Networked English Language Education at Waseda University:
Toward creating Asian-Pacific Intelligence (II)- CCDL and Cyber Seminars

Michiko Nakano*, Matt Bonham**, Kazuharu Owada*, Norifumi Ueda*, Masanori Oya*,
Junko Negishi*, and Yusuke Kondo*
(*Waseda University)
(**Syracuse University)

Abstract

This paper summarizes our poster presentations Q-10 CCDL Project between Waseda and Chulalongkorn, R-11 CCDL Project between Tamkang University, Taiwan and Waseda University and S-7 World Englishes and Miscommunications Revized. We describe our efforts to promote learning across borders in a networked culture by helping students to overcome linguistic challenges and encouraging collaboration with others. The program consists of a three-step system: English tutorials at the first step, Cross-cultural Distance Learning at the second step and Cyber seminars at the third step with lectures on demand and face-to-face interaction, and collaborative IP video-conferencing among students. Since we have dealt with English Tutorial Systems in (I), we will address CCDL and interactive Cyber seminars here.

1 Introduction

The commitment of prominent universities and professional schools to the development of digital course material for the Web has stimulated debate about its efficacy for promoting learning. We argue that the unique properties of the Internet (connectivity, non-linearity, de-centering, and virtual presence) and multi-point distance learning offer opportunities for turning a learner's point of view into trans-cultural ones. According to Kramsch(2005), "neither intercultural nor multicultural education put into question the mainstream principles of the dominant Anglo American culture, ,,, (2005, p.13). Since we embody different and inconmmensurable world views, both Kramsch and Cameron (2002) oppose the world view of 'unity and diversity.' Real world problems cannot be solved by native-like communication skills. In our cyber space, we might be able to find a 'cultural third place outside the domination of the markets and the tyranny of national and ethnic communities': Kramisch(2005, p. 31).

In this paper, we will discuss our attempts to collaborate to promote learning across borders in a networked culture, including the linguistic, cultural, and technological challenges that we have encountered. We will begin by describing our pedagogical objectives in this effort: incidental and contextual learning; independent and active learning; and collaborative learning.

1.1 Pedagogical Objectives

Taylor (2001) predicts that technological innovations and the development of digital course material will have a profound effect on the curriculum: "In the future the curriculum will look more like a constantly morphing hypertext than a fixed linear sequence of prepackaged courses. When

knowledge changes and both seminar tables and lecture halls become global, traditional classrooms will not remain the same (p. 234)." Inevitably, the traditional classroom has changed. "Most important, the classroom has expanded and now is global. Anyone, anywhere in the world can, in principle, sit down around the same virtual table and learn together" (Taylor, 2001, p. 234).

We agree with Taylor that technological innovation has altered and will continue to transform "what educators do as well as how they do it" (p. 234). Both educators and students can share excitement about new technologies in higher education, implementing changes that will have a transformative effect on classroom learning. Nevertheless, how these technologies be more effectively utilized to promote a higher level of student performance?

We were motivated by three pedagogical strategies in the design of this application of digital technology to professional education at the senior undergraduate and graduate level. These strategies, which have been illustrated above, were derived from our classrooms, as well as skills-oriented workshops. They also reflect our theoretical interests in discourse analysis and the larger body of "constructivist" thought, with its emphasis on the de-centered self, the sense of "juxtaposition and superimposition, and nonlinear, pastiche-like orderings of space" (Deibert, 1997, p. 201).

1.1.1 Incidental and Contextual Learning

Our first strategy involves abandoning the conceptual system based on the idea of linear sequencing of teaching (Landow, 1992, p. 2) in order to facilitate implicit, incidental, and contextual learning (Snyder, 1996, p. 103). As learners move through a text, they should not be locked into the perspective of the author, but rather should be guided by their own interests, jumping back and forth, omitting material, skimming detail, or going deeper than the author intended. By departing from the author's organizing framework and following a non-linear strategy, learners are able to integrate better course materials and information into their own conceptual frameworks. Words and images can be inter-linked, creating multiple paths that encourage the integration of information (Seifert and Bonham, 1997). Not only does this approach facilitate understanding, but it also helps students to learn how to work in the actual world that is neither linear nor disciplinary.

1.1.2 Learner Autonomy: Independent and Active Learning

Our second strategy focuses on the transmission of knowledge. In the case of professional education, the application of new technologies may have a profound impact on how knowledge is conveyed. Traditional "chalk and talk" methods of transmission do not seem to have any advantage over newer means of communication.

