It's Alive

I chose to use a technology-enabled solution for my learning challenge because I wanted an efficient and visual tool to solve an ongoing problem. My ELLs were often reluctant to ask questions for fear of standing out among their peers as well as hesitant to engage in English with the instructor. This often led to frustration on my part as I was unable to sufficiently gauge learner understanding and adjust upcoming activities accordingly.

My question was: **How can I quickly and easily gather feedback in a way my students are comfortable sharing and ideally allows them to see that other students share the same difficulties?**

Outline

The technology I have chosen to solve this issue is called **Poll Everywhere**. Using this application will allow my students to quickly answer survey questions, displaying this data in real-time. Not only will this provide me with a better understanding of where further explanation, review, and practice is most needed, but also enable my students to be more at ease with their learning struggles as they see their own problem areas matching those of other classmates.

Plan

1. Identify potential areas of issue in weekly content
2. Build and group these into short lists
3. Translate this content into the students' native language (in this case Korean)
4. Create the survey questions.
5. Plan class time to download the Poll Everywhere smartphone application
6. Explain the wrap-up activity/survey
7. Deploy my survey(s) and give students the corresponding access code
8. Gather the data in real-time and display on the overhead screen
9. Promote student awareness of results
10. Rework upcoming assignments and activities to review identified content and build confidence
11. Repeat

Samples

The following is a sample of a possible survey that could be used in an introductory EFL conversation class. Conversation is structured into 4 initial sections: 1) Greetings, 2) Small Talk, 3) Reasons to End (the conversation), and 4) Goodbyes.

Four responses are available for students to choose from, each one representative of their possible comfortable with a particular course topic.

A final sample slide was included to illustrate some potential results.

Slide 1: Gauging comfort with Greetings

Slide 2: Gauging comfort with Small Talk

Slide 3: Gauging comfort with giving Reasons to End

Slide 4: Gauging comfort with Goodbyes

The slide below demonstrates the possible results for student comfort navigating small talk in conversation.
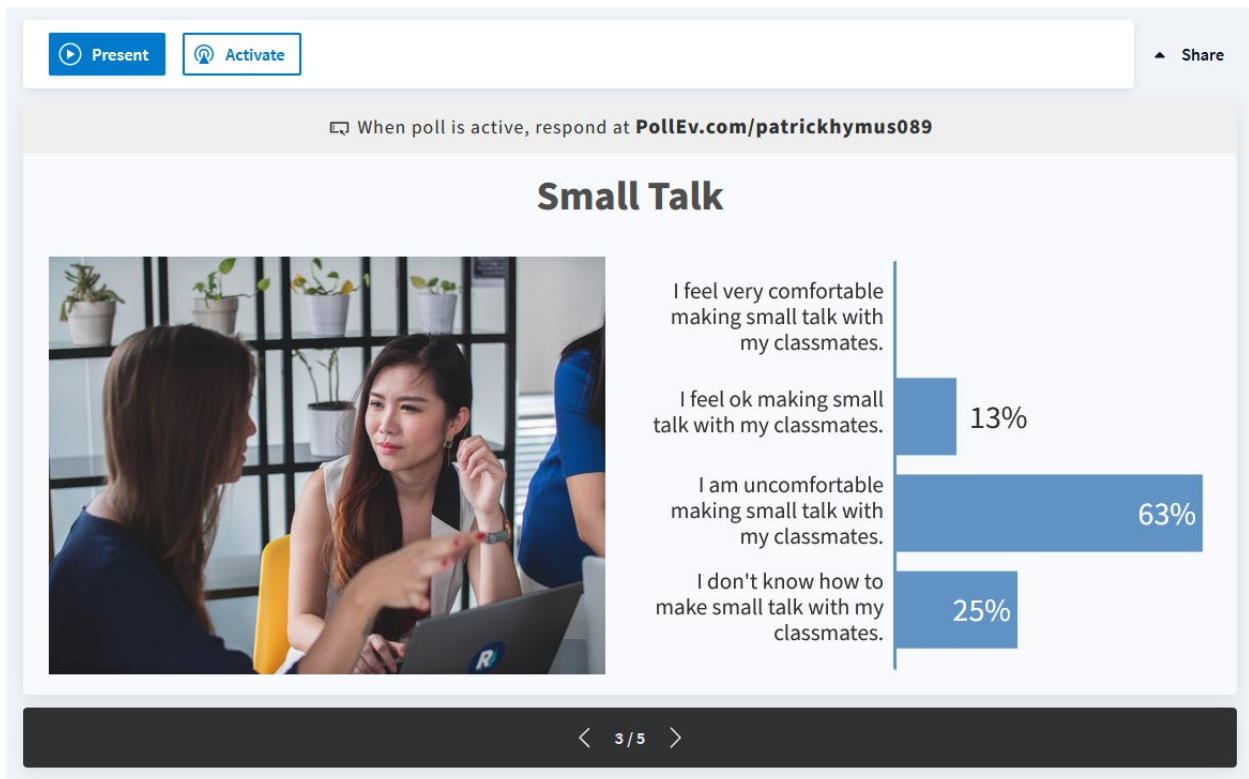
Seeing a significant portion of fellow classmates admitting difficulty with this specific content could ideally have the following outcomes:

1. Allow students to realize that other classmates are also struggling with this content, that they are not alone, and they can be comfortable sharing their struggles with others.
2. Allow the instructor to quickly identify the need for further practice, leading to a reorganization of upcoming activities to allow sufficient time for additional repetition.
3. Postpone review of content students are comfortable with, freeing up time to focus on the above.

Summary

I feel this tool would provide benefit to both my students as well as instructors. The time required to build and deploy surveys will be minimal enough that I could conceivably repeat this approach multiple times throughout the course. Not only would these results allow for more efficient instruction, but students will ideally gain more comfort with asking questions in subsequent courses to the benefit of their own, their classmates, and their instructors.