English Teachers' Initial Beliefs on Network-Based Language Teaching

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English Teachers' Initial Beliefs on Network-Based Language Teaching

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This qualitative case study describes three English teachers who integrated the Internet into their lessons for one semester. The primary focus of this study is on the teachers' beliefs and their web lessons to examine the teachers' understanding of the nature of Network-Based Language Teaching (NBLT) and the effectiveness of their technology use. The data analysis yields the findings that the teachers' own ideas of NBLT have been built up early, but do not necessarily agree with the concepts of effective NBLT from the literature. It also seems that the teachers' web lessons were shaped differently by their beliefs about NBLT and their L2 pedagogy. In conclusion, the teachers' initial beliefs were not yet developed enough to take advantage of the strengths of NBLT. It also appears that their selection and application of web lessons did not realize the potential of the Internet from a sociocognitive perspective (Kern & Warschauer, 2000). Therefore, more elaborate teacher ICT training programs should be developed for English teachers to understand network technology in terms of L2 theories and classroom practices.

[CALL/Teacher Education, 컴퓨터보조언어학습/교사교육]

* This study was edited from Kim's dissertation (2001), "Initial Efforts of Three ESL Teachers to Effectively Utilize Network-Based Language Teaching." The research site, participants, and data collection methodology are identical to those in Kim's previous publication, "Teachers as a Barrier to Technology-Integrated Language Teaching" in *English Teaching* 57(2) (pp. 35-64), which has the different focus and analytical framework from the present study.
1. Introduction

How well do teachers understand recent CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) and agree upon the idea of NBLT (Network-Based Language Teaching)? How will teachers adopt the benefits of web-based resources and functions for their lessons when they are in a richly facilitated networked environment? For the effective incorporation of network technology (e.g., the Internet) into language instruction, there is no doubt that traditional teaching strategies, often referred to as “chalk and talk,” should change in the network-based environment. This evolution will depend upon teachers since they are in the position to decide upon and integrate this new technology into their lessons and curricula.

However, Tilman (1998) predicts that telling teachers that computer will make them more effective is not in and of itself a sufficient motivator. The teacher, as many studies recognize, is an individual with complex motivations, different pedagogy and attitudes toward language instruction, all of which might greatly affect the implementation of technology into classroom practice. If they do not accept the changed instructional environment, including new teaching strategies and changed teachers’ role, the strength of NBLT will not be maximized or sometimes even neglected in real classroom practice.

Kern and Warschauer (2000) indicate that technology in its function and educational role, has developed from structural to communicative just as the same change as in language education. They locate NBLT within the context of the sociocognitive orientation on language teaching. The new role of CALL, summarized from the sociocognitive framework, is “to provide alternative contexts for social interaction; to facilitate access to existing discourse communities and the creation of new ones (Kern & Warschauer, p. 13).” Thus, the nowadays computer can play a multiple role of not just delivering language drills or skill practice, but also serving as a space to explore authentically contextualized microworlds and meaningfully interact in the communities.

Then, what are English teachers’ beliefs on effective NBLT, and how similar (or different) are their beliefs to Kern and Warschauer’s shifted paradigm of CALL? This research attempts to examine three ESL teachers who utilized the Internet for their lessons for one semester and analyzes their beliefs and lessons from the role of CALL in Kern and Warschauer’s sociocognitive framework.
Although many researchers point out the importance of the teachers' role in technology integration, researchers haven’t provided enough practical information for educators and administrators who actually participate in such school reform. Previous studies tend to explain teachers’ beliefs and roles separately from the actual practice and instructional content. Thus, findings of these studies generally do not reflect individual teachers’ voice in a contextualized setting, which is essential information that both teachers and school reformers should know. This study employs qualitative methodology to view teachers’ interaction in socio-cultural context (e.g., language classrooms), and this is also introduced as the changed research method that sociocognitive CALL studies should pursue (Kern & Warschauer, 2000).

The results of this study will provide teachers and school administrators with meaningful information on what English teachers really need to learn through ICT training for effective and worthwhile professional development. In addition, this study will suggest one direction that the researchers in this area should be interested in for successful CALL.

II. Background of the Study

1. A New Paradigm of Language Instruction: Network-Based Language Teaching

Advances in networked computer systems have ushered in a new era for CALL. The rapid growth of the Internet has generated a novel area of CALL, named as Network-Based Language Teaching (NBLT). Kern and Warschauer (2000) describe NBLT as “a language teaching that involves the use of computers connected to one another in either local or global networks.” NBLT is new and different from traditional CALL because it focuses on human-to-human communication among language learners with access to the Internet. Therefore, NBLT emphasizes learning through communicative interaction rather than learning through solitary activities, such as tutorials, simulations, or drill and practice. Pointing out the connection between NBLT and CALL through emerging themes in the previous CALL studies, Chapell (2000) also supports that network-based learning can fall within the scope of CALL.

To show changed aspects in the role of CALL, Warschauer and Kern (2000)
first divide the recent history of language teaching into three theoretical movements: "structural," "cognitive," and "sociocognitive." Then they compare the characteristics of each theoretical perspective with the historically changed roles of the computer.