It does not seem absolutely necessary that the medium be a lecture delivered in person by a teacher in front of silent students, with questions reserved for sections or "practical work" sessions run

by an assistant. To the extent that learning is translatable into computer language and the traditional teacher is replaceable by memory banks, didactics can be entrusted to machines linking traditional memory banks (libraries etc.) and computer banks to intelligent terminals placed at the students' disposal (Lyotard, p. 50).

If traditional teachers are no more competent than memory networks in transmitting Knowledge (Lyotard, p. 53), they can be replaced by faculty who can encourage students to arrange data in new ways, an objective "which….is usually achieved by connecting together series of data that were previously held to be independent. This capacity to articulate what used to be separate can be called imagination (Lyotard, pp. 51-52)."

To encourage imaginative thinking, we need to free students to be active and independent learners. Both traditional lecture courses and many courses that utilize new technologies treat students like passive objects, whose purpose is to absorb "knowledge." Instead, we would like to transfer "to students much of the responsibility for accessing, sequencing, and deriving meaning from information" (Snyder, 1996, p. 103). Having taken this responsibility, students will move from being spectators to real involvement with their teachers, classmates, and others who share their interests. In other words, we hope to use new technologies to empower students to pursue their professional interests.

1.2.3 Intercultural or Trans-cultural Collaborative Learning
Our third strategy is to encourage collaboration with others, including learners in distant locations. "In general, teamwork does in fact improve performance….In particular, it has been established that teamwork is especially successful in improving performativity within the framework of a give model, that is, for the implementation of a task (Lyotard, pp. 52-53)."

Learners should be able to work with each other successfully not because of geographical propinquity (for example, they are sitting next to each other), but because they share an interest in a particular subject matter. In other words, students will be able to work together in virtual space based on interest rather than spatial site (Landow, 1992, p. 129). "The result is a much more decentered, multiperspectival universe of imagined communities" (Deibert, 1997, p. 198).

 In this paper we have described a further extension of our efforts to promote professional education using resources that capture the de-centering properties and the virtual presence of new technologies. Specifically, we have explored the effectiveness of combining interactive digital videoconferencing with Web-based text chat and hypertext authoring to create a new learning environment, where students in Asia, Russia, and the United States collaborate with their colleagues abroad to address current issues. We call this new environment, "collaborative

videoconferencing."

Collaborative videoconferencing can be viewed as a component of "knowledge media," a term first used by Mark Stefik (1986) to describe "the profound impact of coupling artificial intelligence technology with the Internet" and later elaborated by Eisenstadt and Vincent (1998) to include "the process of generating, understanding and sharing knowledge using several different media, as well as understanding how the use of different media shape these processes." According to Eisenstadt and Vincent, "One of the most exhilarating and rewarding aspects of the Internet is the way it brings people together. Being able to share and reuse knowledge is a fundamental aspect of the new possibilities made available through creative uses of Knowledge Media" (p. 4).

2.0 Overcoming Linguistic Challenges: The Cross-Cultural Distance Learning (CCDL) Project

With the view toward overcoming linguistic challenges and to meet the future needs of its students, Waseda University initiated the Cross-Cultural Distance Learning (CCDL) Project. This project began in 1997 and currently has sixty eight participating universities mainly from twenty-two countries: Philippines, Malaysia, Korea, England, Scotland, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Russia, USA, Taiwan, and China (Peking and Hong Kong), etc.. It has three main objectives for the undergraduate level of education: to develop mutual understanding of different cultures, to enrich the foreign language learning experiences and to encourage equitable access to advanced information technology through co-operation and sharing of resources. The project is also concerned with the graduate level of education; it aims at enhancing teacher/facilitator skills through a series of cyber lectures and virtual workshops where leaders in the field share their views on language teaching or applied linguistics with all participating members of the project. The project thus caters for the needs of both facilitators and students.

2.1 Initial Efforts: CCDL Activities in the Classroom

First, the students are encouraged to practice typing till they can type 30 words per minute. Then, they register their profile on our home page with their photographs and send e-mails to their partners to make chatting or video-conferencing appointments. They are encouraged to chat by BBS once or twice a week. The 200-word summary of their BBS information exchanges is reported on our home page as well. When a group of students who share the same interest feel like a face-to-face dialog by video conferencing, they are encouraged to do so. At the end of the term, each student submits his/her final report and makes a public presentation, using Power Point.

With respect to BBS chatting, we identified three pedagogical stages:

Stage 1: To obtain information on a partner's country from a partner, e.g., cultural quizzes, self-introduction, daily life, sports, etc.

