Joint Debate Sessions in English via SCS between Distant Universities
―Using 2-way and 3-way Connections including a Portable Station―

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This paper describes the procedure and discusses the effects of the joint English debate classes mediated by the Space Collaboration System (SCS). The students at Shumei University and Akita University conducted four rounds of Parliamentary Debate (PD) in English through the SCS on two days in 2001. Shumei used a transportable satellite station. Fukushima University also participated in the teleconference as an active audience via its SCS station. Facilitated by the SCS technology, active exchanges were observed on both days. The statistics compiled based on the pre- and post-project questionnaires show that these distant interactive collaborative classes can be very effective in improving their knowledge of the issues they debated on and motivation to interact in English. It was also suggested that the SCS interactive classes enhance oral communication skills and faculty development.

Key Words
SCS, Parliamentary Debate, Oral Communication, Faculty Development, Distance Collaborative Learning

Introduction

This paper reports on the procedure and the effects of joint class sessions to improve English persuasive skills mediated by the Space Collaboration System (SCS). It also discusses interactive distance learning of English communication using information technology.

The students at Shumei University and Akita University conducted four rounds of Parliamentary Debate (PD) in English through the SCS for 90 minutes each on two days in 2001. Akita used its VSAT station whereas Shumei used a transportable satellite station. In addition to Akita and Shumei, Fukushima University participated in the teleconference as audience via its VSAT station. The three university classrooms were linked with a two-way connection on the first day and with a three-way connection on the second day. The National Institute of Multimedia Education

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Center (NIME) served as the hub station and provided technical support.

Using teleconferencing for language learning has recently started and studies on it can be found; however, information on the effect and procedure is still limited. Moreover, interactive class activities among three or more institutions have not yet been reported. Therefore, the primary aim of the present study is to examine the effects of the three-way joint classes aimed at improving persuasive oral skills via satellite as well as to describe its procedure.

The statistics based on the questionnaires proved that the satellite classes were very effective in improving students' knowledge of the issues they debated on and their motivation to interact in English. The skills required for persuasive speech such as handling questions and paraphrasing were also perceived to improve. The use of SCS is extensively discussed from the viewpoints of developing oral communication skills and the possibility of faculty development.

1. Objectives of the joint sessions

Conducting joint classes between Shumei and Akita were considered for a number of reasons. First, the authors had used SCS for their English classes several times before and were convinced of its great impact on learning and motivation (Sasaki, Hirano, and Shiozawa 2000). Second, joint classes were expected to offer the students more authentic opportunities than regular classes to actually need to communicate in English. In other words, interacting with students outside of class was considered to break the plateau level. Thus the authors decided to conduct teleconferences between their classes focusing on persuasive skills.

In addition to experimental purposes to assess the effects of distant collaborative classes, this project had four aims from the viewpoint of English education per se. The first purpose was to develop the students' persuasive oral skills, their critical as well as empathetic listening / speaking skills. The second purpose was to build their critical, logical and quick thinking ability. The third was for them to take an interest in a variety of controversial current topics and then broaden that knowledge and perspective. Lastly, the students were expected to motivate each other to study English and, as a result, to build confidence and self-esteem in using English in public.

2. Characteristics of SCS

SCS is an inter-university satellite network that enables instant, interactive exchanges of audiovisual information between institutions across the nation (Kondo 2001). At present as many as 150 stations called VSAT stations in 123 institutions, mostly at governmental universities, are established. Since February 2000 a transportable SCS station, called Shasaihyoku, has been available which enables any teacher or researcher who cannot have access to a SCS sta-
tion to hold a satellite session anywhere. Akita and Fukushima used their VSAT stations for this teleconference; Shumei used a portable station for the first time.

As Kondo states, one of the features of SCS lies in its versatility in use; any institution can play the central role in the satellite session with the assistance of the hub station that NIME controls. In addition, as many as three different stations can be connected at the same time enabling the participants to talk freely and see each other clearly. Ease of use is another attractive feature; without any specific skills or knowledge on information technologies, SCS can be operated. What is more, reliability of connection is another important factor.

