

Korean EFL Teachers' View in Technology-Enhanced English Classrooms*

Hee-Jung Jung
(Chosun University)

Jung, Hee-Jung. 2006. Korean EFL Teachers' View in Technology-Enhanced English Classrooms. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 14(2), 87-113. The extensive amount of online information and communication in English provides the possibilities to reconstruct the English language curriculum to incorporate communication technology and language learning (Warschauer, 2000). In this regard, researchers believe that EFL teachers' literacy goals should be expanded or changed to reflect this demand. This qualitative study examines teachers' literacy goals and the technology use in the technology-enhanced English classroom environments to understand their goals and experiences in classroom contexts. The data collection methods are interviews, observation, and document collection in two EFL classrooms for two months. Based on the findings of this study, EFL teachers' literacy goals and the technology use are discussed.

Key Words: English as foreign language, Literacy goals, technology, multimedia classroom, Computer assisted language learning.

1. Introduction

To build positive learning environments, teachers' roles are very important because they are charged with designing and presenting the materials and activities based on their goals, expectations, and attitudes (Arends, 1994; Baron, Tom, & Cooper, 1985; Brophy, 1985; Froyen, 1993; Putnam & Burke, 1992). Thus, to understand students' learning, there is

* This study was supported (in part) by research funds from Chosun University, 2006

no doubt that classroom environments should be investigated and teachers' perspectives should be included. Moreover, as digital technology is rapidly becoming a primary carrier of information, many researchers claim that teachers' literacy goals should be expanded.

As information and communication technology (ICT) is widely available, a concern in the research on classroom environments has recently been efforts to increase and improve the use of computer technologies in classroom environments. In some cases, teachers or other education stakeholders have explicitly pointed to technology as an important link to the creation of more efficient and effective learning environments (Means, 1994). Also, the use of computers in classrooms has been linked to a shift from traditional, didactic educational practices to more student-centered, interactive learning activities (Means, 1994; Sandholtz, Ringstaff & Dwyer, 1996). However, although determining technology's role in classroom environments is critical for teachers, administrators, educational technologists, curriculum developers, and school reformers, a more fundamental issue is identifying and understanding the teacher's goals and attitudes in technology-enhanced classroom environments (Cuban, 1986; Hannafin & Freeman, 1995).

Many researchers (Bruce, 1998; Kasper, 2000; Luke & Elkins, 1998; Warschauer, 2002) argue that language teachers' literacy goals should be changed or expanded by the introduction of ICT into classrooms. In print literacy, newspapers, magazines, catalogues, commercial texts, and popular paperback literature were central to our literacy teaching in language classrooms and, thus, the concept of "literacy" was defined as the ability to read and write in text (Luke & Elkins, 1998). However, as computer technology spreads rapidly in all areas, there is a strong emphasis on visual images, icons, and brief sound segments (Bruce, 1998; Luke & Elkins, 1998). Shetzer and Warschauer (2000) note that our language classrooms are in a transition period, beginning to move away from print-dominated classrooms where language teachers' literacy goals are focused almost completely on tasks related to dealing effectively with text "learning to decode text, learning to understand text, learning to write text" (n.p). As a result, technology to

communicate is accompanied with oral or written language to reach our purposes. Thus, Warschauer (2002) emphasizes that teachers' traditional literacy goals need to be expanded in some degree to keep up with these changes, and teachers' literacy goals should include more than teaching how to use language effectively. However, no current research provides evidence of changes of teachers' literacy goals due to technology.

Similarly, according to Kasper (2000), nowadays, one who is literate knows "how to gather, analyze, and use information resources to solve problems and make decisions, as well as how to learn both independently and cooperatively" (n.p). The expanding definition of literacy does not diminish the importance of teachers' traditional literacy goals (e.g., reading and writing skills); rather, teachers need to recognize the increasing importance of information and communication technology for their literacy goals (Chapelle, 2001; Kasper, 2000; Warschauer, 2002). In short, teachers' literacy goals should be focused on students acquiring skills that will enable them to take advantage of the diverse modes of communication with new technologies. Also, students need to participate in global learning communities because a digital, information-oriented society demands multi-literacies that are competence in an even more diverse set of functional, academic, critical, and electronic skills. However, we do not yet know if these new demands are reflected in teachers' literacy goals.

Being multi-literate is especially difficult for ESL or EFL students operating in a second or a foreign language. In their attempts to become literate in target languages, Kasper (2000) emphasizes that students must acquire linguistic competence in a new language and at the same time develop the cognitive and socio-cultural skills necessary to survive in the social, digital, and informative environments. In light of this, Kasper (2000) and Warschauer (2002) agree that students should be able to use English to acquire, articulate and expand their knowledge in various modes with being literate functionally in speaking, listening, writing, and reading.

