Teaching an ESP Writing Course Collaboratively through a Web Community

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This qualitative research was conducted to investigate how to implement an ESP writing course taught in collaboration utilizing the web community. An ESP writing course was designed for the English education students who were preparing for the national teachers' certificate exam. During the intensive two-week ESP writing course, the students wrote essays on four English education topics and received feedback on the structure and the content. Two native English speaking teachers and a bilingual Korean teacher provided the feedback collaboratively through the web community. The researchers suggest three implications from this study: 1) organization of pre-course teacher training, 2) establishment of virtual teacher collaboration, and 3) implementation of the virtual writing lab.

I. INTRODUCTION

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is English teaching that is tailored to the specific learners' needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). ESP can be again divided largely into English for academic purposes (EAP) and English for occupational purposes (EOP) (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Johns & Price-Machado, 2001). In an EFL environment like Korea, ESP is more common than in ESL because the learners do not need to use English in their every day life, but they try to learn English for either academic purposes or occupational purposes. Especially with the expansion of the science and

business industries in the current globalized world, EFL learners' English communication skill is considered as essential making it the learners' primary concern. This results in the gradual growth of demands for the ESP courses in colleges and universities in an EFL context (Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1991; Johns & Price-Machado, 2001).

In case of Korea, since the Ministry of Education, Sciences & Technology recently announced that the prospect English teachers should take the English essay writing test as a part of the national teachers' certificate exam starting from year 2009, an imminent demand for an ESP writing course has aroused from English education majors. In order to respond to the students' needs, an ESP writing course needs to be designed for the students who are preparing for the exam.

However, as it is in most ESP courses, the major issue in designing a writing course for English education majors is also the teacher availability. For instance, even an experienced native English teacher who could provide the students with quality feedback is not likely to be able to deal with English education theories in depth. On the other hand, a bilingual Korean teacher who has expert knowledge in the field usually feels inadequate in providing expert feedback on students' English writing. In this consideration, the researchers assumed that a collaborative teaching in which each teacher's merit can be utilized at its maximum would boost the effectiveness of an ESP writing class.

With this assumption, a temporary ESP writing course was designed for the candidates of the teachers' certificate exam in order to investigate the efficiency of teaching an ESP writing course collaboratively. For this, two native English speaking teachers and a Korean teacher who is also one of the researchers of this study participated. During the course, the native English teachers and the subject teacher played complimentary roles in that the English teachers provided the students with the feedback on the structural features while the Korean teacher researcher focused on the subject in her feedback.

Once the course was established, a qualitative research was conducted eliciting three major issues in teaching the ESP writing course. In this paper, the initial course design and the qualitative research findings will be discussed in detail. This article will also make suggestions on three major tasks to be completed in order to implement the ESP writing course in collaboration through the web community.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

In the early stage of ESP development, the ESP courses were mostly focused on linguistic analysis. In other words, as there was a great demand for English language learning in order to understand the international language at the time of technology and commerce expansion, certain vocabulary and structures that were frequently used in these fields were at the core of the course. However, this type of linguistically-focused approach was not very successful because it did not motivate the students or activate students' learning in any sense (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

With regard to the characteristics of ESP, Strevens (1988) proposed four conclusive characteristics: 1) should meet the learners' specific needs, 2) should be related to particular content areas, 3) should focus on the language features that are appropriate in the target content areas lexically, syntactically or semantically, and 4) should have characteristics contrasting to general English which have no specific purpose. This indicates that an ESP course should not only be language focused, but also, or rather more importantly, be learner-centered. In fact, Belcher (2004) asserts that ESP has been learner-centered all the time since its beginning in that the very definition of ESP prioritizes the learners' particular needs and goals.

The learner-centeredness of ESP underlines the significance of the learners' needs assessment. Since the ESP course is to teach English to satisfy learners' specific needs, the course materials as well as the course objectives should be adequately adjusted depending on the learners' needs (Belcher, 2004). The course duration and level assignments should also be made in consideration of the learners' needs (Dudley-Evans, 2001). That is, while some ESP courses such as preparation for tests or job application may be more effective to run short-term, other ESP courses like oral presentation skills in a professional field are likely to be better off as long-term classes. Like this, when the learners' needs are in the center of the attention, an ESP course can be organized in a wide range of formats.

