Action Research:
How to Implement Transmedia Activities
in a Foreign Language Class? *

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[Abstract]

This research aims to establish a new strategy for the conduction of English language classes. The proposed plan is grounded in insights obtained in the process of implementing new media-based English programs and was devised through the analysis of the learning experiences of students. The subjects of the study comprised 49 students majoring in Science and Engineering for whom the criticism of society and culture via media was not adequately interesting. The investigation purposed to determine how a media-based English program affects the motivation and attitudes of students, and how it can influence the self-evaluation of their achievements. The investigation was conducted through questionnaires, group interviews, and self-evaluation portfolios. The analysis revealed that success was influenced more by the types of activities accomplished in the classroom than using media or media-related topics. These findings suggest that the simple use of diverse media

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does not guarantee success in class. The outcomes of this action research offer a new implementation plan for the next semester. This investigation is significant because it sets an example for the future use of elementary or secondary teachers. In addition, it offers essential pedagogic principles pertaining to a framework of tasks teachers should present to students in trans-media classes.

Key words: transmedia, action research, motivation, peer culture, attitude

Ⅰ. Introduction

This action research aims to establish a new strategy for educational change based on insights obtained through the process of implementing new media-based English programs and through the analysis of the learning experiences of students. That is, the ultimate goal of this study is to make a new action plan to improve teaching and learning. Action research is defined as "the systematic study for the purpose of collecting information on how a school works, how teachers educate students, and how students learn." This information is collected "to gain insights, reflect on classes, make desirable changes in a school, improve students' accomplishment, and finally enhance the quality of life of all the related counterparts" (Mills 28-30). By conducting this kind of research, teachers can reinvestigate "the routine (teaching) methods [that are taken] for granted." Such a process can help educators determine "what is happening in a classroom" and can aid in "confirming the effects of educational intervention" (29). Teachers can utilize the findings that are yielded by action research, which tend to align with their self-reflections about their classes. In other words, action research is akin to the practical progress of pedagogy: a teacher

implements a certain educational program in a class, collects data, verifies effects, and integrates findings with preexisting theories. Thus, teachers can devise novel strategies for their next teaching modules (45). Although many educational investigations adhere to the scientific research methodology in which variables are carefully controlled, it seems to be more rational to acknowledge and to accept the complexity of a classroom and to examine classroom learning with all the variables interacting with one another. Apart from improving pedagogical practices, the current circular action study can also essentially contribute to the overall improvement of the quality of life of students.

Ⅱ. Background

K University is located in Seoul. Most of its students self-evaluate their English language proficiency level as intermediate. The university began a new college English program in the spring semester of 2019. The instructors of this program aimed to introduce transmedia activities to their classes. The term "transmedia" implies an interdisciplinary interplay between cultural, literary, and social discourses grounded in storytelling media content (Middaugh 36; Pence 132; Zachocki 87; Castells & Illera 78). For example, if K-pop is the topic of a class lecture, students may discuss and research the reasons for its extreme popularity. Students can manage information, enjoy K-pop, and react to transmedia content by producing their own texts. In so doing, they do not remain as mere consumers of media-related information; instead, they become "prosumers" as they simultaneously consume and produce class content. The fourth industrial revolution and the unprecedented growth in media content have granted every individual access to unlimited information. In

this context, the ability to critically evaluate the content delivered through varied media is indeed an important and desirable skill. Given contemporary realities, the new English course offered by K University aimed to promote the active engagement of students in critically analyzing media content and in producing their own critical texts.

Further, the course targeted the integration of language acquisition with content learning, a practice labeled Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Students were therefore expected to develop English language skills while they were exposed to diverse pieces of content-related information. The content used in the classes encompassed K-pop, superhero movies, soap operas, online games, sports, etc., and this wide variety of topics was selected to make the class more interesting and familiar to students with discrete interests. It was expected that discussions on media-related topics would motivate students to learn and to use English. In addition, the strategy was intended to help students augment their ability to critically analyze contemporary society by integrating the four communication skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing, with the learning content. Such media-based topics offer a further benefit: students gain access to live English. Moreover, media are constantly updated, and frequent exposure cultivates media-literacy in students. In the bargain, media become a wonderful resource for teachers to introduce students to cultures, both domestic and foreign.

However, the transmedia activities used in this study were limited because it was the first time that such activities were introduced in a classroom environment. Unfortunately, students did not evince as much enthusiasm as the researcher had expected. Therefore, the focus of the study could not, as initially intended, remain restricted to the assessment of whether or not the new course was successful. The task of discovering solutions to improve the course structure and/or to develop

desirable transmedia activities was incorporated into the study's objective.