First of all, instructional orientation in the structural movement was toward well-formed language products (spoken or written) focusing on mastery of discrete skills. Therefore, role of computer from structural perspective was to provide unlimited drill, practice, tutorial explanation, and corrective feedback.

Second, instructional interest in the cognitive framework was in the cognitive processes involved in the learning and use of language, and it emphasized on development of strategies for communication and learning. Accordingly, the role of cognitive CALL was to provide language input and analytic and inferential tasks.

Finally, sociocognitive perspectivists are interested in negotiation of meaning through collaborative interaction with others by creating a discourse community with authentic communicative tasks. Kern and Warschauer (2000) insist that networked technology well serves this new paradigm of language teaching with a sociocognitive framework, and conclude as that:

network-based language teaching does not represent a particular technique, method or approach. It is a constellation of ways by which students communicate via computer networks and interpret and construct online texts and multimedia documents, all as part of a process of steadily increasing engagement in new discourse communities (p. 17).

Further review in L2 instructional value of network technology are done by Kim (2002). Kim categorizes ESL web teaching and learning resources into four types: Computer-Mediated Communication, Authentic Text-Based Information, Drill and Practice and Form-Focused Tutorials. Kim (2002) indicates that these four types of ESL web materials are pedagogically well supported by Communicative Approach (CA), esp. communicative language teaching, content-based instruction, and focus-on-form instruction in task-based language teaching. Kim asserts that this implies that "the existing online materials can be effectively integrated into the communicative language classrooms." (p. 297)
In summary, the literature underscores that the recent CALL should help students participate in meaningful communicative social interaction by engaging various interpretive and constructive tasks with attention to both meaning and form. Therefore, it seems that the effective use of the Internet for L2 instruction means the balanced use of web integrated activities which include student-centered, meaning negotiation-involved, authentic text-based, collaborative or other communicative elements.

2. Teachers' Beliefs on Educational Technology

Many researchers have noted the teachers’ beliefs and attitudes are the most critical factor of the successful implementation of technology into the classroom. For example, in describing teachers’ beliefs as "the lens of the familiar," Darling-Hammond (1990) insists that “teachers’ reactions to instructional reform efforts such as the use of computer technology will vary tremendously depending on the teachers’ experiences, knowledge, and beliefs.” (p. 236)

Some studies point out the relationship between technology use and teaching style. Lidtke (1981) emphasizes on the importance of technology that is suitable to individual teaching styles and attends that technology will be accepted only when the teachers perceive its effectiveness with students in their instruction. Similarly, Olson and Eaton (1986) conclude that teachers tend not to challenge a radically different instruction styles in implementing a new technology, but to fit computers into their present teaching routines. LaFrenz and Freidman (1989) and Stearns (1991) supports the same idea that teachers seem to only accept new methods which have no conflict with their current goals, styles, and traditional curricula.

Teachers’ interaction with technology have been further examined by the recent research in terms of their beliefs, attitudes, and motivation (Becker, 1999; Hurley & Mundy, 1997). In their meta-analysis research (1990-1995), Fabry and Higgs (1997) discusses teacher attitudes as the major factor affecting the implementation of technology. Drawing on several studies, they explains that teacher internal variables such as anxiety, self-confidence, perceived relevance of new technologies, attitude toward school use of computers, all influenced their levels of computer use in their classroom practice.

Accordingly, it seems that teachers’ understanding and willingness to change are
very important in determining the fate of educational technology innovation. Myhre (1998) views that teachers should prepare for educational reforms not only by learning the technology but also by considering pedagogy and subject matter at the same time with the computer use in class. Therefore, more research on teachers' reactions including their beliefs, attitudes, and their approaches, is urgently needed for professional developments, curriculum design, and ultimately, successful implementation of technology into language classes.

Nevertheless, the previous studies on teachers' beliefs in this area investigates teachers' general idea or overall perceptions of educational technology without specifying context in which teachers use technology. Researchers have mostly dealt with how teachers think of using computers as new technology in school mostly by surveys (Becker, 1999; Hurley & Mundy, 1997; Maxwell, 1997; Olech, 1999; Snider & Gershner, 1999). In addition, many of these surveys were conducted one time for a study with many teachers usually in the preliminary stage.

Therefore, there has not been much information on how the teachers have actually used technology, believed, or reacted with regards to the specific applications of NBLT in a certain teaching setting. In conclusion, process-oriented qualitative research is essential to provide more balanced and concrete information.

III. The Study

This is a descriptive case study of the teachers who implemented the Internet into their regular class during one semester. The research site is an English language institute for adult learners in the U. S. This institute requires intensive program students for three classes (two hours for one class) per day: "speaking and listening," "writing and grammar," and "reading and discussion." Three native English teachers, Linda, Phil and Scott, in this institute participated in this project. Two teachers, Linda and Scott, both taught a reading and discussion class for advanced level students. Their students came from 9 different countries mostly hoping to go to college in the States. The students in the two teachers' classes were described as a "especially mature and serious group" (by Linda) or "active, but not hard working" (by Scott). Phil was an instructor of an intermediate speaking and listening class during the research period. Phil explained his students

1) The teachers' names are all pseudonyms.
as a "pretty normal mix," which meant half of his students were quite talkative and active, and the rest were shy. The three teachers' instructional and computer experiences will be introduced in the findings section.2)

The three teachers attended the Internet workshop (three sessions, two hours per session)3) offered by the institute one semester before data collection. After this workshop the three teachers willingly decided to participate in this study and attempted to utilize the Internet for their instruction for one semester. Although it was the researcher who initially asked the teachers for the trial, but the three teachers had been already sufficiently motivated and spontaneously led all the adopting process.

