

# The Language Teacher



*The Language Teacher (TLT)* is the bimonthly publication of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT). It publishes articles and other material related to language teaching, particularly in an Asian context. *TLT* also serves the important role of publicizing information about the organization and its many events.. As a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting excellence in language learning, teaching, and research, JALT has a rich tradition of publishing relevant material in its many publications.

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## Edo Forsythe

In this column, we explore the issue of teachers and technology—not just as it relates to CALL solutions, but also to Internet, software, and hardware concerns that all teachers face. We invite readers to submit articles on their areas of interest. Please contact the editor before submitting.

Email: <tlt-wired@jalt-publications.org> Web: <<http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/tlt-wired>>

## Form Technology for Language Teachers: How Do You Like Your Monkey?

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Online questionnaire technology can be used for various pedagogical purposes, as well as the core task of creating a research questionnaire. In this article, two teachers and writers for *Digital Mobile Language Learning* <<http://digitalmobilelanguagelearning.org>> analyze Google Forms <<http://google.com/forms/about/>> and SurveyMonkey <<http://surveymonkey.com>> to examine ways these two services can be utilized by language teachers in both language teaching and conducting empirical research.

### Google Forms

Google has revolutionized computing through the development of an integrated, online virtual office that synchronizes across devices. Among other things, this allows for the creation and deployment of online forms that can be used for collecting data. Use of these Google services is free, and requires nothing other than a Gmail account. While this technology can be used to create research questionnaires, Google Forms can also be used for various pedagogical purposes, including the creation of quizzes (Flowers, 2014a) or even the management of an entire extended reading program (Firth & Mesureur, 2010; Mesureur & Firth, 2012). Quizzes made with Forms also render nicely on mobile devices (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Mobile Friendly Listening Quiz. This figure demonstrates how Google Forms render nicely on mobile devices. The quiz demonstrated here uses a YouTube video from *EnglishLessons4U*.

### Form Creation

Form creation is done through a very intuitive web app. This allows for Google Forms to be edited collaboratively by team members. In addition, work in progress is automatically saved to Google Drive. Creating the forms themselves is a surprisingly easy process. As an example of its ease of use, a list of items can be copied and pasted from elsewhere to instantly create an array of responses for a multiple choice test item. Furthermore, by simply ticking a box, each item in that multiple choice question can be shuffled randomly for each respondent. Google Forms also takes advantage of Google's search engine; this streamlines the entire process by allowing the searching for and embedding of images and even video to be done without ever leaving the form creation app.

### Form Responses

Responses to a Google Form are sent to a spreadsheet that is automatically created and stored in

Google Drive. These spreadsheets can be exported to various popular formats or analyzed within Google Sheets. Though the teacher must do much of this, it is possible to create self-grading quizzes using the seamless integration between these two apps (Flowers, 2014b). Also, if preferred, there are add-ons to Google Sheets like Flubaroo <<http://www.flubaroo.com>> that assist in the feedback process. It is also possible to get a summary of survey or quiz responses in the form of pie charts and bar graphs from within Sheets at the click of a button.

### **Teaching Ideas and Examples Using Google Forms**

There are a variety of ways a teacher might utilize the potential of Google Forms in the classroom. The authors have often used Google Forms to create supplementary learning materials; a few such examples follow.

#### *Video Enhanced Listening Comprehension Quizzes*

Google forms allows for the quick searching for and embedding of any YouTube video. There are quite a few YouTube channels dedicated to teaching language or adaptable for language learning. One simple idea is to embed a video into Google Forms, and then create a comprehension quiz for that video. The following link leads to a sample quiz that uses video from the YouTube channel *EnglishLessons4U*: <<http://goo.gl/sb3aRy>>.

#### *Reading Quizzes Using Reading Passages Embedded into the Form*

It is also very easy to paste in text from any source into Google Forms to create a reading comprehension quiz. News sources can offer a steady supply of new material. *Voice of America's Learning English* <<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/>> offers news articles written for English learners. The following sample uses a VOA news article and includes a hidden bonus question for those who correctly answer the last question: <<http://goo.gl/jWLNur>>.

#### *Quizzes Using Images as Prompts*

Adding pictures to a form is also very simple because you can search for images and embed them from within the Google Forms web app. Image search with Google is very powerful, and more importantly, an advanced image search allows for a complex set of variables to be selected in your search. This includes preferences for: colors, images

including a face, only photographs, clip art, or line drawings. In this way it can be easy to make a quiz that uses only images as prompts: <<http://goo.gl/FY0guQ>>.

### *Questionnaires and Quizzes Created by Students Collaboratively*

Another way to use Forms is to build a survey or quiz collaboratively. This is an activity where students can be creative. The authors have had success getting students to build research questionnaires collaboratively using Google Forms. Another idea is to have groups of students create quizzes to test their classmates. Because of the collaborative nature designed into the Google Apps Suite, collaboration and integration with Google Forms is made easy with the initial setup of a Google Account (Flowers, 2014c).

### **SurveyMonkey**

Founded in 1999, SurveyMonkey has established itself as a leading provider of free, customizable online surveys. Although the basic user plan for a SurveyMonkey account is free, individuals have to pay a fee to access data analysis services and customization features. The software is very easy to use and the online surveys render well on smartphones. Moreover, the teacher can quickly check a survey's progress through the mobile application. It is these mobile applications that enable the teacher to make use of the software during class time. SurveyMonkey questionnaires are being used for Extensive Reading reports, class reflections, in-class polling, student-led research projects, peer review forms for presentations and other assessment tasks. All of these uses are available through the basic free plan. However, it is only after one chooses to pay for the more expensive plans that one can take advantage of the true power of SurveyMonkey.

