

L3 Socialization of a Group of Mongolian Students Through the Use of a Written Communication Channel in Korea: A Case Study

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I. INTRODUCTION

Many researchers in the field of English education have shown a wide range of cultural differences in teaching and learning in the cross-cultural contexts (Byram & Feng, 2006; Coleman, 1998; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996, 2002; Hammond & Gao, 2002; Littlewood, 2001). It is widely agreed that students from different learning cultures do differ in terms of their values, beliefs, and perceptions on teaching and learning. As Skilton-Sylvester (2001) points out, such differences in learning cultures often serve as challenges not only to minority students who need to succeed in a mainstream class, but to teachers who need to understand their ways of learning in classes.

Recently, most of the universities in Korea tend to become multi-cultural institutions. For a couple of years, the number of foreign students who study in Korean universities have dramatically risen due

to the intense competitions among universities to attract these students. As of 2009, more than 45 thousand foreign students (1.2% of the total student population) were registered in Korean universities. These students generally have the experience of learning English as L2 (Second Language) and learning Korean as their L3 (Third Language). In many cases, their L3 proficiency levels are not sufficient to take Korean classes while their academic successes depend mainly on their L3 knowledge. In this respect, English as their L2 tends to serve as a main communication channel, though such opportunities to interact with Korean peers using English are often constrained in Korean-speaking classroom settings.

The present study examines academic discourse socialization of a group of Mongolian students attending an urban university in Korea by focusing on their use of a "written communication channel" (i.e., e-mail, listserv) in an EFL class. From a perspective of the continua of bi-literacy (Hornberger, 1990, 2004; Skilton-Sylvester, 1997, 2003), this study addresses how a group of Mongolian students who have limited exposure to Korean language and cultures negotiate academic difficulties through "written interaction with peers and a teacher" in a college English class. In particular, the researcher wants to explore how a L2 communication channel provides a social place through which they can acquire L3 proficiency required in a Korean-speaking classroom.

For Mongolian students who need to develop their academic careers in the mainstream community in Korea, being active participants in classroom interaction and acquiring a certain level of proficiency in Korean have long been a challenge (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Kim, 2009; Lee, 1996). In Korean college English classes where any support from L1 (Mongolian) and L2 (English) is not expected, the lack of communication channel would limit interactional opportunities for these foreign students who are not able to speak Korean fluently in the mainstream classroom. Such linguistic barriers coupled with their

expectations about the norms for the classroom interaction are likely to constrain their learning opportunities, thus shaping them as the inactive participants who interact on the margin (Duff, 1995; Morita, 2000; Oches, 1988). It addresses the importance of an alternative communication channel through which they are socialized into classroom practices.

Language socialization emphasizes the interdependence of the acquisition of language and sociocultural knowledge through the range of interactions (Brookfield, 1992; Draves, 1997). As Duff (2000) demonstrates, classroom practice could create barriers to successful participation and stress the fundamental tension that exists between the teacher's needs to engage all students and to ensure the participation of inactive learners. From this perspective, the use of an alternative communication channel can be viewed as the process of becoming a competent member of society through language activities.

Many studies (Atkinson & Ramanathan, 1995; Morita, 2000; Prior, 1994; Spack, 1997) have explored the academic discourse socialization of ESL/EFL students. However, few studies have been concerned with the L3 discourse socialization by focusing on the use of a written communication channel. At best, Morita (2000) implemented an ethnographic study to better understand the discourse socialization of graduate students through their engagement in oral academic presentation. She found that students gradually became apprenticed into the academic discourse by negotiating with instructors and peers as they prepared for, observed, and performed oral presentations. As the teachers in a university English class in Korea, we want to know what happens to the L3 Mongolian learners when a written communication channel as a socialization tool is available to them over the semester. As an attempt to incorporate a written communication channel (i.e., e-mail, electronic

discussion board) into the regular part of teaching practices, the researcher notices her expectations about classroom interaction in a syllabus in this way:

There are many ways to participate in classroom practices. In my class, class participation, comprising 15% of your grade, is broadly defined as your behaviors of preparing for class, participating in class discussion, or interacting with others using electronic communication channels. In particular, electronic interaction (either through e-mail or listserv) is equally important as in-class interaction.

This study explores the role of electronic interactions in L3 learning by focusing on the use of L2 written communication channel by Mongolian university students. Specifically, this case study looks at the specific ways a group of Mongolian students use an electronic channel to overcome the challenges they encounter and to acquire proficiency in Korean as their L3. Using the data collected through students' questionnaires, interviews, e-mails, and listserv postings, this study addresses some of the questions left unexamined by the previous research on language socialization. Hence, the research questions proposed are as follows:

1. What are the views on good teaching and learning approaches perceived by a group of Mongolian students in a Korean-speaking English classroom?
2. What kinds of difficulties, if any, do Mongolian students who don't have any support from their L1 (Mongolian) and L2 (English) encounter in learning Korean as their L3 in the mainstream Korean class?

3. How, if any, do they use a L2 electronic channel to cope with such difficulties and to acquire L3 proficiency when a written communication channel is available to them?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical aspect framing my study is “the continua of bi-literacy,” which emerges from the various disciplines, socio-linguistics, anthropology, and L2 acquisition research (Hornberger, 1990, 2004; Skilton-Sylvester, 1997, 2003). The continua model of bi-literacy serves as a means to deal with dilemma confronting intercultural educational settings, such as language, culture, and identity dilemmas.