I also actively participated in this project as a researcher, a facilitator in the teachers' web class, and a teaching assistant. I had worked with the teachers for about one year since the workshops through this web project period.

1. Research Questions

The major focus of this research is on a) the teachers' beliefs about NBLT at the beginning stage and also on b) the web lessons designed by the teachers themselves. This study intends to analyze the teachers in terms of how effectively they interact with the Internet. Three areas of concern inform this inquiry, namely:

1. What are the teachers' initial beliefs about using the Internet in ESL classes?
2. How do the teachers utilize the Internet for their instruction? How are their beliefs of both language teaching and NBLT reflected in the selection and application of the web lessons?
3. How close are the teachers' beliefs and lessons to effective NBLT suggested by the previous literature?

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2) The further details of the three participants and the research site are introduced in Kim's study (Kim 2002a).
3) This teacher training workshop, called "Internet workshop for ESL educators," introduced online ESL materials and web activities in many language aspects and explained their value for second language learning.
2. Methodology

Data were gathered from class observation (10 sessions in total), interviews (9 times, approximately 250 minutes in total), and document analysis, (e.g., teachers’ and students’ paper/electronic artifacts, such as e-mail and discussion board messages, and teacher homepage/handouts. I taped all the class sessions and interviews and made verbatim transcripts. Observation field notes and researcher’s journal were also the major part of data source.

I employed Spradly’s descriptive observation technique (1980) for taking field notes, which is usually used for an ethnographic inquiry. My interview questions were also prepared for phenomenological interviewing (Seidman, 1991) based on his protocol, such as the three interview series and ethnographic interview protocol (Spradly, 1979), such as grand tour questions (ex. “Tell me about your lesson today.”), or mini tour questions (ex. “Let’s talk more about your second activity, a vocabulary game, Are there any...?”) for richer and natural data from the informants.

Since the research questions and topic of this study are fairly new and unexplored, I attempted to construct an analytic framework through my data analysis. For this reason, I selected a qualitative methodology guided by Ely (1991). Ely’s several suggestions, such as minimal categories (ex. “initial plan,” “initial beliefs,” “initial attitudes,” “changed beliefs,” “changed attitudes,” etc.) and thinking units (see Figure 1), seem appropriate for this study in categorizing the data log for the sake of constructing an effective framework. The pilot study (Kim, 1999) also gave me some insight to anticipate and shape possible themes and patterns.

To assemble smaller themes into one bigger theme in each category, I had to go through the iterative process of reviewing, mapping (Miles & Huberman, 1994), and triangulating all the data. First, I tried to triangulate my findings about each informant to see his/her changes and coherent patterns. Next, I compared integrated themes among the three teachers across main categories for commonalities and differences and unique happenings. Finally, I was able to develop more inclusive and integrative themes that seemed to carry an important analytical impact.

For interpreting and integrating emerged themes into the final conclusion, I
used Kern and Warschauer’s sociocognitive framework (2000) and Kim’s L2 pedagogical framework (2002b) introduced early in this study especially to decide on effectiveness of teachers’ web lessons and appropriateness of teachers’ beliefs. By comparing themes regarding teachers’ ideas and lessons with the roles of NBLT from the sociocognitive perspective, I was able to reach the conclusion on the research questions, especially the third question, “How close are the teachers’ beliefs and lessons to effective NBLT?”

TABLE 1
An Example of Framing Thinking Units in This Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Subcategories</th>
<th>Linda</th>
<th>Phil</th>
<th>Scott</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Beliefs</td>
<td>Initial</td>
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<td>Changed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>Initial</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Changed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons</td>
<td>CMC*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ATBI*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DP/FFT*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regular Class</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* CMC Computer-Mediated Communication  * ATBI Authentic Text-Based Information
* DP Drill and Practice  * FFT Form-Focused Tutorials (Kim, 2002b)

IV. Findings

I will introduce my findings by each teacher, regarding his/her beliefs and web lessons and then analyze the effectiveness of their teaching from the previous studies, especially, from Kim (2002b)’s L2 pedagogical framework of Internet-integrated instruction and Kern and Warschauer’s (2000) role of CALL from sociocognitive perspective.

1. Linda

Linda was a senior teacher with 22 years of teaching experience in the English language program. She has been in the position of curriculum coordinator and teacher supervisor for a long time. Although Linda has only a little experience
with the Internet and showed some anxiety about attempting a new instruction, she was a very well motivated and supportive informant.

1) Linda's Beliefs

(1) "As you know, this class is always tied in to what we are doing in class.”

Linda had a very consistent belief about the role of web lessons in her class and the relationship between web lessons and regular lessons. She believed that the lessons done in the computer lab were to be closely connected to regular lessons. She used the expression "to tie in" many times in and out of class, while discussing the next lessons and reflecting on the previous lessons.

