A Collaborative Learning Model: An Exploratory Study of Online Discussions for Vocational High School Learners

Abstract

The ultimate objective of English education is to foster students' English communicative competence to survive inside and outside the classrooms. However, under the plight including large class sizes, mixed-level classes, and more pressure for national examinations, communicative competence training for high school students seems to be incompletely implemented. With the advent of the technology, online discussions, one of the computer-mediated communication typologies, are regarded as an easy, effective way to allow learners to communicate mutually and construct their knowledge independent of time and geographical constraints. Two studies were conducted, attempting to answer several questions: (1) to understand the feasibility of online discussions via Moodle for vocational high school students, (2) to examine vocational high school students' acceptance of online discussions via Moodle, (3) to assess vocational high school students' learning effect of English writing since online discussions are text-oriented, (4) to realize phases of knowledge construction and interactional discourse patterns in online discussions, and (5) to compare the difference of students' feasibility and acceptance of online discussions and pedagogical English writing for teacher-involvement with non-teacher-involvement. Eventually, we hope to establish a model of scaffolding collaborative learning. A total of 218 students (study 1: 82; study 2: 136) coming from one university and one vocational high school participated in the studies for two semesters. The results were positive. However, online discussions with teacher-involvement outperformed the ones without teacher-involvement. Theoretical and pedagogical detailed implications for conducting computer-mediated communication were addressed in the conclusion for further research.

Keywords: computer-mediated communication, online discussion, English writing, discourse analysis

合作式學習模式：高職生線上討論探索研究

摘要

英語文教育目的是培養學生的英文溝通能力。 然而，在大且程度參差不齊的班級，以及國家考試壓力等的困境下，高中生的溝通能力訓練似乎無法完全執行。在先進的科技中，電腦媒介溝通中的討論區，被視為是一種簡單且有效方法，因為它能突破時間及地理的限制，提供學習者雙向溝通進而建構知識。為期 2 學期的兩個研究，透過課程管理系統 Moodle 平台進行線上討論，試圖回答以下幾個問題：(1)高職學生是否有能力執行 Moodle 線上討論；(2)高職學生是否願意接受線上討論練習；(3) 線上討論是否有助於高職學生英文寫作能力的提升；(4) 在線上討論區裡，知識建構和互動交換的語料模式為何；(5) 教師介入學生線上討論與否，對學生線上討論執行能力、接受力以及寫作能力是否有所差別。最終，我們希望建立一個好的、可以遵循的鷹架式合作學習模式。218 位來自技職大學及高職的學生參與此研究(研究一：34 高中生，48 大學生，2 位教師，共 82 人；研究二：36 高中生，100 大學生，共 136 人)。研究結果極為正向。 不過，有教師介入的線上討論結果勝過沒有教師介入。此外，本研究也提出相關的理論及教學應用說明，希望對於未來電腦媒介溝通的研究有些助益。

關鍵詞：電腦媒介溝通、線上討論，英文寫作，語料分析