

영어어문교육 제8권 1호 2002년 여름

**A Study on the Teaching Method of English
Literature through the Internet and Its Effect**
-L2 Acquisition through British-American fiction in CCDL class
between Kangwon National University and Waseda University-

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Baek, Nak-Seung. (2002). A Study on the Teaching Method of English Literature through the Internet and Its Effect. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, 8(1), 1-13.

One of the benefits of the internet-assisted instruction is that it can improve L2 Learners' motivation to express themselves in English. The purpose of this paper is to investigate an effective approach to British-American fiction learning in Korean universities, which can emphasize communicative strategies drawing on video-conferencing system, a chat system(CUSeeMe), and an e-mail system. Students are passive participants who cannot assert their creativity in the traditional teaching method of British-American fiction, which mainly relies upon reading and translation far from literature lessons. In CCDL(Cross-cultural distance learning) class, students can play active roles in asserting their own ideas and assuming considerable responsibility for making a presentation in English. A professor can play a role as a coordinator in supporting the students' activities and in winding up the class. The main significance of this article lies in providing a paradigm for CCDL class beyond the limitation of the traditional teaching method of British-American fiction in Korea and furthermore in exploring the eclectic integration of the traditional one and CCDL.

* This paper is supported by Kangwon National University Research Grant(March, 2000-March, 2001)

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this essay is to help make the students of ESL/EFL accessible to British-American fiction, so that their positive experiences through CCDL (Cross-cultural distance learning) class for English fiction can be a fruitful part of their overall English language learning. As Chattopadhyay(1983:37) puts it, the study of language can never be complete without a proper appreciation of the literary works in that language. McKay(1982:531) also points out that literature offers several benefits to ESL classes. Firstly, it can be useful in developing linguistic knowledge both on a usage and use level. Secondly, to the extent that students enjoy reading literature, it may increase their motivation to interact with a text and thus, ultimately increase their reading proficiency. Finally, an examination of a foreign culture through literature may increase their understanding of that culture and perhaps spur their own creation of imaginative works.

Traditional way of teaching or learning English fiction in which professors too often tend to neglect having students make their own presentations in English or submit their own English essays on literary works dealt with at English fiction class cannot adequately keep up with the global English learning trends.

We need to find new ways of helping students to take advantage of the internet for English language acquisition. The most frequently-cited motivating aspects of computer-assisted instruction include (a) the novelty of working with a new medium(Fox, 1988), (b) the individualized nature of computer-assisted instruction (Relan, 1992), (c) the opportunities for learners to control(Hicken, et al., 1992 ; Kinzie, et al., 1988 ; Pallock and Sullivan, 1990 ; Williams, 1993), and (d) the opportunities for rapid, frequent non-judgmental feedback(Armour-Thomas, et al., 1987 ; Waldrop, 1984 ; Wu, 1992). In order to meet their English learning impulses we need to merge together CCDL and a traditional way of literature learning method for the more fruitful language learning experiences.

For this demonstrative research, a traditional way of teaching method has been applied to my American fiction course during the rest of the semester except for the period when CCDL class between Kangwon National University and Waseda University has been performed four-times from May 1st till June 30, 2000.

II. PROBLEMS OF THE TRADITIONAL TEACHING OR LEARNING WAY OF BRITISH-AMERICAN FICTION

The traditional teaching method of British-American fiction education in Korean universities may be analyzed to render two noticeable problems. One is the quantitative concern; the discrepancy between the intended course material to cover and its actual amount being dealt. The other is related to inappropriateness of the teaching methodology, disregarding the amount of the intended material. Turning first to the former problem, any typical English-related departments in Korea, by and large, label the fiction courses merely to be bundled under the name of, so-called, "19C British Fiction" or "20C American Fiction," subdivided, on average, by century as the boundary. However, what is actually being covered amounts to, at most, just about a piece of work of one single author of a particular century. A worse instance may even wind up reading only first few chapters based on word-to-word reading and translation during the entire semester. An explanation for such academic dilemma can be drawn from the fact that Korean students do not possess some capability to absorb several works in one semester. Some professors justifies that it is nonsense to discuss several literary works with the students who normally do not even comprehend the content of a single fiction and are even far from reading a fiction. Other professors following the same footsteps claim that although the time is allocated such that a course dedicates more to discussion on fictions rather than the literal translation, students presumably not only have not had any significant training on literary criticism, but they have not even acquired the fundamental methodology to make criticism of fictions. Evidently, this runs against the smooth course management and, on the contrary, lends support for the exclusive reading and translation method. Roughly, it can be said that such unintentional motivation leaves the British-American fiction curriculum in Korea universities only to cover less than a bookload. In this case, it would be proper to state the fiction education as the literature intensive reading program if it is only to cover the content being dealt and to set aside the quantitative matter.