2. Collaborative Teaching

In collaborative teaching, more than one teacher are involved in the whole process

of planning, developing and teaching a course. The co-teachers collaborate in different ways; 1) the teachers teach a course together in each class, 2) the teachers take different roles alternatively, 3) a teacher takes the leader's role, and the other teacher supports the teacher, or 4) the teachers take charge of different projects while the students rotate among the projects (James, 1995). Collaborative teaching can enhance students' learning by enabling the teachers to respond more keenly to the learners' needs. That is, since the teachers also have different potentials and expertise, they can enrich the class by taking different roles depending on the students' needs and the course objectives.

Such benefit of collaborative teaching can be increased by blended learning. The blended learning is a teaching convention which aims to improve teaching and learning by utilizing both the face-to-face instruction and online learning (Doering, 2006). In a research comparing e-learning, blended learning and classroom learning, Han (2006) draws the conclusion that the students learn the content knowledge best in blended learning although students overall English proficiency does not show any significant differences among the three types of learning. This illuminates the possibility that the ESP writing course, which is a type of content-based learning, might be best taught by adopting both face-to-face and online instruction methodologies.

3. Network-based Language Teaching

Since the 1990s, originating from the idea of utilizing the interactive feature of the electronic network, computer has been more actively adopted in second/foreign language classes. The socio-cognitive perspective in language learning underscores the learner-learner interaction as well as the teacher-learner interaction inside and outside the classroom in which the learners can experience varied contexts where the language is used not to mention learn specific target knowledge (Breen, 1987; Candlin, 1987; Flowerdew, 1993; Long & Crookes, 1992; Snow, 1991). The interactive feature of the Internet not only could enhance learners' active participation in learning but also could facilitate the communication in teacher collaboration.

Especially, the network-based language teaching is widely used in distance learning since the Internet provides the tool for language instruction beyond time and space. In fact, a number of researches in English language teaching utilizing network-based teaching methodology have been conducted reporting positive results (Choi & Kang,

2002; Han, 2006; Kim, 2000; Park, 2001; Yang, 1999). In a study of collaborative teaching in cyber instruction, Yang (1999) illustrated how the network-based teaching facilitated the communication among the teachers who taught distance courses together in their preparation, development and management of the course.

III. METHODOLOGY

1. Participants

In this study, a total of 28 students attended an ESP writing course for two weeks from July 21 to August 1 in 2008. All the students were English education majors who were preparing for the national teachers' certificate exam. Six students were graduate students, 22 were the fourth-year undergraduate.

Two native speaking teachers and one bilingual Korean teacher researcher participated in this course. The native teachers led the classroom activities and provided feedback on students' writing. The Korean teacher researcher coordinated the program by monitoring the student work and the teachers' feedback and providing weekly content feedback to the students.

In order to maximize the feedback opportunities, the students were divided into two groups, face-to-face feedback group or online feedback group, depending on their preferences. This two-way feedback system was intended because since the course was conducted during the vacation, some students would not be able to make visits for feedback on occasion. Eleven out of 28 students chose to receive feedback face-to-face while 17 students through online.

2. Class Activities

1) Course Objectives

The course was designed to help students develop academic essay writing skills specifically regarding the English education topics. Four practice test questions were made based on the sample questions of the practice test, which was administered by the Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE) in June, 2008 (Appendix

A). In this practice test, there were four types of questions, but in this course, only two types (No.1 of class 1 and No. 4 of class 2) were selected due to the time constraints. In the first week, students practiced writing on the sample questions of the KICE practice test. And then in the second week, students practiced writing on two more similar questions. The major objective of this course was to provide the students with effective feedback so that the students could improve their writing skills to meet the requirements of the national exam.

2) Class Procedures

The class consisted of two aspects: the whole group sessions and individual feedback sessions. The whole group sessions were given on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; individual sessions on Tuesday and Thursday. During the whole group sessions on Monday and Wednesday, both the face-to-face and online feedback group students met with their native teachers and did writing activities; topic discussion→ brainstorming→ outlining→ writing rough 1st drafts. As homework assignments, students completed their 1st drafts and uploaded their writings in the web community.

