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Smarting Inside and Outside the Classroom: Smartphones, Non-professional Interpretation, and Attitudes of the Young*

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Harvor, Finn. Smarting Inside and Outside the Classroom: Smartphones, Non-professional Interpretation, and Attitudes of the Young. *The New Studies of English Language & Literature* 69 (2018): 45-67. Smartphone usage has become ubiquitous, especially among the young. and this ubiquity of an attractive, sometimes addictive technology has raised alarm among educators. This alarm has its justifications, since the negative aspects of smartphone usage can lead to distraction. However, since smartphones are, in effect, miniature laptop computers, they also have substantial benefits when employed correctly. They allow access to numerous apps and programs that benefit students, especially when they are learning a foreign language and trying to improve via self-study. Moreover, young people themselves are frequently insightful in to the negative aspects of this technology. Finally, students who are active at self-studying and aware of smart technology's benefits can be admirably creative in developing study habits and strategies that might be effective if incorporated into structured foreign language learning. (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

Key words: smartphones, seamless learning, self-study, active-awareness

I. Introduction

Usage of smartphones is not only prevalent, so is ridiculing people — especially the young — for the usage of them. In pop culture, it is easy to encounter jokes making fun of people glued to their smart phone screens. A few years ago, the term "smartphone zombies" was coined (Borowiec, 2016, 1). This term has in turn been changed into a

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neologism: “smombies” (Chatfield, 2016, 2). Furthermore, the common attitude among educators is to treat smart phones as a threat to learning.

The goal of this paper is not to proselytize for smartphones. Clearly, smartphones have disadvantages from both a social and educational point of view. There is a discourse of smartphone criticism (which will be described in more detail below), and even a discourse that focuses on it as an acutely “Korean problem”. Articles with titles such as “Ultra-wired South Korea Battles Smartphone Addiction” (AFP, 2014, 1) or “South Korea’s Smartphone Obsession” (Rodgers, 2017, 1) only feed an uneasy sense among educators that smartphones are, in the final analysis, a dangerous, distracting technology that is destructive to attention-spans, and therefore, to education.

Why smartphones in particular? We have adjusted to other forms of digital technology in the classroom, and even embraced them. It would seem that there is something about the sheer ubiquity of smartphones that makes them seem uniquely powerful as a form of distraction. Some of this distractive power can in turn be mitigated by technology: there are programs that inhibit smartphone use in schools (Bell, 2014, 1), and these programs can be utilized in other venues as well (Waddell, 2016).

Yet, in part because of their prevalence and their increasing technological sophistication, one is compelled to ask: do they not also have educational potential? This is a particularly germane question for language learning, since the devices, with their dictionary and translation apps arte very suitable for working between languages, and, moreover, since the internationalization of social media theoretically lends a widespread means for students to improve their foreign language skills in a way they enjoy.

These types of openly structured activities inherently incline toward what might be termed casual translation; that is, translation that is not engaged in in order to gain marks or produce a “perfect” result, but

translation that is employed for communicative purposes within casual social contexts, such as those one finds in social media. And since the prevalence of smart phones is such a widespread phenomena, and since social media usage is one of the favoured activities of smart phone owners then it is logical to view social media — commonly considered a threat within a classroom context because of its power to distract — as one means by which a self-motivated student can improve his/her foreign language skills by engaging in casual practice and interpretation. ("Social media" for purposes of this paper will include social media platforms such as Facebook, along with texting and conversational interchanges via apps such as WhatsApp, Kakao, etc.), There are other smart phone tools such students can utilize as well: dictionaries, email, self-recording (to improve pronunciation and intonation), and so forth. In effect, any tool that the machine of a smartphone provides is viable if its creative usage improves language acquisition.

In a previous study (Wrigglesworth & Harvor) we found that many self-motivated students employed their smartphones in innovative ways to support their studies, both in and out of the classroom. at times were remarkably inventive at creating new activities that would assist their language-learning. As coincidence would have it, these students were generally noticeably effective speakers and writers. Moreover, in my classroom experience, I have found that while students belong to that generation which grew up with smartphones (they became an available technology in 2008, when the average 20 year-old in 2017 was eleven years old), they are perfectly capable of applying critical thought to smartphones as a social/educational phenomenon.

