

The Platform Concept and Feature of Global Distance Collaborative Learning Website^{*}

-- Global School Network (GSN) as an Example

Cui Bai Li

College of Elementary Education, Hainan Normal University, Haikou, Hainan, China(571158)
405900956@qq.com

keywords: Online learning; Collaborative Learning; Global School Net; Website; Design

Abstract. Through the Internet, collaborative learning gradually across different countries or regions and presents development of Cross-cultural distance learning. The design of global distance collaborative learning website becomes more and more important. The paper takes the famous global distance collaborative site(Global School Net ,GSN) as an example, expounds the concept and connotation of global distance collaborative learning website platform, then analyzes and expounds the architecture , basic characteristics and design features for global distance collaborative learning website. The thesis thinks the Global School Net which is cultivation of students' global consciousness and focusing on using the Internet to carry out distance collaborative learning. Then the thesis explains the platform features of the website of the global collaborative learning which include locating in comprehensive platform of distance collaborative learning, focusing based on distance collaborative project learning, emphasizing characteristics of seeking international partners and collaborative project and pay attention to support tools for online collaboration learning .

Introduction

Through the Internet, online collaborative learning gradually across different countries or regions and presents development of Cross-cultural distance learning. The design of global distance collaborative learning website becomes more and more important. From the beginning of twentieth Century 80 years, more and more middle schools and primary school have carried out global online collaborative learning, appearing the famous project platform of website for global distance collaborative learning : Global School Net (GSN), Norway Kindlink, iEARN, Think Remote Cooperative Learning, ThinkQuest (global student website making contest) ,etc.Among them, the global remote collaboration site Global School Net (www.globalschoolnet.org, GSN),has been known as an online global schoolhouse, is the most representative of the global distance collaborative learning platform. Since GSN launched in the US in 1984, GSN is opening freely to teachers and students, has accumulated thirty years of organizing network learning activity experience, which participants are around the world hundreds of countries, hundreds of schools. However, because English communication barriers, the GSN website at present in many

^{*} Foundation Item: Development and Implementation of Digitization of School-Based Curriculum on Global Distance Collaborative Learning Perspective. 2010 Youth Fund Project of Humanities and Social Science Research of Ministry of Education (Project Number: 10YJC880063).

non-English country middle and primary school still is little-known. In view of the GSN website global influence, the paper explains the basic concept, content and structure of the GSN website, then analyses the design strategy of the global distance collaborative learning website, revealing its global distance collaborative learning design features, which provides reference for cross culture online collaboration for China and other countries.

The Overview of Global Distance Collaborative Learning Website (GSN)

The earliest, the GSN project is the free education for the mail (FrEdMail) network based on, by two teachers in Santiago, Iraq Feng Na Dr. Mary Andreas (Dr. Yvonne Marie Andres) and Al Rodgers (Al Rogers) co founded the non-profit educational website. In the GSN started, just organized their own students to connect the east coast of the United States students participate in online writing project, by 1990, to participate in the online network learning schools has expanded to more than 300 schools in many countries. Using GSN web site Project classification search function, found that as of 2014 December, there have been archived 2651 distance collaborative learning project, the subject category involves: art, business, language, sports, social studies, mathematics, science, technology, history, international relations, cultural diversity, vocational education, social welfare, health and other disciplines consecutive years. Among them, intercultural collaboration projects are: Doors to Diplomacy and International CyberFair etc. .

Cultivation of Students' Global Consciousness. Since its creation, GSN will relate distance collaborative learning idea and network learning platform closely, make full use of special network communication tool learning website, Blog, video conferencing, and build the bridge for the geographical gap, let students to connect the global full participation in the collaborative learning process, and help them to become the global consciousness of citizens. As of 2014 December, the GSN website brought together more than 2000 regional cooperation of distance collaborative learning project, there are 29 ongoing projects, 22 are applying for the project. The typical project including Doors to Diplomacy, International CyberFair, geography games (GeoGame), Online Expeditions, Newsday, write a letter to Santa Claus (Letters to Santa) etc. Through the design, support and encourage effective practice and exploration project, lets the student in the culture communication and cooperation between students and people from all around the world on a meaningful project skills, build their understanding of cultural diversity, the cultivation of students' global consciousness.