The centrality of this theoretical orientation is to bring L2 learners’ intercultural perspectives to the mainstream classroom by incorporating learning contexts of minorities, their cultural traditions, or literacy experiences in their home countries into teaching and learning practices (Hornberger, 1990). In the majority-minority continua, there has been a privilege of one end of the continua (i.e., monolingual and decontextualized), which has more power than the other. This continuum model emphasizes the importance of providing a social space for minority students in class by paying attention to what has traditionally been the less powerful ends of the continua.

This model gives consideration to teaching and sharing minorities’ cultures of learning and to valuing their cultural asserts by shifting instructional stances to the less powerful ends of continua. Such an intercultural perspective incorporated into classroom practices provides EFL students with a more social place to negotiate different norms for classroom interactions. In this process, new comers have opportunities

to constantly reshape their identities as active participants in a new community of learning. As Duff and Uchida (1997) and Pennycook (1994) argue, sociocultural identity and representation play a critical role especially for EFL students in the mainstream classroom. In particular, classroom practices in the US are not often culturally and socially neutral since social and cultural aspects of other languages are seldom discussed in mainstream classes. Under this setting, new comers' (i.e., EFL students standing on the margins) expectations about learning practices and teaching methods are likely to conflict with those of mainstream communities (Hornberger & Ricento, 1996; Tollefson, 1999). Such conflict often occurs in multi-cultural classrooms in that students' perceptions on appropriate classroom interactions are deeply embodied in personal histories such as past educational and cross-cultural experiences.

The bi-literacy continua model addresses the importance of intercultural communication in English classes, illustrating why understanding different expectations about classroom interaction held by minority students is a necessary part of learning and teaching practices. An electronic literacies may provide minority students who can speak in the mainstream way in class with a communication channel to reproduce their own sense of sociocultural identity through an online-interaction with others' linguistic and cultural values. Accordingly, the teacher can promote literacy development of linguistically diverse students in multi-cultural settings by providing equitable learning environments (i.e., shifting to the less powerful ends of continua). In this respect, a written communication channel, such as e-mail or listserv, can serve as a space to constantly learn a new learning context through the negotiation process of their expectations about teaching and learning practices, institutional contexts, and interaction with peer students (Giroux, 1992). Thus, this theoretical perspective supports the use of electronic channel as a way to bring minority students' cultural capitals to the classroom (Skilton-Sylvester, 2001).

2. Brief Review of Literature

From a sociocultural aspect (Gee, 1990; Street, 1993), the role of the social interaction in classroom practices is viewed as an essential part of L2 learning in that it provides a way to negotiate learning skills and cultural differences in a multi-cultural classroom. Recent studies have attempted to understand language learning as the interpersonal process by bringing the social factors into the classroom practices (Cotterall, 1990; Donato and McCormick, 1994; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1997; Gillette, 1994; Klinger & Schumm, 1998; Klinger and Vaughn, 2000; Liang, Mohan, & Early, 1998). Since multi-cultural classes involve both language and culture, the range of communication channels can be viewed as a means to understand the patterns of communication specific to a particular linguistic group. Such channels also provide insight into particular linguistic groups by helping to interpret what types of meanings these groups apply to different communication channel. As Littlejohn and Foss (2005) suggests, “cultures communicate in different ways, but all forms of communication require a shared code, a channel, a setting, a message form, a topic, and an event” (2005: 312).

Morita (2000), in her ethnographic study involving ESL graduate students in Canada, examined the L2 discourse socialization through their engagement in oral academic presentation. She found that students used an oral presentation as a socialization tool and gradually became apprenticed into the academic discourse by negotiating with an instructor and their Canadian peers as they prepared for, observed, and performed oral presentations. This study suggests that a teacher could mediate the learning development for a given task by setting up some tasks in which students could work together.

Many other studies have addressed the importance of socialization process into the classroom practice especially in the classes involving various

cultural groups (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1997; Klinger & Schumm, 1998, Skilton-Sylvester, 2001; Stevens, Slavin, & Farnish, 1991). Stevens et al. (1991), in their experimental study involving fourth-grade students from ethnically diverse schools, randomly assigned students to three groups (cooperative group with traditional instruction, traditional instruction, and cooperative group). They found that a cooperative group dominated the first two groups in terms of learning outcomes. Similarly, Klinger & Schumm (1998) and Klinger & Vaughn (2000) conducted discourse analyses of the peer talk of cooperative group to examine how in-class communication channel while working in peer groups helps ESL students negotiate expertise and difficulties in the mainstream English classrooms. They showed that working together with American peers could broaden interactional opportunities for ESL students, addressing the importance of creating an in-class communication channel available to minority students.

However, the studies on cooperative learning in L2 English classes tended to have difficulties in explaining the multiple learning situations shaped by many ways of interaction going awry. As Skilton-Sylvester (2001) demonstrates, there are many ways patterns of interaction can go awry in the mainstream classroom involving EFL students. Some EFL students with limited linguistic knowledge on target language don't have any communication channel to participate in classroom practices. And, in many cases, any attempt to involve them in learning practices ended up with broken communication. Jacob, Leggett, and Myers (1996) and O'Connor and Jenkins (1996) clearly illustrated this point. They found a wide range of opportunities available to L2 learners during the oral interaction. However, these opportunities occurred relatively infrequently or were superficial. Some EFL students either discussed simple aspects of L2 learning during the interaction or easily withdrew from group processes.