At this point, we need to remind ourselves of characteristics of traditional teaching and technologically-mediated environments.

As C.J Pollard & R.R. Pollard point out, characteristics of traditional teaching and technologically-mediated environments(Pollard & Pollard 1993, 11) may be taken into comparative consideration as shown in Table 1 below:

TABLE 1
Characteristics of traditional teaching and technologically-mediated environment
(Pollard & Pollard 1993, 11)

Traditional Environment	Technologically-Mediated Environment
Onus for learning placed on teacher	Onus for learning placed on teacher
Teacher viewed as a content specialist	Teacher viewed as a learning specialist
Teaching as an instructive process	Teaching as a constructive process
Passive learners	Active learners
Teacher as a presenter and knowledge provider	Teacher as a facilitator and organizer of knowledge
Learner access limited to textbooks and other printed, dated materials	Learner access to vast amounts of knowledge through technology
Isolation of the classroom	Learning environment extending beyond the classroom walls
Learner as a receptacle of information	Learner as a creative problem-solver and information user
Emphasis on individual projects and achievement	Emphasis on collaboration and group project-oriented activities
Teachers attending to administrative tasks for a great deal of the day	Computer technology expediting teacher administrative tasks

The main purpose of this article lies in presenting an experimental paradigm for CCDL(Cross-Cultural Distance Learning) project to overcome the limitations of the traditional teaching method of British-American fiction in Korea and in exploring the eclectic integration of the traditional one and CCDL.

III. APPLICATIONS OF CCDL PROJECT TO BRITISH-AMERICAN FICTION TEACHING

1. The main purpose of CCDL project

This paper is based upon Cross-cultural Distance Learning(CCDL) courses conducted by Kangwon National University and Waseda University. We have run two undergraduate courses jointly with law students at Waseda as well as one

graduate seminar with American Literature graduates at Waseda from May, 2000 until the present (June, 2002). Our students are all majoring in English. In this section, we are mainly focussing on the procedures, methods, and merits and demerits of the project.

The main purpose of CCDL project lies in enhancing the English proficiency of the students of both universities by making their learning situations enjoyable and fruitful. Specifically, this project is to

- (1) create the situations where students of both universities to get to know and understand each other through ISDN(Integrated System Digital Network) so that they can exchange their ideas and information via English, a powerful communication tool of today.
- (2) make the students of both universities to work together through "TeleMeet" system(a kind of video-conferencing system), Chat system(CUSeeMe), e-mail system or in a joint seminar so that they feel confident in performing an autonomous self-instruction with the help of their group members and supervisors. As a result they can feel sense of satisfaction in their English proficiency.
- (3) provide a new style of joint-education of L2 learning and acquisition because there are very few(almost none) researches on the use or role of multi-media in L2 learning and teaching. The result from this project will be very fruitful for future works in the use of communication systems in L2 learning and teaching.

2. CCDL Project's formation

2-1. The subjects(students)of TeleMeet class of the graduate students who registered Professor Terasawa's American Fiction class(Waseda University) and Professor Baek's American Fiction class(Kangwon National University). The composition of TeleMeet class is as follows:

- (1) Professor Terasawa's American Fiction class: 5 graduate students.
- (2) Professor Baek's American Fiction class: 8 graduate students.

2-2. The subjects(students) of CuSeeMe class consist of the students who registered Professor Katsukata's English class (Waseda University, mainly

freshmen or sophomores of Law Department) and Professor Baek's American fiction class and Professor Kim's Phonology class (Kangwon National University, mainly juniors and seniors of English Department).

The composition of the CUSeeMe class is as follows:

- (1) Professor Katsukata's English class: 90 freshmen.
- (2) Professor Baek's and Professor Kim's class: 15 juniors + 39 sophomores.