Stage 2: To learn about a partner's country and explain one's own culture, e.g., mutual understanding, breaking down stereotypes, etc.

Stage 3: To express one's opinion on current topics, such as environmental problems, world affairs, and so on.

As Nakano (2003) indicates, CCDL activities which emphasized BBS chatting (although we provided occasional video-conferencing) had some shortcomings in that the students use very short simple sentences during the BBS chatting sessions--the mean lengths of utterance [MLU] were 6.05 among Waseda University students, 5.08 among Korea University students and 8.29 among De La Salle University students, respectively. This can be compared the MLU in e-mail and essay-writings:

> French 1st year univ. students of English--- 17.25
>
> French 3rd and 4th year university students --- 19.08
>
> Dutch 3rd and 4th year university students ---17.59
>
> NS of American English --- 18.26
>
> NS of British English --- 22.36
>
> Waseda Students (e-mails) --- 15.08
>
> Waseda Students (CMC) --- 6.05
>
> (Data from Nakano et al., 1999)
>
> This suggests CMC should be regarded as conversational rather than written form of exchanges.

In fact, Nakano(2000 and 2003) showed that the BBS chatting can be characterized as conversational writing, satisfying some aspects of interactive everyday dialog in terms of vocabulary level, sentence length, turn-taking (overlapping and butting-in), conversational features in their lexical use and delivery speed (if their typing speed matches their speaking speed, particularly in intermediate level). For this reason, recently the students are encouraged to make digital videos to introduce the Japanese culture and social system to their Asian friends in English.

2.2 CCDL activities in 2005

We introduced the use of Blog and Moodle in our classroom activities and we replaced Bizmate Chatting System with Live on. We structures the classroom activities as follows:

Step 1   : Brainstorm

Think about the topic you want to work on.

Before deciding the topic, ask yourself:

a)   Is the topic feasible for research?

=Can you really do the research?

b)   Are the sources available?

Do you have access to the sources (people, texts, etc) that are necessary for conducting your research?

   c) Can you finish everything by the deadline?

After deciding the topic, clarify

What do you already know about the topic?

What information do you need to know more about?

Step 2   : Deciding on a Research Question

A topic is a broad subject of your work. For instance, these are all examples of topics:

Career choices of female university students

Experiences of international students in Japan

Once you have a topic, you need to narrow it down so that you can formulate a question. A good research question asks a clear, concise question instead of simply stating a broad issue. Ask a research question that helps you focus on one area of your topic. A research question is different from a question that you ask in your questionnaire or in an interview. It is a question that you want to answer by the end of your project.

For instance,

How do female university students choose their careers?

How do international students adapt to Japanese society?

The question should not be answered by a simple yes/no. Instead, questions that examine "why", "how" and "what" are preferred.

Step 3   : Evaluate your sources

Try to gather information from a variety of sources to make your research valid.

Websites and books

Newspapers and magazines

Interviews

Questionnaires

You need to judge whether the sources are credible if you are referring to a text (website, newspapers, books, etc). You need to be especially critical when you are getting information from a website.

Factors you should consider are:

Authority: Is the writer of the source an expert?

Purpose : Does the source want to inform you or persuade you?

Audience: Who is the audience? Is it written for experts? Children?

Currency: Is the information recent?

Quality: Is the language objective?

Accuracy: For factual information, can the same information be found in other sources?

When you decided to use information from a written text, keep a record of the source (note where you got the information).

Step 4> Method:

Decide which is more suitable for answering your research question.

(1) Qualitative Research : Interview

Interview at least 6 people for this project.

The interview should last at least 30 minutes for each person. Analyze the interview in terms of their point of view and assumptions.

(2) Quantitative Research　questionnaire and statistical analysis

Collect questionnaire results from at least 30 people for this project.

The research itself can be done in Japanese. However, you will need to translate the result into English for presentation.

Step 5　: Creating questions for interview/questionnaire

There are different types of questions that you can ask during your research. *Refer to "Types of Questions" handout for preparing questions.

When you are conducting a research that involves participants, here are the guidelines you need to follow.

1)　　Include participant information (gender, age, other background information necessary for your research)

2)　　Be clear: Explain the intent of the research to the participants.

3)　　Stay focused: Do not ask questions that are not related to the topic

4) Results of the interview/questionnaires should be kept confidential.

<Step 6> Analyzing the data

Interview results:

The purpose of the interview is to explore the unique experience of individuals. Look for common answers among participants as well as unique answers.

Questionnaire results:

Indicate the results by using graphs and charts. Use statistics.