As I told you before, it is important to me that I tie in whatever we are doing so that they (students) see the connection. So they don't think that it is separate.

She always emphasized to her students the close connection between the two different class types at the beginning of her web lesson. She believes that the students see the benefits only if they had lessons with the related content and familiar type in a computer lab. Thus, Linda's fundamental criterion of success in her web class seemed to be how nicely the web lesson is tied in to her normal class. I assume that her emphasis on the connection between web lessons and regular lessons came from her belief that the web lesson is only another class in a computer lab, so the web class goals should not be different from that of other regular lessons. During the interview, I was able to find much evidence that supported this assumption.

I really enjoyed it. You know I really have. I think that the students are also enjoying it. As long as the activities are relevant to the class and to their goals, you know, they really feel they are learning. That's, I guess, what I am really concerned about.

That is, Linda thought that web lessons and regular lessons should not be separate in terms of goals and contents. For further evidence, I compared the
teacher-articulated goals between the regular class and the web class to see if they agreed with each other. In comparison, the articulated goals both in Linda's regular class and web class were basically same, but her web class included a few additional goals.

The role of Internet-integrated instruction in Linda's views was to support her regular instruction within her existing routine and context. For this reason, she did not intend to change her original focus, content as well as objectives and goals of her web lessons. Linda's beliefs are explained by the common finding in many studies that teachers tended to adopt only new methods that are consistent with their objectives, styles and traditional curricula (LaFrenz & Freidman, 1989; Stearns, 1991).

(2) "I am still questioning myself about..."

Unlike her consistent beliefs in this new lesson role, her rationale of using the Internet for her instruction did not seem solid. Linda repeatedly showed unsureness about a) the overall benefits of using the Internet; b) the function and purpose of each web activity; and c) the teachers' role in guiding the web-based class.

First of all, she did not have any strong opinion about web-based lessons in general. Every time I visited her office to talk about the lesson of the week, her first words were, "I have no idea what I am going to do this week. I haven't thought about it yet." After our meeting, she seemed a lot clearer about what she wanted to do. In addition, Linda often asked me questions such as "What do you think? Any ideas?" or "Do you think I can do this?" before she eventually made a decision.

Second, Linda easily lost track in planning her next lessons. While we were discussing her lessons, she would take notes or make a list for the next lesson saying, "Oh, I like that," or "It will perfectly tie in my lesson." However, when I visited her one or two weeks later, she sometimes did not remember what she had wanted to do or why she had wanted to do it. She would also repeatedly ask me the functions and meaning of a web activity, even the ones that had already been done in class.

She also had questions on the teacher's role in leading and managing the web class. Linda did not easily find her role in this new educational environment. She
kept confirming with herself and with me to make sure that she was doing all right. After the second class, she expressed her uncomfortable feeling in class as follows,

I felt that I was useless today! That was an interesting feeling (Laugh). They didn't need my help really. So I kind of felt there was nothing for me to do.

It seemed that Linda hadn't thought very much about her role while the students were doing individual tasks in the computer lab except helping students technically. However, her students didn't have much need for technical assistance. Linda seemed anxious about how to deal with her spare time in class, or she was simply bored.

To sum up, Linda's views on the role of web-based lessons in her whole class were formed early in her adaptation process before she had a clear idea about the benefits or unique functions of Internet-integrated instruction. Linda seemed to expect that her web lessons would function as a supplement to her whole class. For this reason, she intended to provide a familiar environment for her students. However, her beliefs about the benefits and strengths of the Internet for her ESL class seem unsettled. She was unsure about the purposes of each web activity and the teacher role in a computer lab.

2) Linda's Web Lesson.

During the data collecting semester, Linda taught a reading and discussion class for the advanced-level students. Linda took her class to the computer lab seven times (mostly, every Friday) during the research semester. The daily lesson usually consisted of 3-5 activities that included online vocabulary exercises and a discussion board activity. She usually spent 15 minutes in the beginning detailing directions for the day's activities and had her students do the activities themselves for the rest of the class hour. Her major job in the computer room was a) helping the students if they had any questions regarding the lesson and computer, and b) guiding them to move to the next activity by reminding them of the time. The web activities Linda attempted were as follows:
* Discussion Board Activity (used four times)
An in-class CMC activity. Students participate in real-time forum altogether with the reading topic of the week by exchanging messages for 20-30 minutes.

* Vocabulary Quizzes (used five times)\(^4\)
Teacher-created interactive drill and practice, such as concentration, crossword puzzles, and multiple choices, for vocabulary review of the week 15 min.

* Scavenger Hunt (used three times)
A content-based reading activity using online authentic text-based information. Students search for the answers by exploring specific websites.

* Other Online Reading Activities (used once or two times)
Teacher-created reading activities for the day, such as mystery reading, college humor, Underground Railroad, or TOEFL reading. Students read given stories over the Internet and answer the questions to practice various reading strategies, such as skimming and scanning, locating the main idea, and finding double meanings in the authentic language context.

As seen in her lesson plan, Linda equally selected and utilized various and balanced web lessons for every session: CMC, authentic-text based information, and drills and practice and form-focused tutorials (Kim, 2002b).