Similar activities with sufficient audiovisual quality could be possible through other means such as ISDN or the Internet. As to videoconferencing via ISDN, special lines need to be installed between the sites to be linked. Internet teleconferencing, on the other hand, requires a specific computer environment. For instance, the sites to be involved have to be hooked to the Internet. In addition, sufficient bandwidth and the opening of certain ports in the firewall, if any, need to be secured in order for large amounts of data such as that required for video to be transmitted.

Unlike these means mentioned above which demand special equipment and cost, SCS is readily available for many institutions across the nation including the universities involved in the present study. What is more, with SCS, NIME staff not only helps arrange the dates and equipment for the joint class, but also troubleshoots any technical problems that could occur during the class.

3. Past studies using teleconferencing in language classes

Distance education has been focused during the past decade especially on the use of the Internet as a promising venue that promotes learner autonomy over pace, methods, content and learning objectives (Cowan 1995). For instance, Cohen (2002) reported a successful satellite-based computer network offering precious learning experiences to remote Pacific Island students. In contrast, challenges of distance education, such as the necessity of high level of faculty involvement and curriculum changes, have also been discussed extensively (Li 2002).

In the field of language education, computer-assisted language learning, or CALL, has also been successful in assisting with collaborative projects especially in terms of reading and writing (Warschauer 1997, Flynn 1999, and Davis & Chang 1994). However, few studies on distance real-time collaborative learning to enhance oral language skills can be found.

In fact, teleconferences have been introduced in English classes only for the past few years. For instance, Hayase & Kano (2000) have conducted a series of virtual university programs linking a Japanese university and an American university using
ISDN videoconference and the Internet. Their classes focused on cultural understanding and global community building. Their results show that the participants in both classrooms raised their understanding of mutual cultures. In addition, Fujita (2001) reported on her experimental teleconference through the Internet with a senior high school class in Hawaii. Her detailed report on the procedure of teleconference provides practical information as to devices and Internet resources to teachers considering introducing distance collaborative learning. Actual messages exchanged between students in two countries are also offered.

On the other hand, studies discussing the effect of SCS, as a means of teleconferencing, on language classes are, on the whole, still limited. Sasaki, Hirano & Shiozawa (2000) illustrate English debate activities among three university classes via SCS. They suggested this satellite system greatly motivated students to study English based on their written feedback. In addition, Tokui (2000) reported on her experimental joint SCS Japanese classes focusing on intercultural awareness, noting some advantages of SCS sessions. For instance, SCS enabled lively real-time discussion, resulting in raising the interest in exchange among participants. She also suggested its possibility to improve the quality of classes.

However, little is known about specific areas of linguistic abilities that could be enhanced through teleconferencing. Empirical data and knowledge on the use of technologies that enable real-time distance collaborative learning are still lacking. In fact, despite the increase in the use of SCS among university classes on the whole, Seta (2001) contends that information on the procedure and effects of SCS is still not sufficient.

4. Characteristics of Parliamentary Debate

The authors decided to employ PD (Goodnow Knapp & Galizio 1999) in order to achieve their project goals to improve impromptu persuasive oral skills. As explained below, PD encourages the debaters to think on their feet. The other students can also learn to become active listeners by serving as judges as well as recorders.

PD has several different formats; however, the following one is common. Four debaters, two from each side, debate on a certain theme, or a motion as follows.

1 Prime Minister Constructive Speech 7 minutes
2 Leader of the Opposition Constructive Speech 7 minutes
3 Member of Government Constructive Speech 7 minutes
4 Member of the Opposition Constructive Speech 7 minutes
5 Leader of the Opposition Rebuttal (Summary) Speech 4 minutes
6 Prime Minister Rebuttal (Summary) Speech 4 minutes

PD, gaining popularity among universities in the world, is different from a more common debate style
called National Debate Tournament (NDT). NDT focuses on research and evidence; in other words, it requires debaters to make speeches based on solid data and facts they gathered in advance. The quality of evidence often affects the judgment. In contrast, in PD, modeled on the British Parliamentary system, the judges as well as the audience are supposed to be ordinary citizens without any prior knowledge of the issue. Therefore, debaters are required to focus on common sense and spontaneity. In addition, with little preparation time, how to speak is as important as what to speak. Namely, delivery and content of the speech have equal significance in PD.