Only a few studies examined the role of electronic channel in the multi-cultural context. Skilton-Sylvester (2001), in her ethnographic study, showed that a written communication channel played a critical role to bring less able L2 students to classroom practices. Specifically, she showed that promoting a written communication channel in L2 classroom not only worked as an effective learning tool, but provided a means to negotiate the norm for new community of learning as well. Cohen and Miyake (1986) examined the role of electronic literacies in the sociocultural context and showed that e-mail could be an effective communication tool linking students from different cultures. In the multi-cultural classrooms, e-mail communication provided an opportunity to work together by creating an effective learning environment in ESL classrooms. In a similar study, Cortazzi and Jin (1996) looked at the ways that electronic communication played a mediating role in understanding different cultures of learning, broadening the scope of interactional opportunities.

The studies mentioned above suggest that a written interaction can serve as a new channel to mediating academic difficulties by bringing the cultural components into classroom. However, less attention has been paid to the use of written communication channel in L3 learning. Many of the foreign students who need to learn Korean as their L3 are likely to face challenges quite different from L2 learning. For example, even foreign students who are proficient in English tend to have little chance to use their L2 (English) in Korean-speaking classrooms without any support from their L1 (native language). Such lack of communication channels for these students is likely to constrain their interactional opportunities in Korean classes.

In the spirit of Skilton-Sylvester (2001), this study examines how Mongolian university students who have studied Korean in Korean-speaking classes use electronic communication channel to overcome the challenges they face in the mainstream Korean classroom.

III. METHODS

1. Participants and classroom contexts

The participants for this study consisted of 3 Mongolian college students who took an English class (English 102) as the general educational requirement at an urban university. This English course was a multi-cultural in that several students from the foreign countries, though the majority of subjects were the first- and second-year Korean students, participated in this study. English 102 (a total of 40 students) was considered as a process-oriented reading-writing class in that students would engage in the composing process using the thematically related reading texts as source materials. In this respect, students in this class were expected to engage in various types of classroom activities (i.e., group works, reading and writing discussions) over the semester.

The Mongolian students in a Korean-speaking English class were the native speakers of Mongolia who could speak and write English fluently as their L2. Before coming to the university in Korea, these students had the opportunities to learn English in an international high school in Mongolia in which English was used as a main communication tool. However, their literacy skills in Korean seemed not sufficient to take any Korean class since they had a limited experience in learning Korean. The Mongolian students in class never had a chance either to practice Korean as their L3 in their country or to participate in formal language training in Korea.

Three Mongolian students from an English 102 course (a total of 40 students) agreed to participate in my study and signed consent forms after each individual learned about his/her rights as a research participant from the researcher. Table 1 provides the description of the subjects involved in this study.

Table 1
Characteristics of Informants in Each Section

Subjects	Student A	Student B	Student C	Others
Learning Context	L3	L3	L3	L1(Korean)
Year in Korea	1.5 Yr	1.5 Yr	1.0 Yr	Native
Age(Sex)	23(M)	22(F)	23(M)	22.5
Ethnicity	Mongolian	Mongolian	Mongolian	Korean
TOEIC	720	710	690	540(Average)

Note: 'M' and 'F' in the parentheses denote male and female, respectively.

All of 3 Mongolian students were international students who came to Korea to pursue their academic goals. As shown in Table 1, they shared similar personal traits in terms of ages, years of studying in Korea, and educational backgrounds in their home country. They all were proficient EFL learners who graduated from the same international high school in Mongolia. Students A and B took various Korean classes for three semesters, while student C as an exchange student studied in Korea for two semesters. While all three were able to speak English as their L2, they had limited linguistic resources in Korean as their L3. Their proficiency in English was indicated by the high level of TOEIC scores (707), which were compared to an average TOEIC score (540) for the rest of the Korean students in the class. On the other hand, the majority of Korean students were the native speakers of Korean who had literacy experiences under the mainstream discourse communities.

In the Korean-speaking English classroom, interactional opportunities for the Mongolian students were likely to be constrained especially when English was not used as a median of communication in class. Since classroom communication could occur in various ways (Skilton-Sylvester, 2001),

such as oral and written interactions, an electronic interaction was valued as an appropriate participation in my class. During the written interaction, the Mongolian students were allowed to communicate with peer students and a teacher either using English or Korean. In this respect, an inclusion of electronic interactions as a part of curriculum was the teacher's attempt to link Korean cultures of learning to Mongolian ones. The use of electronic communication channel by Mongolian students who could not speak in Korean in the mainstream way might help to overcome the challenges by providing a new space to interact in their ways. As Skilton-Sylvester (2001) mentioned, electronic communication was connected to a regular part of student-student and student-teacher interactions through listserv or e-mail in class.

Korean students have used electronic communication in the classroom to navigate their participations in a new culture of learning. However, it is important to realize that they have not just participated in a static system, but they have been a part of changing the class dynamic to better address their expectations as Korean students studying in the United States. (2001: 236)

2. Data Collection and Analytic Procedure

The data were collected through three methods over a semester. First, to assess the Mongolian students' views on good teaching and learning and ways of interacting in class, the questionnaire was administrated at the beginning of the class (i.e., see Appendix, for detailed information). Second, the written data (listserv postings and e-mails with the instructor) were collected to analyze ways of using a written communication channel by the Mongolian students. Third, informal interviews with Mongolian students conducted during the individual conferences were documented. All these data were used to analyze the role of electronic L2 communication by the Mongolian students in negotiating the challenges during the classroom

practices in the Korean-speaking classroom .