I started my career as a teacher at K University in March, 2013. That means, it was the 7th year in my career when I attempted at incorporating transmedia into a typical foreign language class. I taught three classes in the spring semester of 2019: students in two of these classes were Humanities majors, while those in the third class belonged to the department of Science and Engineering. A survey was conducted at the beginning of the course by the researcher to assess the students' motivation to learn English through the use of varied transmedia activities. The Humanities students exhibited relatively high levels of motivation to participate in such classes; however, the Science and Engineering majors did not. Therefore, this study examined the changes experienced by the 49 Engineering majors during the spring semester of 2019. The levels of motivation and attitudes of these 49 students toward learning English in the offered classes were evaluated based on their responses on the implementation of the media-related English program. During the course of the study, I was able to obtain feedback on the transmedia activities used in class, whether or not they were successful, the reasons for the success or failure, and finally, suggestions about how the use of transmedia activities in classes could be improved.

Ⅲ. Literature Review

The 21st century demands that students possess the literacy skills to construct meanings as they interact with multiple media platforms. Contemporary realities also expect students to produce their own texts under specific cultural, social, educational contexts in "affinity space." Affinity space(s) are "the spaces where participants share

and co-construct new knowledge" with "the potential to engender collaborative learning environment" (Zacholcki 91). In other words, teachers should, through the use of diverse media platforms, provide effective educational contexts within which learners can involve themselves. Whitby suggests that teachers should develop pedagogies that "personalize learning, enable the learner, highlight the interpersonal nature of learning, and contribute to building the learning community" (qtd. In Zacholcki 92).

Storytelling is a representative task in transmedia, and it provides an immense space within which learners can "produce content, construct meanings, and worlds, as well as build communities and networks" (Gambarato & Dabagian 231). The key is to make the tasks "interesting," "informative," and "interactive" enough to encourage learners to utilize diverse media platforms to construct meaning or knowledge they can use (Gambarato & Dabagian 239). Put differently, transmedia courses can only succeed when attractive, realistic, and challenging tasks are provided to students to encourage creativity.

Transmedia is aligned with the paradigm of constructivism, according to which learners build their own knowledge and guide their own development when teachers present the right educational conditions. In other words, learners can acquire "the ability to investigate, experiment, construct, discuss, and analyze" various content. Educationalists say that CLIL, which integrates language acquisition and content learning, is one way to make this self-driven learning possible (Zaripova et al. 3-4). However, it is important to question whether such content knowledge is valuable enough for students to invest time and effort, or whether students recognize such terms and concepts as being worthwhile and rewarding.

Robot Heart Stories, introduced by Gambarato and Dabagian, is a typical example of such a transmedia project. To provide a context, Laika, an alien robot, crash lands

in Montreal and must travel across North America to Los Angeles so she can avail of a spaceship and return to her home planet. However, Laika faces a problem: she has no idea of Earth and its geography. Therefore, students must provide Laika with proper information so that she can reach the space station in Los Angeles. In trying to achieve this objective, students need to study a variety of subjects such as geology, history, science, or art using diverse media sources. Thus, students attain digital literacy via various platforms or multimedia content such as images, journey logs, and social media as they simultaneously offer important bits of information about culture or geography to Laika, who knows nothing about this planet.

Another example of a transmedia project is *The Ancestral Letter*. It was presented by Castells and Illera in a paper in 2018. In this case, a secret organization called Ancestral attempts to replace humans with androids in an effort to maintain Earth's equilibrium. However, Toni, the first prototype, becomes so integrated with human society that he even develops emotions. Consequently, the secret organization decides to get rid of Toni, who manages to escape from Ancestral. He now asks for help from students so that he can find certain letters in a parchment. Students are briefed on the situation through Toni's video message and then participate in the creation of the narrative by collecting multifarious multimedia information. Since each medium only contains partial information, students are required to decode information that can be integrated with the existing narrative.

In a similar vein, Pence introduced a rewriting project on social media for the well-known Shakespeare play, *Much Ado about Nothing* as well as for another play called *Inanimate Alice*, whose narrative is created through contributions from students. The media for the latter incorporates images, music, sound effects, puzzles, and games, and the project is thus evaluated to be a true transmedia activity based on real user interactions (135).

Castells and Illera elucidate that digital generation education is an open "text" while in the past, education was a "work" that was closed and completed. In other words, digital generation education is open to the construction of meanings that can be added to extant interpretations. As they acquire education, students can make use of diverse hypertexts as well as multimedial and transmedial connections (79).

In a truly transmedial transmedia activity, students should be able to participate actively in the meaning creation process, during which they interpret information stemming from diverse media sources. An activity that makes learning a complete "work" rather than an additive "text" cannot function as transmedia. In a transmedia course, students can add information to a text, provide ideas, place importance on a minor character, or create a new character. Thus, transmedia courses offer space for interactions among learners or between learners and the text. Such interactions occur as the students tackle discrete media platforms such as video, comic books, augmented reality games, phone calls, or posters (Pence 132). The point is to ensure that the interactions are of high quality and are accompanied by a narrative text. The so-called essence of a transmedia activity is, therefore, excellence in interaction.

Since the key to a transmedia activity is interaction, the narrative text given in such a course is "incomplete." Students interact with the real world, acquiring the prospect of exploration, interpretation, and expansion of knowledge for themselves. Transmedia expands media channels and encourages collaborative problem solving while offering opportunities for interaction (Pence 136).