With regards to class management, however, Linda kept a single format in directing her class. She had a 15-20 minute long introduction to the day's lesson by explaining the direction of each activity in detail and then had her students do their own work individually for the rest of the class. No oral interaction was involved in class, only computer work. The class was very quiet, and there were some students who asked questions or assistance from the teacher; but most of the time, there wasn't any kind of interaction between teacher and students or among students. The teacher usually stayed there doing nothing.

Linda's lessons did not provide much room for students to initiate and generate their own learning. Some of the lessons required more interactive and voluntary participation, but the rest of them were individual or teacher-directed learning. In

\(^4\) She used a web quiz maker, called Quia.com (http://www.quia.com)
addition, there were a few collaborative tasks based on one-to-one communication. Linda also limited her web lessons within classroom boundaries. She did not seem to see the value of extended learning outside her classroom online community. Overall, Linda's web lessons reflected her belief that there must be a close connection between the regular lesson and the web lesson. Her web activities were systematically tied into her mainstream class content. It appears that her web lessons focused on English as the whole language to develop communicative competence. However, her lessons were structured and teacher-directed just like her teaching routine. In conclusion, Linda was on the path to fully realizing the potential and effectively utilizing NBLT from a L2 pedagogical perspective, but she did not fully take advantage of providing a learner-centered interactive community with no limitation of time and space.

2. Phil

Phil is a master's level student who teaches English part time. He has four years of teaching experience including teaching in different countries. He is very comfortable with using a computer and the Internet. He has little experience using the Internet as teaching resources and creating his own online quizzes.

1) Phil's Beliefs

(1) Open listening lab

Phil's apparent belief emerging from the data analysis is that the web lessons should be different from traditional lessons. Phil repeated the idea that the Internet should provide a different learning environment in the ESL class than textbook-based regular classes. He once expressed this thought as follows:

I was talking with somebody, today he said, "if we can do with the pen and paper, or book or cassette, why do we have to do it with the Internet?" I basically feel the same way.

According to this idea, Phil believed that the lesson format and teaching style should be different in the computer lab. He insisted that there was no reason to
take his students to go to computer lab if he could do the same thing in a traditional language lab. That is why he wanted to create a unique learning environment with the entirely different content and teaching style.

His initial idea was to set up an open listening lab. In his web class, Phil expected that students could choose and practice web listening materials according to their proficiency, interests, or learning pace. This idea was based on Phil’s beliefs that the biggest strength of using the Internet is that it makes individualized learning possible. He believed that the Internet allows students to learn English at their own pace, depending on their own interest and learning style, and that this automatically generates a learner-centered lesson.

To examine if Phil truly believes that differentiation of a web class from a regular one is necessary, I compared his lesson goals between the computer lab and the a regular classroom (including in a traditional audio-visual (AV) lab). As a result it seems that his web class goals did not overlap much with his regular class, but were more similar to his goals in a listening lab. He focused only on listening practice in his web classes just as he did in an AV lab. During the interview, Phil mentioned the importance of balance between the traditional language lab and the computer lab so that each compensates for the other’s weakness. Thus, this implies that although he had very similar fundamental goal for both lab lessons, Phil considered an Internet-mediated lesson different from both a) regular classroom lessons and b) listening lessons in a traditional audio lab.

(2) “I am not sure if it’s necessary. I am just focusing on speaking and listening.”

Phil was able to define the functions and benefits of the Internet in terms of his own beliefs from the beginning. His definition is clear-cut and focused. He often asserted that the Internet has a big potential and advantage in certain aspects of ESL lessons but not for all subjects in ESL. In addition, he also clearly stated his opinion of the role of the Internet in an ESL class and of the teacher’s role in web-based ESL class:

As a teacher, I think an important thing is to have the students go as far as they can go. And that is one of the benefits of the
Internet. They can choose a difficult listening passage, or easy passage or medium passage, depending on how much they want to challenge themselves. And it also, kind of, shifts the center of power in the classroom from me to students.

Phil also showed an apparent personal belief in selecting web activities and web materials. First, he limited the function of some web activities to the specific skills. For example, he did not want to put the discussion board onto his class home page. He seemed to believe that the discussion board activity did not fit his class goals. While Phil was developing his home page in the computer lab with other teachers, he said,

I am not sure if its necessary. I am just focusing on speaking and listening. No more than that. Discussion board is for reading and writing.

In addition, for the third class, Phil had a chance to use the discussion board in order for two students in a pair to exchange their information during the listening activity, but he did not use it. Thus, Phil avoided using the discussion board because he repeated that he wanted to focus on oral communication instead of written communication.

As another example of Phil's beliefs in web lesson selection, I noticed he was using more difficult and lengthy listening pieces for his students to practice in the web class, compared with those in a traditional language lab. More specifically, from data analysis, the listening exercises in the traditional language lab were a maximum of 10 minutes long, but the web-based listening exercises were sometimes 45-60 minutes long per exercise. As a reason for choosing highly demanding materials, Phil asserted that the Internet should provide more challenging practice to students so that they can listen more extensively and widely.

It seems that these beliefs came mainly from his personal pedagogy, as he stated from the interview, but also from his personal beliefs that the web-based lessons provide a new learning opportunity to students. This assumption is also supported by the fact that he had never used any really challenging listening
materials in a traditional language lab.

