

The Application of Computer Assistance Teaching to Language Learning

電腦輔助教學運用於語言學習

黃淑敏

摘要

現今，網路教學已是普遍的事。網路提供許多有用資訊給學生們學習，學生學習的場所已不限定於教室了，他們可以隨時隨地地學習。這個研究旨在對電腦輔助教學運用於語言教學之調查，並調查透過電腦輔助學生們可以獲得何種程度的有用資訊及技能。這一以電腦輔助教授的課程，其內容為三個月與希臘羅馬神話有關的英語課程。上課的學生為約一百位高一、二的高雄高工學生，學生們在此三個月以 A 捷 www.ajet.org.tw 為平台，每週上課一小時，學生須回家做作業。此課程有兩次線上討論、一次線上測試與線上回答問卷調查。而此課程結束之後兩次的比賽，一次是網頁比賽，一次是學生們須穿希臘羅馬服裝參加化妝比賽。在此課程中有一些發現：

1. 大部份的學生喜歡這門課程，因為他們因此獲得有關希臘羅馬神話的知識。
2. 透過這門線上教學，學生學會如何線上收集資料。
3. 有些學生在英文寫作能力有進步，
4. 學生們從參加化妝表演學到有關希臘羅馬神話服裝。

關鍵詞：電腦輔助教學、A 捷。

黃淑敏 高雄高工英文科教師 / 國立高雄師範大學英語學系碩士

Abstract

Nowadays, learning on the Internet is common in the world. There are many websites to provide students with the useful information that they could learn. It is not necessary for the students to be in the classroom. They can learn many courses in any place. This study aims to investigate the application to the computer assistance to language learning. It also aims to investigate to what extent students can obtain the useful information and skills through the computer assistance. The computer-based course is a three-month English course about Greek or Roman mythology. The subjects are 100 hundred first- or second –year students in Kaohsiung Industrial Vocational High School. The instrument is a website: <http://ajet.ykn.org.tw/>. The students attend a one-hour course for three months. They also need to do their homework at home by means of the Internet. There are twice online discussions in the three months. After three-month learning on the Internet, one computer-based test (CBT) and one computer-based questionnaire (CBQ) are administered on the students. Besides, there are two contests after the course. One game is the contest of the portfolio by means of the homepages. The other is the contest of the fashion show that students wear the clothing in Greek or Roman mythological style. In study, some findings are as follows:

1. Most of the students like this kind of online learning.
2. The students can learn how to collect and find the relative information through this computer-based learning.
3. Some students even make great progress in the writing skill.
4. In the fashion show, some students know more about the mythological costumes when they prepare for the contest.

Contents

I.	INTRODUCTION
II.	LITERATURE REVIEW
III.	THE THEORY OF THIS STUDY
IV.	THE ORGANIZATION OF AJET PLATFORM
V.	PROCEDURES
VI.	DISCUSS
VII.	CONCLUSION
VIII.	REFERENCES

1. Introduction

Information and network technologies have changed how people work, live and learn. The Internet revolution has brought great impact on the global society, and is greatly changing the educational environment. The worldwide webs have changed human society and thoughts (Ong, 1982; Castells, 1998). With the growth of Internet, more and more institutes worldwide have been experimenting with online learning. In the beginning of the development of the Internet, most people are readers. They read other people's homepages and get the relevant information. Then they express their ideas and communicate with others by means of writing. With the advance of computer technology, the expression on the Internet becomes richer and richer. The basic writing has developed to the hypermedia authoring or multimedia. In the era of the Internet, language teachers take advantage of the authentic material in all possible digital forms. This new trend leads to a new style of language teaching, namely, network-based language teaching (Kern & Warschauer, 2000).

In Taiwan, several virtual online classrooms are created to arouse different levels of students. For example, there are four country models for Taiwan' online education, two of which are AJET project (Advanced Joint English Telecommunication, <http://ajet.nsysu.edu.tw>) and IWiLL project (Intelligent Web-based Interactive Language Learning, <http://ww.iwillnow.org>). They are excellent online learning platforms in Taiwan. Today, we will discuss the application of language learning on AJET-YKN platform. There are a variety of learning information and teaching materials on this website. This study aims to investigate the application of computer assistance to language learning. It also aims to investigate to what extent students can obtain the useful information and skills through computer assistance.

2. Literature Review

There are two areas involved in this study: the basic theory and the organization of AJET-YKN platform (<http://ajet.ykn.org.tw>).

3. The Theory of This Study

The basic theory of this study comes from Vygotsky's theory (1978).

According to Vygotsky, the new learning theory of the social cultures comes from the cooperation of the learners. In the cyber world, learners can learn and collect all information from the cyber world. Computers become a media for the learners to contact other people from different worlds. While getting touch with other people on the Internet, learners can improve their own language writing skill and learn the problem-solving skill in terms of the cooperation.