This paper will illustrate that there are proactive, intellectually self-disciplined students who have designed effective means of using smartphones as casual learning tools. It will also illustrate that many university students have nuanced understanding of the dangers of

smartphones. The paper will attempt to show a "middle way" in which intelligent usage of smartphones can be considered as a potential learning tool.

II. Setting the Groundwork of the Debate

For years, the potential of mobile digital technology as a language-learning tool has been recognized within the field of education studies. El-Hussein et al. (2010) have categorized mobile learning as "any type of learning that takes place in learning environments and spaces that take account of the mobility of technology, mobility of learners and mobility of learning," and using a mobile phone as the digital machine utilized when studying a language has been categorized beginning in 1996 by Chickering and Ehrmann, with Geddes (2004) and Kukulska-Hulme and Shield (2008) focusing specifically on smartphones. Parallel to this has been a body of study on using mobile devices for learning generally, with acknowledgement that the devices remain viewed with suspicion by many within education (Mellow, 2005).

Yet while researchers within the academic field of education are enthusiastic about smartphones as an educational tool, and also enthusiastic about their usage in social-economic settings where smartphones are more accessible than pricey text-books, there is resistance to them — quite noticeable resistance — in popular discourse about education. In an article in *The Atlantic* by Peter Barnwell, a teacher at Fern Creek High School in Louisville, Kentucky, Barnwell is adamantly skeptical about the educational benefits that smart phones bring. Barnwell writes:

> We also know that other school districts across the country are in the midst of trying to incorporate technology to enhance learning,

> and to close the so-called digital divide—to ensure all students have access to an Internet-enabled device. One way to solve the access issue is to allow students to use smartphones in class.... [But] when I peer into classrooms, I see students tuning out their peers and teachers and focusing instead on YouTube and social media.... [In my own classroom] I have guidelines for cellphone and smartphone use, but it's a constant struggle to keep kids engaged in lessons and off their phones. Even when I know I've created a well-structured and well-paced lesson plan, it seems as if no topic, debate, or activity will ever trump the allure of the phone. (2016)

Note that Barnwell offers the reader a vaguely defined yet intuitively resonant image: that of the smart phone in public schools, either being used enthusiastically in the hallways, or being introduced to the classroom, where there are rules in place governing when the devices can be used, but there are not (as far as Barnwell describes it) no exact rules on how they might be used when employed specifically for study assignments.

Barnwell allows that smartphones can be used by a particular cohort of students — high achievers. But his misgiving — his deep-seated mistrust, really — is of underachievers. Is this an act of conflation? That is, is Barnwell discarding a potentially rich pedagogical method for one group of students because of frustrations with another (whose smartphone usage may, recall, not be precisely guided enough to also give them benefit)? Or is he simply an experienced teacher who is expressing a real-world predicament? These questions are germane not only in the United States, but internationally. Since, in South Korea, for example, smartphone usage is generally banned in public school until high school graduation, Barnwell's point of view that smartphones are essentially dangerous to young students seems a cross-cultural sentiment.

Barnwell is keen that his antipathy toward smartphones is supported

by experts. He continues:

> Research supporting the idea that smartphones—specifically—can be used to enhance learning for all students, even underachievers, is hard to find. However, Stanford University's 2014 study on at-risk students' learning with technology concludes that providing "one-to-one access" to devices in school (students don't have to share) provides the most benefit. The study does not, however, mention smartphones as a choice tool to achieve greater engagement and academic success. I next contacted Richard Freed, a clinical psychologist: "High levels of smartphone use by teens often have a detrimental effect on achievement, because teen phone use is dominated by entertainment, not learning, applications," he said. (2016)

But note that this passage only underscores a tendency toward conflation. Now it is not Barnwell (a mere high school teacher), but Freed (a clinical psychologist with a popular non-fiction book out) who sounds the alarm of how distracting smartphones are. At no point is the obvious question asked: since laptop computers also have easy net access — and therefore access to all the apps and game websites and other temptations of the internet — why are they also not considered forms of jeopardy to learning?

Part of the answer seems to be that laptops are machines whose usage is easier to control (the machines are more visible, and cannot easily be hidden under desks, etc., for surreptitious viewing). But they are also essential study tools: we now write on them. If we also wrote — as some students now do — on smartphones to such an extent that these machines, too, became word processors, we might also view them less negatively, despite their ongoing access to apps, etc.