During the individual feedback sessions on Tuesday and Thursday, the teachers provided their feedback on student writing either face-to-face or through online as the teachers were assigned to at the beginning of the course. The native teachers' feedback was discussed before the course began to be focused on: 1) organization, 2) mechanics, 3) vocabulary (wrong word, word choice, spelling, etc.), and 4) grammar (pronouns, articles, conjunctions, etc.). The native teachers' feedback is named as the structure feedback in contrast to the content feedback provided by the Korean teacher who majored in English education. The content feedback was provided as a review on the English education theories by a bilingual Korean teacher on Friday in relation to the two topics, which the students worked on during the week. For this, the Korean teacher monitored student work uploaded in the web community focusing on whether the necessary English education theories were appropriately adopted in their responses.

Several teachers' conferences were made before the course began, while the course was running and after it was finished. During the conferences, the teachers planned the classroom activities, the feedback types and modes and discussed what the students' needs were and how to respond to them. The following table shows the summary of the class procedures.

TABLE 1. Summary of Class Procedures

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Instructors	NT	NT	NT	NT	KT/NT
Content	Writing activity: Question 1	Structure feedback	Writing activity: Question 2	Structure feedback	Content feedback Writing activity: writing tips
Mode	F2F	F2F/Online	F2F	F2F/Online	F2F
Remarks	- KT monitored students' 1ˢᵗ drafts, teachers' feedback, and students' revisions. - NT and KT had teachers' conferences before, during, and after the course.				

* NT: native English speaking teachers / KT: bilingual Korean teacher/ F2F: face-to-face

3. Data Collection

Since this study was conducted as a qualitative research, no manipulation was made at the beginning of the course. Instead, the course was designed only in consideration of students' needs: to prepare for the national teachers' certificate exam. While the course was running, the researchers tried to collect all the class related data such as course planning notes, teachers' conference logs, students' 1ˢᵗ drafts, teachers' feedback, students' revisions, and observation notes as well as student surveys at the end of the course.

Since the Korean teacher who took charge of the content feedback was the researcher, she took field notes of all the course planning process and the teachers' conference logs. Students' 1st drafts and revisions along with the online teacher's feedback were saved automatically on the web community. The offline teacher's feedback was collected at the end of each week for analysis.

While observing the course and collecting the data, the researchers elicited several issues regarding the implementation of an ESP writing course. These issues were asked at the student survey (Appendix B) and at the teachers' conference at the end of the course.

4. Data Analysis

In this qualitative study, the researchers reviewed the students' drafts as well as the teachers' online and offline feedback during the course in order to withdraw research questions. By the end of the course, the researchers developed 8 survey

questions based on their reviews. The 8 questions in the survey intended to ask 1) whether the students found the teacher's feedback effective, 2) what type of teacher feedback was provided and which of the teacher's feedback was helpful, and 3) whether the students' goals in this course were achieved. Since the survey was made on the last day of the course, which was at the peak time of summer vacation, only 16 students out of 28 were able to participate in the survey. All the questions except for Question 2 and 6 were open ended questions. The students were asked to freely write their opinions.

The teachers' conception and evaluation of the course was elicited through four teachers' conferences throughout the course. The researchers analyzed the teachers' views, which the Korean teacher researcher took field notes of during the conferences, comparing and contrasting the views with the students' revealed in the survey.

1) Effectiveness of the Teacher's Feedback

As this course was designed to help the students to be prepared for the national teachers' certificate exam by developing essay writing skills, effective teachers' feedback on students' writing was considered as the major component of the course. That is why Question 2 in the survey asked the overall student reaction to the teacher's feedback to confirm the effectiveness of the course. As the table below demonstrates, 11 students out of 16 said they were satisfied with the teacher's feedback, but 2 said they were not satisfied while 3 responded "middle," which indicated they were not either satisfied or dissatisfied.

TABLE 2. Students' Overall Reaction to the Teacher's Feedback

Survey questions & responses
2. Were you satisfied with the teachers' feedback in general?
a. Yes (11)
b. No (2)
c. Neither (3)

Following Question 2, students were asked to explain why the course was satisfactory or not satisfactory. In the following Table 3, the students' responses were summarized by the category.