To summarize, Phil also had pretty concrete, self-defined beliefs about functions of web-based lessons before he began to use them. His fundamental belief was that the use of the web lesson could only be justified if it could provide a different learning experience. He saw individualized learning as one of the biggest strengths of Internet-based lessons for listening classes. This belief is well supported by some researchers (Kitao, 1996; Sheingold & Hadly, 1990).

2) Phil's web lesson

Phil taught a speaking and listening course during the research semester. Phil had three sessions in the computer lab to be held approximately every three weeks. His main focus was on speaking and listening practice using the web materials. His students brought a headphone to class and listened to dialogues, short speeches, or news columns under the teacher's direction. He usually prepared worksheets for the students and asked them to hand them in at the end of the class. Phil intended to switch the focus of power from the teacher to the students in order to create individualized learning opportunities in a computer lab. The web activities he was using were as follows:

* Listening Practice with Shorter Conversations
  Warm-up exercises with one website\(^5\) including 100 listening activities (dialogue & questions) sorted by the difficulty level or topic. The teacher has the students do two activities of their own interest and proficiency for 10 min.

* Listening Practice with a Longer Speech (NPR: Science Friday)
  Another listening activity using longer passages (weekly science column) from one website\(^6\). Students select one radio show of their own interest and do individual work with teacher-prepared worksheets for 30 min.

* Look for Your Partner
  A listening & speaking-integrated activity. Each student listens to a 5-minute speech online and finds out who listened to the same passage by orally talking with their classmates sitting in a round table.

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* Self-listening Practice

Individual listening practice with self-selected listening materials. Students freely listen online and fill out the in-class sheet which has four general questions: website name and address, time spent, and the content summary.

Phil's first web lesson type was very close to meaning-focused drill and practice according to Kim's framework (2002b). Students were asked to practice by listening to a short passage particularly designed as a listening exercise and to answer the comprehension questions. The second web lesson was closer to authentic content-based drill and practice, because the website itself was not designed for ESL students, and students were asked to choose a topic of their own interest. He did not turn to either CMC or Form-focused materials. The selection of these web lessons implies that he had solely focused on listening practice by using websites that provided various listening pieces. He wanted to achieve his goal by having mostly meaning-focused drill and practice either in an individual or collaborative way. Thus, it seems that Phil considered the web lesson as another listening lab that could be substituted into the traditional language lab.

In terms of class management, Phil had basically the same format as Linda. He gave a brief instruction to the students for less than 10 minutes and asked them to complete the tasks by themselves. His job in the web class was helping students fix technical problems, answering questions, and encouraging them to keep going. Since he had focused on individual practice for the first two classes, he never controlled anything: topic selection, time limit, or length of listening. He just let them choose all of these according to their own preference. In a word, his web lesson provides an individualized learning environment.

Phil's web class remained only in the physical classroom boundary. He provided some online materials for individual out of class work, but they were not really the major focus of his class. He did not open an online community to communicate between teachers and students or among students, which is frequently considered as one of the biggest strengths of NBLT.

In conclusion, Phil's beliefs about the role of computer seem closer to the one from the so-called structural perspective in terms of providing unlimited drill and practice (Kern & Warschauer, 2000). He utilized the Internet strictly to practice a certain language skill that was considered separately from other language aspects.
From the literature, language learning is the process of developing communicative competence and thus, all linguistic categories are interrelated with each other and also can be developed by interactive communicative language use in authentic discourse contexts (Hymes, 1972; Swain, 1993, 1995). However, Phil did not view CMC or other content-based instruction as being beneficial for his class because he believed that they do not help speaking and listening. From these pedagogical concerns, it is concluded that Phil's lessons did not fully utilize NBLT.

3. Scott

Scott had 6 years experience as an English teacher. Scott has a very good knowledge of the Internet in general. He had done several web activities with his students in last few years.

1) Scott's Beliefs

Scott seemed to be an unaltering believer of the Internet as a powerful teaching tool in ESL classes. He has attempted to utilize the Internet for his ESL class for the last several years. Data analysis from the interview and e-mail messages support that he firmly believed that the Internet can be integrated very effectively into ESL classes. He always clearly stated his positive belief about the Internet.

Compared with the other two teachers, Scott's belief in using the Internet for language teaching is much more positive and robust. From the beginning he believed that the time and effort devoted to using the Internet were definitely worthwhile for both teacher and students.

However, his positive considerations were limited to online communication (CMC), interactive communication activities (e.g., chatting and discussion boards). He put an emphasis on online chat rooms or discussion boards as valuable tools that teachers could use for their classes. Furthermore, he also believed that all the possible web activities that involve no interaction could be better utilized as individual work outside class, rather than as teacher-directed group work in class. That is the main reason why he did not take his students to the computer lab and had the students do the web activities as only homework assignments.
He also clearly formed a personal definition and role of the BBS (Bulletin Boards) activity for ESL learners:

I think having the discussion board gives them a chance to write out their answers so I think that there was a little more complexity and a little more thought... that they (students) were sitting in a circle feeling they need to say something immediately so I thought people have little more opportunity for reflection...

Scott expected that the discussion board activity would provide a chance for students to have more in-depth discussion that ESL learners seldom reach during synchronous class discussion.

