



저작자표시-비영리-동일조건변경허락 2.0 대한민국

이용자는 아래의 조건을 따르는 경우에 한하여 자유롭게

- 이 저작물을 복제, 배포, 전송, 전시, 공연 및 방송할 수 있습니다.
- 이차적 저작물을 작성할 수 있습니다.

다음과 같은 조건을 따라야 합니다:



저작자표시. 귀하는 원저작자를 표시하여야 합니다.



비영리. 귀하는 이 저작물을 영리 목적으로 이용할 수 없습니다.



동일조건변경허락. 귀하가 이 저작물을 개작, 변형 또는 가공했을 경우에는, 이 저작물과 동일한 이용허락조건하에서만 배포할 수 있습니다.

- 귀하는, 이 저작물의 재이용이나 배포의 경우, 이 저작물에 적용된 이용허락조건을 명확하게 나타내어야 합니다.
- 저작권자로부터 별도의 허가를 받으면 이러한 조건들은 적용되지 않습니다.

저작권법에 따른 이용자의 권리는 위의 내용에 의하여 영향을 받지 않습니다.

이것은 [이용허락규약\(Legal Code\)](#)을 이해하기 쉽게 요약한 것입니다.

[Disclaimer](#)

교육학박사학위논문

**Korean Graduate Students' Learning Experiences
in a Blended English Writing for Academic
Purposes Course**

학문적 목표를 위한 영어쓰기 블렌디드 수업에서의
한국 대학원생들의 학습경험

2014년 8월

서울대학교 대학원
외국어교육과 영어전공
김 민 정

**Korean Graduate Students' Learning Experiences
in a Blended English Writing for Academic
Purposes Course**

학문적 목표를 위한 영어쓰기 블렌디드 수업에서의
한국 대학원생들의 학습경험

by

Minjung Joyce Kim

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Department of Foreign Language Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in English Language Education

At the
Graduate School of Seoul National University

August 2014

Korean Graduate Students' Learning Experiences in a Blended English Writing for Academic Purposes Course

학문적 목표를 위한 영어쓰기 블렌디드 수업에서의
한국 대학원생들의 학습경험

지도교수 김 진 완

이 논문을 교육학박사 학위논문으로 제출함
2014년 4월

서울대학교 대학원
외국어교육과 영어전공
김 민 정

김민정의 박사학위논문을 인준함
2014년 7월

위 원 장 _____ (인)

부위원장 _____ (인)

위 원 _____ (인)

위 원 _____ (인)

위 원 _____ (인)

Korean Graduate Students' Learning Experiences in a Blended English Writing for Academic Purposes Course

by
Minjung Kim

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Language Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English Language Education
at the Graduate School of Seoul National University

July 2014

APPROVED BY DISSERTATION COMMITTEE:

ORYANG KWON, COMMITTEE CHAIR

BYUNGMIN LEE

SUN-YOUNG OH

TAE-YOUNG KIM

JIN-WAN KIM

ABSTRACT

Korean Graduate Students' Learning Experiences in a Blended English Writing for Academic Purposes Course

Minjung Kim
Department of Foreign Language Education
The Graduate School
Seoul National University

In the last few decades, blended learning has emerged as a new learning model which includes benefits for both online and face-to-face instruction. With the increased interest in blended learning for higher education in Korea's university and EFL settings, additional research is needed to understand how students work within blended learning environments in order to make language learning experiences meaningful and joyful.

To answer the question of 'how', the present study sought to explore the learning experiences of Korean graduate students enrolled in a blended English Writing for Academic Purposes course through a qualitative case study within the Community of Inquiry Framework (Garrison et al., 2000). The study first described the teaching and learning contexts to show how the course was designed. Second, the study examined the challenges guiding interactions in an online classroom, where most writing activities took place, and determining how the students overcame these challenges based on Moore's three types of interactions; learner-instructor, learner-learner, and learner-content interaction (Moore, 1989). Finally, the study looked into the helpfulness of blended learning

with respect to learning academic English writing.

The data were collected from multiple sources such as surveys, observational notes, reflective journals, and interviews, all of which were analyzed qualitatively to extract salient themes in the area of online interactional difficulties and values students placed on blended learning in relation to learning academic English writing.

The results illustrated a variety of challenges that the students encountered in online interactions and described various attempts they made to overcome these challenges. Cultural inhibition and unfamiliarity with online communication were prime challenges in interacting with the instructor. In learner-learner interactions, distrust of peer feedback and lack of face-to-face interaction appeared to be the challenges. Students also reported that the burdensome workload and the high level of lesson materials were barriers to online interactions with content.