<Step 7>: Interpretation of the findings

Reaction to the results- Your opinion

- Were they surprising?

- Did they meet expectations?

Video clip Project

Video clip should be about 7- 10 minutes.

Start filming while you are collecting data for your research. It generally takes more time than you expect.

Narration and subtitle must be in English. If you are filming someone, you must ask for permission in advance. Do not film without permission!

2.3 Overcoming Cultural Challenges: Omnibus On-Demand Cyber Courses with Face-to-Face Interactions

Co-existence in Asia

Our first multi-point omnibus-style instruction consisted of eight on-demand lectures and two live sessions. Each faculty member from the participating universities provided two on-demand lectures. Basically, the lectures were related to the primary theme of Co-existence in Asia. The course, including teaching materials, lectures and BBS Q&A, was conducted in English. Either symposium or workshop was held at the end of this semester course, when the students got together to make presentations on their work.

World Englishes and Miscommunication

There are at least two views of English as a global lingua franca and English as an International Language (EIL). Most people agree that today English has achieved the status of a lingua franca, not because of the growth in the number of native speakers but because of an increase in the number of individuals in the world who have acquired English as an additional language.

Although the initial spread of English was due to speaker migration, resulting in the development of largely monolingual English-speaking communities (USA and Australiasia), the current spread of English is due to individuals acquiring English as an additional language for international and, in some contexts, intra-national communication. This type of language spread results not in monolingualism, but rather large-scale bilingualism.

1. Many learners of English today have specific purposes in learning English, which in general are more limited than those of immigrants to English-speaking countries, who may eventually use English as their sole or dominant language.

2. Many L2 speakers of English will be using English to interact with other L2 speakers rather than with 'native speakers'.

3. Many current learners of English may desire to learn English in order to share with others information about their own countries for such purposes as encouraging economic investment, promoting tourism, etc.

This is the position of English as a global lingua franca. On the other hand, English as an International Language (EIL) tends to emphasize the three points:

1. Learners of EIL do not need to internalize the cultural norms of 'native speakers' of English

2. The ownership of EIL has become de-

nationalized

3. The educational goal of EIL is often (and should be) to enable learners to communicate their ideas and cultures to others.

English is being studied and used more and more as an international language in which learners acquire English as an additional language of wider communication.

The dominance of 'native-speakers' and their culture has been seriously challenged. It is time to recognize the multilingual context of English use and put aside a native speaker model of curriculum development. Only then can an appropriate EIL curriculum be developed in which local educators take ownership of English and the manner in which it is taught. For this shift in the nature of English, we prepared the omnibus on-demand course with occasional multi-point video conferencing called 'World Englishes and Miscommunications'. In this course, we focus on specific syntactic, lexical, phonological, pragmatic, para-linguistic features of each variety of English that might cause misunderstanding. The varieties we dealt with are Chinese English, Korean English, Malay English, Singapore English, Philippine English, Indian English, Hongkong English, Thai English, Taiwan English and Japanese English.

Conclusion

One essential characteristic of successful implementation of educational multimedia is the capacity for future development, both technologically and pedagogically. Over the past several years technology has evolved significantly, providing new opportunities to test new methods of teaching. When applying these new approaches to our teaching, we should not focus too much on the technology, which sometimes makes us lose sight of the students. Instead, we should be using the technology to re-construct the classroom, whether it was in cyberspace or in a building.

As a result of our research program on applications of new technologies, we now view the classroom as being created by the students, themselves, with technology as a resource to promote active learning. To that end, our most recent efforts at collaborative videoconferencing provide a qualitatively different experience compared to other forms of learning. We have found that collaborative videoconferencing, which combines an asynchronous discussion forum with

face-to-face interaction, results in more learning and greater enthusiasm for future collaboration, than does a traditional classroom setting. Students become involved in a truly transnational learning environment, where they obtain information and knowledge, debate competing perspectives, and create products with colleagues with whom they would otherwise not have the opportunity to collaborate. This approach, we believe has the potential to transform what we should do in the classroom and how students learn autonomously.

Acknowledgement

References

Bonham, G. M., Surin, A., Nakano, M., & Seifert, J. W. (2003). IP Videoconferencing in Graduate Professional Education: Collaborative Learning in Japan, Russia, and the United States. In *Proceedings of the ED-Media 2003: World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia, & Telecommunications.*

Bonham, G. M. & Seifert, J.W. (2000). The disruptive and transformative potential of hypertext in the classroom: implications for active learning, *International Studies Perspectives*, 1, 57-74. Deibert, R. J. (1997). *Parchment, Printing, and Hypermedia. Communication in World Order Transformation*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Bonham, G. Matthew and Jeffrey W. Seifert. "The Disruptive and Transformative Potential of Hypertext in the Classroom: Implications for Active Learning," (http://web.maxwell.syr.edu/ir/isa99.htm) International Studies Perspectives, 1 (2000), 57-74.

