

Micro-Paper 13: *Livescribe and Second Language Learning*

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Defining the term

Livescribe is part of a cluster of smartpens, devices that digitally record what one writes or draws along with the audio of what is going on as the notes are written. Livescribe users can then combine the notes and audio into a pencast, which they can later save on a computer as a PDF, send to Evernote, or send to the Livescribe mobile app on one's tablet or smartphone, depending on which model of the pen one has. When played back, the audio is synced with the writing, allowing the writer to recall the sounds and notes that took place at the moment of recording them.

Livescribe smartpens allow students to write notes and record the teacher's lecture or instruction to the class. The pencast can be played back later so that the student can review either part or the entire lesson. Literacy researchers have explored the use of Livescribe smartpens to record middle school students' small-group discussions about literature. The use of Livescribe in these classes, as our research has shown, provided spaces for authentic formative assessment and encouraged collaboration among the students.

Connecting it to LSLP

Digital technologies have many applications for students learning a second language. Livescribe smartpens can aid note taking in class by recording the audio as well as

what the student is writing for later review. Students can also record lectures or discussions in the target language so that they can playback and listen as many times as they need. Teachers can also have their students record themselves speaking or having a group discussion in the target language, enabling the teacher to have an authentic assessment of students' literacy skills and language acquisition. All of these applications can increase students' confidence as they learn a new language.

Expanding Second Language Research

While the potential of Livescribe smartpens begins to surface in English education, we still need to explore further research how technologies that combine written text and audio, such as the Livescribe smartpen, can support English Language Learners. Communication skills are vitally important in the 21st Century, and new technology tools can help teachers and students develop these needed skills.

References

- Livescribe (2014). *Livescribe: Never miss a word*. Retrieved from <http://www.livescribe.com>
- Witte, S., Graham, J., Grysko, E., Bistricean, S., & Piotrowski, A. (2013). Every voice counts: Partnering literature and Livescribe. *Florida English Journal*, 48(2), 24-38.

This LSLP Micro-Paper is part of a series of guest micro-papers by researchers at the Initiative for 21st Century Literacies Research at Florida State University