However, students started to interact better with the instructor as they intentionally tried to practice English writing in the form of written speech. They also interacted more effectively among themselves after peer feedback trainings in a face-to-face classroom and spending more time building relationships face-to-face. Furthermore, students demonstrated different learning strategies to deal with content matters and online activities.

In regard to its value, blended learning was found to be important for learning academic English writing in different areas. The students evaluated that the instructor's personalized and timely feedback were most helpful for improving academic English writing skills, but that peer feedback and group

discussion were valued limitedly, because they were helpful for only certain areas of writing skills such as checking mechanical errors and brain storming ideas. Lastly, although these students were burdened by the high level of contents, they still found interactions with content helpful, because they could benchmark other students' writings and utilize online resources for future references.

The research findings imply that second language writing in a blended learning format features interactivity in that writing is a collaborative experience of knowledge building through constant interactions with the instructor, peers, and content. Moreover, students' experiences are varied due to differences in their educational backgrounds, needs, motivations, learning strategies, and personalities. Finally, the study suggests that the teaching presence, more than the social or cognitive presence, is dominantly called for to bring about meaningful interactions in Korean EFL blended learning; that is, teacher's multiple roles as an instructor, designer, and facilitator should be fulfilled.

Key words: academic English writing, blended learning, Community of Inquiry framework, challenges of online interactions, second language writing feedback

Student Number: 2004-31101

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 The Background and Necessity of the Study	1
1.2 Researcher's Motive and Position	6
1.3 Purpose of the Study	7
1.4 Research Questions	8
1.5 Organization of the Dissertation	10
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.1 Blended Learning	11
2.1.1 The Concept of Blended Learning	11
2.1.2 Blended Learning in Higher Education	14
2.2 Blended Learning in SLA	16
2.2.1 Computer-Mediated Communication in Language Learning Environments	17
2.2.2 Web-Enhanced Instruction in Second Language Writing	21
2.3 Interactions in Online Learning Environments	23
2.3.1 The Concept of Online Interaction	23
2.3.2 Typology of Online Interaction	25
2.4 The Blended Learning Process Model	28
2.4.1 Teaching Presence	30
2.4.2 Social Presence	31

2.4.3 Cognitive Presence	32
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY.....	34
3.1 Methodology Rationale and Approach	34
3.1.1 Interpretivist Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry	35
3.1.2 Qualitative Case Study	36
3.2 Research Design.....	37
3.2.1 Research Site	37
3.2.2 Participants	40
3.3 Data Collection.....	41
3.4 Data Coding and Analysis.....	44
3.5 Enhancing Trustworthiness	49
CHAPTER 4 TEACHING AND LEARNING CONTEXTS.....	52
4.1 Teaching Presence in the EWAP Course	55
4.2 Social Presence in the EWAP Course	65
4.3 Cognitive Presence in the EWAP Course	71
CHAPTER 5 CHALLENGES OF ONLINE INTERACTIONS AND OVERCOMING THEM.....	75
5.1 Learner-Instructor Interaction	75
5.1.1 Cultural Inhibition in Korean Classrooms: From “How can I say <i>No</i> to the professor in <i>English</i> even <i>Online</i> ?” to “ <i>I tried to write in English more.</i> ”	76
5.1.2 Unfamiliarity with Online Communication: From “ <i>I don’t know what to say or how to say.</i> ” to “ <i>I tried to write some questions instead of being hesitant.</i> ”	81
5.1 Learner-Learner Interaction	85
5.2.1 Distrust and Discomfort of Peer Feedback: From “ <i>Why would I contaminate my eyes by reading something that’s full of errors?</i> ” to “ <i>Peer</i>	

<i>feedback training helped me to see which areas I needed to make comments on.</i>	85
5.2.2 Lack of Face-to-Face Interaction Time: From “ <i>It is not possible to have a true discussion online.</i> ” to “ <i>I felt much more comfortable talking with the classmates online after we had more real time classes.</i> ”	89
5.3 Learner-Content Interaction	93
5.3.1 Class and a Half Syndrome: From “ <i>There are too many activities which I never have enough time for.</i> ” to “ <i>After I learned to enjoy group work, I did not mind extra work in the online classroom.</i> ”	93
5.3.2 Difficulty of All-English Materials: From “ <i>It’s too difficult to understand all-English textbooks.</i> ” to “ <i>Mixing English with Korean was not necessary.</i> ”	96
CHAPTER 6 VALUE OF BLENDED LEARNING FOR ACADEMIC WRITING.....	99
6.1 Value of Teacher Feedback.....	99
6.1.1 Teacher Talk as a One Stop Solution: “ <i>Teacher feedback- the more the merrier.</i> ”	100
6.1.2 Prompt and Personalized Teacher Feedback: “ <i>I appreciated the teacher’s immediate and personalized feedback.</i> ”	104
6.2 Value of Peer Interaction.....	109
6.2.1 Students’ Written Feedback for Mechanics: “ <i>Peer feedback was pretty useful but only for checking mechanical errors.</i> ”	109
6.2.2 Group Discussion for Content Development: “ <i>A Group discussion was good for brainstorming ideas</i> ”	113
6.3 Value of Online Resources and Time Flexibility	119
6.3.1 Learn to Write from “ <i>Lurking</i> ”: “ <i>I could benchmark others’ essays.</i> ”	120
6.3.2 Usefulness of Classroom Materials and Time Flexibility: “ <i>All the uploaded materials are good references.</i> ”	122
CHAPTER 7 DISCUSSION.....	125
7.1 Interactivity of Second Language Writing in Blended Learning	125