Scott articulated other purposes of his web activities during the interview. First, he wanted to set up web activities out of curiosity to see how the students reacted. Second, he believed that this activity could provide an additional opportunity for his students to develop discussion skills. Third, using a home page is an easier and faster mode for teachers to deliver reading resources to their students. Finally, students may be more motivated and interested by the web activities so that they read more widely:

...then also hoping that would cause the students, you know, to read a little more widely about some of our topics, hoping that will be motivating for them. They will be interested checking some of the links and that will make them a little more interested,

Thus, he expected that his web activities ultimately would motivate his students to seek more extensive reading opportunities.

Scott used a CMC activity in order to provide more opportunities to the class to express their opinions. Although his online discussion was not as interactive as his in-class discussion time, two different approaches were very similar in terms of the content and subject of the discussion. It can thus be concluded that the purpose of his web lesson agrees in part with his general goals.

In summary, Scott viewed the web-based activities as another opportunity for students to engage outside the classroom. He had concrete ideas about the
application and function of web lessons, focusing particularly on human-to-human interaction via the Internet as a valuable instructional benefit. He also convinced himself of its benefits, so that he believed his time and energy spent on web-based teaching would be rewarded after all.

2) Scott’s Web Lessons

Scott’s class was a reading and discussion class for advanced learners similar to Linda’s. However, unlike Linda, Scott did not take his students to a computer lab to do his web activities together at the same time. He used the Internet activity as an additional out-of-class activity such as optional work, extended forum, or homework assignment. He did two types of web activities are as follows:

* Weekly Forum (web board discussion)
  A CMC activity that the teacher posted questions related with inclass reading topics, such as “What do you think...?”, or “How would you summarize if...”, and students give their opinions on the class discussion board.

* Homework Reading
  An optional further reading activity with teacher-selected website links which are related with each week’s chapter, but have more intriguing parts, interesting stories and photos. Teacher usually gives annotation and discussion questions.

Regarding the activity selection, Scott employed two types during the whole semester: Authentic text-based information (content-based lesson) and CMC. First, Scott explored some interesting articles or websites that were related to the topic for the week, such as surrogacy, religion, or Malcolm X. The other activity, sometimes mixed with this reading activity, was online discussion. The discussion was done asynchronously over the class homepage through the discussion board. For example, the teacher posted one question about the week’s reading, and the students were supposed to reply to the message at any time during the week. Scott’s web lesson only focused on online communication, which is the students interaction over the Internet, although sometimes online discussion was preceded
by the reading activity. His homework reading activity was also a good combination of CBI (content-based instruction) and CMC although material selection was limited by a teacher.

The way Scott led his web activities is to draw students’ attention first, and waited for spontaneous participation rather than asking their active involvement. He just introduced his class homepage and mentioned discussion board to the students in his class one time, and he himself did not participate in online discussion almost at all. A student complained with a message titled “WE NEED A NEW TOPIC” after 2–3 weeks of no new message on the board.

From the interview, Scott repeatedly underscored the importance of self-motivated participation. He believed that the unwillingness of a student to use the discussion board resulted from a general attitude toward institutional assignments, rather than from a lack of understanding of the benefits. However, some research demonstrates that there are many factors that affect students’ attitudes toward CMC, such as motivation types, gender, personality traits, computer experience, and skill level, and subject contexts (Chapman, 1998; Cravener & Michael, 1999). Thus, there might have been other possible reasons that hinder students’ spontaneous participation; for example, students did not know the function of the discussion board, did not like the topics or could not understand the reading articles. In addition, Kim (1999) also notes that students initially tend to remain as passive participants in CMC although they have strong interest in it.

In conclusion, Scott’s web lessons were pretty well grounded by sociocognitive perspective of NBLT. His weekly discussion board activity provided an opportunity for students to communicate with each other in the meaningful context using authentic language with no time limitation. He utilized an essential benefit expected from NBLT, that is, a communicative authentic language use activity. However, he did not provide the chance for students to select reading materials on their own interest and on their own difficulty level by self-searching. In addition, he only intended to drive students’ spontaneous participation, and it doesn’t seem that Scott helped students very well to enter into online discourse community.

V. Discussions and Implications

Here are the three research questions addressed earlier in this study. I will
review them to further discuss the study findings.

Q1) What are the teachers' initial beliefs about integrating the Internet into ESL classes?

The teachers’ initial beliefs about the functions and roles of the Internet for ESL instruction varied remarkably. The teachers’ views of the web-based lessons were already formed by the start of the project. This finding is very similar to Darling-Hammond’s assertion that, “teachers’ reactions to instructional reform efforts such as the use of computer technology will vary tremendously depending on the teachers’ experiences, knowledge, and beliefs (1990, p. 236).” Linda believed that her web lessons should functions as a supplement to her reading class and should, therefore, not deviate in content or format. Phil believed that his web class should provide a totally different environment that is mutually supplementary for his listening practice class. On the other hand, Scott wanted his web lessons to be an interactive community in which students would spontaneously participate. The initial beliefs of the two teachers (Linda and Phil) are similar to other findings in teacher studies (LaFrenz & Freidman, 1989; Olson & Eaton, 1986; Stearns, 1991) in that teachers tend to adopt only new methods that are consistent with their objectives, teaching routines, and traditional curriculum. Linda and Phil’s web classes were very close to traditional classes that are teacher-controlled, non-collaborative, and only existing within classroom boundaries.