However, Pence does not fail to note the reason why professors are reluctant to introduce transmedia activities in their university courses. By their very nature, transmedia activities are "fluid" and "fragmented." Professors tend to prefer an organized class structure based on standard texts; however, the knowledge disseminated in transmedia courses changes according to the student interactions with

the text (137). Thus, university professors are unwilling to use an incomplete text in courses that mandate the transfer of a certain span of knowledge to students in a certain period. Moreover, while students may belong to the digital generation, they also need training to productively engage in a transmedia activity, and such training might not be readily available.

Ⅳ. Focus Area

The present study intended to explore how the transmedia English program offered by K University affected the motivation, attitudes, and self-confidence of the Science and Engineering students who enrolled in the course. This specific thrust of the study is rooted in a belief that affective factors such as motivation or attitudes are decisive in determining the success of a course. Students can substantially improve their learning outcomes when they are motivated and when they evince a positive attitude toward a course. In the ideal scenario, motivated students actively construct the meanings of the texts they handle and produce information as they interact with or consume assorted media content. Therefore, affective factors such as motivation, attitudes, and the self-evaluation of academic performance in students must be treated as crucial variables that have considerable bearing on the outcomes of a course.

In a typical college, students learning English are often required to work at limited activities that are based on a given text. This closed "work" restrains student participation and thus creates a negative impact on the affective factors of learners. However, it is not always possible to implement a major transmedia project in a college English course for freshmen. To address this issue, the present study attempted to examine how transmedia activities may be incorporated into a typical

intensive reading course based on a given text. It also investigated how such transmedia activities could be improved while their effects on affective factors in learners such as motivation, attitudes, and self-confidence were demonstrated. The investigation was executed through questionnaires, a group interview, and self-evaluation portfolios. Since the study purposed to trace the changes in the affective factors of students, their self-reporting materials were crucial. In other words, through the self-reports, the study intended to identify how students evaluated the class activities, and how they felt about their learning progress. Finally, this study aimed to verify the effects of transmedia activities in a foreign language course to identify the potential of this pedagogic methodology and to discover ways of improvement.

Therefore, the following research questions were asked in the study:
1. How do transmedia English tasks influence affective factors such as motivation, attitudes, and self-confidence of students?
2. How can transmedia activities in a class be improved?

Ⅴ. Educational Intervention

This chapter offers an exemplary overview of the course based specifically on Unit 4 of the text. Although transmedia activities are usually extensive storytelling projects, the researcher designed shorter and less complicated activities because of concerns pertaining to feasibility. Such a route was preferred as first, the course was meant for freshmen who were likely to be unfamiliar with difficult tasks. Second, it was hoped that the students would discover principles or theories after they

conducted a simple and interesting investigation into various interrelated topics rather than accomplish one major task. Third, the researcher had to find a way to incorporate transmedia activities into a language course, and such curricula are usually designed to encompass intensive reading activities. Thus, this study resulted from the researcher's efforts to embed transmedia into a typical language learning course. It was hoped that students would develop critical thinking skills as they dealt with discrete media content and that they would prove their research skills through a final group presentation at the end of the course.

The next sections detail the course framework based on Unit 4 of the textbook to offer a general overview of the classes.

TABLE 1. Unit 4–1. Intensive Reading Activities

(Unit 4–1) Lesson Plan						
Participants	49 Science and Engineering students					
Topic	The Return of the 1980s					
General Class Objectives	Students should be able to explain the cultural influences of the 1980s on contemporary society and to explicate the reasons for such an impact.					
Aims of the Class	1. Students should be able to explain the cultural influences of the 1980s culture on contemporary society. 2. Students should be able to explicate the reasons for the revival of the culture of the 1980s.					
Materials		Teacher			Students	
		PPT/ Vocabulary List			Text/ Mobile Phone/ Vocabulary List	
Steps	Phases	time	Teaching/ Learning		Materials	Methods
			Teacher intentions	Student experiences		

Introduction	Attracting attention	5	Introduction: the topic (using images or video clips)	Getting accustomed to the topic		Full Class Activities
	Pre-reading Activity	5	Introduction: the aims of the class			
Development	Aim 1 :	15	1. Summary/ finding keywords	Note-taking	PowerPoint	Individual Work
		10	2. Individual Presentation: Keywords in relation to the content of the text	Individual Presentation		Presentation
	Aim 2 :	15	3. Skimming and scanning	Skimming and scanning Discussion		Full Class Work Group Work
		10	4. Discussion			
Wrap-up		10	1. Full class summary: storytelling -Round Robin Story	Round Robin Story		
		5	2. Listening to the text using an audio file	Checking the understanding of the text and evaluating the text		

1. Individual Work

Students read the text with the help of a vocabulary list provided by the instructor and wrote a summary or just listed keywords in their notebooks. They were given 15 minutes to study the text individually. Such individual work offers definite advantages. First, students attain a general gist of the text as they note the keywords or the summary. Second, it propels student participation in subsequent activities or

presentations because they obtain a preliminary understanding of the text in the first stage. Finally, students become aware of the difficulties they face and the areas on which they must focus, which accords them with ample opportunity to prepare for the later stages of the class. It should be noted that students are allowed to summarize the text in different ways, and according to their language proficiencies. Beginners can list the topic sentences of each paragraph while intermediate and advanced learners can challenge themselves to express key messages in their own words. Individual work is imperative because it leads students to achieve the learning outcomes through the course of the entire program. Thus, individual work is an indispensable asset for students at every stage of the course.