Some notable characteristics of PD are as follows. First, it is an extemporeaneous debate. The motion is announced only 20 - 30 minutes before the beginning of the debate. So, rather than collecting a lot of evidence, appealing to the audience's general knowledge and emotion — sometimes along with their humor — is crucial. Second, direct frequent interchange between debaters is seen in the form of "Point of Information" during constructive speeches. If a speaker from the opposing team has a question or any brief comment, he rises and says, "Point of information, please". The debater either accepts or rejects it. The response also should be quick and to the point. Thus, PD was expected to be a practical, exciting, and enjoyable activity for higher intermediate learners of English. Fujita (2002) has also introduced PD to her high school classes stressing oral communication.

5. Profile of the students and classes involved

The classes involved in this project were as follows. Shumei University: Seminar on Language and Communication (14 students). The students spent about a year in the U.K. under the university curriculum. Akita University: Oral Communication (18 students). Their majors were as follows: English Education 5, International Communication 12, Special Education 1. Fukushima University: English Conversation Club (four students). They gathered on their own encouraged by Professor Sean Mahoney. Most of them were third-year students and were eager to improve their oral communication ability. With regard to the level of their oral proficiency, it was quite similar: intermediate to higher intermediate. All the students have little difficulty maintaining basic English conversation for a few minutes. As to familiarity among the students, majority of Shumei and Akita students met a month before at an English performance festival.

6. Procedure of the project

6.1 Preparation activities before the joint classes

Before the joint classes, the students were familiarized with PD in each university, Shumei and Akita, in three ways: ① showing either a video
or actual matches; ② having them write their own opinion about the two motions already announced and smoking on campus; ③ having them practice several debate rounds.

6. 2 Joint classes
1) Procedure of the classes

SCS joint classes were conducted from 9:00 to 10:30 on January 25 and on February 1, 2001. Two motions were debated in each class; the first motion on each day had already been announced before the session, whereas the second one was given on the spot. These were the motions.

January 25:
① A grade-skipping system should be introduced in Japanese high schools.
② Cellular phones should be banned on university campus.

February 1:
① Doctor-assisted suicide should be legalized for terminally-ill patients.
② English teachers should use only English in all professional meetings.

The timetable on each day was as follows.
1. Round 1 (prepared version) 30 min.
2. Announcement of the motion for round 2
3. Discussion on round 1 /
   Preparation for round 2 15 min.
4. Round 2 (impromptu version) 30 min.
5. Discussion on round 2 10 min.

During the discussion time following each round, comments were welcomed from Fukushima University. The impromptu motion, or the second motion on each day, was announced immediately after the first discussion. During the debate, the audience filled flow sheets, and after each round, they evaluated the debate from the following viewpoints: Analysis, Reasoning, Refutation, Organization, and Delivery.

2) Classroom settings and satellite connection

Akita and Fukushima conducted the joint classes in their classrooms equipped with the SCS system. At Shumei, an ordinary classroom was
set up as a temporary studio. The desks, monitors, and cameras were arranged as follows so that the debaters could see both the audience in their classroom and the students in Akita and Fukushima on the monitors. The third monitor screen allowed the debaters to check themselves.

On the first day, Shumei and Akita were linked via two-way satellite connection, and Fukushima joined by connection change. On the second day, three-way connection enabled all three universities to talk to each other at all times.

A connection test session was conducted two days before each joint class.