### **Key Benefits of SurveyMonkey**

#### *Answer Piping*

An important advantage of an online survey is that respondents can be asked to read and respond to the sections that are relevant to them. After answering a question prompt for example, the respondent is led past irrelevant sections to the questionnaire to sections that are specifically applicable to them based on their answer to a particular question. This creates a more seamless experience for the respondent and, hopefully, it will encourage the collection of higher quality data (Martins, 2010).

### Answer Filtering

In order to identify correlations or trends in the data, one can ask the answer filter to show only the specific answer sets that are of interest. For example, the filter could be used to focus in on respondents who have studied abroad if one of the questions asked whether the respondent has ever studied abroad.

### Qualitative Analysis

SurveyMonkey has built in word frequency and category labeling functions to help the teacher evaluate open-ended responses effectively. Moreover, these two functions in combination with the built-in search function help make the researchers job much easier when evaluating large quantities of qualitative data.

### Customized Reporting

SurveyMonkey creates charts and reports based on survey responses, which can be downloaded as a PDF or JPEG file. These files or charts can then be embedded directly into a report, presentation, or research paper. It is worth noting here, that the teacher can also use the answer filter to generate individual reports for students or other interested parties.

### Teaching Ideas and Examples Using SurveyMonkey

Two tasks that the authors most regularly use SurveyMonkey to fulfill are for managing students' extensive reading logs and as a peer-review tool for in-class presentations or writing evaluations. For the extensive reading log, after students finish reading a book they are required to complete a short survey. Within the survey students have to: (1) select their name (this assists with survey filtering); (2) answer some general questions concerning the book (for example, the publisher, number of words, title, and perceptions); and (3) complete three open-ended questions about the book (for example, What was your favorite line from the book? Who was your favorite character and why? What would be a good question to test whether the reader actually read the book?). During the semester the teacher can quickly check the survey's results to evaluate the progress of the class. If the teacher wants to investigate a specific student's progress, they can use the filter function to see a student's individual responses. At the end of the semester, a teacher can use the filter and customized reporting functions to create an overall report for each student that is used to grade students on their extensive reading effort.

SurveyMonkey questionnaires also assist in the facilitation of peer-review activities in the classroom. In the case of in-class presentations, the teacher can create a short questionnaire that reflects an evaluative rubric for the task. The teacher shares a link or QR code to the online survey with students who then, after each presentation, complete the questionnaire on their smartphones. At the end of the task the teacher is able to use the filter and customized reporting functions to generate an overall peer review for each speaker.

For basic research purposes the SurveyMonkey free plan will be enough for teachers to employ it in the basic ways discussed above. However, as the examples above suggest, the paid service makes this tool much more useful for language teachers and researchers (see Table 1 below for a summary of differences between these two services). Although an annual price tag of ¥40,000 may be a turn-off for some, teachers could pool money to purchase a shared account, or encourage their school to invest in SurveyMonkey Enterprise, whereby all teachers in a school or department could manage their own SurveyMonkey account.

### Conclusion

Online questionnaires represent not only a powerful tool for academic research, but also a way for teachers to save time and extend their lessons beyond the classroom. Table 1 below provides a comparative summary of Google Forms and SurveyMonkey. The major differences found include the cost of SurveyMonkey versus the free offering of Google Forms, and the sophisticated response analysis services offered by SurveyMonkey versus the largely self-styled analysis one must conduct using Google Sheets.

Table 1. Comparison between Google Forms and SurveyMonkey

Applications	Google Forms	SurveyMonkey (Basic)	SurveyMonkey (Gold)
Cost	Free	Free	¥40,000 Annually
Unique Question Varieties	9	10	10
Mobile App	No	Yes	Yes

Applications	Google Forms	Survey-Monkey (Basic)	Survey-Monkey (Gold)
Question Piping: (Respondents answer questions based on their responses)	Yes	No	Yes
Automated Text Analysis (Open-ended Questions)	No	No	Yes
Image Embedding	Yes	No	Yes
Sound Embedding	No	No	Yes
Video Embedding	Yes	No	Yes
SPSS Integration	Yes	Yes	Yes
Question Limits	No	Yes (10)	No
Response Limits	No	Yes (100)	No
Design Themes	19	51	51
Customized Reporting	No	No	Yes
Answer Filtering and Cross Tabulation	No	No	Yes
Professionally Designed Survey Templates	None	31	51
Generates Printable Surveys	Yes	Yes	Yes

**References**

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**Editor's Note:** As you've read above, online tools provide a powerful tool for language teachers. To learn about many more technology tools, sites, and programs for language learning, join us at the JALTCALL 2015 Conference at Kyushu Sangyo University next month. Registration is open now at <<http://account.jaltcall.org>>; more conference information is available at <<http://conference.jaltcall.org>>. See you in Fukuoka in early June and until then, stay Wired!

[JALT FOCUS] NOTICES



**Malcolm Swanson**

This column serves to provide our membership with important information and notices regarding the organization. It also offers our national directors a means to communicate with all JALT members. Contributors are requested to submit notices and announcements for JALT Notices by the 15th of the month, one and a half months prior to publication.

Email: <[jalt-focus@jalt-publications.org](mailto:jalt-focus@jalt-publications.org)> Web: <<http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/jalt-focus>>

**Perspectives on a Membership Fee Increase**

Kevin Ryan, Director of Treasury, and Fred Carruth, Director of Membership

You are probably already aware that the EBM passed a motion to increase Membership Fees in February, and that when the OGM passes

the same motion in June, it will become possible for us to put that into effect, probably from September 2015. Please check page 60 of the Sept 2014 issue of TLT for more background.

**How Did We Get Here?**

We haven't raised fees for almost 20 years. In that time a lot of things have happened. TESOL, in the same time period, has almost tripled its fees. Here