But another answer also is possible, and it is one indicated by the experience of a school in the UK called the IPACA, on the Isle of

Portland. Here, smartphone usage in the classroom is embraced. The thinking is these devices are so popular and so widespread, that there cultural significance might as well be embraced within a structured educational context. Branwen Jeffreys of the BBC writes:

> At IPACA, director of change and innovation Gary Spracklen argues it's about embracing 21st Century learning. "With a smartphone we can cross-reference the textbooks — we can look at the Syrian crisis at the moment, the different population flows that are changing throughout Europe. We can't do that with a textbook." The children at IPACA still read books, but the school library is online as part of a move to cloud-based learning. A secure wi-fi system with filters operates across the school and devices are made available to everyone. Any phone used in class has to be face up, on the table and unlocked so anyone can see what is open. Vicky Short, whose son Finlay is at the school, says the reality is children are growing up with access to devices, and need to learn how to use them productively.... [Short says:] "I think it's important to understand as a parent that things are not done now as they may have been when we were at school. It's all about helping our children develop into modern society." (2105)

What is significant about this description — and what Barnwell leaves out in any sort of descriptive detail — are the rules on how, exactly, the phones are to be employed within a classroom: " Any phone used in class has to be face up, on the table and unlocked so anyone can see what is open."

The Jeffreys article continues with criticisms of smartphone usage, citing a contrasting case: that of a school in Manchester in which smartphones are banned outright (analogous to the Korean situation). Nevertheless, unlike the Branwell article, a detailed scenario in which smartphones can be used in a structured manner so that all students (not

just "high achievers" contrasted with "underachievers") can benefit.

Both these articles have been chosen and examined in some detail because they are popular articles by education specialists; they exist outside the realm of specialist journals: both the Atlantic and BBC have large popular audiences, and are culturally influential. However, both focus very much on students within school classrooms. That is, the implicit assumption is that learning is an activity that resides largely within the walls of a school. How about students who study and learn outside the classroom? They certainly exist. And whether they are categorized as high achievers or not (it is this author's firm opinion that the linkage between high grades and high intelligence is not fixed), their activities are of considerable interest to any educator who wishes to interest students in language acquisition not simply as an in-class activity, but as something best partaken both at school and after-hours ... and as something enjoyable. These educational philosophy could be applicable in any school system.

However, the points I would like to underline for a Korean audience are: 1) That we need not view smartphones within the classroom as a strict either/or; they could be banned from some classes, while utilized in other classes in a controlled fashion. 2) Classes devoted to foreign language acquisition are frequently most effective when a communicative teaching style is employed — i.e., when students either speak freely or write spontaneously in full sentences/paragraphs 3) Speaking and writing spontaneously in a foreign language inherently involves some of the skills of informal translation. 4) Korean students tend to be somewhat hesitant to speak or write spontaneously. 5) Any tool which could encourage Korean to speak/write spontaneously would well be considered as a useful classroom assistant. 6) When students are motivated enough to self-study, any foreign language activity is useful in improving acquisition, and this practice often has a "casual" quality. 7) Smartphones not only interest

young people because they like mobile digital technology, they also are directly useful to writing (e.g., dictionary apps as well as search engines that provide research material), speaking (recording one's own voice as a memo), listening (recording the instructor's voice when lecture material is difficult), and reading (finding useful research material online, or finding research material that genuinely interests students, such as articles about pop culture or sports that would increase their engagement in conversation classes and increase their vocabularies).

III. Scholars Think Differently about Digital Tech and Learning

While both these popular articles are, respectively, by an educator and journalist specializing in education, they do not accurately encapsulate attitudes among scholars of education. For example, Peter Mellow writes:

> Technology is an environment (Hoffman, 2004) that our students now inhabit.... these students, born from 1982 onwards, by the time they are aged 21, on average, will have spent twice as long playing video games than they have reading, and four times more time watching television than reading (Prensky, 2001). [While] older generations ... would consider these figures alarming[,] decrying this disparity will not change them, and will only exacerbate the situation if we continue to ignore it.
>
> One aspect of being a great teacher is to get a student to consider the obvious in such a new light that not only is his or her thinking changed, but the process of how to think is itself affected (Fulghum, 1997). Prensky would argue that the student's thinking is already changed (Prensky, 2001). His exploration of the concept of neuroplasticity is a poignant reminder to educators everywhere. Educators need to be fleet of foot and adapt their material and methods of teaching to best fit this new breed of learners. (2005)