6. 3 Questionnaires

In order to investigate the project's influence on the students, a questionnaire was administered before and after the joint classes. The questions, on both cognitive and affective domains, are mainly related to persuasive oral and aural skills that are expected to develop through the joint classes including pre- and post-activities (Appendix 1). The items, reflecting such things as oral skills, thinking ability, knowledge to motivation, were selected and modified based on the elements of effective debaters (Colburn 1972, Capp & Capp 1965, Klopf & McCroskey 1969, and Goodnow-Knapp & Galizio 1999). As Fryar, Thomas and Goodnight (1993) point out, "Debate is more than an academic exercise. The skills and values you will acquire in debate can be applied in nearly every occupation as well as in your relationships with other people" (p. 8). Therefore, the items also include values such as "learning to respect different points of view, learning in depth about a socially significant problem" and so on (Brooks 1966 p.15).

The students rated their own feelings and ability using 1 (strongly disagree / unsatisfactory) to 5 (strongly agree / excellent) scale points to each question item. After collecting all the data, the Sign Test was conducted to assess the difference before and after the joint sessions in the students' perception of their skills, knowledge, interest and motivation. The Sign Test was employed as the most suitable test to estimate the location of distribution, where the data are ordinal matched pairs. Written feedback was also collected after the joint sessions. Additionally, a post-writing assignment on smoking was administered but was not analyzed in the present study.

7. Results and discussion

We analyzed the effects of SCS classes based on the following: comparison of the ratings of pre- and post-project questionnaires; oral and written comments made by the participants (Appendix 2); and observation of the actual classes. In both joint classes, active interaction was observed with little control by the teachers (Shiozawa & Sasaki 2001).

The question items were reorganized and divided into five categories for analysis (Table 1). The number written beside each question corre-
sponds to the item number of the questionnaire. First, the means of pre-
test on all the items, except for two
("asking questions" and "listening critically"), were higher than those of
post-test. This means that the stu-
dents perceived that, on the whole,
their skills and knowledge were
raised through teleconferencing.
Positive oral and written comments
after SCS attested to the results of the
questionnaires: for instance, "We were
at first nervous, but after debating we
felt fulfilled and relaxed." and
"Debating through screen was chal-
enging, however, I felt enlightened to
hear different opinions from other
university students."

In the table, the question items with
an asterisk (*) proved to be signifi-
cantly different between two means
(before and after the classes) at the
5% level with the Sign Test. Among 22
questions, seven items were rated sig-
nificantly higher after the SCS class.
As for the cognitive domains (Table 1
(1) and (2)), "critical and logical
thinking" and "knowledge on the top-
ics" were significant; especially, the
latter increased by about 0.7 points.
Written assignments on the topics
prior to the joint classes may have
activated their knowledge and thought
on the topics and helped internalize
them after the debate.

What should be noted in the result
of the Sign Test was that the students
perceived that skills and strategies
required in communication between
unfamiliar people, such as "handling
questions", "paraphrasing", and
"adjusting speaking" improved signifi-
cantly (Table 1 (3) and (5)). These
speaking skills and strategies may
have been developed through the
slightly challenging environment of
SCS; in other words, the SCS class,
where students from different univer-
sities communicate in a little more for-
mal atmosphere via satellite than in
the everyday classroom, urged the
students to speak clearly and persua-
sively.

With respect to the affective
domain (Table 1 (4) ), the statistically
significant item suggests that the stu-
dents became less inhibited in speak-
ing English with other university stu-
dents after the joint sessions.
Additionally, it indicated that they
came to enjoy debating through the
project. In fact, the students became
more active and relaxed on the sec-
ond day. The number of "Point of
Information" offered as well as accept-
ed increased dramatically on the sec-
ond day. A friendly atmosphere was
promoted toward the end of the proj-
et.

In contrast, two items, "listening
critically" (Table 1 (1) ) and "asking
questions" (Table 1 (3) ), decreased in
ratings although statistically not sig-
nificant. Audiovisual difficulty pertain-
ning to the system may have been
responsible. Actually, some students
pointed out that they were uncertain
whether they had made sense to their
partner students on the screen due to
delayed response and limited view.
Also, for the same reason, they had
difficulty raising their "Point of
Information" at the appropriate time.