However, all the papers cited above are based on what researchers

claim for teachers' literacy goals due to the lack of empirical research. It is hard to understand whether teachers agree all the researchers' claims and how teachers experience the expected changes in literacy. In addition, we need to understand how the teachers and students accept technology in their classroom to reach their literacy goals. Therefore, this paper examined teachers' literacy goals and understands how their goals affect classroom environments with empirical research. Also, this paper discussed how technology is integrated into the language classrooms.

2. The study

2.1. Research sites

One English classroom from each of two different schools was selected; a 5th grade EFL classroom and an 8th grade EFL classroom. Both schools are located in the same local city in South Korea.

2.1.1. The 5th grade technology-enhanced English classroom

The 5th grade EFL students came to the language classroom twice a week (every Wednesday and Friday). The EFL classroom that I observed for this study was composed of 22 boys and 20 girls. They speak Korean as their first language and learn English as a foreign language. Students' English levels in the classroom varied due to extra-curriculum or private tutoring systems. While some students had just started to learn English in this classroom, some students could speak English like native speakers.

The female teacher, who specialized in English education at a teacher education college, taught 5th graders English as a foreign language in the elementary school. Like her students, she spoke Korean as her first language and learned English as a foreign language. She did not have any chance to take a class related to CALL or educational

technology. However, she took some teacher training sessions at a local ministry of education (MOE) workshop. She had taught English for two years in the elementary school. She had used technology since she started her teaching career in this elementary school.

The students' English journals, alphabet cards, and vocabulary cards were displayed on the walls. As other classrooms in the elementary school had, it was equipped with a networked computer, a scanner, printer, camcorder, overhead projector, 45-inch television, and video. Each student had a computer monitor on his/her desk and there was a control system for students' computer monitors on the English teacher's desk. Six or seven students' desks made one small group in the lab, so there were a total of six small groups. The teacher used software and the Internet as technological applications to teach English. The MOE had developed software for each grade, and EFL teachers were required to use the software in the language classrooms. Also, the local MOE had developed and provided materials and programs for each grade level that EFL teachers could download from the MOE website

2.1.2. The 8th grade technology-enhanced English classroom

While the 5th grade EFL class focused on speaking and listening, the 8th grade EFL classroom focused on all four areas (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). Also, grammar and structure were important parts of the lecture because they helped to prepare learners for the English exam and for university entrance exams.

The classroom was composed of 15 boys and 25 girls. All students spoke Korean as their first language, and learned English as a foreign language. They had learned English since third grade. They had taken national English exams twice a semester since 7th grade. After school, 32 out of 40 students attended private English institutions or had private tutoring to learn English structures (grammar) to get a higher grade in English.

The English teacher had received his qualification to teach English from college of education and had taught English for five years. He

spoke Korean as his first language and learned English as a foreign language. He did not have any chance to take a CALL class or an educational technology class before. However, he attended some workshops and studied by himself. He had a rich background in computers. He was skillful in repairing hardware and in using multimedia software. He was one of the school experts who fixed the computer applications when the need arose.

In the 8th grade EFL classroom, Catholic symbols such as pictures, crosses, and poems for prayers were hung around the classroom. Like other classrooms, the classroom had one networked computer, a 45-inch television, a video player, and an overhead projector. The students had a 45-minute English class every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Unlike the elementary school, students stayed in the classroom and each subject teacher moved to the classroom depending on the time schedule. The students did not have their own computers in that classroom and they watched a big projection television for the computer screen. The English teacher used software, the Internet, and the class website to teach English. Like the elementary school, the ministry of education (MOE) developed the software that the teachers must use in the classrooms. Also, the local MOE developed and provided the supplemental materials or programs for teachers. The teacher carried his own laptop computer for each class. He also created and managed the class website.

2.2. Data collection

To enhance the integrity and trustworthiness of the data collected in the two classrooms for two months, the process of triangulation was employed by using semi-structured interviews with teachers, observation of learning environments with technology, and document analysis. I visited twice a week in the 5th grade class and three time a week in the 8th grade class.

The interviews were conducted twice with each EFL teacher: at the beginning and end of the data collection period. The first interview with

the 5th grade teacher was about 30 minutes and the interview with the 8th grade teacher was 50 minutes. Both interviews were tape-recorded and notes were taken. The second interviews with the teachers occurred after all classroom observations were complete. The second interviews were focused on teachers' experiences in the TELL classrooms. To support their answers, they provided many examples, materials, and websites that they used in their classrooms. The second interviews lasted 60 minutes for the 5th grade teacher and 80 minutes for the 8th grade teacher. Also, I asked additional questions during the observation when I needed clarification about issues such as their classroom management strategies and group projects. To answer these follow-up questions during the data analysis, I used member checks, contacting participants through email.