TABLE 3. Details of the Students' Reaction to the Teacher's Feedback

Survey questions & summary of responses

	3. Please explain why or why not you were satisfied with the feedback.
satisfied	a. was able to understand the overall structure of the academic essays. (9) b. teacher's feedback on common grammar mistakes was useful. (6) c. teacher's suggestion on vocabulary use was helpful for revision. (2) d. learned how to practice essay writing by myself. (1)
not satisfied	a. feedback on the content (in relation to English education theories) was inadequate. (6) b. lost motivation toward the end of the course due to the time pressure. (1) c. others (2)

The students who responded they were satisfied with the teachers' feedback mostly (9 out of 11) said that they clearly understood the structure of the academic essays. Six students responded they got help from the teacher's feedback on grammar mistakes. Two students specifically mentioned feedback on vocabulary was especially helpful. These elements that the students found useful were all structural features.

On the other hand, one of the biggest concerns of the students who were not satisfied with the teacher's feedback was that there was not enough feedback on the content. Many students remarked at the end of the survey that they wished to receive more feedback on the content from the instructor who majored in English education. Although there was a weekly content review session provided by a Korean teacher who majored in English education, the students thought it was not enough to meet their needs. The students specifically mentioned that they would like to learn how to incorporate the English education theories into their writing, which implies that they wanted to receive feedback during the class in earlier stage of the writing.

2) Types of the Teachers' Feedback

Question 4 and 5 of the survey asked how the students interpreted the teacher's feedback. In Question 4, the students were asked what type of feedback their teachers made on their writing. Question 5 asked the students which of the teacher's feedback was most useful for their revision. The details of the student responses to these questions are as follows.

TABLE 4. Students' Interpretation of the Teachers' Feedback

Survey questions & summary of responses

4. What type of feedback did your teacher mostly provide?
  a. grammar mistakes (14)
  b. natural flow of the writing (6)
  c. logical connection (4)
  d. overall essay structure (3)
  e. clarity (3)
  f. content (3)
  g. vocabulary (1)
5. Which of the teacher's feedback was most useful for your revision?
  a. natural flow of the writing (9)
  b. grammar (8)
  c. logical connection (6)
  d. sentence structure (5)

According to the students' response to Question 4, feedback on grammar mistakes was made most frequently, and then feedback on natural flow of the writing and logical connection followed it marking 10 in total. In response to Question 5, 15 students also indicated that they were helped to gain the coherence by stating that the teacher's feedback on the natural flow of the writing or on the logical connection was most helpful. This outnumbers the students who responded they got most help from the feedback on grammar. This seems to contradict the students' responses with regard to the teachers' feedback in which they remarked that there was not enough content feedback because feedback on the coherence of the writing is definitely referring to the content. However, the students' assumption about the content feedback is observed to mean specific reference to the jargons of the English education field.

The students' articulation of their needs for more content feedback also appears to disagree with the teachers' assumption. In the teachers' conferences, both the teachers reported that they could support the students with the content area as well as the structural features. As discussed above, among the types of the teachers' feedback illustrated in Table 4, feedback on 'the natural flow of the writing' and the 'logical connection' should be considered to have dealt with the content area. The content feedback is observed in the teachers' feedback, which demonstrated that the teachers were assisting the students to get the natural and logical flow in their writing by asking the students questions to clarify their ideas. This is supported by one of the students' comment saying that she was motivated to look over the English education theories

again in order to illustrate her ideas more clearly responding to the teacher's requests for clarification.

In summary, the data reflected in the student survey and the teachers' conferences in regards to the types of the teacher's feedback illustrates that students would like to receive feedback on the general English writing skills as well as on more specific content of their majors. The data also points out an important fact that the students interpret the teachers' feedback differently from the teachers' intention based upon their needs.

3) Students' Goal Achievement

Question 6, 7, and 8 in the survey are intended to find out whether the class was helpful for the students to achieve their goals in this course. As explained earlier, this course was offered to the English education majors who were preparing for the new feature in the national teachers' certificate exam, the essay writing. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the students wanted to improve their essay writing

TABLE 5. The Course Effectiveness

Survey questions & responses
6. Was this course helpful to achieve your goal? 　　a. Yes (15) 　　b. No (0) 　　c. Neither (1)