And this is the first sign of a serious schism in thinking on smartphone usage — that is, the schism between MALL as an academic field of study and the smartphone as a "sign" of popular discourse. In the first case, the smartphone is often seen as an exciting tool. In the second case, the smartphone is often seen as a threat. This point is not one that we wish to dwell upon at present, but simply flag for future discussion, as usage of smartphones for self-study of a foreign language — and therefore, casual translation — might help bridge this schism by underscoring the degree to which, on the one hand, it is an easily observable fact that smartphone usage is very prevalent among the young, yet the machines themselves arouse strong opinions (might one go as far as saying dark emotions?), and it given that educational policy is not determined exclusively or primarily by educational theorists and scholar, but is also much influenced by school board trustees, activist parents, and local and provincial politicians who design policy. In other words, the seemingly harmless logic of education specialists such as Mellow will inevitably encounter sometimes fierce resistance. But since self-study takes place outside the classroom, perhaps educators can successfully inspire students to so some work on their own in order to accrue the benefits of performing casual translation as a means of improving foreign language skills.

During a series that Professor Jon Wrigglesworth and I did with for the article mentioned earlier that is pending publication, we focused on the self-study habits students had when using mobile digital devices. Of particular note was the concept of "seamless learning" — at term coined by Wong, et al. (2015) to describe moving back and forth between formal and informal learning environments. Formal learning strategies involving smartphones were predictable enough: students frequently used their dictionary functions and internet search capabilities. In a sense, they used them like laptop computers. The dictionary usage was particularly significant from a translation point of view, since students are naturally

eager to expand their vocabularies and make sure they are using words correctly.

In 2016, Professor Wrigglesworth and I used a mixed methods approach — that is, online survey and semi-structured interviews. The students we talked to were majoring in English translation and interpretation at a highly-ranked South Korean university. They were asked to participate They were asked to participate in an online survey that consisted of 69 items. All told, 250 surveys were returned to us, for a response rate of 62%, and from this, 241 were included in our analysis. The genders were 63% female and 37% male. 100% were owners of smartphones. 96% were Korean, and 4% were other nationalities.

We arranged 28 detailed, personal interviews by phone and Skype or Facebook messenger. These individualized interviews were quite lengthy, and ranged from 30 to 45 minutes. (Note: the students I quote from later were done separately, and taken from mini-essay assignments.) During the course of our research, we divided the students into three groups.

> We classified participants as either passive-unaware, passive-aware, or active-aware based on their reported engagement with smartphone activities and how they perceived using these activities to further their language learning goals. Those who were categorized as passive-aware designers related little or no interest in using activities on t5heir smartphones to pursue language learning, but they were unable or unwilling to actively seek out opportunities for language learning. Active-aware designers were keenly aware of the potential smartphone activities held for languagte learning, and they frequently sought them out. (Wriggleworth, Harvor, 2017, 11).

These categorizations became crucial when analyzing the data I had collected in the course of asking students mini-essay questions (usually as parts of exams). However, while most of the quotes that follow are

from students we would categorize as active-aware (since they were enthusiastic and creative in their self-study), I would like to underline that the techniques these students use could be used to motivate passive-unaware or passive-aware students. That is, a student does not inherently belong to one category or another. He or she belongs to the category defined by his/her self-study habits. all students with a desirte to improve their language ability can learn from what follows.

What was significant was the *behavior* of individuals; it was not necessarily the students with the highest scores who were the most active. however, students who scored well on TOEIC tended to be more active. In other words, it may be that there is a correlation between taking initiative on one's own and learning a foreign language more effectively.

The data that Wrigglesworth and I collected was separate from the data that follows; however, it provided a conceptual framework and also gave an important context to the data I collected via written assignments. This data was taken from three classes taught in the fall semester of 2017. The courses I was teaching were officially at the first and second-year levels, but the range of students was as high as fourth year. Each class contained between ten to twenty students. The gender balance tended to be equal. I did not attempt a statistical analysis. the aim was to focus on qualitative data. I wanted to gain more insight into precise attitudes and precise activities that these students thought/performed independently and of their own initiative. I selected quotes for this paper based on that qualitative criteria; I was interested in students whose remarks were in some way noticeably articulate or thoughtful.

