring inside the groups and during the synchronous sessions and who was neglecting their group work, but I needed more improvements in the evaluation system regarding collaboration, by adopting rubric evaluation on collaboration as well, in order to nurture my students’ cooperative attitudes more effectively.

**VI.** **[How to implement COIL course](#Table_of_contents)**

6.1 Tools and facilities

**-One lap top computer (ideally two)**: If you want to see international partners’ faces clearly, while watching presentation slides, you need to use two laptop computers because the web camera window is so small.

**-Ethernet code**: To get a stable internet connection, you need this code and Ethernet port, not Wi-Fi.

**-USB extension code**: To move the web camera to the right place to shoot students’ faces, you need this extension code.

**-Webcam**: Computer has a built-in webcam, but it is not removable, so you need to have the external webcam to shoot students nicely.

**-Tripod**: To set up the external webcam at the right place with optimal height, you need the tripod.

The above five need to be connected as below for a whole class synchronous session.



Your students need the following things for their group synchronous session.

**-Headset/earphone with a mic for each student**: Each student needs to have a headset with a mic for their group sessions to pick up their voices and to hear their international partners’ voices clearly. I make students bring it as a required tool for my COIL course.

**-Individual rooms for group sessions**: If you want to let your students have group synchronous sessions, you need to reserve an individual room for each group. Or, students can join the group sessions from their homes.

6.2 Samples of synchronous sessions

-**whole class level**

[**https://vimeo.com/62389810**](https://vimeo.com/62389810)

**-group level**

[**http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkAR4kUVyzo**](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkAR4kUVyzo)

6.3 Communication with your international partner teacher

In the first year, you might feel like it is troublesome to do COIL course because you need to communicate with your international partner teacher quite often. No matter how much exchange and confirm that you do with your partner, misunderstandings and troubles would happen during COIL course. However, please remember that COIL is defined as a new approach to teaching and learning which provides **not only students, but also faculty** the ability to communicate and collaborate with peers internationally through online. We cannot make our students do what we cannot do properly. Also, you should bear mind that once you overcome the first collaboration, your psychological burden and workload will be fairly reduced from the second time. Thus, I think it is a pity that you experience it only once for your students.

**VII.** **[References](#Table_of_contents)**

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David Matsumoto ICAPS(Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale)

University Minesota’s Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA)’s Cultural Bibliography: <http://www.carla.umn.edu/culture/bibliography/>

Bruce LaBrack’s What’s up with Culture: <http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/>

Notes

1. Whether or not explicit linguistic knowledge can turn into implicit linguistic knowledge still remains controversial. See Ellis (2001) and Krashen (1981) for further discussion.
2. Since 2012, I have been inviting a group of about 30 Kyushu University students who come to study at SJSU Gateway program in March for a month to my 25B intermediate Japanese class. They introduce their own culture’s funny stories and interview on their superstitions and fortune-tellings each other. The activities are introduced after reading a *Rakugo* (a Japanese traditional funny story) in Lesson 20 of Genki textbook and after reading “*Yakudoshi* (an Unlucky year)” in Lesson 21.