I observed language classrooms because the observation would help me understand the language-learning contexts and discover how the learning environments carried out goals of language learning in the classrooms. I observed two classrooms for two months. During the observations, essential records were kept while in and out of the field. During fieldwork as an observer, I spent the majority of time observing and recording the interactions, tasks, and behaviors of the EFL students and teachers. I also observed the class website by focusing on how the 8th grade teacher and students communicated and how the website worked for the language learning environment. I visited the website once a week to observe what new things were posted and how they interacted with each other.

Documents were collected in each classroom. During the observations and interviews, I collected some materials that could be helpful to understand the teachers and classrooms such as lesson plans, handouts, and curriculum guidelines and Information & Communication Technology (ICT) guidelines for EFL classrooms. Also, I collected the students' products such as activity sheets, journals, and assignments.

2.3. Data analysis

The data were read during and after data gathering in an effort to recognize emerging patterns and categories. For the purpose of this study, the elements of analysis originated from all three sources of data. The tape-recorded interviews, observational notes, and documents were transcribed, organized, and read to reveal relevant categories. I listened to interview tapes to transcribe them because it is a first step for analysis and an opportunity for rewriting and reorganizing my rough observation notes (Maxwell, 1996). As Patton (1990) suggests, my next step was reading the interview transcripts, observational notes, or documents that were to be analyzed. While I read transcriptions and observation notes, I wrote notes on what I saw in the data, to develop tentative ideas about categories and relationships regarding the research questions. After this, I started coding all of the data. The coding helped me rearrange my data into categories that facilitated the comparison of data within and between categories and aided the development of theoretical concepts.

3. Findings and discussion

To discuss the findings of this study, this section will be composed of two main themes: teacher's literacy goals and the technology use. Each theme will be followed by discussion.

3.1. Teachers' EFL literacy goals

Before starting classroom observations, I interviewed the teachers individually. I met them in their offices and asked about their English literacy goals in their English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom context. I found that the teachers had two main EFL literacy goals: language skills and cultural understanding. To explain each literacy goal and to discuss some issues related to the goals, the interview data and the observation data were used.

3.1.1. Language skills.

Both EFL teachers considered speaking and listening skills as their literacy goals. To clarify my interview question, I explained that the general literacy concept was the ability to write and read. Both EFL teachers did not agree with my explanation, and they reminded me that I was in an EFL classroom, not in a first language classroom. The 5th grade teacher noted:

Well, I think that your definition of literacy is only applied to first language. English in Korea is a foreign language. To be literate in the foreign language, students need to have ability to speak and listen first. To me, being literate means that people can use the language properly. Do you think that writing and reading is the first requirements to be literate in foreign language? I strongly believe that to be literate in English as a foreign language, students need to open their mouths and ears. That is the first thing to be literate in English as a foreign language. If we cannot speak the language, why do you need to invest the huge amount of time and money? We are learning a language to communicate. That is the key! My students should be able to talk in English. I do not want them to keep in their brains forever without speaking up.

In the 5th grade EFL classroom, I observed a lot of activities that the teacher supposed were useful to learn speaking and listening. For example, the 5th grade students did not spell out the word "Hello." They just said "Hello" and responded to other classmates. The teacher said that although the students might learn reading or writing skills indirectly when they participated in activities that focused on speaking or listening skills, she tried to provide many chances to learn primarily from speaking and listening.

The 8th grade EFL teacher's understanding of being literate in English was similar to the 5th grade teacher's opinion, but much

broader. The 8th grade teacher claimed:

Fully being literate in a foreign language is that students can write, read, speak, and listen in the target language. However, we should have speaking and listening skills first to be literate in a beginning stage. But, to help students be fully literate in a target language, all four language skills should be taught when they are in advanced stage.

Like the 5th grade teacher, the 8th grade teacher believed that speaking and listening were more important than writing and reading in EFL classrooms. In addition, he expanded his view to be literate in the EFL context. He claimed that to be fully literate in the target language, students needed to read and write as well as speak and listen. In sum, both teachers claimed oral communication skills as one of their EFL literacy goals, and they believed that it was essential to be literate in English.

3.1.2. Understanding culture

In addition to speaking and listening, the teachers acknowledged the importance of understanding culture to be literate in the target language. The 5th grade EFL teacher mentioned that English should be taught with American culture because English education in Korea is based on what she perceived as American Standard English and the language reflects the culture. She explained that learning English had been meaningless for her and something to memorize because her teacher had taught English without discussing any cultural element. In her understanding, if students understand the culture of a target language, they can communicate with body language even though they do not have sufficient verbal skill. In their EFL classrooms, I observed that the teachers took time to discuss differences or similarities of culture related to each lesson. One student claimed that including cultural materials in the class made him interested in learning English and it helped him

comprehend the lesson. During the class, I observed that most of the students focused on cultural video clips or stories that the teachers prepared to teach lessons with asking additional questions or comparing with their culture.