TABLE 6. Students' Course Evaluation

Survey questions & summary of responses
7. Please explain how this course was helpful or not helpful to achieve your goals. 　　a. Enhanced understanding of the overall essay writing process (5) 　　b. small group discussion helped to extend ideas (3) 　　c. helped to get prepared for the national exam (1) 　　d. motivated to review English education theories in English (1) 　　e. provided with opportunities to write in English (1) 8. Please write your suggestions and/or opinions about the course. 　　a. wish to have faculty who majored in English education; need more feedback on the content (6) 　　b. two weeks are too short; hope to cover more essays. (3) 　　c. hope this course is offered again either during the semester or winter vacation (2) 　　d. no suggestions or opinions (5)

skills, specifically on the English education topics. First, the following Table 5 confirms that the class was beneficial for the students' goal achievement.

As this table illustrates, 15 students out of 16 respondents affirmed that the course helped them to reach their goals. The following questions, Question 7 and 8 reveal more detailed students' evaluation of the course.

This result also elucidates the students' assumption and expectation of the ESP course. While their responses exposed their objectives were fulfilled, the students still requested longer course with more topics and more content-specific feedback. When these requests of the students are considered looking into the other items such as 'motivated to review English education theories in English,' it can be assumed that if the students deal with more essays in an extended time with the same type of guidance, students could be *scaffolded* to explore their major content area by themselves, which would compensate for their needs.

IV. FINDINGS

1. Feedback in ESP Writing

The major issue that was revealed in the above data analysis was that the students request the ESP course should be taught by the professional in the field. However, the reality is that it is not easy or feasible to find the faculty who can teach both the major content and the English essay writing skills. Actually, the reason why this course was designed to teach collaboratively through the web community was to solve this problem. That is, while the native teachers teach the English essay writing skills, the Korean teacher who majored in English education would monitor the students' work on the web and provide content feedback at the end of the week.

However, the limitation in this case was that the timing of the feedback on the content was inappropriate. In other words, since the content feedback was provided after the students wrote their first drafts and even their revisions, students could not make much use of the feedback in actual writing. Moreover, the content feedback time was limited to one hour per week, the teacher was rushed to cover two topics within one hour not to mention having no time to address to any students' writing individually.

The workload on the content feedback provider was also heavy. In order to give feedback on the content area, the teacher should have monitored the 28 students' 1st drafts, the teachers' feedback as well as the students' revisions within four days. Although the content feedback provider did not have to commute to every class, she spent average five hours a day reviewing the students' writing and the teachers' feedback. Supposing that this course was a temporary course during the summer vacation, the teacher who provided the content feedback could cope with the work only because there were no other classes to attend to. In this sense, the content reviewer's job would not be manageable in the normal context.

From this study, the researchers found that the feedback provided in an ESP course needs to be reconsidered from the students' perspective. In this course, the teachers divided their roles and offered their feedback they were able to control at different times in consideration of the unique situation of the ESP. However, from the learner's point of view, the feedback should deal with the essay holistically. The logical connection and the natural flow of the writing could be realized to a certain extent by asking the students clarifying questions, but ultimately, the cohesiveness and coherence of the students' writing could be achieved through the feedback that is addressed specifically to the field knowledge. Therefore, feedback on the structure and the field-specific content should be made synchronously when the students submit their 1st drafts. Then the students could revise their essays holistically referring to the teacher's feedback that was made both on the structure and the content.

The close examination of the students' responses to the survey items such as Question 2, 6, and 8 illuminates that the students feel the need for better quality feedback since their expectation for the ESP writing course is higher than it is for the regular writing courses. In Question 2 and 6, which asked the students whether the teacher's feedback and this course were helpful to achieve their goals, the majority of the students responded positively. And yet, in Question 8 which asked for the students' suggestion and opinions for the course, 6 students out of 11 respondents stated that the content feedback should be made more thoroughly by a professional in the field. This appears to be because the students believe that the ESP writing course should be different from the average writing course in that it should particularly address to the major field knowledge.

In summary, the feedback type in ESP writing should be able to encompass the

formal structures, language functions, and the professional knowledge as a whole. The feedback timing is as important as the feedback type in ESP writing. Only when the holistic feedback is provided at the early stage of the writing can the students utilize the input in the stage of developing and revising their writing.