IV. What Students Think (1)

Casual interpretation was an activity inherently embedded in much of the self-study habits that this last group of students created. Yet

paradoxically, when asked about how they felt about smartphones and whether they were detrimental to education, many university students answered yes. This was part of a more widespread critique the students had about smartphones generally, as a seductive technology that, while entertaining and useful, also carried with it real-world dangers.

In the first case, I had a class of 16 students. They were studying discussion and debate. In class, we talked about several articles dealing with the impact that technology is having on our society, or might have in the future. I opened a discussion with my students not necessarily by talking about smartphones directly within the classroom, but talking about them within the context of general safety; the phenomenon of "distracted walking" wherein people (not necessarily young) are so absorbed in their phone screens they are unaware of what is in front of them. These answers were not directly connected to language learning, but did illustrate a willingness to think in a critical, practical way about the dangers of smartphones. Students emphasized the necessity of "school safety education" programs amd "educated drivers". One student added: "Educating drivers to watch out for people and pay attention to not only the road but also pedestrians, especially those who were on their phones, is another viable solution. Lastly, if the problem becomes severe than the government can impose laws that increase the penalty or fines...."

Interestingly, instead of being reactionary and denouncing the technology wholesale, the students were quite practical and logical in their solutions. as I say above, what is germane here is the students — typical young people — understood that smartphones have serious downsides. but they were also clearly of the opinion that these problems could be managed, and the usefulness of smartphones enhanced. What I found interesting about these responses were three characteristics: first, the willingness on the part of the young to accept criticism of smartphones. Second, an ability to think pro-actively about solutions,

rather than condemning the technology wholesale. Three: an ability to articulate themselves with elegance and intelligence.

As well, and keeping the examples on this same anecdotal level, I found that whenever I gave my students a research assignment and asked them where they would find their information, I found that the number of students who preferred using their smartphones was so overwhelming that it was rare to find a student who would voluntarily go to the library to search for information. This point is worth emphasizing: smartphones have become essential research tools for students. (Also as a result I would give my students a short lesson on how to effectively use library books, and also emphasize to them that using their smartphones — that is, the Internet — was fine as long as they did so in an active way that included substantial sifting through available material rather than just choosing one or two sources of information that happened to be high on the list created by a search engine.)

Once conversations with my students moved from the question of whether smartphones were "bad" to whether smartphones had a place in a creative but self-disciplined study habit, the opinions changed. And to someone of an older generation, this might raise an eyebrow or even cause an indulgent smile; after all, were not these students — so clearly in love with their digital devices — only excusing their own weakness? The interpretation this author would like to offer is that what is at play is a paradox, not a contradiction. What was lacking for the interviewees were clear classroom models of smartphone usage that did work. Therefore, it was not that the students I talked to were somehow hypocritical; their unease about smartphones in public schools was based on deep-seated personal experience. Instead, they were willing to contemplate smartphone usage for educational purposes when it was effectively controlled. Recall the example of the IPACA school in the UK. Its classroom regulations were fairly simple: the smartphones had

to be on one's desk, screen up, with the phone unlocked so a teacher could double-check on whether a student was surreptitiously playing games or chatting during class-time.

Similarly, university students who were more open-minded about smartphone usage were those who seemed to have an intuitive understanding of the precepts of MALL and seamless learning.

On the final exam, I asked a different style of question. Each section of the essay portions of the exam was divided into two. Students were given debating topics, and they had to choose between contrary resolutions. In other words, they had to choose between arguing either for or against a particular resolution.

In part C of the exam, one resolution read resolved: smartphones are part of everyday reality. Furthermore, they are the technology that has barely been tapped in terms of their full potential as creative slash intellectual tools. Therefore we must discard are updated fear that they harm young people and include them in the classroom, as long as their usage is monitored and they're not used for games and the train education system much must change its stance on them and middle and high schools··· Now, choosing one side pro or con, discuss your argument in response to this resolution.

Student five: [Korean] "There is widespread objection against technology, especially those with access to communication or gains, in a learning environment. The biggest fear is that students will use technology and classroom to play games or chat with friends rather than use the technology for learning. This irrational fear against technology in classrooms has to stop because technology like the smartphone is also a source of information for students. More and more students are beginning to use technology to aid their studies. We look up information on our smartphones, look at educational lessons on our phones and computers, type up essays on our computer and even create data sheet

and spreadsheets on the computer.... If we want to teach students effectively, we need to incorporate technology and learning together instead of looking at technology just as a 'distraction' from learning."