3.1.3. Issues on literacy goals

The teachers identified speaking and listening as their literacy goal because they understood that it would make their students learn practical communicative English. Also, they believed understanding culture as one of their literacy goals. They added that integrating cultural materials in the classroom increased authenticity that encouraged students to learn English in the TELL classrooms. The data showed that some other factors affected the teachers' literacy goals and students' literacy goals.

First, there is pressure on teachers' literacy goals. During interviews with the teachers, I questioned how they had the same literacy goals and even explained them in the same order. The 5th gradeteacher said that the reason might be that Korean social interest in Western culture and oral skill in English were increased and everyone could read about the topics in their Korean daily newspapers and news nowadays. Thus, although English literacy goals were not explained directly, teachers unconsciously learned from social trends. For example, during my research period, one newspaper periodically printed Korean editorials about English education. The editorials talked about how teachers could encourage students to speak in English and introduced many options such as innovations in English classrooms, summer camps in English-speaking countries, using English videotapes, or communicating in English at home. The newspapers and other media suggested that EFL education in Korea was largely for oral communication. In other words, although some policies such as university admission or standardized testing did not exactly follow that trend, I realized that teachers and students were eager to learn and use oral skills in English.

In addition, I found that the official MOE curriculum affected the

teachers' literacy goals. For example, beginning with a new curriculum in 1997, the MOE revised English textbooks in order to focus on English used in daily life, to drastically increase the number of native-speaker instructors, and to reinforce training programs for oral communication skill in English and technology for English teachers. In short, the curriculum strengthened the importance of communication in English. The MOE officially emphasized that the focus of English teaching shifted from reading and writing to speaking and listening (Kim, 1995). The data suggest that the social trends and official guidelines have pressured the teachers to set listening and speaking skills as their EFL literacy goals.

Furthermore, while I understood the two EFL teachers' literacy goals, I questioned whether their students shared their teachers' literacy goals. During the interviews and the classroom observations, I found that the curriculum affected the students' literacy goals. For instance, while the EFL class for the 5th graders was much more focused on the speaking and listening and did not have any paper exams, the EFL class for the 8th graders could not ignore reading and grammar because the students were required to take English exams twice a semester. As a result, I found that the literacy goals between the 5th graders and the 8th graders were quite different. First, some 8th graders had no goals. For example, one 8th grader mentioned, "It is hard to answer because I have not thought about it and nobody told me. We just do what we need to do in the classroom." Second, some 8th graders set their goal for exams. For instance, "My goal is to learn many vocabulary words because it is useful for reading," "I do not have any goal. Maybe my goal is to get a higher score on exams. I have not thought about it. I just study for exams," "I think that I should know the content of the textbook. It is basic to learn more and to get a better testing score," In short, these responses from the 8th graders reflected the lack of the students' objectives and the pressure associated with taking exams.

However, I found from the interview data that the literacy goals of the 5th graders were more enthusiastic and focused on speaking. For example, "I should be able to say hello to Americans," "I must

understand when native speakers talk," "I want to understand what he means." While the 8th graders had different goals, the 5th graders wanted to speak in English. Based on the interviews and observations, I noticed that these differences in literacy goals seemed to relate to their class contents and exams.

Since the 8th graders focused primarily on exams, I questioned the 5th graders about the meanings of higher scores on exams. Two of the 5th graders answered, "Test scores are not important to learn English because exams can be prepared for any time by memorizing. But speaking is harder and more important, " "Exams can be prepared for in a short time. But speaking can not." I realized that getting a higher score on an English exam was not important to the 5th graders. According to the student interviews, it was something that they felt they could accomplish any time.

Also, based on the interview data, I noted a gap of literacy goals between the students and the teacher. Although the 8th grade teacher mentioned two primary literacy goals, speaking and listening and understanding culture, none of his students considered them as their literacy goals in the interviews. However, although the 5th grade teacher had not discussed English literacy goals with her students, the students' goals were similar to the teacher's literacy goals during the interviews. I realized from the observations that the gap in the 8th grade classroom may have occurred because the teachers' literacy goals were not fully reflected in the class contexts. The 8th grade teacher claimed that although he set speaking and listening as one of his literacy goals, he also needed to prepare his students for testing that focused on grammar and reading, and thus his literacy goals could not be reflected all the time. Additionally, during the interviews, the 8th grade teacher pointed out that gaining admission to top universities was a primary goal for students and parents. As a result, the teachers' literacy goals, assessment, students' interest, and curriculum did not fit together seamlessly.

3.2. The technology use

After gaining an understanding of the teachers' literacy goals, I began an inquiry into technology as a part of the classroom environments. In this section, how technology is used in the classroom is presented based on all three data sources. Then, I discuss why the teachers used technology. Lastly, overall discussion of this question follows.

