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For our interview, we talked to Jeff Kuo, who graduated with a BS in Mechanical Engineering from UC Berkeley in 2010. He has been teaching English in Deokdu Elementary as well as to middle and high schoolers at a local domestic abuse shelter in Busan, South Korea for three years.

In regards to his teaching process, Jeff is concerned with different ways in holding the attention span of his students, and making sure he can effectively reinforce the fundamental points in his lectures. In each class, he incorporates a form of active learning, whether through games or activities, because he finds interactivity a strong conduit to learning. In regards to his working process, Jeff usually first creates a rough outline of his lesson plan, and then adapts it to powerpoint. He points out that powerpoints are a very useful technology in his lessons, because he is about to add interesting effects such as sounds and animations that keeps his students engaged.

Jeff mentioned that the school was beginning to integrate “smart” technology into classes, and a certain number of teachers are trained to incorporate tablets in their lessons. These technologies seem to boost productivity in classes because the interactive element keeps the students attentive and engaged. However, Jeff notes that the downside to using these tablets is that it takes longer to prepare for classes. The idea of invested time is something that stood the main concern for Jeff as he considered the advantages and disadvantages to implementing gadgetlteration to his lessons. He says, “It depends on two things: length of training required (for me) and amount of time needed to make the lesson. My lessons are all 40 minutes in length and I teach around 28 hours this year. If I don't want to take work home, I have 12 school hours to prep all my lessons for the week. So it would be 1) how long would it take for me to learn this gadget and 2) can I re-use this lesson type many times?” Also, he specifies that if the technology is complicated and he needs to spend too much time explaining, it leaves little time for reinforcement of the lesson, which is fundamental to teaching language.

From this interview, we were able to learn that teachers are very conscious of time both outside and within class. While the interactivity that comes with using technology to learn can be a huge influence to the students, if the time it takes to learn the technology as well as use the technology in class is too long, then it would not be worthwhile to use it. This reinforces our idea that simplification is an important element to consider when engaging with audiences, whether it is from the web or program developer to the teacher, or from the teacher to student.