2. Skimming and Scanning

In this session, the instructor assessed the students' understanding of the target content based on questions regarding specific lines of the text. Students raised their hand when they could offer an answer, and they answered the questions after skimming and scanning the text. The instructor recorded the names of the students who volunteered or contributed to the class. In this manner, the learners were able to reinforce and extend their learning.

3. Whole Class Summary

The class ended with the instructor encouraging all students to sequentially utter at least one sentence that would fit into the storyline of the text and to evaluate its contents. The instructor started the storytelling and volunteers spoke a sentence in succession. When the story was not carried forward by other statements offered by

the students, the instructor would again add a few sentences to enable student participation. When the perfect story was created, students expressed their opinions about the content and listened to the text audio file, after which the first session of the classes was dismissed.

TABLE 2. Unit 4-2. Incorporating Transmedia into the Intensive Reading

(Unit 4-2) Lesson Plan						
Participants			49 Science and Engineering students			
Topic			The Return of the 1980s			
General Goal of the Class			Students should be able to deliver a presentation on the 1980s culture and technology			
Aims of the Class			1. Students should be able to explain the text in detail. 2. Students should be able to research and deliver a presentation on 1980s technology. 3. Students should be able to deliver a presentation on 1980s fashion and music.			
Materials			Teacher		Students	
			PPT/ Structure List		PPT/ Structure List/ Text	
Steps	Phases	time	Teaching/ Learning		Materials	Methods
			Teacher intentions	Student experiences		
Introduction	Attracting Attention	10	1. Introduction	Review and explain each definition of the major vocabulary in English	PPT/ Text	Full Class Activities
	Review	15	2. Review: Words worth remembering			
Development	Aim 1 :	15	1. Reading recapitulation: Write 1 or 2 paragraphs using the structure list based on the three important questions and given	Students elaborate on important information in English.	PPT/ Structure List	Individual Work Individual Presentation

	Aim 2 :	15	keywords. 2. Presentation: Reading recapitulation	They research and deliver a presentation on 1980s culture.		Group Work
	Aim 3:	10	3. Group project: (two options) - Research 1980s technology and talk about it - Organize a "Back to the 1980s" party 4. Presentation: Group project			Group Work Presentation
Wrap-up		10	Checking the understanding of the text based on the unit questions	Students recall contents and evaluate them.	PPT	Full Class Activities

4. Review

In the second session, students read sentences explaining the main vocabulary used in the text under discussion and volunteered to define the words in English or in Korean. This activity was aimed at the whole class. The vocabulary in Unit 4 contained words such as *catchphrase, acid washed jeans, synth-pop, recession, and mind-control.*

Next, the instructor encouraged students to review the text by reading the recapitulation. The text contained three important questions with keywords. Students read the text (previously learned) again and elaborated on the related information to write one or two complete paragraph(s), which is précis. Some examples of Unit 4 reading recapitulation are given below.

1. Why are pop culture creators in their 40s and 50s drawn to the 1980s in their work? (Keywords: nostalgia, grew up, childhood, personal, Ernest Cline)

2. What parallels do some people see between the events of the 1980s and current events?

(Keywords: credit crisis, recession, Cold War, Middle East, North Korea, political tension, fear of war)

As supplementary material, the instructor circulated a structure list of the literal and free translations of the text to the learners. The structure list comprised 10 sentences that could pose difficulties for some students. The researcher disseminated this material to the students to nudge them toward self-study so that the instructor would not be required to furnish a further explanation of the text. This method was found to be more effective than providing students with verbal translations in class: often, distracted students tend to miss such oral information. Therefore, students can assess their strengths and weaknesses and identify areas for improvement by accomplishing individual work.

The activities described above are typical of foreign language courses based on intensive reading comprehension. As Nation has asserted, what is important here is not to cultivate the ability to read "a text", but to read "texts" (28). To put it another way, through language classes, students should be able to read every text based on capabilities that can be "applied to all texts." It is a misunderstanding that intensive reading is confined to translation attending to vocabulary, grammar, or structure. Instead, intensive reading can cultivate higher abilities such as application, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, or synthesis (Nation 25-39).