In the TELL classrooms, the teachers used software, computers, the Internet, *Edunet*, and *Teacher's Club*. The 8th grade teacher additionally used the class Web site. *Edunet* is a comprehensive educational information service system that allows all Koreans including students, teachers, and the general public, to access thousands of online services such as sharing educational resources for each grade level, creating an online learning community, and accessing personalized services. The *Teacher's Club* is a Web site for teachers' discussion and class resources developed by a local MOE. In this site, teachers could get resources similar to those they could get from *Edunet*. However, in this site, teachers, not researchers or technicians, made and posted all products.

3.2.1. How technology was used in the 5th grade classroom

With the software, the students did all kinds of activities such as guess, listen, speak, game, sing, and chant. Also, the students had their own computer monitors and volume controls. Even the students who sat in the back rows of the classroom could see and hear clearly. In the class, the 5th grade teacher gave her students time to think about what they would learn before her students were exposed to the direct visual screen in software. For example, in the 5th grade class, to teach a question "What are you doing?" and some answers such as "I am dancing" or "I am singing," the teacher played the software without showing the screen. She asked her students to listen to a dialogue and remember the vocabulary words or sentences that they heard. Some students wrote down what they heard in their notes. Due to the lack of

their vocabulary skills, they used Korean to write down their notes. After listening to a dialogue from the software, the teacher and students discussed the vocabulary words or sentences that they heard. The students shouted what they remembered from a simple word "hi" to a full sentence "I am dancing." The teacher explained this:

Students can understand what the situation is about with the movie clip. However, I do not want to show the movie in the beginning because the students will not pay attention to the dialogue. They just look at their motions of the animated characters in the movie clip. So, I planned to give them more chances to think about what the dialogue means and to negotiate the meanings in their own ways.

During this activity, the classroom was very noisy because students shared what they had heard and what they missed with classmates and their teacher. Whenever the teacher accepted what they had listened, they were excited. After the discussion, the students listened to the dialogue again with the animated movie clip. The students guessed the situation based on what they heard and what they saw. The teacher and students discussed what the dialogue entailed.

Also, the 5th grade teacher used the software to show samples of the activities. The students interacted with the software in the role-plays. An animated character in the software did one of the roles in a dialogue, and a student or all students performed another role(s). After practicing with the software, the students formed groups or found partners to practice the dialogue. One of the 5th grade students claimed that while practicing with the software gave them chances to check what they learned without embarrassment, practices with classmates gave chances to apply their learning to what he thought were communicative situations with students' face to face.

3.2.2. How technology was used in the 8th grade classroom

As the 5th grade teacher did not show the screen to give her students time to think about the lesson before she used the software, the 8th grade teacher started with discussion about the theme of the lesson with the students before he used the software. For example, to start a lesson "I'd like a cheeseburger," he talked in Korean about his experiences in the fast food restaurants, talked about his favorite fast food, and asked his students' experiences. Some students shared their experiences with the teacher and other classmates. Most of them were funny experiences. With the discussion, the students seemed to anticipate what the new lesson would be about by connecting their experiences to the new lesson.

During the class, the 8th grade teacher's lecture was combined with the software. He explained some detailed notes with the software. As the instructional tools, the teacher's knowledge and the software's native speaker pronunciation with visual features supported each other. For example, the software was always used for learning activities such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the classroom. For listening and speaking activities, the students needed to solve questions such as matching, filling-in-the-blanks, and multiple choice after listening to dialogues emanating from the software. In these activities, the teacher gave some detailed explanations and related them to previous lessons to review the answers. In the reading activities, a native speaker from the software read an article that was related to the lesson and important vocabulary words or expressions appeared in different colors. After that, the teacher explained each single sentence by analyzing the structures and grammar to make his students understand the meanings of the sentences and prepare for English exams. In the interview, the teacher claimed that he supported student learning by providing assistance that matched the students' level and the students' background knowledge.

The 8th grade teacher also had a class Web site. The site was composed of news, a bulletin board, lectures, assignments, supplements,

and a teacher profile that were written in both Korean and English. In the lecture section, the teacher posted each class lecture on the site and updated it every day. The students could access the class content whenever they missed class or needed more detail. In the news section, the teacher posted what the students needed to know. In the bulletin board, the students posted their questions, suggestions, or stories to share with other classmates and the teacher. In the assignment section, the students could download the assignments and submit them electronically. In the supplement section, the students could download handouts and other materials. In the teacher profile section, the teacher included a brief autobiography. Also, the student could see the teacher's family pictures and students' pictures.

In addition, the Internet, *Edunet*, and Teacher's Club were the main sources for both EFL teachers to find additional activities or supplements for their classes. They had their own favorite sites to navigate new ideas or class materials such as games, activities, movies, songs, and dialogues. To adapt the materials for their classroom, they deleted or added more to fit the class contents and their students. On this site, the teachers also discussed their classroom problems and shared their teaching strategies with other teachers.