3. Data Analysis

1) Data Analysis

Upon completion of data, the researcher conducted the data analysis according to several different schemes, using the Constant Comparative method (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, & Coleman, 2000; Patton, 1990). The analyses consisted of two distinctive phases. In the first phase, the interactional patterns of engaging in classroom practices by the Mongolian students were analysed. Specifically, the difficulties they experienced in the mainstream Korean English class were identified. In the second phase, using the analysis obtained in phase 1 as baseline data for the second phase analysis, this paper examined the specific ways that the Mongolian students used an electronic communication channel to mediate such difficulties and thus to expand their interactional circles.

The analysis in phase 1 focused on examining ways of engaging in classroom interaction by the Mongolian students in relation to the barriers to constraining classroom interactions. Using the questionnaire concerning the students' approaches to classroom interactions and interviews with them, two sub-categories (i.e., teaching and learning and classroom dynamics) were identified. The types of obstacles to classroom participations emerging from the data analysis were coded into two sub-categories: interactional challenges arising from a) different approaches to cultural learning (Kim, 2001; Skilton-Sylvester, 2001) and b) lack of communication channels (Pavelanko, 2002).

The analysis in phase 2 focuses on the use of e-mail and listserv postings by Mongolian students. Specifically, ways of using computer-mediated communication were categorized into a) use of L2, b) use of both L2 and L3 (i.e., code switching and mixed use of L2 and L3), and c) use of L3. The levels of electronic participation by the students were coded in terms of:

- (a) The degree of electronic interaction denoted by the total number of electronic communications students used over a semester and
- (b) Levels of engagement were coded according to:
 - a complete sequence (i.e., a completion of a sequence of electronic communications, such as initiating a comment-responding to others' comments-replying to them).
 - an incomplete sequence (i.e., an electronic communication that breaks a sequence of cycle above)

IV. Results

This study examined how Mongolian students who could not speak in Korean in the mainstream way engaged in the electronic communication as a new channel to expand their interactional opportunities. The following section presents the results from this study, which would provide insights into the role of electronic L2 communication in an English classroom in Korea.

1. Students' Approaches to Classroom Interactions

1) Views on Approaches to Good Teaching and Learning

In a survey that investigated the students' views on teaching and learning and on classroom interaction, both Mongolian and Korean students shared common grounds on the norms for good classroom practices. In general, the approaches to good teaching and learning perceived by Mongolian students were not different from those by Korean students. Table 2 summarizes the survey results for appropriate classroom practices viewed by both the Korean and Mongolian students.

Teaching and Learning Practices:

1. A good learning approach is to keep learning from classroom interaction rather than learning through individual practices and memorization.
2. A good teacher should share power with students in class rather than control the classroom.
3. A student should pay more attention to finding his/her own ways of learning rather than following what a teacher orders.
4. A student should actively participate in classroom practices rather than just preparing for the class.

Classroom Interaction:

5. A good learning is to keep learning from classroom interaction rather than learning through individual practices and memorization.
6. It is important to engage more in involving other students in classroom discussions.
7. It is more desirable to have a chance to practice in groups rather than practice individually.
8. I'd like to help less able students in class during the classroom interaction.

Table 2
Students' Views on the Norms for Classroom Practices

Survey		Mean Scores		
		Mongolian Students	Korean Students	Class Mean (SD)
Teaching and Learning	Item 1(Interactive Learning)	3.6	3.7	3.6(.47)
	Item 2(Power Relation)	3.9	3.8	3.3(.49)
	Item 3(Independent Learning)	3.8	3.8	3.8(.39)
	Item 4(Participation)*	3.9	3.5	3.6(.44)
Classroom Interaction	Item 5(Classroom Activity)	4.1	3.8	3.9(.33)
	Item 6(Classroom Activity)	3.9	3.7	3.5(.37)
	Item 7(Group Practice)	3.9	3.7	3.6(.43)
	Item 8(Helping Behavior)*	4.3	3.5	3.7(.42)
Total Mean		3.9	3.6	3.6(.46)

Note: "strongly disagree"=1; "disagree"=2; "undecided"=3; "agree"=4; "strongly

agree"=5. "*" denotes *t*-test result of the significant mean difference at the 5% significance level.

When it comes to good learning and teaching approaches perceived by the Mongolian students, their responses provided evidence contradicting the conceptions of Asian learners reported in many prior studies (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Hammond & Gao, 2002). The mean score for interactive learning (item 1) was 3.6, which was compared with 3.7 for Korean students. Specifically, in the response to item 1, the Mongolian students' preference for 'interactive learning' overwhelmed the commonly-cited conception of 'learning through memorization by Asian learners' (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Hammond & Gao, 2002). They viewed the individual ways of learning, such as individual practices and memorization, as less desirable, revealing more preference for learning through the interaction.

In the response to power relationship in item 2, the Mongolian students showed higher preference for the learner-centered approach. They put more value on the teaching of sharing power than that of holding power, casting a negative view on the teacher-directed classroom climates. In item 3 (mean score of 3.8), the students reported their desire to develop their own ways of learning instead of the teacher-directed learning practices. They positioned themselves as active participants of a learning community rather than passive recipients of knowledge. In responding to the participation over preparation in item 4, the Mongolian students had a higher mean score (3.9) than that (3.5) reported by Korean students. The Mongolian students indicated the relative value of class participation over preparation, recognizing the important role of the classroom participation.