Student six: [Korean] "Smartphones have become an inseparable part of our daily lives. If we can't choose to just live without it, it is now time that the proper usage of smartphones should be learned from school.... [O]nce this problem could be solved by monitoring and education, smartphones can actually be great tools. For example, students would be able to easily access up to date information research for multi-media information online with the usage of smart phones. Smartphones allow students to get an academic experience that they wouldn't be able to get when they are simply using books."

Therefore, it became a question of finding effective means to utilize the smartphones as learning tools. What was key was not whether the technology should be condemned, but whether its usage should be modified in order to to allow it to help with studying. Note further that students readily acknowledged the convenience of smartphones as a means to search the internet, to use for note-taking or dictionary purposes. What interested me from a translation/pedagogical point of view was something somewhat more unusual: could the phones also be used outside the classroom in order to improve language learning? For this is what Jon Wrigglesworth and I had found to be the case with the active-aware designers; those students who were most proactive in utilizing smartphone technology as a tailor-made learning enhancement.

V. What Students Think (2)

Studying outside class on tasks that are not homework is not mandatory. Yet the form of self-study is one of the hallmarks of a effective foreign language-acquisition. Recall Wong et al.'s concept of seamless

learning. I would like to add to that a possible suggestion for scholars of interpretation that one might consider whether informal interpretation (to use a common example from student life, using a dictionary or using an article from the internet written in one language (such as Korean) for a homework assignment to be written in another language (for example, English) are engaged in what might be termed "seamless translation". As Garcia, et al., have observed, word reading is affected by translation ability (2005). Or, to put it differently, since the variance of bilingualism is associated with level of translation ability, while students may not be involved in translation activities in a sustained fashion, they still employ forms of translation whenever it is necessary for another activity they are engaged in; consider the situation of an individual reading an article in another language and needing to look up words in it, and then making a post (in the foreign language) at a website, and again needing to double-check his/her writing by using a dictionary, translation app, or other form of translation activity.

Additional to this line of reasoning that informal translation is part of out-of-class or seamless learning, since three of the premises of this paper are that self-study is important to foreign language-acquisition, that self-study tends be more effective when it is enjoyed, and that smartphones are generally enjoyed by young people, then examining the ways in which students use phones as study tools is germane to the topic. As we saw above, student attitudes toward phones in class are ambivalent. While some favor the usage of phones in class, others do not. In the sample of students in the debate class who were quoted above, opinions were roughly equally divided. However, because we ourselves did not use smartphones in that class apart from dictionary usage and a few occasions when students were encouraged to research articles on the internet, it is possible that the underlying assumption of these students was that smartphones would only be utilized in a narrow range of ways.

Talking to students who used smartphones as an informal learning tool was an invigorating experience, since the inventiveness and ingenuity of these young people underscored that smartphones — like laptops, like other digital devices — have considerable positive educational potential. It is worth noting that the university at which I work, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, the school has built an online system it calls "e-class". Students are therefore inherently inclined to use their phones since it is an easy way to access homework and find out about class assignments. Frequent usage of e-class was one activity — a spring-board, one might say — for those students who also used their smartphones as self-study tools.

Several students Jon Wrigglesworth and I talked to offered a wide range of activities students used. For example, messaging apps like Kakaotalk or WhatsApp, social media such as Facebook, dictionary apps, ebooks that were online, videos via platforms such as YouTube, and so forth. Preferred activities were chatting with foreign friends in the (student's) second language, reading or watching English-language material, and recording one's voice or those of others.

One Korean student wrote [abridged]:

> I use my smartphone when I'm on group work. We can check each other's materials by kakaotalk. Especially 'Group Chat'.... I use e-book a lot. When the book is too heavy or when I forgot to bring the book to class, e-book is my lifesaver. 'Epyrus e-book library' app is my favorite. And I'm big fan of podcasts, when I go to bed I always turn on VOA NEWS or other radio channels. It helps me listening English. Also I can play other radio channels that I missed.... To watch impressive scene of movie or drama, 'Youtube' is the best one.... When I get boring and feel sleepy during class or when the lecture is to hard to understand by one time listening, I make voice recordings of lectures. Actually I use it very often, like once a day. And if there

are lots of writings on board, I take photos of it using 'silent camera' app. I don't prefer writing notes during class, because some professors might think that I'm texting during the class. And using translate app by scanning the pictures of english sentences (that difficult for me), I can get the contents of notes easily.... When I was interested in Spanish and since there are so many 'learning Spanish' books, so it's too hard to pick one. Then I downloaded the app 'Duolingo' and it helped me.... [2016]

