Digital Portfolio as Mediation to Enhance Willingness to Communicate in English

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Abstract : This research will discuss if performance tasks with technology would enhance students' willingness to communicate. The present study investigated how Japanese learners of English would change their attitude to communication in their target language by experiencing a performance task, called 'digital portfolio', in the classroom, applying the concepts of action research. The study adapted questionnaires including four-Likert and open-end questions as mixed-methods research. There were 28 students in the class. Many of Japanese university students with low proficiency (A1 in Common European Framework of References in Language Learning and Teaching) have difficulty in communicating in English due to the low proficiency and the lack of practice in and outside of the classroom at secondary education. They should need to mediate between themselves in the world of L1 and L2 with completing a performance task for communication. This paper will introduce the practice of CALL class where A1 level students have made their 'digital portfolio' related to the topics of TED® (Technology, Entertainment, Design) Talk materials. The students had 'Portfolio Session' twice in one term, once in the middle, and once at the end of the course, where they introduced their portfolio to their classmates and international students in English. The present study asked the students to answer a questionnaire about willingness to communicate twice, once at the end of the first term and once at the end of the second term. The four-Likert questions were statistically analyzed with a t-test, and the answers to open-end questions were analyzed to clarify the difference between them. They showed that the students had a more positive attitude to communication in English and enhanced their willingness to communicate through the experiences of the task. It will be the implication of this paper that making and presenting portfolio as a performance task would lead them to construct themselves in English and enable them to communicate with the others enjoyably and autonomously.