4. The Organization of AJET platform on <http://ajet.ykn.org.tw>

5. Procedures

A computer-based course is applied to the students in Kaohsiung Industrial Vocational High School for three months. The main courses include the origin of Greek mythology, the short poem and composition writing, and personal portfolio contest by means of homepage or front pages. Students need to do their homework at home by means of the Internet. Twice online discussions are held during the three months. After three-month learning via the Internet, one computer-based test (CBT) and two computer-based questionnaires (CBQ) are administered on the students. The whole online course includes four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Finally, the contest of the students' cosplay is held. Students wear costumes in the mythological style and have a short English play to compete the championship.

5.1 Participants

100 students attend this online course. 50 students are the first grade students. 50 students are the second students.

6. Discussion

There are seven pieces of homework in the online course. Students need to represent their homework by means of front pages. Learning attitude toward the course is a part of the course, such as the time students go on the website and the times students post their opinion on the discussion board. Twice online discussions are included, too. Besides, a final online test will end the course. Because most of the homework needs to be done by homepages or front pages, students need to express their ideas or feelings with multiple-sense on homepages. It provides students with higher levels of thinking, learning and creativity. It also inspires students to develop

not only their communication skill but also their problem-solving skill. Students experience the excitement of creative thinking and the thrill of resolving difficult problems. For example, students are asked to think about the question after reading the story of Prometheus: If you were Prometheus, what gifts would you give human beings? Please name three items in fifty words. Students need to think about what kind of thing is important for human civilization. Besides, they must also learn how to express their ideas in terms of the grammatical tense. For example, Student 100 writes that he would give humans (1) a kind of food which would not be used up (2) a place where humans don't have any wars (3) a kind of medicine would treat any disease.

Students also are asked to create their own poems by means of the alphabetical order to finish one piece of the homework. One piece of homework asks the students to think about their ideal boyfriends or girlfriends in an alphabetical order. Student 101 answers:

Love me with his whole heart
Make me happy
Never do any dangerous
Overcome the difficulties with me
Promise he will take care of himself

While doing this homework, students also think about the standard of their ideal partner in the future. They develop a creativity to finish their homework. In Lin's study of the publication of a class homepage on "Learning a language in a Foreign Country", the students not only involved themselves in the Internet world where the target language, English, was actually used for communication, but also created a sense of competence in accomplishing a task (1997). Thus, students involved in this course not only expand their literacy for communication but also make the brainstorming about their principles of ideal partners.

After this week course, students need to have an online discussion about whether it is important to be beautiful or handsome? Would the students want to do some plastic surgery themselves? During the online discussion, students reflect on their thoughts and get the correction of their original thinking. In the end of the online discussion, students agree that a person with good looking also needs other abilities to convince other people. Appearance will fade away at last. While getting involved in the online chat, students get not only the practice of writing but the reflection of their principles of life.

On the other hand, students get self-esteem and interactive communication through the accomplishment of their homepages and browsing other students'

homepages. Students also get friendship development and cooperation to accomplish the cosplay. They know more about Greek culture and mythology through the contest of the cosplay.

There are several findings in this study. Firstly, the number of the students would influence the quality of the feedback from the teachers. Because there are 100 students in this online course, teachers could not correct the assignments very carefully. Especially most students involved in this online course are not of high level. Secondly, students majoring in Information Technology (IT) scores better than other students. The reason may be that students majoring in IT have higher level of intelligence than others. They have higher scores to enter this school after the Entrance Examination. High intelligence would affect the level of writing. Thirdly, according to the online questionnaire, most students like this online course. More than 90% of the students think this online course is very interesting and of creativity. Fourthly, about 90% of them think that their English reading, writing and vocabulary abilities get more improvement. Fifthly, the difficulties they encounter in this online course are: understanding of the reading materials, accomplishing the assignments and joining the online discussion. However, 95% of the students involved in this course still think the advantages are more than the disadvantages in the online learning.

7. Conclusion

Like Boettcher says that the power of information technology makes a significant influence in language learning (1994). Students involved in this online course learned how to solve the problems and how to think creatively. They also learn the importance of cooperation and the skill of interactive communication. Their reading, writing and vocabulary skills also have some improvement. They like online courses. That is, online courses have good future and could be successful.

REFERENCES

- Boettcher, J. (Disposition, vocational knowledge and development: sources and consequences. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Vocational Educational Research* 5 (1). 1-26.
- Castells, M. (1998). *End of Millenium*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Kern, R. & Warschauser, M. (2000). Introduction: Theory and practice of network-based language teching. In Warschauer & Kern (eds.) *Network-based language teaching: Concepts and practice*, pp. 1-19.

- Lin, C. & You W. (1997). Interactive WWW-assisted instruction: a new way of education. (pp 565-572). *Papers of the seventh International Conference on Computer-Assisted Instruction*. National Kaohsiung Normal University.
- Ong, W. (1982). *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London: Routledge.
- Vygotsky, L. S., M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner & E. Souberman.(eds.) (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.