2. The Length of the ESP Writing Course

The ESP writing course in this study was run for two weeks at the end of July during summer vacation. During the two-week sessions, the students worked on four essays going through the whole cycle of the writing process: topic discussion → brainstorming → outlining → writing 1st draft → revising and editing. As the writing process itself requires extended time and effort, two weeks was insufficient in any respect.

As illustrated in the data analysis, a number of students expressed their hopes to practice more essays during this period. In the survey question 8, 3 students out of 11 respondents suggested that four essays during the two-week course were not enough. This also reflects the students' higher expectation for the ESP writing course. Considering the writing process the students ought to go through, the students could not spare much time for revising or editing their writing in this study. In fact, during this two-week course, more than half the students could not complete their revisions of the third and the fourth essays within the course period. Nevertheless, the students desired more topics to cover apparently from their high expectation for the course as well as themselves.

However contradictory it may seem, the students' expectation for the ESP writing course cannot be ignored. When the students participate in an ESP course with concrete and imminent objectives like those in this course, the class should be able to respond to the students' needs comprehensively.

In this respect, this study sheds light on the significance of the time consideration in an ESP writing course. As illustrated in the literature review, an ESP course can be provided in a variety of ways in terms of its mode and time. However, as revealed in this study, a writing course in ESP is preferable when provided as a long-term class than a short-term special course. While a wide range of topics are to be covered in an ESP course, the nature of the writing process requires an extensive time. When

the students have sufficient time to pursue their subject knowledge and to process their writing, they could be more fulfillingly assisted with the teachers' feedback.

3. Teacher Collaboration through the Web Community

The most frequently discussed challenge in ESP is the lack of the teachers who are capable of dealing with both the field-specific knowledge and teaching English. In order to overcome this limitation, the classes in this study were conducted collaboratively by two native teachers who are experienced ESL/EFL teachers and a Korean teacher who has the field-specific knowledge.

There are a number of different ways to teach a course collaboratively, but in this course, the native teachers played the major roles contacting the students on a daily basis and the Korean teacher took the supportive role. That is, while the native teachers taught the general English writing skills during the major sessions, the Korean teacher supported the class with the field-specific knowledge that was necessary to be incorporated in the students' writing only at the end of each week during the two-week sessions.

In this process, the web community was used as the critical instrument. Since the classes with the two native teachers occurred simultaneously, the Korean teacher could not attend both the classes to support. However, the web community made it possible for the Korean teacher to review all the students' work as well as the teachers' feedback. The reason why the Korean teacher looked into the teacher's feedback was because she needed to complement the teacher's feedback in the content area. In this way, the teachers were able to provide the students with the feedback both on the structure and the content.

However, the major problem of this course that was revealed in the student survey was the insufficient content feedback. As indicated earlier in the data analysis, the students felt the content feedback was inadequate because the feedback on the structure and the content was given by different teachers at different times. This should draw the teachers' attention to collaborating for the students' needs not for the teachers' needs. Having divided the roles in making feedback, the teachers could reduce their burden to cover all the subjects but this did not satisfy the students' needs for more thorough feedback.

From this, it could be concluded that it is best when the content instructors plan the tasks and train the English teachers before the course begins, and after the course begins, the content instructors monitor the student work to make any complimentary feedback through the web community. This complimentary feedback on the content can be made at any time of the students' needs if the web community is appropriately used.

V. IMPLICATIONS

The course investigated in this study was offered to the prospect English teachers who needed to practice testing skills. Since the subject was English education, the teachers whose majors were not English education could still easily involve the topics since they could use their firsthand knowledge from their experiences as English teachers. However, if the content area is far from the teachers' background, in English teachers' case, especially science and engineering, it could be much more difficult to cope with the students' needs for the field-specific feedback in addition to the structural feedback. In order to maximize the benefit of the ESP course, the findings of this study illuminate three important implications: 1) organization of pre-course teacher training, 2) establishment of virtual teacher collaboration, and 3) implementation of the virtual writing lab.

1. Organization of Pre-course Teacher Training

In ESP writing especially when the students have very specific purposes such as test preparation, job application, or academic paper submission, the students require the feedback on the content as well as the structure. Since the English teachers cannot be equipped with the necessary knowledge across all the disciplines, it is essential they get training before the course begins.

For this, the ESP writing course should be planned collaboratively with the field-expert faculty to begin with. The English teachers and the teachers from the major departments work together to develop the course themes considering the language functions and the content knowledge the students have to deal with in their majors.