7.2 Diversity of Second Language Learners' Experiences in a Blended Writing Course.....	129
7.3 Strengthening the Teaching Presence and Lessening the Social Presence	134
CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION.....	140
8.1 Major Findings	140
8.2 Pedagogical Implications	143
8.3 Suggestions for Further Study.....	146
REFERENCES.....	149
APPENDICES	161
ABSTRACT IN KOREAN.....	169

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Background Information of Participants	41
Table 3.2 Community of Inquiry Template	46
Table 3.3 Phases of Thematic Analysis	48
Table 4.1 Community of Inquiry Template with New Indicators from Present Study	53
Table 4.2 Description of Manuals and Tools in the Online Classroom	58
Table 4.3 Weekly Contents	72

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Three Types of Interaction in Distance Learning.....	26
Figure 2.2 Community of Inquiry Framework	29
Figure 3.1 Sample Lesson Plan	39
Figure 4.1 Front Page of Online Classroom.....	56
Figure 4.2 Configuration of Online Classroom Menus	57
Figure 4.3 Self-Introduction Board	60
Figure 4.4 Tips for Group Discussion	61
Figure 4.5 The Material Board	63
Figure 4.6 Teacher Feedback.....	64
Figure 4.7 Student's Diary (with Emoticons).....	66
Figure 4.8 Group Discussion Forum... ..	68
Figure 4.9 Teacher's Diary Board	69
Figure 4.10 Example of Assignment... ..	73

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The present study examines graduate students' learning experiences in a blended learning environment in order to gain insights into the complicated nature of blended EFL settings. In particular, it investigates the challenges students encounter when interacting online and how they coped with them, and values placed on the benefit of blended learning in an academic writing course. This chapter introduces the background and the necessity of the study (Section 1.1), states the researcher's motive and position (Section 1.2), presents the purpose of the study and research questions (Section 1.3), and sketches out the overall structure of the dissertation (Section 1.4).

1.1 The Background and Necessity of the Study

With the development of technology and widespread availability of online networks, distance education or computer-mediated communication (CMC) has brought about a new trend in second language learning with its potential benefits of providing meaningful and collaborative interactions (Kitade, 2000). Along with increased adoptions of CMC for language learning (Beauvois, 1995), in order to overcome limitations of either exclusively online or traditional (face-to-

face) classrooms, blended learning has emerged as an effective educational method as it combines the best practices of online learning and face-to-face classroom activities. According to Osguthorpe and Graham (2003), there are six advantages of blended learning: 1) pedagogical richness, 2) access to knowledge, 3) social interaction, 4) personal agency, 5) cost effectiveness, and 6) ease of revision. Graham, Allen and Ure (2003) also identified three notable reasons to implement blended learning: 1) improved pedagogy, 2) increased access and flexibility, and 3) increased cost-effectiveness.

In highlighting the aforementioned benefits and motives of blended learning, a good amount of literature demonstrates that it is being adopted widely in higher education (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008; Graham, 2006; Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003; Shea, 2006). It is gaining more popularity in higher education, especially for graduate school students with higher demands on time flexibility and personalized learning (Bonk & Graham, 2006; Ho et al., 2006; Singh, 2003; Young, 2002).

In the US, the reports of the national survey of information technology in higher education conducted by the Campus Computing Project (2003) say that more than half of the college courses adopt web resources, and a third of courses utilize online resources to promote interactions among students and instructors. In South Korea (hereafter Korea), there is a growing tendency of implementing blended learning in on and offline universities (Jung, 2010). According to a white

paper published by the Ministry of Education and Korea Education and Research Information System (2003), blended learning was used in about 63% of the university education courses in 2002 and 67% in 2003 (as cited in Lee & Im, 2006). These numbers contribute to the support of blended learning worldwide. Ross and Gage (2006) concluded, “In the long run, almost all courses offered in higher education will be blended” (p.167).

