A Strategy for SNS-based Writing Practice to Leverage Less Proficient Students’ Participation and Pedagogical Performance

Kwang-Soon Lee • Bong-Gyu Kim*
(Mokpo National University • Mokpo National University)


This study explores the influence of SNS (Kakao-Talk) writing practice on less proficient students’ (LPSs) participation in class and illustrates a new trial to promote pedagogical transformation from the traditional approach. In this study, 62 LPSs were participating in a teacher’s guided writing class by using specific grammar templates through Kakao-Talk, a tool of an SNS writing platform. While re-making template sentences, students were automatically reminded of the contents they had learned. They were also offered multimedia-based content including reading supplementary materials and YouTube videos uploaded on SNS, which was recompiled from students’ textbooks. The study employed a mixed method approach adopting qualitative and quantitative analyses (5-likert scale) by using SPSS 12.0. A post-survey was analyzed to calculate the students’ presence on SNS, and the efficacy through SNS-writing activity (Kakao-Talk). The correlation between scaffolded input and students’ writing strategy and the reliability coefficient of feedback factors were also reviewed. The results revealed that a number of teachers’ strategic scaffolding should be prepared to induce learners’ active engagement. While monitoring students’ writing activity through Kakao-Talk, teachers’ scaffolding ability to control the virtual-space was also considered to be as essential for LPSs as teachers’ meaningful pedagogical roles and responsibility.

I. INTRODUCTION

When using the combination of pedagogy and technology as an effective way to transfer knowledge, an instructor should design input-strategy in advance. Input-strategy here was

* 1st Author: Kwangsoon Lee, Corresponding Author: Bonggyu Kim.
drawn based on *Active Teaching and Learning* (Huddleston & Unwin, 2007; Robson, Bailey, & Larkin, 2004). It was also connected with students’ preferred method using multimedia and SNS-based writing tool to boost students’ participation. Learning language with social technology networks can introduce educational opportunities to enhance and transform teaching and learning platforms, environments, and its outcomes. Networking technology opens up a new venue for communication and collaboration between teachers and learners, and between students, leading to knowledge-building even though there are potential pitfalls and demerits which social networking technology learning environments can bring (Harasim, Hiltz, Teles & Turoff, 1997).

In addition, although learners are in different places out of class, the shared learning atmosphere, knowledge and virtual space simultaneously can be fresh to learners and the shared virtual space can trigger students’ participation more and stimulate collaborative learning. This view highlights that Kakao-Talk, a type of SNSs, is more likely to be the window to enlarge the domain of in-class learning condition beyond the traditional classroom. One of the possible reasons Kakao-Talk can be an appropriate tool as a teaching and learning platform is that currently a growing number of people have been familiar with the cutting edge technology including various types of pedagogical tools. For instance, the number of Kakao-Talk users has increased dramatically with 100 million registered users by July 2013 in Korea since it launched in 2010 (Ko, 2013). To most students, a smart-phone has already been a necessity without which they cannot live, which means they can access it at any time. Furthermore, students show their preference of Kakao-Talk to talk with friends because of its availability at any place, even in classrooms and users can exchange their responses with other peers immediately. Therefore, in the language learning context, Kakao-Talk may provide a means to increase opportunities for communicative practice with technology. In particular, for less proficient students (LPSs) who are shy and reserved, the SNS-writing environment representing alternative speaking seems to produce opportunities for increased linguistic output. However, this type of technology-based teaching and learning condition needs appropriate strategies with which teachers can guide learners more effectively, especially when they are LPSs.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. Technology-based Scaffolding for LPSs as Teaching Tools

To guide second language (L2) writers more effectively, understanding the nature of L2 writing is necessary. Yau (1989) mentioned that overall L2 writers did less planning, at the global and local level (Campbell, 1987; Whalen, 1988). Global level means the writer