When it comes to classroom practices (items 5 to 8), the Mongolian students like Korean students revealed the strong tendency toward classroom engagement and their roles in class as active participants. The mean values for items 5 and 6 reported by the Mongolian students were 4.1 and 3.9, respectively, indicating that their views were skewed to the cooperative

learning continuum. It suggests that students value 'communicative classroom' as a more desirable approach, when compared with the whole class, teacher-directed instructional practices. The Mongolian tended to view 'working together' (Item 7) and 'helping others and others' assistances through the classroom interaction (Item 8) as more valuable classroom dynamics. In particular, helping behaviors in classroom (Item 8 with a mean score of 4.3) were highly valued by the Mongolian students, which was compared with 3.5 for Korean students. With respect to the classroom practices, the students revealed their preferences for 'communicative and interactive approach,' and they also viewed that a good educational system should encourage cooperation over competition among students.

In short, Mongolian college students possessed the well developed views on teaching and learning in two pedagogy areas that were not different from those of Korean students. It was suggested that good teaching and learning could share common ground across different cultures. Mongolian students valued the learner-centered learning and teaching approach as desirable, providing evidence not consistent with the findings from many prior studies (Cortazzi & Jin, 2002; Hammond & Gao, 2002). With respect to the classroom practices, the students revealed their preferences for 'communicative and interactive approach,' and they also viewed that a good educational system should encourage cooperation over competition among students.

2. Challenges to Being Active Participants

The interview data conducted through the individual conferences were used to analyze challenges they encountered during the classroom interactions. As opposed to their descriptions about good teaching and learning discussed in the previous section, all three Mongolian students positioned themselves as inactive participants and passive recipients of knowledge in class. They reported the lack of Korean proficiency and FL

learning environment as key obstacles to constrain their interactional opportunities. These students didn't have any effective communication channel in a Korean-speaking English class. While their abilities to speak in Korean as L3 were quite limited, the use of English as their L2 was not encouraged in class, leading them to interact on the margin.

The results from the questionnaire and interviews with the students demonstrate that although the Mongolian students possessed the well developed perceptions on teaching and learning, their literacy practices were often seriously constrained by the traditional classroom in Korea. Throughout the semester, there were only several incidences where the Mongolian students participated in classroom discussions. When the researcher closely looked at their participating behaviors, they just gave the responses to the teacher's questions or easily withdrew in the middle of discussions rather than initiated the issues or discussions. As the Mongolian students in class shaped themselves as the inactive participants, they failed to use classroom practices as a social place to learn a new culture of learning through an interaction with their Korean peers. Throughout the semester, they had participated in the classroom interaction on the margin, suggesting that interactional opportunities available to them were seriously restricted. The key challenges described by the Mongolian students were reported in Table 3.

Table 3
Classroom Challenges Reported by the Mongolian Students

Group	Challenges
Student A	Lack of proficiency in Korean (L3) Mono-lingual classroom (no use of L2(English) as a communication tool) Limited support from their L1 (Mongolian)
Student B	Lack of proficiency in Korean (L3) Mono-lingual classroom (no use of L2 (English) as a communication tool) No responses from peer students

Student C Lack of proficiency in Korean (L3)

Mono-lingual classroom (no use of L2 (English) as a communication tool)

Teacher-directed classroom and lack of group interaction

The major challenges Mongolian students encountered in a Korean-speaking classroom were found to be the lack of proficiency in Korean (3/3 students) and mono-lingual classroom cultures (3/3). Since all three students had limited linguistic knowledge on Korean, their ability to communicate with Korean was not sufficient to take class in a Korean-speaking class. They didn't have any prior experience of learning Korean as their L3 and Korean culture of learning before coming to Korea. In particular, during the learning process in Korea, they didn't have any support from their native language, from L2, and from classroom practices. Such learning conditions forced them to engage in self-learning process (i.e., individual learning practices), making them vulnerable to pursuing their academic goals in Korean classes.

While the Mongolian students were proficient L2 learners, they reported that English hardly served as a L2 communication channel in Korean classes. During the interviews with the Mongolian students, they repeatedly addressed the importance of a L2 communication channel in FL classrooms. The following excerpts from the students show how and why their interactional opportunities is limited in a Korean class.

I never ever doubt about using English in such [multi-cultural] classes. Since I didn't speak Korean, I couldn't participate in classroom discussions. For that reason, I need to ask questions in English. But, in many cases, no one [Korean students] respond to my questions and classroom becomes silent. I am so afraid of that. (Student C, individual conferences)

I feel like I am not allowed to use English in class while English is the only language I can use. So, I don't have any chance to talk in class. Last semester, I didn't say anything in Korean classes. If I can not use English,

the only thing I can do is just sit and write. (Student A, individual conferences)

"What is the homework next week?" That is the only question I ask in class. I study hard [herself], but I really want to learn something from the classroom lectures (Student B, individual conferences).

As shown in the above excerpts, communication circles in class for Mongolian students were so limited for various reasons. Student C mentioned his limited linguistic ability as a barrier to interact while student A described how he was often marginalized in Korean classes. Specifically, student C pointed out her inability to negotiate difficulties in the mono-lingual cultures of learning she experienced in a multi-cultural FL classroom. Similarly, student B addressed the importance of L2 communication channel by raising the issue of communication problem in Korean classes.