Cameron, D. (2002). Globalization and the teaching of 'communication skills', In D. Block and D. Cameron (Eds), *Globalization and Language Teaching*, Routledge.

Camilleri Grima, Antoinette, *How strange! The use of anecdotes in the development of intercultural competence / Comme c'est bizarre! L'utilisation d'anecdotes dans le développement de la compétence interculturelle,* Council of Europe / European Centre for Modern Languages, 2002, ISBN 92-871-5033-8.

Deibert, R. J. Parchment, Printing, and Hypermedia. Communication in World Order Transformation. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997

Eisenstadt, M. & Vincent, T. (1998). *The Knowledge Web. Learning and Collaborating on the Web.* London: Kogan Page Limited.

Fenner, Anne-Brit, *Cultural awareness and language awareness based on dialogic interaction with texts in foreign language learning*, Council of Europe / European

Centre for Modern Languages, 2001, ISBN 92-871-4713-2.

Grünhage-Monetti, Matilde, Elwine Halewijn and Chris Holland, *ODYSSEUS – Second language at the workplace: Language needs of migrant workers: organising language learning for the vocational/workplace context*, Council of Europe / European Centre for Modern Languages, [book + CD-Rom], 2003, ISBN 92-871-5266-8.

Huber-Kriegler, Martina; Lázár Ildikó; Strange John, *Mirrors and Windows. An intercultural communication textbook*, Council of Europe / European Centre for Modern Languages, 2003, 92-871-5193-8.

Kramsch, K. & Thorne, S. L. (2002). Foreign language learning as global communicative practice, In D. Block and D. Cameron (Eds), *Globalization and Language Teaching*, Routledge.

Kramsch, K. (2005). Intercultural Literacy vs. Communicative Competence, In

Lyotard, Jean-Fracois. The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989.

Landow, George P. Hypertext. The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology. Baltimore, MD and London, UK: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

Park, K., Nakano, M. & Lee, K. (2003). Cross-Cultural Distance Learning and Language Acquisition. Seoul: Hankook Publishing Co.

Nakano, M., Yamazaki, T., Miyasaka, N., & Saito, T. (1999). A Study of EFL Discourse Using Corpora (7): An Analysis of E-Mail Discourse and Variation of Expressions. In *Proceedings of the 4th Conference of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics.*

Nakano, M. (2003). Cross-Cultural Distance Learning. Lecture presented at JICA, FD Seminars for South East Asian Countries. Nakano, M. (Ed.) (2003). *CCDL Research Reports*, Vols. 1, 2 & 3. CCDL Research Center, Waseda University. Nakano, M. (Ed.) (2003). *CCDL Research Reports*, Vol. 4. CCDL Research Center, Waseda University

Nakano, M, & Bonham, G. M. (2005). The CCDL Project : Learning Across Borders in a Networked Culture, In M. H. Field & J. Fegan (Eds.), *Education Across Borders : Philosophy, Policy, Pedagogy, New Paradigms and Challenges*, Waseda University Media-Mix Co., Ltd.

Newby, David, *Mediating between theory and practice in the context of different learning cultures and languages, European Centre for Modern Languages*, Council of Europe, 2003, ISBN 92-871-5270-5.

Seifert, J. W. & Bonham, G.M. (1997). Using the World Wide Web: Expanding the Classroom or a Virtual Distraction? Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Association.

Seifert, J. W. & Bonham G. M. (2000). Learning Through Digital Technology: Text Chat, Video-Conferencing, and Hypertext. In L. Kuzma, J. Lantis, & J. Boehrer, (Eds.), *Active Learning in International Studies for the 21st Century*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner, 201-217.

Snyder, I. (1996). *Hypertext. The Electronic Labyrinth*. Carlton South, Australia: Melbourne University Press.

Stefik, M. (1986). The next knowledge medium, *AI Magazine*, 7, 34-46. Taylor, M. C. (2001). *The Moment of Complexity. Emerging Network Culture.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Taylor, Mark C. The Moment of Complexity. Emerging Network Culture. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

Zarate, Geneviève, *Cultural mediation and language learning and teaching,* Council of Europe/ European Centre for Modern Languages, 2004, ISBN 92-871-5259-4.