Similar to findings of Warschauer and Kern (2000), the teachers did not fully see the benefits of network-based language teaching in that it would allow students to enter into new authentic discourse communities. Linda often expressed her uncertainty of the benefits and functions of some web activities, while Phil refused computer-mediated communication to focus strictly on skill practices. Scott limited his Internet class to only CMC, not other instructional types, such as self-researching authentic language resources, meaningful or communicative drills, or attention to form in discourse contexts (Kim, 2002b).

Q2) How do the teachers utilize the Internet for their instruction? How are their language pedagogy reflected in the selection of web lessons and application
of these lessons into their class?

The three teachers' web lessons were very different and also closely associated with differences in a) their beliefs about NBLT and b) their L2 pedagogical perspectives. Linda's web lesson resembled her regular class lesson. She intended to achieve all the tasks she would ordinarily accomplish in her normal class. Thus, Linda fully utilized all the functions of the Internet, and they were all based on subject-matter core in an authentic language setting. All of her web lesson types, CMC, ATBI, D&P, FFT, took place in the socio-cultural context of the target language. Linda's web lesson content met the L2 pedagogical focus from the sociocognitive perspective suggested by Warschauer and Kern (2000). However, Linda's lessons did not provide much room for students to initiate and generate their own learning. The format of her web lessons were usually individual or teacher-directed learning.

Phil's web lessons were skill-based and performance-focused, which is a structural L2 approach categorized by Warschauer and Kern's framework (2000). Phil utilized the Internet strictly to practice a certain language skill separately from other language aspects. Phil's web lesson was not based on language learning via a communicative approach as a process to develop communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). However, Phil intended to switch the focus of power from teacher to students and to create an individualized learning opportunity in a computer lab, Scott's web lessons focused on content-based CMC and existed outside the classroom. His weekly discussion board activity provided an opportunity for students to communicate with each other in a meaningful context using authentic language without time restrictions. He intended to drive students spontaneous participation since he believed that self-generated interaction was extremely meaningful. However, Scott did not select other functions of the Internet which were frequently considered by researchers as beneficial for L2 instruction, such as self-searching online resources (ATBI), attention to form (drill and practice or form focus tutorials) and others.

Q3) How close are the teachers' beliefs and lessons to effective NBLT suggested by the previous literature?
Therefore, from data analysis of this study, the three teachers web lessons were partly designed and achieved considering the role of NBLT from current L2 approaches. Nevertheless, the teachers' initial beliefs were not fully developed which negatively affected their ability and desire to take advantage of the strengths of NBLT. It also appears that their selection and application of web lessons did not realize the potential of the Internet from a sociocognitive perspective.

The results of this study should be considered under the following limitations. First, the three teachers spontaneously participated in this study in a quite favorable environment which was a one person to one computer setting with a technical assistant and a web consultant (researcher) available. The results might have been very different if teachers had been unwilling to utilize technology with no encouraging elements.

Second, the participants are native speakers of English who are teaching in the ESL setting. Their needs and purposes of using technology are not always same as non-native teachers in other instructional settings. Thus, English teachers in Korea where English is taught as a foreign language, will have somewhat different beliefs an attitudes in the similar environment.

However, this study, by the nature of qualitative research, does not intend to generalize the findings. It is because every single classroom is unique and always changing. Moreover, the study results are only themes and patterns that repeatedly appeared in this context-sensitive situation in addition to the small number of participants. There must be numerous other valuable processes with very different patterns in network technology-integrated instruction.

Notwithstanding the dilemma of generalization, the qualitative inquiry, including this, gives language educators process-oriented and context-colored information, which is quite different from what statistical research does, but is also necessary. Linda, Phil and Scott do not seem idiosyncratic figures either in an ESL or an EFL setting. I believe that there must be many Korean English teachers that would not be able to take advantage of the strengths of network technology because of their lack of understanding of effective NBLT. It also seems true that teachers' negative attitudes that come from intial failure make even more difficult the successful settlement of technology into English classrooms in Korea.

Then what should English educators and CALL researchers do for Korean
English teachers in the soon-to-be networked teaching environment? First of all, they should develop more systematic and continuous professional ICT training programs solely designed for English teachers. The current teacher IT training in Korea is far distant from helping the teachers understand the differentiated effects of NBLT, for example, “how CMC, ATBI, DP or FFT can be utilized for better English lessons.” In general, the present workshops offer one time introductory lesson that only deals with general computer use or ESL web resource introduction. However, the training program should be extended and continued for both pre- and in-service teachers for their incubation period. The content should be also developed into systematic lessons regarding the L2 pedagogical role of information technology and multimedia in the present school curriculum.

Second, CALL researchers in Korea should be more interested in suggesting L2 theory-oriented and curriculum-situated instructional guidelines. There is few practical, but theoretically supported references for instructional designs or material evaluations particularly used in Korean CALL environment. Teachers might not embrace the power of NBLT if the researchers do not convince them that the computer will assist their current instructional practice more effectively than any others.

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