The means for the items "getting
audience attention” and “using non-verbal expressions” in the domain of “persuasive oral skills” did not change between the pre- and post-tests. As opposed to face-to-face interactions, where the feedback from the audience is more immediate and more direct, debate through monitor screens may have been difficult (Appendix 2). In other words, the students felt unsure whether or not they made themselves clear to the audience in the other classes.

8. General discussions

Most survey items concerning both cognitive and affective domains necessary for persuasive ability were rated higher after the project. Although statistically only seven out of 22 items improved significantly, the results demonstrated that this method of instruction was effective. One of the major reasons for the favorable outcome may be the combination of teleconferencing and PD, which created a competitive, cooperative and enjoyable atmosphere in all classrooms involved in the project. The debaters needed to cooperate within the group in order to cope with the competitive activity of PD with other university students. Moreover, they had a real audience, or judges, who gave them critical but constructive comments. After the sessions, many of the participants commented that they felt fulfilled because they were able to function in English in such a challenging atmosphere. This sense of achievement may have given them confidence.

Another factor for favorable results may be that the event was an integral part of the course in each class. The two joint classes were scheduled towards the end of the term. The instructors discussed the purposes and procedures fully via email and telephone before the joint sessions incorporating the class aims. They also spent substantial time explaining the objectives and procedure of the joint classes to the students, sharing purposes and enthusiasm as part of the long-term goals of their respective courses.

Additionally, as was mentioned previously, many of the students at Shumei and Akita had already met at an English performance festival before the joint classes. This may have accelerated the friendly atmosphere. The instructors have also known each other. In this sense, face-to-face, direct communication may be preferable at some point in the project.

The main activities were conducted between Shumei University and Akita University; however, the presence of Fukushima University was of great importance. Because Fukushima gave the debaters objective and constructive criticism, as judges as well as audience, the joint SCS classes focusing on PD were fruitful. In terms of technology, this was enabled by the 3-way connection of SCS, supported by the refined technique and vigorous assistance of NIME staff.

As for the difference between “prepared motions” and “impromptu motions”, the students were better
prepared in their arguments in the former, while in the latter, dynamic interaction was observed especially on the second day. The debaters may have experienced the exciting nature of PD, focusing on spontaneity and wit. In contrast, as the result of the questionnaire suggested, the students increased their knowledge of the prepared motions through their investigation beforehand regardless of the fact that their interest in the topics remained almost the same after the project. Therefore, announcing the motion long before the debate can be effective in developing background knowledge on the topics, although it is not authentic to PD.

Caution has to be exercised, however, in conducting a teleconference. First of all, implementing an SCS joint class requires time and energy as is the case with distance collaborative learning using other information technologies. As Maiya (1998) warns, SCS should not be introduced too easily without any preparation or commitment on the part of the teachers, technical staff and students. Li (2002) maintains, “distance education cannot become a new revenue, given its time- and labor-intensiveness and the cost of installation of new technology”, which could be applicable to teleconferencing using any information technologies.

Secondly, close communication among the instructors, administrators, technical staff and students is required; they need to negotiate the date, place and equipment for the SCS joint class. This is also pointed out by Hayase & Kano (2000) and Fujita (2002). In that sense one is advised to start planning teleconferences well in advance.

Moreover, after agreeing on the date and time of the joint sessions, the instructors and the technicians need to devote at least an hour or two before the class for testing the equipment and connection. When using the portable SCS station, the users are supposed to set up the studio, or the classroom, taking into consideration sound effect and lighting; so an additional two hours or so is necessary before and after the joint session. Technical support from NIME is also vital. Without their experience, technique and assistance, no SCS session would be possible.

Furthermore, during the satellite sessions, we need to be well prepared to deal with some technical problems such as time delay, echo, and the unexpected signal interruption. Actually, on the second day, it took us an hour to finally get connected and we had to change the class schedule. Also, on the second day, an echo bothered Akita for the whole hour. So the instructors and students involved should be patient and stay flexible.