Then the pre-course teacher training should be organized to provide the English teachers with the required background knowledge to cover the themes the teachers developed together.

This type of pre-course teacher training is indispensable in ESP writing because the teachers need a certain level of knowledge in order to give feedback so that the students could write coherently. Without touching upon the field-specific content, the teachers could not fully assist the students to write clearly and logically. If the teachers are informed of the students' concrete needs along with the major concepts and principles related to the subject, the teachers should be able to provide the students with more constructive feedback.

2. Establishment of Virtual Teacher Collaboration

In order to make the most of the ESP course, it is ideal that the course is supported by the field-professional. That is, although the English teachers are trained before the course begins, they may not be able to respond to the students' needs spontaneously. It is also possible that the English teachers overlook some essential elements that need to be included in students' writing or do not recognize the inaccurate information that ought to be corrected. However, the major teachers' participation in class is not either possible or effective for class in practical view.

Through the web community, however, the field experts can facilitate the course by having access to the students' writing any time at their convenience and communicating with the English teachers. Supposing that teacher collaboration across different fields is difficult mainly because of the time constraint as well as the schedule conflicts, the web conferencing among the English teachers and the major teachers would solve many problems in ESP courses.

The web conferencing may be required to be coordinated by a bilingual Korean teacher in case that the major teacher does not have enough English skills to communicate with the English teachers about the content. This also can be done through the web community, which eliminates the difficulties in administration.

This type of teacher collaboration may be considered costly from the administrators' perspective. However, if the student's learning is put in the center of the education, the teacher collaboration across the fields should be supported. In fact, if the

collaboration is made virtually as illustrated above, it would not be so much expensive or time consuming as it is done face-to-face.

3. Implementation of Virtual Writing Lab

One of the research findings of this study was that the students with a specific purpose wished to have as many practices as possible dealing with a wide range of topics. It was already indicated in the data analysis section that the comprehensive coverage of the topics cannot be done within a short period of time. This calls for the administration of the on-going virtual writing lab. That is, a writing lab is provided through a web community throughout the year. The writing lab can be offered in two ways.

One is through a structured web community. In this writing lab, the lab manager provides a syllabus with selected writing topics in specific areas, which are developed by collaborative pre-sessions with the field experts. Then the students write the essays on the topics in order they are presented in the syllabus. The students submit their writing on the web community, which is reviewed by the English teachers as well as the major teachers who communicate with the English teachers regularly. This writing lab is appropriate to assist a face-to-face ESP writing course.

The other way is through an open web community. In this type of virtual writing lab, there is no structured syllabus. Instead, the students write essays on the topics of their own selection or needs and receive feedback by submitting their writing on the web community, which is categorized by the specific field. For this, the English teachers and the field experts should be assigned to monitor one particular content area. This type of writing lab can be offered exclusively from any credit courses to help the students for their needs in general.

VI. CONCLUSION

Implementing an ESP writing course demands careful consideration in multiple aspects. The class in this study attempted to teach an ESP writing course collaboratively through the web community. The students in this study, who were preparing for the

national teachers' certificate exam reported that the course was useful in that it helped them to understand the overall structure of the English essay and to write more coherently.

However, many students expressed their needs for more field-specific content feedback, which indicated that the teacher collaboration through the web community should be utilized at all the stages of the course. That is, before, during and after the course. When the English teachers and the field-expert teachers work collaboratively throughout all the stages of the course, the teachers could provide the students with more thorough feedback encompassing the formal structure, language functions, and the field-specific knowledge. This type of constant teacher collaboration could be conducted through the regular web conferences where the teachers assess students' needs and review the course based on their observation of the students' work on the web community.

In order to respond to the students' needs for coverage of more topics in their fields, the ESP writing course could be offered throughout the year through the web community. Two possible models suggested in this study are: 1) the structured web community, in which students write essays on the given topics following a pre-designed syllabus, and 2) the open web community, in which students write essays on their selections or needs. In the both types of the writing labs, the students receive feedback from the English teachers as well as their major teachers.