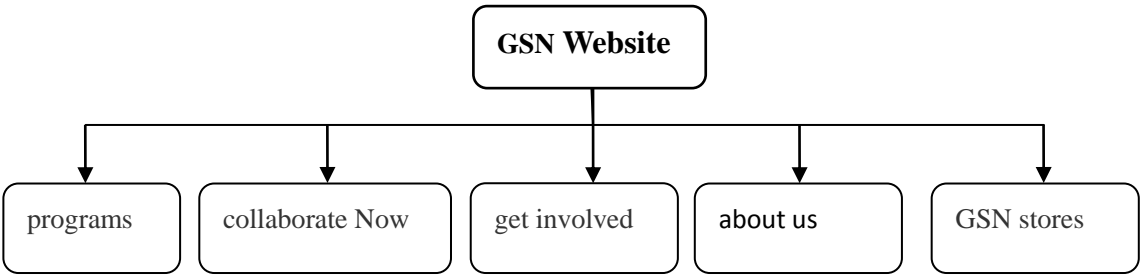
Use the Internet to Carry Out Distance Collaborative Learning. GSN website development together between teachers and students from around the world distance collaborative learning project, and to provide an organized a network learning platform, cohesion, easy to communicate. The website provides collaboration themes for public release, looking for companions, collaboration tools and other learning support functions, can the whole process support, counseling, recording, reproducing, assessment of cooperative learning. It encourages primary and middle school students around the world to participate in project activities, help students to share different social culture between each other through the online virtual communication, so as to understand and experience the diversity of real world culture, and from the virtual environment to walk to the reality of life and learning to build a profound friendship. All these efforts are aimed at promoting the teachers and students use the Internet to carry out distance collaborative learning in primary and secondary schools, students use the Internet to improve the learning ability.

According to the different levels of collaboration, collaborative learning project can be divided into website competition type, survey research, problem solving, such as different types of interpersonal communication type. The GSN project as a model of global cooperation of collaborative learning, not only relates to various types of remote collaboration, but many projects through the government, schools, businesses and community cooperation for many years has developed into the annual activities. Among them, diplomatic doors and international Webpage exposition of these two projects are held for many years the continuous global website production competition, participating students and teachers all over the world, is the most representative of the GSN remote collaborative learning project. Unfortunately, because English communication obstacle, at present the GSN project in the middle and primary schools of our country still little-known, participants only.

Platform Features of the Website of the Global Collaborative Learning

Locating in Comprehensive Platform of Distance Collaborative Learning. For students to better organization of different regions to participate in collaborative learning, distance collaboration website not only provides communication and communication platform for the participants, the more important is supporting to the implementation process and function service of project plan. In the GSN web site, mainly includes five main columns of project sections which are “programs”, “collaborate Now”, “ get involved”, “GSN stores”, and etc. " programs " and " collaborate Now " which embody distance collaborative learning characteristics of the comprehensive website , elaborate the project resources and cooperation method of distance collaborative learning, as shown in Table 1.In addition, the homepage of website also links the Logo of the ongoing, the most representative online collaborative project (doors to diplomacy and International CyberFair), reflecting the online collaborative learning project.