An additional factor to be paid attention to is classroom setting, especially with the transportable station. Careful planning to maximize the effect of SCS, taking into consideration the purpose of the class, is necessary. For instance, as Tokui (2000) also suggests, in order to promote friendship and lower inhibition, camera angles constantly showing stu-
dents’ faces that creates a supporting atmosphere may be important. Factors such as lighting, the size of the classroom, and the size of the audience should also be considered.

9. Conclusion

The SCS debate joint classes involving three distant universities were conducted twice in 2001. The satellite project, aimed at improving oral persuasive skills, proved effective. In fact, the participants were very active and enthusiastic in the joint classes. Also, the questionnaires attested to the positive influence of the project on their skills, knowledge, interest and motivation. First, the students felt they increased their knowledge on the topics dealt with in the project. Second, they became comfortable in speaking with other university students in English. Moreover, many of them learned to enjoy debating. Therefore, it may be safe to say that the teleconference project motivated the students to interact in English.

The overall success of such a project depends on its design and purpose, along with the reliable technology of SCS. Above all, SCS allowed teachers without any knowledge on telecommunications to concentrate on class content. What is more, SCS ensured connection among three university classes, which simulated the three distinctive parties PD requires: proposition, opposition and judges.

Next, the project suggested that instructors should fully discuss objectives as well as methods beforehand and enthusiastically share both with their students. In addition, sharing information with technical staff is also important to implement a successful teleconference.

10. Future tasks

Through the two SCS joint classes, it was suggested that conducting teleconferences would facilitate faculty development. They offer a good opportunity for other faculty members in and outside of the institution to observe classes and discuss methods and procedures. The authors actually invited other interested faculty members of their institutions this time and exchanged ideas afterwards, which was stimulating for both sides. In this way, the SCS open class will contribute to improving university classes. The importance of “making a class transparent” via telecommunication had been pointed out by Hiki (1986) long before the innovative technique of SCS and other means were introduced.

The idea of having a joint class linking distant universities can be applicable to any technical communication means available. At present, SCS is one of the most user-friendly systems for university teachers for this kind of joint project. Also, with more than 150 stations already set up all over Japan in different institutions, mostly universities, it would be a waste not to utilize SCS to connect them. With the development of telecommunication technologies, similar projects using other means could be possible in the
near future. As English education professionals, we should strive to make use of a variety of means available and increase our know-how and educational opportunities.

Let us finally turn our attention to the present situation of English education in Japan. The need to raise the English proficiency of Japanese has been strongly advocated recently; for instance, the introduction of English education in primary schools will be put into practice soon. The controversy over English as Japan's second official language was also debated extensively. Yet, under the present situation where ordinary Japanese can get along without any need or opportunity to actually use English, it is difficult to motivate students to communicate in English. Therefore, giving students meaningful opportunities where they can and need to interact in English is crucial, especially for intermediate students who have mastered the basic skill needed for daily conversation. Matsumoto, an advocate of debate education, maintains that building the attitude to willingly communicate in English is very important (Matsumoto 1996). Developing basic skills in class is fundamental; however, providing an opportunity to actually communicate in English with other students in a quasi-authentic setting as in a virtual classroom can be added to our responsibilities.

Now that the effectiveness of SCS on English classes stressing impromptu interactions has been made clear, the authors have been continuing their joint classes via SCS, incorporating other activities such as Interactive Theatre (Hirano, Shiozawa, Saeki & Yoshida 2000) and Strategic Interaction (Di Pietro 1987). A series of joint projects mediated by satellite has also promoted friendship among the distant universities. Further studies on English education using teleconferencing will contribute to both raising the quality of university English classes as well as developing students' communication ability.