In this course, the researcher trained students to make summaries and overviewed

reading strategies such as skimming and scanning in connection with vocabulary and structure lessons. In Nation's terms, a glossary can contribute to efficient vocabulary learning (38). It enables students to direct their attention to high frequency words, while they can "see the meanings of low frequency words, thus avoiding the need to spend valuable class time on them" (39). In addition, the structure lists used in the course resulted in students spending less time and effort in translating the text. Thus, by directing the attention of students to higher skills that can build a solid foundation for transmedia, this course placed increased importance on summary, précis (reading recap), vocabulary through context (words worth remembering), and evaluation of the text instead of traditional translation.

5. Group Work

At this stage, students were required to work on a project as one of the post-reading group activities. In the process of doing this small project, they could "produce" their own texts based on the abilities acquired by intensive reading activities in interpreting and evaluating texts. Since students get few opportunities to speak in English, group projects provide them with the prospect of improving their participation as a way of transmedia activities.

Students were given two project options to choose from:
1. Research one of the 1980s technologies and talk about it.
   - Which item did you choose?
   - What was it used for?
   - How did it become important?
   - What kinds of people were probably most interested in it?

- Can we still use it? What is the modern equivalent of this item?

2. Organize a "Back to the 1980s" party. Make note of the clothes, music, and kinds of decorations you will need.

While researching the topics, students dealt with various media contents, expanded the given texts, and produced their own ones.

Table 3 illustrates the transmedia activities the researcher used in the class for the spring semester of 2019.

TABLE 3. Transmedia Activities from Unit 1 to Unit 9

Unit	Transmedia Activities
Unit 1.	Research and talk about Marvel movies
Unit 2.	Talk about the secrets of the popularity of K-pops. Who is your favorite singer?
Unit 3.	Research video games for education
Unit 4.	Talk about the impact of the 1980s culture on contemporary life
Unit 5.	Which of the two do you like more: Vampire or Werewolf? Research Korean supernatural beings.
Unit 6.	Which character do you like the most in the *Harry Potter series*? If you woke up 5 minutes before the class, what spells would you like to use? If you were a professor, what course would you want to teach based on the *Harry Potter* series?
Unit 7.	Name your favorite Disney animation movie and tell us why you like it best
Unit 8.	Introduce Zombie Movies. When were they popular? Talk about the conclusion of the movie, *Train to Busan*.
Unit 9.	What makes *The Lord of the Rings so popular*? Compare *The Lord of the Rings* with *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.

6. Final Group Project

The transmedia activities culminated in the final group project. Students were required to deliver a final group presentation in the 13th week. They were free to choose a topic as long as it involved culture-related criticism. For example, one group decided to investigate the immense popularity of BTS from a socio-cultural perspective. The students were encouraged to wait two or three weeks before executing their research project. They were also required to consult with their instructor on their proposed research topics and methods in the 7th week of the course. Once the topics and methods were finalized, the students were expected to work toward the completion of their project and to deliver the final group presentation in class. Every student was to contribute to the project, and each group was expected to rehearse its presentation prior to the final delivery to ensure coherence. The topics covered were racial issues, media's influences on fashion, self-driving cars, etc. While preparing for the project, they read, watched, enjoyed, and evaluated multiple media contents to produce their own texts.

VI. Data Collection

The data used in the study were collected through surveys, a group interview, and via self-reporting by students through their self-evaluation portfolios. The analysis of the data attempted to identify the effects of transmedia activities in the foreign language course on affective factors in students such as motivation, attitudes, and self-confidence. Initially, questionnaires were distributed to students around the seventh week of the semester. The researcher then selected participants for the study

on the basis of their responses to the questionnaires. In addition, the questionnaires helped to identify the needs of the students. The group interview was conducted around the midterm examination with six volunteers who were majoring in Science and Engineering. The group interview was semi-structured and conducted informally after dinner. Finally, the students submitted their self-evaluation portfolios twice: first, around the midterm exam and subsequently around the end of the semester.

1. Questionnaires

The questionnaires were distributed around the seventh week of the semester to assess the general satisfaction of students with the classes, along with their needs and attitudes with regard to the relevant media. The survey items were composed of the students' background information, their responses to the media content, and general satisfaction with or suggestions for the English classes. The participants were selected based on their responses: the researcher chose the Science and Engineering majors who had the least satisfaction with the English class to trace their changes during the course.

2. Group Interview

A semi-structured group interview was conducted after the midterm examination. The researcher organized a dinner meeting with the six selected interviewees to establish a rapport, following which the interview was conducted with the informed consent of the students. The interview lasted 20-30 minutes and was recorded and transcribed for the subsequent analysis. During the interview, the students exposed their group dynamics and felt free to tender their responses without apprehension. The group

interview enabled the instructor to obtain invaluable in-depth information based on the chain reactions expressed by the group members. Interviewees with ideas that differed from the rest of the group articulated their opinions on a subject unstintingly after listening to what the other members of the group had to say. Despite the short duration of the interview, the instructor was able to attain intensive information through the examination and observation of the interactions and dynamics between the participants.