The so-far mentioned qualitative research findings highlight the significance of the teacher collaboration in the ESP writing course. This study attempted the teacher collaboration through the web community but had limitations in that the course was too short and the content feedback timing was inappropriate. Further research on the practices of the virtual ESP writing class models in a more extended time will be able to activate further development of the ESP writing course.

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APPENDIX A

Practice Test by the Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation

Class 1

1. Motivation has been accepted as one of the key determiners of success in English language learning and teaching. First, define the construct of second language learners' motivation in your own words. Second, read the following classroom situation and discuss how to enhance the students' motivation in terms of 1) materials use and 2) assessment. Write well-formed paragraphs. [approximately 300 words (30 lines), 25 points]

Classroom Situation: You are teaching the lowest level of students in a level-differentiated program of a Korean middle school. The class consists of 20 students. Students have difficulty in mastering the communicative functions provided in the textbook. They have a low level of motivation as indicated by a lack of enthusiasm. They are easily distracted and unwilling to participate in classroom activities.

2. Suppose you teach high school students the following text. Design one pre-reading, one while-reading, and two post-reading activities, along with the rationale for each activity. One of your activities should be a vocabulary learning activity. The activities should be presented in detail. Write well-formed paragraphs. [approximately 300 words (30 lines), 25 points]

Why the Sky is Far Away

In the beginning, the sky was very close to the earth. In those days people did not have to till the ground, because whenever they felt hungry they simply cut off a piece of the sky and ate it. But the sky grew angry, because often they cut off more than they could eat, and threw the left-overs on the rubbish heap. The sky did not want to be thrown on the rubbish heap, and so he warned people that if they were not more careful in the future he would move far away.

For a while everyone paid attention to his warning. But one day a greedy woman cut off an enormous piece of the sky. She ate as much as she could, but was unable to finish it. Frightened, she called her husband, but he could not finish it, either. They called the entire village to help, but they could not finish it. In the end, they had to throw the remainder on the rubbish heap. Then the sky became very angry indeed, and rose up high above the earth, far beyond the reach of people. And from then on people have had to work for their living.

Class 2

3-1. Considering the commentary below, write a short critique of the poem, focusing on the ambiguity of the underlined part, "*And miles to go before I sleep.*" Provide supporting details from the poem to claim your argument. [approximately 150 words (15 lines), 15 points]

> *Commentary*: In this poem, the world of the woods, the world offering perfect quiet and solitude, exists side by side with the realization that there is also another world, a world of people and social obligations. The poet is put in mind of the "promises" he has to keep, of the miles he still must travel. We are not told, however, that the call of social responsibility proves stronger than the attraction of the woods, which are "lovely" as well as "dark and deep."

3-2. Suppose you use this poem in a Korean middle school classroom as teaching material. In the poem, identify pronunciation points (one fricative and one linking) and grammar points (one modal auxiliary and one bare infinitive) that the students would have difficulty with. Choose one pronunciation point and one grammar point, and propose how to teach them in the classroom. [approximately 200 words (20 lines), 15 points]

4. Read the statement below and follow the directions.

> Some people say that the internet has a positive impact on students; others believe that widespread use of the internet is detrimental to them.

Which view do you agree with? Use <u>two</u> specific reasons and examples to support your stance. Write well-formed paragraphs. [approximately 200 words (20 lines), 20 points]

APPENDIX B

Course survey

강좌 설문지

이름＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿   학과 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

성별 ＿＿＿＿＿＿   **나이** ＿＿＿＿＿   **feedback group 구분**＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

1. 본인이 Online 또는 offline feedback group을 선택한 이유는 무엇이었습니까?

2. 전반적으로 교사의 feedback에 만족 하였습니까? (예/ 아니오)

3. 만족 또는 불만족 하였다면, 그 이유를 구체적으로 기술하십시오.

4. 교사는 주로 어떤 종류의 feedback을 본인의 에세이에 주었습니까?

5. 교사의 feedback중 어떤 부분이 수정작업에 가장 유익하였습니까?
    (a) 문법, 문장구조 등   (b) 문단, 문맥의 흐름

6. 이번 강좌가 본인의 수강 목적에 도움이 되었습니까? (예/아니오)

7. 도움이 되었다 또는 되지 않았다면 그 이유를 구체적으로 기술하여 주십시오.

8. 이번 강좌에 대한 그 밖의 의견을 자유롭게 기술하여 주십시오.

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