3.2.3. Why did the teachers use technology?

According to the interviews, one of the main reasons that the teachers used technology in their classrooms was that the MOE required using technology in every classroom. Besides, the teachers claimed that they were more willing to use technology in their classrooms for the following reasons:

- (1) Technology provided variety and dynamism in their classrooms
- (2) Technology gave more mobility
- (3) The teachers could conduct research for their class preparations
- (4) The MOE and other teachers support the teachers to use

technology

(5) Technology was accessible to teachers and students

Although the MOE required it, the teachers intentionally used the software to teach English in their classrooms because the software was easy to use. In addition, the dynamics of the software were suitable for young students. The 5th grade teacher pointed out:

When I opened the software, there was no reason not to use it. It was very colorful and visual. It was also helpful to cover my inability in English. To learn the sentence " This is a bedroom," students can see the house, bedroom and animated friends. Students can listen to the native speaker's pronunciation and practice their pronunciation. Students can sing and dance with the animated friends. I cannot provide these all without the software.

Also, using software as a main source for content material gave the teachers more mobility during the class. The 8th grade teacher mentioned that he could see the screen anywhere in the classroom. Thus, he did not need to stay by his desk. He looked around the classroom and checked whether his students were on the right track. He gave individual feedback when he walked around the classroom. I observed that the students seemed to be less distracted than they were when the teacher stayed by his desk. During the observations, I realized that using software as the main medium for classroom instruction gave the teachers mobility and interactivity with their students.

Another reason that they used technology was for research. The teachers researched for their class preparations. To find some other materials or information, the teachers navigated the Internet. They usually found cultural pictures or stories that they could show their students to understand the contents. Both teachers agreed that if teachers and students use it properly, the Internet could give many options to make the language classroom rich and active with huge amount of materials. But the 8th grade teacher told me that he could

only use *Edunet* and *Teachers' Club* to find resources because searching required considerable time and expertise.

The MOE and other teachers supported the teachers' use of technology in their classrooms. Although the teachers did not have any training on how to use the technology effectively, they claimed that they felt comfortable using the technology in their classes due to the support from the MOE and other teachers. For example, *Edunet* provided activities or materials for each grade level of English. According to the interviews, both teachers used this site as the main source of extra activities and supplements. They agreed that this site was helpful to make their classes fun and effective because the supplements were practical and relevant to the subject matter. The site provided various activities such as picture cards, games, songs, and movies in each lesson that teachers could not make by themselves. Also, video clips recorded in a real classroom showed classroom activities in detail. The 8th grade teacher claimed that the site was supportive for all teachers, time-efficient because anybody could access it for free, and easy to download if they had the Internet access. Similarly, the 5th grade teacher indicated that she could not make these supplements herself because it required a lot of time and skill that were impossible for her to invest.

In addition, the teachers shared their teaching strategies with other teachers. Although the *Edunet* by the MOE was supportive of teachers, it did not reflect all teachers' needs because researchers and technicians created and managed it. The 8th grade teacher joined the *Teachers' Club* to get other teachers' ideas. It was a sharing place for EFL teachers in that local area. They posted their problems and issues and replied to the issues that they could help with via the bulletin board. The 8th grade teacher claimed that it was sometimes more realistic and practical because teachers, who were in English classrooms and knew real situations, provided all.

Furthermore, both teachers could access the Internet in their classrooms, home, and computer lab. The students also could use the networked computers in the computer lab and at home. Accessibility of

the Internet was not a concern for the teachers in these classrooms. In this study, an average of 94% of the students had home access to computers and the Internet. Because the 5th grade teacher believed that her students learned a range of computer applications at home or in private institutes, she claimed that she did not feel the need to cover basic computer skills during class time, and thus saved class time for addressing more important academic material. The teachers also assigned homework that involved computer use such as that involved in research and writing. I was worried about some students without home computers and network access. When I discussed this concern with the 8th grade EFL teacher, he responded:

Most teachers do not have the need to devote class time to cover basic computer skills and were not reluctant to assign homework involving computers because the Internet cafes are everywhere and students can access from school and friends' houses. Besides, I assign collaborative group work that does not require Internet access or a computer for every individual.

I understood that the Internet access was available because Internet cafes were widespread and Internet access was cheap. However, whenever I visited the computer lab in the school, the lab was locked all the time. Also, although computers were getting cheaper, they were still expensive. I still question whether computer is really accessible for all students.

3.2.4. Issues on the technology use

The teachers claimed that technology supported teaching by integrating all materials and connecting with extra help. Each application supported one another to overcome drawbacks of each application to reach the teachers' needs. For example, they used software to learn the textbook contents, the Internet to use various materials and communicate with other teachers, and the class Web site

to build an English learning community. Also, the data showed relationships between goals, tools, and students' perception toward technology.