3. Self-Evaluation Portfolios

Students were required to submit self-evaluation portfolios twice during the semester: around midterm and at the end of the semester. In these portfolios, they reported their progress in relation to language learning and recorded their perceptions about their limitations. The portfolios were useful in tracing the process of the changes that were brought about in the affective factors of the students. The portfolios also served to activate the students' meta-thinking with regard to the learning they accomplished. The responses recorded in the portfolios represented the outcomes of more careful reflection in comparison to the other collected data such as their answers to the questionnaires or their interactions during the group interview. Although this study cannot verify the usefulness of the transmedia activities with the aid of quantitative data such as pretest or posttest results, it offers meaningful insight into affective factors including motivation, attitudes, and self-confidence.

This study verifies the effects of transmedia activities on affective factors through the triangulation of discrete research data. Each source of data contributed complementarily to answers to the research questions.

VII. Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. Questionnaire

The levels of class satisfaction as reported by the three classes the researcher taught are recorded as follows:

TABLE 4. Class Satisfaction

Humanity Major A	3.628 (out of 5)
Humanity Major B	3.388 (out of 5)
Science & Engineering	3.255 (out of 5)

Taking these responses into consideration, the study closely examined the reactions of the students from the department of Science and Engineering, who reported the least degrees of satisfaction in class. The Science and Engineering majors self-evaluated their English language proficiency levels as advanced (2), intermediate (33), and beginner (13).

TABLE 5. Reactions to the Media

1. How interesting were the media-related topics?	3.0625 (out of 5)
2. Did the media-related topics enhance motivation?	2.479 (out of 5)
3. How effective were the transmedia contents as teaching material?	3.333 (out of 5)

As the above statistics demonstrate, a majority of the students thought that the use of varied media as a teaching material was effective, while a relatively lesser number of students reported that they found media-related topics to be interesting or motivating.

When analyzing students' written responses, it appears that the teaching style (a type of the class) or evaluation method is more important for student evaluations than the topics addressed in the course texts. In other words, assessments and classroom activities matter to students attending a course. I had informed my students of the types of questions for the mid-term and the final before the survey. The two regular examinations in the module included the typical intensive reading comprehension questions such as pronominal questions, yes/no questions, true/false statements, multiple-choice items, and blank-filling or completion exercises. Therefore, students also expected to perform more intensive reading activities in classes.

In terms of suggestions, 5 out of the 13 selected students stated that they needed more intense practice in the translation and interpretation of a text. In addition, two participants reported that they found the pedagogic style to be similar to the classroom sessions in high school. Conversely, some students indicated that they wanted more communication-based classes with group projects designed to boost interaction with their peers.

In relation to the role of media in the classroom, most students said that the use of media as a mode of communication helped to enhance improving interest, motivation, and concentration.

2. Group Interview

The researcher interviewed 6 participants for 20 minutes after dinner. The participants volunteered for the interview, implying that they had opinions to share about the class. Among the participants, many had advanced levels of proficiency in English. One of the interviewees was passive in the activities conducted during the sessions of the English language course even though he was highly motivated to learn English to

achieve his career plans. The researcher assumed that he was not satisfied with the classes, and was very happy that he had volunteered for the interview. The participants reported that they found the target texts and the discussion topics too easy for their cognitive level. Despite their rather low proficiency in the English language, they said that they had reached maturity in terms of cognitive development, and hence wanted to discuss more profound topics.

> I expected that I would learn higher standard of English in university than in high school. I thought that I could read an English novel in university for instance. However when I opened the text, I was so disappointed with the low level. It was almost the same in level as what I read in high school. (Student A)

Nonetheless, not everyone evaluated the quality of the text as being of a low standard. One of the interviewees suggested that since the discussion topics were so easily accessible, students misjudged the texts to be too easy. According to her, some of the articles in the study material carried profound messages worthy of deliberation by mature minds.

> In fact some articles are so good. ⋯ Sometimes I get stuck in somewhere in the text. They end in social issues. I was deeply impressed by some chapters. But since the discussion topics are so familiar to the students, they tend to regard it as too easy. They do not know the articles are so much informative and critical. (Student B)

In addition, some students pointed out the negative peer culture in English language classes.

> Everyone knows English is so important and wants to study. But we are so young that our attitudes toward the classes are not serious or earnest. We have to speak in English, but many students laugh and they are shy about speaking in English. ⋯ They have to change the attitude. To participate in English classes seriously, I feel that the discussion topics should be serious too. Alright. The topics are interesting enough. However, we are above the level of discussing Vampires. These topics are for children in elementary school in America. If the topics be interesting, it needs to be somewhat challenging, not too difficult such as female rights, racism, or discrimination. (Student B)

In summary, students wanted to have a conversation on the topics they felt were apt for their cognitive levels. Some found the discussion topics and the texts "childish," while others found many of the articles profound and obtained critical insights from them. In other words, some students perceived the text as childish, not because of the standard of the text itself, but because they deemed the classroom activities to be childish. Simply speaking, classroom activities negatively affected the evaluation of the texts.