However, real challenges they faced was not classroom interaction itself, but the acquisition of subject matter. Since they had no effective communication channel serving as a tool to negotiate meaning, their ways of interacting with others in class was likely to be superficial. As Skilton-Sylvester (2001) points out, the quality of interaction should be recognized as a barrier to learning practices in a multi-cultural classes since it had a direct influence on students' learning outcome. For Mongolian students who couldn't speak in Korean in the mainstream way, any attempt to involve them in classroom practices would end up with unexpected outcomes, negatively influencing on their learning process. This point was addressed by student A who expressed a negative opinion on open class discussion.

I know I need to participate in classroom activities, but to be honest with you, I don't learn anything from others during the class. In many times, I spent most of my time in reading the textbook and solved the

problems during the class (Student A, individual conferences).

Similarly, student C described why her participatory behaviors were not related to learning outcome.

Sometimes, I memorized what I need to say and just talk about it when I need to say something in class. It makes me angry, but that's everything I can do in class (Student C, individual conferences).

The excerpts above clearly illustrate that the class interaction itself does not provide the Mongolian students with a place to negotiate different cultures of learning or to share their opinions with Korean peers. It also shows that classroom teachers would play a very limited role in class interactions when an alternative communication channel is not available.

3. Expanding Communication Circles Using an Electronic Channel

The ways Mongolian students engaged in electronic communication were quite different from in-class interaction that they repositioned themselves as active participants. A written communication channel helped to broaden their communication circles by bringing Korean peers into L2 communication and by gradually leading them to L3 interaction with their Korean peers.

1) Electronic Interactions by Mongolian Students

The written data (i.e., e-mails and listserv postings) completed during the semester were analyzed to examine the extent to which the Mongolian students participated in electronic interactions. Total communication units ($N = 552$) produced by the students over the semester are reported in Table 4.

The ways of participating in online communication by the Mongolian students differed widely in terms of the quantity and levels of engagement in written interactions. In online interactions with an instructor through

e-mails, the Mongolian students were more active in participating in electronic communications than their Korean peers. Specifically, an average of e-mail interactions generated by three Mongolian students over the semester was 12, which was higher than the average communication units (5.7) for the class. The corresponding numbers for the listserv postings (electronic discussion board) were 23 and 21 respectively, which were also higher than the average unit (8.0) for this class. This results show that Mongolian students, when an alternative communication channel was available, tended to more frequently interact with their teacher and Korean peers through either L2 or L3 communication over a semester.

Table 4
Analysis of the Electronic Communication Unit s

Students	Analysis of Communication Units		
	E-mail (percent)	Listsrv (percent)	Complete Sequence
Student A	12(5.2%)	23(7.1%)	11(7.6%)
Student B	14(6.1%)	21(6.5%)	9(6.2%)
Student C	10(4.4%)	19(5.9%)	15(10.3%)
Korean Students [Mean Value]	193(84.3%) [5(2.3%)]	260(80.5%) [7.2(2.2%)]	110(75.9%) [3.1(2.1%)]
Average C-unit	5.7	8.0	3.6
Total C-unit	229	323	145

Note: A complete sequence denotes an interactional incidence that completes a sequence of electronic communications, such as "initiating a comment-others' opinions-responding to others."

When it comes to an analysis of the complete sequence that measured the quality of interaction, the Mongolian students dominated their Korean peers. As shown in Table 3, the numbers of complete sequences for students A, B, and C were 11, 9, and 15, respectively, which were compared with 3.6, or an

average figure corresponding to their Korean peers. It suggests that the Mongolian students not only participate in online discussions, but engaged in ongoing interaction with their peers through a sequence of ask-question responses. A sample incidence for the complete sequence done between student B and their Korean peers illustrates how he used L2 communication channel as a social place to involve Korean peers in his communication circle:

In class discussion regarding animal life, many students argue that killing animals for foods should be banned, although it was unavoidable to killing them for medical purposes. But, I have no idea about this argument. Whether killing animals is for medical purpose or for foods, animals are not able to avoid pains and sufferings either way. Am I right? (Student C, listserv posting)

That is a good point. But, the reason why we allow killing animals for foods is because it saves a lot of human life. So, it should be different case from killing animals for foods. (A listserv response by a Korean peer)

You don't seem to understand my point. It is impossible for people to survive without the protein from meat. In this respect, killing animals for foods also save human life. For that reason, if your argument is pain and sufferings, you need to oppose killing of animal for medical purposes. (Student C's response to a Korean peer)

As illustrated in the example above, the Mongolian students not only dominated their Korean peers in terms of complete sequences but used a L2 communication channel to bring their peers into discussion as well. In this respect, a written communication channel clearly helped to broaden their interactional opportunities, emphasizing the importance of an alternative communication channel available to them out of class (Skilton-Sylvester, 2001).

In discussing the role of computer-mediated communication, electronic

channel can provide an equitable interactional setting for students whose native language is not available in multi-cultural classrooms (Dixon-Krauss, 1996; Kim, 2009; Skilton-Sylvester, 2001). For Mongolian students, an electronic communication served as a channel to negotiate cultural differences through interactions with their counterparts. Throughout the class, they used L2 communication channel as a tool to socialize into Korean cultures of learning. The social role played by a written communication is illustrated by students B and C. In the interviews with the researcher conducted at the end of the semester, they expressed their understanding of classroom cultures in Korea.