I found that goals affect tools. During my observations, I realized that different literacy goals encouraged teachers to integrate different tools in their classrooms. The 8th grade teacher shared his office with two other English teachers. He was the youngest teacher and the only teacher who was willing to use computers in his classroom. While the 8th grade textbook had changed for the new curriculum, the 9th grade textbook had not been changed for the new curriculum yet during my observation period. Thus, the 9th grade English textbooks still focused on grammar and were not accompanied by software. According to the 8th grade teacher, more experienced, older English teachers wanted to teach the 9th graders because they did not have to change their literacy goals and teaching skills. He pointed out that new textbooks and curriculum required new literacy goals, and teachers needed to use computers because it was helpful to reach their goals, and it was requirement of the new curriculum. While the older 9th grade teacher, who focused on grammar, went to his classroom with a textbook, lecture notes, and a tape recorder, the 8th grade teacher, who focused on speaking and listening, went to his classroom with his notebook computer and software. I realized that while technologies as tools are not necessarily better than conventional tools, teachers use different tools to reach their different literacy goals.

Also, I found that the teachers integrated technology as a part of their classroom environments to support their literacy goals and to motivate their students to learn. In spite of differences between the classes, there was an important common thread: the students in both TELL classes did not consider technology as a special aid for language learning; rather, they saw technology as a part of their learning environments. During the students' interviews, I asked the students about what technology they used in their classrooms. However, one of the students said that he did not use any technology in his classroom. While I saw many technologies in his classroom, the student did not

regard computers and software as technology. Then, when I made reference to the technology tools in his classroom, he nodded his head and said " ya, right! We use them." I was curious why he did not notice these technological devices. His answer was "I thought that you wanted something huge or new." I had similar responses from two more student interviewees. I realized that technologies that they used were not something special to them; instead, it was just another tool such as chalk and a blackboard. It was only a favorite tool and it was always there in the classrooms. In other words, I noted that they perceived that technology served as one of vehicles to help them learn English like other tools in the TELL classrooms.

Also, during the interviews, some students claimed that the reason they learned English in the TELL classroom was to develop the required skills to successfully compete in a world that they viewed as dominated by English and computers. As a 5th grader told, "I am not sure whether I like English and computers. But I should learn English and computers to be a successful man in the future." However, not all the students felt unambiguously positive about the use of computers in their classes. Many of the students in the 8th grade EFL class and a couple of the students in the 5th grade EFL class felt that too much time and effort were being put into technology at the expense of learning English. As one 8th grader complained:

While the students' opinions were different regarding the use of computers in their classes, both teachers were enthusiastic and positive about integrating computer applications into their classes. The 8th grade teacher said "I never regret using computers in my class. I want to use more if time and money are available. I already have a plan to add another new technology for next semester." During the observations, I noted that the teachers integrated technology to experience the possibilities that they believed in and they did not doubt the potentials of technology. Also, the teachers claimed that their classrooms improved activities and interactions because of the technology use. However, I observed that although their activities were various and fancy due to the technological features, interactions and activities were not much

different than drill focused activities and even technology occupied most of the class time that caused reducing interaction between students.

4. Conclusion

As discussed earlier, researchers claimed that the spread of information and communication technology (ICT) was shifting the meaning of what it means to be a competent language user (Warchauer, 2002). The tremendous amount of online information and communication in English supported the need to reconstruct literacy goals and English language curriculum to incorporate technology-enhanced communication and information (Warschauer, 2000). Therefore, researchers explained that language literacy goals should be and are being expanded in language classrooms.

However, in this study, the teachers' stated EFL literacy goals did not reflect what researchers claimed for literacy goals in language classrooms. The EFL teachers shared two common goals for EFL literacy: language skills and cultural understanding. They claimed that the focus of their instruction had changed from teaching of discrete grammatical skills to teaching of oral skills and negotiation of meaning. They added that comprehension was more important than structural drill practice. Also, in the teachers' terms, culture became one of their interests and emphases for their language classrooms because they believed that language was a part of culture. When I interviewed them about their literacy goals, the teachers did not note any recent goal change toward electronic literacies. In short, what researchers believed literacy goals should be in language classrooms was not connected to the teachers' stated literacy goals in their language learning classrooms.

However, during the classroom observations, I realized that the teachers' practice reflected literacy goals that were emphasized in research. With technology integration in the classrooms, the students naturally learned how to use technology to accomplish their projects and to contact with the teacher and other classmates. For example, to complete the students' project in the 8th grade classroom, the students

used computers to develop final reports for their projects. Thus, the students learned how to use a word processing program and scanners as well as how to research. As another example, in the 5th grade classroom, the students listened to chants or songs to learn expressions or sentences in a lesson. Through chanting and singing, the students learned musical/ rhythmic literacy while they learned English. In short, in the TELL classrooms, various literacies such as computer literacy, information literacy, and musical literacy were taught at the same time by integrating technology into their classrooms.