Another student commented about e-class specifically:

I often use smartphone to access e-class. Since I don't know when professors will upload notices or assignments, I access e-class every day(more than once a day)." However, what was of interest was his own habits with the phone. For example: I use Facebook the most when I use English. I have some foreign friends in the U.S. since I have been "there as an exchange student for a year. When I share information, I use timeline or Facebook message. Also I used voice call(an international call) and video call(Skype) to talk with my foreign friends regularly few years ago, but we rarely use them now due to the time difference.

So this student's ability to use the phone directly as a communication tool varied according to the availability of his friends, and determined whether or not he would use voice or text communications. But this same student was also very active about self-study strategies such as reading and watching videos. He remarked that he belonged to a club devoted to reading the New York Times, and was interested in TED videos. He also used his voice recorder: "Also, I make audio recordings when I study English. Especially OPIC test that I'm preparing is a speaking test, so I use smartphone to record my voice and listen to it again. So I use memo and audio recording app the most when I use English." Finally,

he had installed apps specifically geared to his study interests: "To study English, I installed 'Hackers TOEIC' and 'TED ME' in my smartphone. The former is to study TOEIC. I can practice TOEIC test using a free practice test in the app."

This means this particular student used at least six different functions on his phone that were linked to improving his English ability: memos, voice recording, media apps, social media texting, phoning, and reading. While these activities were sometimes prompted by classroom activity, they also sometimes were not. The situation was inherently seamless. Similarly, I would argue, his usage of casual translation was also seamless; that is, employed when the situation required it.

Another student, in this case Chinese, used the phone regularly for a large variety of activities: "english website, korean and english dic, english podcasts, mainly chinese ebook" (2016). What distinguished his behavior from the Korean student above was he seemed to use English conversation more often — likely a result of his not being a native-speaker of Korean, and therefore resorting to English as a lingua franca.

When pressed on his English-only usage, he responded: "I usually take photos and use video recordings in the need of collecting information. Camera function is the most accessible on smartphone and i can save a lot of photos and videos in great amount of saving memories since it is the least memory taken function." As well: "I recommend TED the most to people planning to learn English. There are many different kinds of topics dealt in TED lectures and there is a script for each lecture. So, if you watch TED, you can increase your ability in both Eng listening and reading. In addition, Naver dictionary service is useful. Not only English is served but also many languages other than English are served." [2016]

The concept of seamless learning is important here. Because smartphones are so powerful — they are effectively small-sized laptops —

they are, like bigger computers, able to handle a wide array of tasks, and language-learners who are habituated to use their phones for both leisure and study move back and forth between tasks quite easily. This may seem "distracted". But it helps language-acquisition, and does so in a way the students find interesting.

VI. Conclusion

The general conclusion of this series of interviews was to underline first that contemporary university students have a nuanced understanding of both the positive and negative effects of smartphones, and that more pro-active students (active-aware designers) are adept at utilizing this technology in order to self-study English. Because of my earlier research with Wrigglesworth, the goal of this paper has been to gather qualitative data focusing on the attitudes young people have toward smartphones, and the methods they use on a practical level in order to self-study foreign languages, especially English. When the two sets of data are brought together, one finds that first, unsurprisingly, smartphone usage is very popular among undergraduates; second, those undergraduates can be divided into three groups when it comes to utilizing smartphones as a self-study learning tools: passive-unaware, passive-aware, and active-aware (Wrigglesworth, Harvor, 7). It should be noted that what is significant is the *behavior* of individuals; it is not necessarily the students with the highest scores who are th most active. However, students who scored well on TOEIC tended to be more active. In other words, it may be that there is a correlation between taking initiative on one's own and learning a foreign language more effectively.

The conclusion this paper has arrived at is tentative and meant to stimulate further discussion among educators. However, this author believes young university students tend to be sophisticated and objective

about the strengths and weaknesses of smartphones generally, and that some of their self-study techniques might be adopted by language instructors who wish to bring to the classroom activities many students will be interested in and enjoy.

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