... While I discussed many things with my Korean friends, I was able to understand why they didn't respond to my questions [in English]. [for Korean students] speaking English in a Korean class is like I speak Korean in class. (Student B, interview)

Some Korean students told me that I don't need to worry about participation because it is not evaluated in Korean classes. I knew that preparations for the class and exams seemed to be more important than classroom discussion. So, I try to enjoy my class and use it to learn Korean. I think the best way to learn Korean is to use Korean [in electronic interaction]. (Student A, interview)

When taking a look at the patterns of using L2 in electronic interaction, the Mongolian students used English during the online interaction. However, they tended to use more L3 as their communication tool over time. From an analysis of their written products, the changing pattern of using "L2-L2/L3-L3" were obvious. Although the Mongolian students used more English as their communication tool, the frequency of using L2/L3 (i.e., mixed uses of L2 and L3, such as code switching) was higher at the last half of the semester. The ways of using communication language are reported in Table 5 below.

During the first half of the semester, English was used as a main communication channel by the Mongolian students. For student A, the majority of communication units (10/15 communication units) were produced using English (L2) while a few incidences for L2/L3 (2/15) and L3 (3/15) were found. However, during the second half, the frequency of using L2/L3 and L3 was gradually increased. The corresponding numbers for L2/L3 and L3 were 7/20 and 5/20, respectively. Students B and C also revealed the similar pattern of using more L3 and less L2 in written interactions, as shown in Table5.

Table 5
Patterns of Using Communication Channel

Students	First 8 weeks			Last 8 weeks		
	L2	L2/L3	L3	L2	L2/L3	L3
Student A	10	2	3	8	7	5
Student B	12	3	0	7	8	5
Student C	13	1	1	5	5	4
Korean Students	97	36	129	147	53	90
Total C-unit	132	42	133	167	73	104

Note: L1 denotes the use of English, L2-L3 indicates the mixed use of Korean and English, and L3 means the use of Korean in written communication.

This pattern of interaction indicates that a written communication channel could encourage the Mongolian students to socialize into Korean cultures of learning by repositioning themselves as the active participants in class. Over the course of study, the use of L2 communication provided a channel to extend interactional opportunities for Mongolian students by sharing their own opinions with Korean peers. On the other hand, the use of L3 by the Mongolian students during the electronic interaction could be considered as an attempt to involve their Korean peers in discussions.

Specifically, they used more Korean as a communication channel when discussing the issues not related to classroom contents, such as asking a cheaper place to buy some Korean novels. In interviews with the Mongolian students during the individual conferences, students A and C illustrated why they interacted with Korean peers using L3 when a L2 communication channel was available to them.

I have so many Korean teachers in my class. That's the reason. I need to learn Korean to take classes here. In Korea, I feel like a baby because there are so many things I cannot do myself in school. But, I have many Korean friends who know every information I need. (Student A, individual conference)

I like to use English when I participate in classroom discussion. I am better able to write English and express my opinion to them. But, I use Korean when I need class information from them. (Student C, individual conference)

In the excerpts above, both students A and C used a L3 channel as a social place to negotiate difficulties they encountered in their academic life. In particular, they positioned themselves as experts when communicating with peers using L2. They, however, reshaped themselves as novice learners when they used L3 communication channel. In discussing an important role of cultures of learning in multi-cultural classrooms, understanding different learning contexts should become an essential part of teaching practices (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). An electronic communication channel also provides an excellent space to share students' expectations about classroom practices and to negotiate different cultures of learning.

In short, an alternative communication channel served as a social place to teach and learn different cultures of learning, and such interactional dynamics would not be achieved without a written communication channel. An electronic interaction helps to broaden interactional opportunities for the

Mongolian students by teaching what they need to learn and what Korean students need to know about them. In this respect, an electronic communication should be considered as an essential part of teaching practices especially in a multi-cultural classroom.

V. Conclusions

From the tradition of the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 1990, 2004; Skilton-Sylvester, 1997, 2003), this study examined the role of electronic communication by focusing on ways of using L2 and L3 communication channels in electronic interactions by Mongolian students. As evidenced by many studies (Coleman, 1998; Kim, 2001; Lee, 1996; Skilton-Sylvester, 2001), this study showed that interactional opportunities for Mongolian students in English class were seriously constrained. The major challenges they encountered in a Korean-speaking class were lacks of linguistic competence in Korean as their L3, little support from their native language (L1), and mono-lingual classroom cultures, which served as a barrier to using English as a communication channel. In classroom interaction, these students shaped themselves as passive recipients of knowledge over the semester, interacting with their peers on the margin.

This study showed that lack of communication channel in class was the challenges that a group of Mongolian students needed to overcome to be successful learners in the mainstream classroom. When Mongolian students were allowed to use English as their L2 in out-of-classroom practices, they were able to broaden their communication circles by actively participating in electronic interactions. The use of electronic communication by Mongolian students contributed to changing class dynamics in that an electronic channel not only broadened their communication spans, but helped to reshape themselves as active learners of a community of learning as well. Specifically, a written communication served as a socialization place to

negotiate expertise and difficulties they encountered in a Korean-speaking classroom.

The patterns of using L2 and L3 by Mongolian students clearly showed their processes of being socialized into Korean cultures of learning through the electronic interaction. However, the results show that the role played by the L2 and L3 communication channels differed widely. They often took a position as active learners and experts when using L2 as a main communication. On the other hand, L3 communication channel served as a tool to overcome the challenges they encountered in their daily life and to learn Korean. In the "L2-L2/L3-L3" pattern, a communication channel tended to shift from L2 to L3 (on a L2-L3 continuum) over the course of study, suggesting that their attempts to use more Korean in online interactions could be considered as the process of socializing into a Korean learning community (Hornberger, 1990).