3. Procedures :

3-1. The graduate course schedule for TeleMeet class designed by Professor Terasawa and Professor Baek's agreement is as follows:

- (1) 2nd week in May. : "The first Seven Years" by Malamud
May 10th Wednesday 1:00-2:20(Kangwon National University Student's Presentation).
- (2) 4th week in May. "A Rose for Emily" by Faulkner
May 24th Wednesday 1:00-2:20(Waseda University Student's Presentation).
- (3) 2nd week in June. "The Mourners" by Malamud
June 14th Wednesday 1:00-2:20(Kangwon National University Student's Presentation)
- (4) 4th week in June. "That Evening Sun" by Faulkner
June 28th Wednesday 1:00-2:20(Waseda University Student's Presentation)

3-2. Both Professor Katsukata's and Professor Baek's and Professor Kim's classes are first divided into 18 to 30 groups: each group with 3 participants. Each of these groups is to pair with one of the groups of the overseas partner university to make a Kangwon-Waseda co-work group.

The participants in each group are to carry out their co-work activities by having frequent contact with their home and overseas partners of their own groups via chat system, and an e-mail system.

The students of this project are asked to do the following before the project starts:

- (1) to write student file:
name, age, residency, hobby, major, e-mail address, and self- introduction

within 150 words.

- (2) As for topic, "Find some similarities and differences between you and your partner, by asking partner's personal history, cultural background, educational background, and so on."

4. Communication Tools.

The communications tools for this project are as follows:

- (1) computer communication system (video conferencing system)
- (2) a chat system
- (3) an e-mail system
- (4) others (express mails, telephones, etc.)

(1) computer communication system

This is a system enabling two or more people in separate locations to converse with each other by using a headset, a microphone and a CCD video camera. The participants can talk to their partner overseas whose real-time video pictures were seen on the monitor screen of the PC and whose real-time voices were being able to be transmitted through the headset.

This system is called "TeleMeet" developed by Matsushita Electric Industrial Corporation and is installed in one of the two PCs, available on the ISDN line.

(2) a chat system

This system which is available on the internet is called "CUSeeMe" which enables people in separate locations to converse with each other. In this sense it is the same as "TeleMeet." However, it is different from "TeleMeet" in that it requires neither a headset nor a CCD video camera due to the inability to get clear pictures and voices. With this system the participants are only supposed to have talks simply by typing their messages to their overseas partners. This system is installed in three PCs.

(3) an e-mail

This system is available on the internet and the participants can use this system free of charge. Both Waseda University and Kangwon National University students have their e-mail addresses of the respective universities.

(4) others (express mail, telephone)

Those who would like to contact with their respective travel overseas or home partners can make use of other means or tools such as express mails, telephones, etc.

5. Condition for the communication tools

Regarding the use of "TeleMeet" the condition for its use is that the participants of Waseda University should give a call to start to use it.

As for "TeleMeet" and "CUSeeMee", participants are supposed to fix the date and the time to use them by making an appointment via e-mail or the bulletin board on the Home page.

6. Assigned Co-work Activities

The graduate students are supposed to make their assigned presentation and participate in discussion. The TeleMeet class for graduate students is conducted every two weeks.

The undergraduate students are supposed to study, investigate, discuss it with their partners of their group both at home and overseas and make a final report on it at the end of the academic year. Topics assigned will be the ones closely related to them and in fact the ones suggested and selected by them. The topics must be the ones helpful to establish the mutual understanding across different cultures, manners and customs, social system, traditional values, etc.

7. Before starting the project the participants are needed to get to know each other by using various communication tools.

8. Requirements

- (1) profiles should be sent to project@mn.waseda.ac.jp or turn them to their supervisors by the middle of April, 2000.
- (2) summary of each discussion with their overseas partners on the bulletin board of the home page within 48 hours after they have one. The length of the summary is about 200 words. They are to pay a particular attention to the home page because the way of making a summary on the bulletin board will be

notified later through the home page.

- (3) have to participate in the discussion with their overseas partners voluntarily and positively. They are supposed to exchange their views on the assigned topics through the discussion. Understanding their partners(both at home and overseas) is carried out by discussions. The number of the times of their participation in the discussion will be reflected on their report cards.
- (4) are supposed to establish a good tie of friendship and a mutual understanding with each other.