Although the practice in language classroom environments were followed to what researchers suggested, the teachers did not perceive changes in their classroom environments and could not connect theory to their stated goals. This implied that research that would be helpful for the teachers to note changes in their literacy goals and their classroom environments was not reachable for them, or the teachers did not have access or time to connect their beliefs or practice to research. If the teachers understood what theory claimed for literacy goals and TELL classroom environments, they might perceive changes and state their goals related to what researchers claim. Also, they might create and justify their goals with their rationale based on theory and their experiences. Therefore, there is need for further research to investigate the cause of the gap between literacy goals that researchers emphasized and the teachers' literacy goals and how the gap can be narrowed in classroom environments.

Also, in this study, I learned that technology was not considered a novel tool for the students in the language classrooms. During the interviews, some students did not identify the available technology as technology until I mentioned it to them. In short, the students saw technology as a part of their learning environments that was not something unique in their classrooms. In the teachers' point of views, although they noticed the technology that they used in their classrooms, they believed that technology was one of the required tools to make language learning effective and fun in their classroom environments. In both classrooms, technology was not for decoration; instead, it was

actively used for language learning.

Furthermore, the exploration of the TELL classrooms in this study showed that several components worked together to integrate technology into their classroom environments. For example, to achieve the teachers' literacy goals, the MOE required using technology and provided technological and pedagogical support, and the teachers had opportunities to adapt various activities and appropriate technology based on their objectives, instructional strategies, and students' needs. In addition, the teacher and the students interplayed to facilitate the language learning environments. For example, in both classrooms, although technology provided visualized features and pronunciation of native speakers, the feedback from the software was limited. However, the teachers modified the problem by providing their students interactive feedback, and the students exchanged feedback during practice. In short, neither the teachers nor technology alone completed the learning environments. Each member (e.g., the MOE, the teacher, and the students) was engaged in facilitating the students' language learning.

During data collection, I often observed that the MOE and the teachers coordinated and planned the activities in advance, and computers were not the central focus; instead, the teachers used technology as a means for students' learning in the environments. In light of this, research to understand students' learning in CALL classroom environments should investigate how components of the environment interact together, rather than focus on each single component. Additionally, CALL research should be goal-oriented rather than technology-oriented because technology is a tool that is developed and designed to support certain purposes.

References

- Arends, R. I. (1994). *Learning to teach*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Baron, R., Tom, D., & Cooper, H. (1985). Social class, race and teacher expectations. In J. B. Dusek (Ed.), *Teacher Expectancies* (pp.

- 251-269). Hillsdale, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Brophy, J. E. (1985). Teacher-student interaction. In J. B. Dusek (Ed.), *Teacher expectancies* (pp. 303-328). Hillsdale, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Bruce, B. (1998). New literacies. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 42(1), 46-49.
- Chapelle, C. (2001). *Computer applications in second language acquisition: Foundations for teaching, testing and research*. Cambridge; UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Cuban, L. (1986). *Teachers and machines: The classroom use of technology since 1920*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Froyen, L. A. (1993). *Classroom Management: The Reflective Teacher-leader*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co.
- Hannafin, R., & Freeman, D. (1995). An exploratory study of teachers' views of knowledge acquisition. *Educational Technology*, 35(1), 49-56.
- Kasper, L. F. (2000). New Technologies, New Literacies: Focus Discipline Research and ESL learning Communities. *Language Learning & Technology*, 4(2), 105-128.
- Maxwell, J. (1996). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Means, B. (1994). Introduction: Using technology to advance educational goals. In B. Means (Ed.), *Technology and education reform: The reality behind the promise* (pp. 1-21). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Luke, A. & Elkins, J. (1998). Reinventing literacy in new times. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 42(1), 22-34
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd ed.)*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Putnam, J. & Burke, J. B. (1992). *Organizing and managing classroom learning communities*. NY: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Sandholtz, J., Ringstaff, C., & Dwyer, D. (1996). *Teaching with technology: Creating student-centered classrooms*. New York: Teacher's College Press.

- Shetzer, H., & Warschauer, M. (2000). An electronic literacy approach to network-based language teaching. In M. Warschauer & R. Kern (Eds.), *Network-based language teaching: Concepts and practice* (pp. 171-185). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Warschauer, M. (2000). Online learning in second language classrooms: An ethnographic study. In M. Warschauer & R. Kern (Eds.), *Network-based language teaching. Concepts and practice* (pp. 41-58). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Warschauer, M. (2002). A developmental perspective on technology in language education. *TESOL Quarterly*, 36(3), 453-475.

Hee-Jung Jung
Department of English
Foreign studies, Chosun University
375 sesukdong Dong-gu
Gwangju 501-759, Korea
Phone: 82-62-230-6217
Email: jung@chosun.ac.kr

Received: 30 Mar, 2006

Revised: 12 Jun, 2006

Accepted: 19 Jun, 2006