> During the group activities we have small talks not directly related to the text. The topic itself is so easy and there is not a lot to talk about. We just take turns to make a small presentation after the discussion with only three or more sentences about the topics. (Student C)

Students suggested the following in relation to the classroom activities:

1. More authentic small group projects should be employed.
2. The discussion topics should be more serious.
3. Tests should reflect the classes.
4. The peer culture hindering student participation in activities should be changed.

5. There should be more text-focused activities or discussions.

3. Self-evaluation Portfolio

The self-evaluation portfolios are composed of the following questions: how frequently do the students participate in the class?; in what aspects do they feel they are developing?; how to improve their own learning?; and finally, how do they evaluate their overall accomplishment? Based on the responds to the questions, I categorized their replies into the three factors of motivation, attitude, and self-confidence. The categorized reactions included the following statements:

TABLE 6. Student Self-evaluation Reports

Motivation	I am trying to watch media without subtitles with more interest in improving English skills. I feel the necessity to see the world anew by having my own view in relation to familiar media I am reading books outside the classroom with the interests gained in English classes.
Attitude	I came to be familiar with the media-related topics that I did not know of. I am growing while I evaluate myself by doing this portfolio. I learned how to negotiate conflicting thoughts in group activities. While I was passive in learning, now it seems that I actively participate in classes. I am learning to study for myself with media-related topics, and I am learning to share my ideas with my group members. I feel interested in media.
Self-confidence	I can express myself in front of others. I can explain some part of the text using English. I can use simple and easy vocabulary when I elaborate on a sentence. The ability to write in English has been improved due to participating in group activities.

	I was afraid of speaking in English before. But now I do not think it so difficult to express my opinion in English though. I feel improved in the abilities to use vocabulary, summarize text in English, and find the gist of the text. I feel confident in expressing my thoughts in English or in Korean.

Students reported that their self-confidence in reading, speaking, and writing English increased after the course. They also replied that their productive English vocabulary was amplified. Most of the students reported that their English proficiency had improved along with their motivation to learn English. They comprehended the instructor's objectives apropos the class design. Although many students felt that the sessions were not particularly satisfactory in themselves, they reported overall satisfaction with their accomplishments at the end of the course. It is possible that students could have reported their satisfaction because a negative self-evaluation could affect their grade at the end of this semester. It is also possible that students may really have felt that they had improved their language skills. Some students could also have believed that their learning success resulted from their own efforts and not from the classroom sessions they attended during the course. Whatever their reason, the majority of the students appeared to be satisfied with their own learning at the end of the course. Thus, even though the students did not think that the class activities were adequately effective, they were contented with their accomplishments, and they left the course with a positive attitude and improved motivation with regard to learning English.

However, whether the satisfaction came from intensive reading or from transmedia activities is not clear. Nonetheless, the intensive reading activities applied in this course were not traditional; they were designed to train students to prepare for transmedia activities. Even when the students worked on intensive reading, the activities laid a foundation for the use of transmedia. Therefore, this action study

focuses on the manner in which students may be allowed to consume and produce a variety of texts as they accomplish their learning before introducing them to a full-fledged transmedia-based instruction in a foreign language course.

Ⅷ. Results and Discussion

Is it possible for transmedia activities to complement intensive reading courses? In some ways, it does not seem likely. Intensive reading activities are more important than transmedia to students who place much value on course evaluations because they want to achieve a good grade at the end of the semester, and can only acquire the high marks through the close reading of a set text. It is no wonder that students consider intensive reading to be more effective in preparing for midterm and final examinations, and thus believe that foreign language courses should revolve around intensive reading activities.

How, then, can students be encouraged to simultaneously immerse themselves in transmedia and intensive reading? How can students be encouraged to actively participate in transmedia activities? How can the negative peer culture that stops students from participating satisfactorily in a foreign language course be overcome? The answers to these questions are not simple or immediately clear. What is clear, however, is that more interesting, useful, and appropriate activities should be designed for students keeping their cognitive levels in mind. In addition, educators must discover ways to include transmedia in the final evaluation of students. The larger point is to integrate transmedia and intensive reading activities in foreign language courses so that students can reap the benefits of both approaches. In brief, students must be made to understand that transmedia activities are closely related to

intensive reading because the latter would lead to their success in transmedia projects. Thus, instructors should carefully design lesson plans and should explicitly inform their students that the skills acquired in intensive reading can contribute to their performance in the transmedia activities.

The responses attained for each of the research questions asked by this study are provided below.

1. How do transmedia activities impact the affective factors of students such as motivation, attitudes, and self-confidence?

Through their self-evaluation portfolios, most of the participants reported that they had improved their English language proficiency levels in general. In particular, they reported higher levels of self-confidence in reading and writing English texts and felt that their productive vocabulary had improved. However, many students thought that the credit for this improvement was due to their own efforts rather than to the class activities. Regardless, an interesting linkage between evaluation methods and the use of diverse multimedia emerged: when the purposes and methods of classroom sessions do not correspond to the evaluation method, students place more importance on excelling in their evaluation examinations. In this case, students wanted more intensive reading sessions since the midterm and final examinations were designed to test close reading skills. These replies accord invaluable insights for language courses seeking to bring about an integration of intensive reading and transmedia.