9. Evaluation

The Participants' evaluations will be based on the following:

- (1) the number of the times summaries are presented
- (2) the content of the summaries
- (3) the final report
- (4) the number of the times the students have participated in the discussion with their overseas partners
- (5) the creativity of the participants' ideas and their enthusiasms and efforts

10. TeleMeet class questionnaire and CUSeeMe class questionnaire:

(a) TeleMeet class questionnaire for 8 graduate students:

- 1) Was TeleMeet class fruitful to you? Yes (8), No (0)
- 2) How many times a month do you think TeleMeet class should be conducted?
Once a month (3)
Twice a month (5)
Once a semester (0)
Twice a semester (0)
- 3) How long do you think TeleMeet class should last at a time?
1 hour (2) 1.5 hour (4)
2 hours (1) 3 hours (1)
- 4) Do you want to attend TeleMeet lecture again? Yes (8) No (0)
- 5) Are you going to recommend TeleMeet class to juniors? Yes (8) No (0)

(b) CUSeeMe class questionnaire for the undergraduate students.

- 1) Was CUSeeMe class fruitful to you? Yes (15) No (0)

- 2) Do you want to attend CUSeeMe class again? Yes (15) No (0)
- 3) What do you think is the biggest problem in CUSeeMe class?
- | | |
|--|-----|
| The shortage of computer sets | (3) |
| The breach of the time promise on the other side | (5) |
| The difficulty of a topic arranged by professors | (7) |

The result of the questionnaire shows that the majority of graduate students attending TeleMeet class felt more or less anxious about English-speaking class through internet in the beginning. But in the course of time they became more and more familiar with TeleMeet class. On the contrary, most undergraduate students attending CUSeeMe class felt curious and interested in TeleMeet class on the whole.

What is essential to CCDL is that professors need to promote the proper atmosphere generating group discussion among students. Each student's interpretation of the literary works has his or her own validity and each personal meaning in them is shared, exchanged, negotiated, reinforced, valued, or loosed in the process of interacting freely, safely, funnily with others' findings. In this way, discussion is stimulated, and the professor serves as a coordinator. Most importantly, a safe learning mood should be created in which critical remarks and words of ridicule can be greatly restrained "so that free communication can take place" among students.(Arnold 10).

The students' activities in CCDL class may serve to create "the positive tension necessary for their genuine exchange of ideas"(Maley & Duff 10), which is the most valuable for an effective communication among themselves.

In CCDL class, students may become active users of English language rather than its passive consumer or imitator, expanding their communicative experiences in the English language. Stimulating their creativity through English fiction CCDL class is suitable for coping with a global new trend of English learning, for students must be more active and responsible for their English learning.

IV. CONCLUSION

Many students agree that both TeleMeet class and CUSeeMe are very interesting and fruitful to improve their proficiency of English and their understanding of

Japanese students' approaches to English Literature. While they confess that they needed a lot of time to prepare for TeleMeet class and CUSeeMe, they could approach a lot of information in the course of preparation. But they express their regret for some difficulty to communicate their own ideas caused by some mechanical problems. If more sophisticated TeleMeet or CUSeeMe systems are to be developed, CCDL class will be sure to gain more popularity among both professors and students.

Some productive suggestions of our joint class through internet may be drawn for American literature education of Korea and Japan.

- (1) It is recommendable that the professor should provide opportunities for the student to contrast or compare his interpretation with those of native readers. This may result in a confirmation of his own position.
- (2) The professor must help the students to escape his limited boundary or to be released from his racial and social prejudices. When the non-native student reads, he may be confronted with something which is not within his cultural orbit. To cross the cultural boundary, the student has to open his mind enough to respect what is foreign to him. This means to learn what strangeness is through experience which is somewhat different from those in his own country.
- (3) One of the most important roles of the literature professor is to pay special attention to the way the reader expresses himself in written responses to foreign literature. It is not easy to help the student develop his own sensibility, because the professor has to respect a variety of responses from the student. The professor should consider any modes of response as valid and look into them according to their cultural plausibility.
- (4) More sophisticated TeleMeet system and CUSeeMe chat system are urgently needed for better communication.

More elaborate study on presenting a paradigm for CCDL class is urgently needed so that we might overcome the limitation of the traditional teaching method of British-American fiction in Korean universities.

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Received Date: 2002. 4. 25
Confirmed Publication: 2002. 6. 10