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References

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Table 1. Mean scores of ratings of the Pre- and Post-questionnaires (n = 30)

(1: poor / strongly disagree —— 5: excellent / strongly agree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>item #</th>
<th>questions</th>
<th>Pre mean (SD)</th>
<th>Post mean (SD)</th>
<th>Sign Test (5% level)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Critical and Logical Thinking / Listening</td>
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<td>2.93 (0.77)</td>
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<td>think opposite views</td>
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<td>3.33 (0.75)</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>2.57 (1.05)</td>
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<td>Knowledge and Interest</td>
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<td>3.37 (0.95)</td>
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<td>Confidence and Motivation</td>
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<td>3.23 (1.02)</td>
<td>3.63 (0.84)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>cnfdnt spk Eng wth othr univ</td>
<td>3.07 (0.93)</td>
<td>3.63 (0.84)</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>enjoy debating in English</td>
<td>3.27 (1.12)</td>
<td>3.90 (0.94)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>Empathetic Listening / Speaking Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>listen emphathetically</td>
<td>2.83 (0.81)</td>
<td>3.23 (0.72)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>try to make sense of others</td>
<td>2.80 (0.91)</td>
<td>3.03 (0.66)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>respect opposite views</td>
<td>3.37 (1.02)</td>
<td>3.67 (0.83)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>adjust speaking</td>
<td>2.10 (0.79)</td>
<td>2.60 (0.71)</td>
<td>*</td>
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</table>

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Appendix 1. Questionnaire (pre- and post-project questionnaires)

The authors administered a questionnaire before and after the project. Questions no. 1 - 22 are the same in pre- and post-project questionnaires.

SCS Questionnaire

No. ( ) Name [ ]

1. At this time, I would rank my ability to think about a controversial topic critically and logically as ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory  2: Fair  3: Good  4: Very good  5: Excellent

2. At this time, I am able to think of arguments to support views opposite to my own.
   1: Strongly disagree  2: Disagree  3: Somewhat agree  4: Agree  5: Strongly agree

3. At this time, I would rank my ability to listen to others’ opinions critically as ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory  2: Fair  3: Good  4: Very good  5: Excellent

3'. What elements do you need to listen critically? (Japanese is OK.)

4. At this time, I would rank my ability to listen to others’ opinion empathetically （＝相手の身になって）as ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory  2: Fair  3: Good  4: Very good  5: Excellent

4'. What elements do you need to listen empathetically? (Japanese is OK.)

5. At this time, I would rank my skills to make sense of what the speaker means as ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory  2: Fair  3: Good  4: Very good  5: Excellent

6. At this time, I would rank my ability to organize my opinion quickly as ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory  2: Fair  3: Good  4: Very good  5: Excellent

7. At this time, I would rank my ability to express my opinion persuasively as ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory  2: Fair  3: Good  4: Very good  5: Excellent

7'. What elements do you think necessary for your speech to be more persuasive? (Japanese is OK.)

8. At this time, I would rank my skills to ask questions as ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory  2: Fair  3: Good  4: Very good  5: Excellent

9. At this time, I would rank my skills to handle questions as ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory  2: Fair  3: Good  4: Very good  5: Excellent

10. At this time, I would rank my skills to get the audience’s attention as ______.
    1: Unsatisfactory  2: Fair  3: Good  4: Very good  5: Excellent

11. At this time, I would rank my skills to paraphrase when necessary as ______.
    1: Unsatisfactory  2: Fair  3: Good  4: Very good  5: Excellent

12. At this time, I would rank my skills to use non-verbal expressions effectively
13. At this time, I would rank my skills to analyze the audience while speaking as
   1: Unsatisfactory 2: Fair 3: Good 4: Very good 5: Excellent

14. At this time, I would rank my skills to adjust my way of speaking based on
    the feedback from others as ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory 2: Fair 3: Good 4: Very good 5: Excellent

15. My knowledge about a grade-skipping system is ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory 2: Fair 3: Good 4: Very good 5: Excellent

16. My knowledge about doctor-assisted suicide is ______.
   1: Unsatisfactory 2: Fair 3: Good 4: Very good 5: Excellent

17. At this time, I am able to respect opposite views.
   1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Somewhat agree 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