2. How can classroom transmedia tasks be improved?

As is evident from the results of the group interview, students tend to regard a text as childish when they feel that class activities are not apt for their cognitive level. Almost everyone agrees that students should have an opportunity to truly interact with a text so that the transmedia tasks succeed in their educational contexts. Nonetheless, this course showed definite limitations in creating effective transmedia tasks. In other words, even though the process of adding new information to a given text is decisive, this course failed partly in taking full advantage of transmedia. That failure was due to the instructor's intention to fully utilize a given text along with the attempt to contrive transmedia activities that were simple and concrete so that students could easily engage in them during classroom sessions. Additionally, teachers must find ways to overcome the prevailing negative peer culture that acts as an obstacle preventing students from actively participating in transmedia activities. The main points for consideration concern the integration of transmedia with current intensive reading courses for freshmen, the creation of successful transmedia activities that lead students to truly interact with a text, and the designing of activities appropriate to the cognitive levels of freshman students. In sum, instructors must provide a two-pronged push: first, to create and implement effective transmedia activities; and second, to find a remedy for the existing negative peer culture.

IX. New Action Plan

The following recommendations are extended for the English course to be offered in the next semester.

1. Design interesting and challenging tasks so that students can fully engage themselves.

2. Provide a framework of educational context so students can become prosumers.

3. Let students realize that social and cultural interactions form the essence of literacy.

4. Present the proper educational context for students to experience a flow of intrinsic motivation.

5. Give students real audiences within and outside the classroom.

Alternative tasks will be designed for the next semester on the basis of the above principles.

First, instructors should create effective transmedia activities based on the interests and cognitive levels of the students. Second, there is a need to guide students so that they can see the relationship between intensive reading and transmedia activities. Instructors should explicitly, repetitively, and concretely explain to students how the two aspects are interrelated and how students should simultaneously consume and produce information. Third, the importance of transmedia should be reflected in the course evaluation methods. In other words, the two regular examinations should reflect the transmedia activities conducted in the classroom sessions. This strategy will serve to direct a part of students' attention away from intensive reading and toward transmedia. Finally, students should be trained in an explicit and tangible manner to improve their peer culture. This need is very pressing because a desirable peer culture is a precondition to the success of transmedia activities in the classroom.

Ⅹ．Conclusion

This study analyzed student reactions to the new English course being offered at K University, as an action research. Although students expressed increased satisfaction with the classes improved over time, the study focused primarily on identifying steps to fully actualize the potential of transmedia, and on the ways in which a pedagogical improvement could be brought about in the next action strategy for the course. Educators and researchers must decipher the actual circumstances of classrooms to contemplate fresh strategies and lesson plans. They must devise new methods of providing students with proper tasks as a form of scaffolding for beneficial learning to occur. Although this course was limited and flawed, the insights from the research are not trivial. With the right framework and support, learners can realize their potential within and outside the classroom. More research is now required to ascertain ways to resolve the problems of negative peer culture and unidimensional evaluation methods.

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국문초록

실행 연구:
외국어 수업에서 트랜스미디어 활동을 어떻게 접목시킬 것인가?

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이 실행 연구는 영어 수업을 위한 새로운 전략을 확립하는 데에 목적이 있다. 제안되는 계획은 새로운 미디어 기반 영어 프로그램을 시행하는 과정에서 얻은 통찰력에 근거를 두고 있으며, 학생들의 학습 경험을 분석하는 과정에서 고안되었다. 본 연구는 미디어를 통해 사회와 문화를 비평하는 데에 큰 흥미를 느끼지 못하는 이공계 학생 49명을 대상으로 하였다. 본 연구는 미디어 기반 영어교육 프로그램이 학습자의 동기와 태도에 어떻게 영향을 미치는지, 학습자들의 자신감에 어떤 영향을 미치는지를 분석하는 데에 초점을 두었다. 연구는 설문지, 그룹 인터뷰, 자기 평가 포트폴리오를 도구로 사용하였다. 연구 결과 학습의 성공 여부는 미디어나 미디어 관련 자료를 활용하는 것보다 수업에서 활용하는 활동의 유형에 더 영향을 받는 것으로 드러났다. 이러한 발견은 단순히 다양한 미디어를 활용하는 것만으로는 수업의 성공을 보장할 수 없음을 의미한다. 본 실행 연구의 결과는 다음 학기 새로운 실행 계획을 제공한다. 이러한 발견은 고등 교육 뿐 아니라 초, 중등 학교에서도 활용할 수 있는 본보기를 제공한다는 점에서 의미가 있다. 또한 본 연구는 트랜스미디어 수업에서 학생들에게 제공할 과제의 틀과 관련하여 중요한 교육 원칙을 제공한다는 점에서 중요한 의미를 지닌다.

주제어: 트랜스미디어, 실행 연구, 동기, 또래 문화, 태도

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