Table 1 The Structure of GSN Website



Focusing Based on Distance Collaborative Project Learning. As the global distance collaborative learning website, GSN website focused mainly on distance collaborative project based learning, project learning with its emphasis on information technology means, to emphasize the comprehensive use of interdisciplinary knowledge. In the GSN website "the project area" in the column, show representative remote collaboration project site, they are website contest type (International CyberFair and Doors to Diplomacy), survey research (online exploration project), problem solving (geography game project), interpersonal communication type (write to Santa and the daily news item). These digital project based learning, often around a core theme, to encourage students to fusion of different disciplines of knowledge inquiry learning, beyond a single subject, the subject content knowledge application, extension, re creation, thus forming the curriculum development

form a digital campus novel. In these projects, international Webpage fair and diplomatic doors website contest project because it combines the comprehensive application of various skills, over the years has been to insist on the development of project based learning in the local community and the Internet, thus become the most influential typical project GSN site.

Emphasizing Characteristics of Seeking International Partners and Collaborative Project.

Cross cultural distance collaborative learning emphasizes cross national, cross regional cultural exchange than the average distance collaborative learning. Therefore, seek international partners and projects become key cross cultural distance collaborative learning platform. In order to facilitate the user to find proper partners, GSN website for the global users in the "search for partners or project" column provides a powerful item search function, can according to the date, subject, age, type of collaboration, technical means or keywords to search their interested learning project, and then to want to find partners or project. In recent years, in order to enhance global cooperation platform and the teacher management function, GSN site also with eLanguages (electronic language) platform for cooperation, established the international partners and project space (the International Projects or Partners Place, referred to as "iPoPP"), for teachers to provide users with convenient network learning project release space, promote the remote collaboration facing the global teachers.

Paying Attention to Distance Collaboration Supporting Tools. GSN site can support hundreds of remote collaborative learning project, depends to a large extent it provides an organized, project diversity, rich resources, convenient communication network learning platform. GSN not only provides the learning outcomes of the network display space for learners, but also provides a collaborative means diverse, in the site's "Cooperation Center" to provide a series of necessary tools, such as auxiliary tools, assessment tools, audio, animation and other elves, blogs and periodicals, bookmark sharing, chat room, courseware, file sharing, email and electronic greeting cards, instant messaging, mailing lists and forums, maps, charts and visual effect, photo sharing, polls, video, Web publishing collaboration tools. In addition, the website also set up online evaluation module for the doors to diplomacy and international network of World Expo project, providing a unique peer review (Peer Review), convenient both players cross regional, cross time and space to carry out works review, which makes remote collaborative evaluation of the website can better realize.

Summary

In short, the global distance collaborative web site of Global School Net (GSN) due to the design idea of the study of globalization, development and operation of the website reflects the cross cultural distance collaborative learning support and service function integrity.

References

- [1] Global School Net (GSN).<http://www.globalschoolnet.org>
- [2] Lin Shubing, Xu Xiaodong, Che Wei Jian , Review and Summary of Development of Distance Cooperative Learning Project , Distance Education in China. 10(2011).36-42.
- [3] Li Cuibai, Construction Strategy of Instructional Platform of Interscholastic Collaborative Network, China Educational Technology .4(2009). 61-64.

- [4] Sun Weihua, Gao Danyang, Xiao Guangde, The Promotion of Youth Case Study Global Exchanges and Cooperation Learning, Information Technology Education in Primary and Secondary Schools .7,8 (2007). 100-102.
- [5] Zheng Dawei, Study of Collaborative Project Based Learning, Audio Visual Education Research, 6 (2010) , 75-77.
- [6] Li Cuibai, Construction and Activity Design of Collaborative Online Learning Community System, Southern Press, Haikou, China . 2014.
- [7]Chen li, Feng Xiaoying, Li Shuang, The Main Strategy and Scaffolding of Interscholastic Collaborative Learning Activities, China Educational Technology .5(2008). 49-52.
- [8]Bai Xiaojing, The Analysis of Website of Online Collaborative Learning, China Education Network .12(2006). 74-75.
- [9]Bai Xiaojing, The Design and Organization of Distance Collaborative Learning, The Modern Distance Education.5(2006). 10-13.
- [10] Zheng Dawei, Research on the Reform of Collaborative Learning to Promote Basic Education in Western Rural Areas, Elementary education. 3(2010).55-59.