18. At this time, I feel comfortable about speaking English in class.
   1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Somewhat agree 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

19. At this time, I feel comfortable about speaking English with students from
    other universities.
   1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Somewhat agree 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

20. At this time, I enjoy debating in English.
   1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Somewhat agree 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

21. At this time, I’m interested in a grade-skipping system.
   1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Somewhat agree 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

22. At this time, I’m interested in doctor-assisted suicide.
   1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Somewhat agree 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

23. (pre-project). What do you expect to learn/gain from experiencing debate
    with other university students? (Japanese is OK.)

24. (post-project) What did you learn/gain from experiencing debate with other
    university students? (Japanese is OK.)

25. (post-project) Which debate made you try to be more persuasive?
   1: in-class debate 2: debate through the SCS 3: No difference

Appendix 2. Written comments on the SCS debate from the students
Summary of the written responses to no. 23, 24, and 25 of the post-project
questionnaire. (The texts are mostly intact. Comments to other items are omitted)

23. What did you learn / gain from experiencing debate with other university stu-
    dents?
   • I was impressed with the knowledge and ability of the students in the other
     university.
I learned different perspectives.
I realized my level of English and weak points in speaking English.
I got to know different ways of thinking.
I got to know the format of Parliamentary Debate.
How to persuade others
How to rebut critically
Opinions of the other university students stimulated my thought.
I felt relieved because the level of proficiency was almost the same among us.
Timing of Point of Information is very difficult.
I realized I need to build my vocabulary.

24. 25. Which debate made you try to be more persuasive, in-class debate or debate through the SCS? If they were different, why?

Positive points of SCS debate
- Debating with students we don’t know is thrilling and stimulating.
- At first I became nervous, but I got to enjoy debating with students of another university.
- I tried to be more persuasive because we don’t know each other and couldn’t anticipate their response.
- I spoke aggressively because of the competitive atmosphere.
- We tend to depend on each other in in-class debate; however, we had to be assertive in the SCS debate.
- SCS debate has more authenticity.
- The competitive atmosphere forced us to cooperate within the team.

Negative points of SCS debate
- SCS debate was difficult because I couldn’t see audience’s face well. I couldn’t see the other team’s response, either.
- I felt unsure whether I made myself understood to the students of the other universities.
- Hard to listen because of technical difficulties such as echo and time lag.
- In-class debate is easier because we can respond immediately to the other side when we want to say something by raising Point of Information.
- It was difficult to understand what the other side said via SCS.
- I became very nervous.
SCSを介した遠隔大学間での
英語パーソメンタリー・ディベート合同授業
——2波および3波運用ならびに車載局を利用して——

塩沢泰子1）、佐々木雅子2）

本研究はSCSを用いて主に秀明大学と秋田大学の間で実施された英語ディベート授業について、その方法と結果を分析、検討したものである。合同授業は2001年1月、2月に2回にわたって実施され、福岡大学が両日とも聴衆、ならびに審判として参加した。秀明大学はSCS車載局を利用した。授業ではパーソメンタリー・ディベートという即興性の高い方式のディベートを行ったが、共通の事前指導（トピックリサーチやディベート練習）を通じた衛星授業では活発なやりとりが観察された。事前事後のアンケートによれば、英語即興口頭能力が大きく改善され、ディベート・トピックについての知識が増大したと受講生に認識された。また、英語・オーラル・コミュニケーションへの抵抗が少なくなわり、ディベートを楽しむようになつたことが判明した。エコーや音声の音がばらつき技術的な難点もあるものの、遠隔地の教室をつないで、学生による双方向口頭活動中心のSCS合同授業は参加者を手に入れ、学習意欲を高めた。授業に学内外の教職員を招待することにより、FD効果も示唆された。

キーワード
SCS、ディベート、オーラル・コミュニケーション、FD、遠隔教育

1）秀明大学国際協力学部
2）秋田大学