This study provides some implications applicable to multi-cultural classrooms in which students from two or more cultures interact. First, an alternative communication channel should be considered as an essential part of teaching practices especially in the class involving minority students. We as teachers need to know classroom interactions can occur in various ways. As shown in this study, a written communication channel can play a crucial role in reshaping their identity as active contributors to classroom practices. In this respect, the electronic communication, when incorporated as a regular part of class interaction, can help minority students socialize into a new learning community without loss of their own cultural status (Norton, 1997).

Another pedagogical implication is that EFL classroom should be appropriately structured across contexts. As a population of foreign students increases rapidly, traditional college classrooms in Korea become inter-cultural classrooms. Interactional dynamics in such classes take place within a wider range of contexts (Turner, 1997). Rather than impose the Korean norms underlying traditional classrooms, teachers need to find a way to create "cultural synergy" (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). By providing an effective

communication channel through which various languages can interact, classroom teachers should help minority students negotiate cultural differences and academic difficulties they encounter in their daily life. Bilingual classroom can be a good example to coherently put the various elements together in classroom teaching (Tudor, 2003).

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❖ ABSTRACT

L3 Socialization of a Group of Mongolian Students Through the Use of a Written Communication Channel in Korea: A Case Study

Kim, Sun-Young

This paper explored the academic socialization of a group of Mongolian college students, learning Korean as their L3 (Third Language), by focusing on their uses of an electronic communication channel. From a perspective of the continua of bi-literacy, this case study investigated how Mongolian students who had limited exposure to a Korean learning community overcame academic challenges through the use of a written communication channel as a tool in the socialization process. Data were collected mainly through three methods: written products, interviews, and questionnaires. The results from this study were as follows. Interactional opportunities for these minority students were seriously constrained during the classroom practices in a Korean-speaking classroom. They also described the lack of communicative competence in Korean and the limited roles played by L2 (English) communication as key barriers to classroom practices. However, students' ways of engaging in electronic interactions differed widely in that they were able to broaden interactional circles by communicating their expertise and difficulties with their Korean peers through the electronic channel. More importantly, the communication pattern of "L2-L2/L3-L3" (on a L2-L3 continuum) emerging from data demonstrated how these students used a written channel as a socialization tool to mediate their learning process in a new community of learning. This study argues that a written communication channel should be taken as an essential part of teaching practices especially for foreign students who cannot speak Korean fluently in multi-cultural classes.

Key Words

통신방법, 제 3 언어교육, 학습문화, 다문화수업

written communication channel, L3 teaching and learning, cultures of learning,

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Appendix

Questionnaire for Classroom Interactions

The purpose of this interview is to understand "your experiences in participating classroom practices (i.e., participation, preparation, classroom activities). In particular, please try to describe difficulties you faced in the Korean classrooms. Please feel free to respond to the following questions below. Thank you!

A. Personal Information:

1. Name: _____ 2. Age : _____
3. Nationally: _____
4. The number of years studying in Korea.: _____
5. How many hours, on average, do you invest in preparing for a class:

6. How do you evaluate your ability to communicate with Korean? (please check one.)
1) excellent 2) good 3) fair 4) poor 5) very poor
7. Do you have any prior experience in learning Korean in a language program before coming to Korea?
 - 1) No.
 - 2) if yes, indicate the period and language institution you attended.
Training period: _____ Institution: _____

B. Your Views on Classroom Teaching and Learning

[“strongly disagree”=1; “disagree”=2; “undecided”=3; “agree”=4; “strongly agree”=5]

1.	I believe it is important to engage more in involving other students in classroom discussions.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2.	I'd like to help less able students in class during the classroom interaction.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
3.	A good class practice is to provide an opportunity to learn from other students rather than learn from a teacher.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
4.	It is more desirable to have a chance to practice in groups rather than practice individually.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
5.	A good educational approach is to encourage cooperative learning rather than encourage competitions among students.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
6.	A good teacher should control the classroom rather than share power with students in class.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
7.	A good student should pay more attention to following what a teacher orders rather than trying to find my own ways of learning.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
8.	A good learning approach is to keep learning through individual practices and memorization rather than learning from classroom interaction.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

C. Classroom Interaction [Interview Protocol]

[Think about your ways of interacting with others in class.]

1. How do you describe the extent to which you participate in classroom practices? (i.e., active, somewhat active, very inactive)
2. Please explain to me why you believe so.
3. Describe the types of activities you engage in? For example, you are like to work with your peer students, or to ask questions to a teacher during the class.

4. Please tell me about the most difficult things you experience in the Korean classes.
5. How do you overcome such challenges you faced in the Korean-speaking classes?
5. Based on your experience, what is the "most demotivating thing" in Koran class?
6. Think about your ways of interacting with others in class. what is the "most motivating thing" in class?

D. Use of Electronic (i.e., e-mail, discussion board) Channels

1. Have you ever use electronic communication tools, such as e-mail, discussion board?
2. If so, what are they and how do you frequently use those during the semester?
3. What are the main purposes of using these communication tools? You may use them:
 - a) to ask questions,
 - b) to get helps from peer students and a teacher,
 - c) to exchange an opinion on the issue discussed in the class, and
 - d) to make friendships with peer students and a teacher
 - e) If you have any other purposes, explain these to me.