In addition to the higher demand on blended learning in universities, it is also extensively implemented in language classrooms for its potential benefit of enhancing interactional opportunities within and outside the classrooms. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) classes, which were previously referred to as a traditional computer laboratory, are now directed with blended learning to enhance active learning through interactive strategies (Graham, 2006). Recent studies show that blended learning for language learning yields positive outcomes in academic achievements and the learner’s satisfaction (Choi, Ko, & Baek, 2009; Hinkelman & Gruba, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2012; Rovai & Jordan, 2004; Yoon & Lee, 2010). The most emphasized benefit of blended learning maximizing opportunities for meaningful interactions (Flottemesch, 2000; Muirhead, 2004) which many researchers believe vital for both foreign language learning and distance education (Fulford & Zhang, 1993; Jiang & Ting, 2000; Kearsley, 1999).

With regard to second language writing education, several researchers found

that blended learning enhances a process-oriented writing development by expanding the opportunities for collaboration, communication, and the development of positive attitudes and confidence about writing, which are not easily achieved in fully online settings (Chih-Hua, 2008; Clark & Olson, 2010; Colakoglu & Akdemir, 2010). Wold (2011) argues, “Blended learning clearly has many advantages over using online formats for writing instruction for ELLs” (p.372). Similar findings have been made in Korean EFL settings as well (Yoon, 2011; Yoon & Lee, 2010)

While the importance of CALL has been continually emphasized, there is a lack of research on actual student experiences in blended learning from the students’ perspectives (Lao & Gonzales, 2005; Shieh, Gummer, & Niess, 2008). Perhaps this is due to the fact that the majority of research in online or CMC has been focused on the relative effectiveness of learning outcomes between exclusively online and face-to-face environments. According to Liu et al. (2003), out of 246 articles in the area of CALL during the 1990s, 176 were about software evaluation, computerized testing, and project oriented experiments; all of the 176 articles were about teacher (or administrator) centered studies. Chapelle (1997) stated, “L2 classroom research suggests the need for descriptive research documenting the nature of the interaction that learners engage in within various CALL contexts. In other words, it is essential for CALL research to observe learners’ linguistic and non-linguistic interactions in order to understand

the nature of the task.” (p. 28). Furthermore, although blended learning for EFL learners has gained attention in recent years, it has been neither applied well in EFL writing courses nor researched much (Wold, 2011).

Despite increased interest in blended learning in the higher education of Korea’s university and EFL settings, there is even less research focusing on students’ experiences in a blended learning environment. Blended learning research for Korean language classrooms, albeit it in small amount, mostly suggests an effective model through comparing the effects of courses (e.g., Lee & Lee, 2012; Yoon, 2012). Although they are equally valuable discoveries, a more student-centered approach can fill the gap to see “what is going on in a virtual world” as opposed to a traditional face-to-face instruction classroom. Therefore, it is imperative to hear the students’ voices to learn about the nature of blended learning and to understand their interactional experience, which are the key elements of the online classroom (Beldarrain, 2006; Berge, 1999; Liaw & Huang, 2000; Northrup, 2001), and in addition to language acquisition as well.

Given this, the present study investigates the students’ learning experiences in blended learning in terms of challenges and values as the students partake in a semester-long English Writing for Academic Purposes course in order to gain insights that can contribute to the improvement of blended teaching in EFL.

1.2 Researcher's Motive and Position

The researcher in the present study played multiple roles, which rendered her meaningful interactions with the students. She adopted a blended learning curriculum for this particular course (English Writing for Academic Purposes) because the need for continued or extended time for learning arose. As many students continually pointed out from previous semesters,¹ 'not enough time for interaction and classwork' was one of the weaknesses for a once-a-week graduate course. Having been teaching the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course for graduate students for several years, the researcher started to realize that these students were always short on time and wanted more time to study. This motivated the researcher to consider blended learning as an alternative method of teaching this EAP course and to complete two semesters as a pilot study prior to the current research. After seeing some positive reviews on a small version of the blended course², in order to embrace the students' needs for more time for interaction and class work, with the help of school administrators, the blended course was designed based on Community of Inquiry Framework (Garrison et al. 2000), which proposes a learning process model for online or

¹ The researcher had been teaching the EAP course for 6 consecutive semesters and was concerned with the students' feedback for the current study.

² Two blended courses were taught as a pilot study in limited areas. For example, students utilized online classroom for only once a week for discussion forum.

blended learning. The researcher also took part in knowledge building with the students and tried to facilitate helpful interaction to improve their academic writing skills.

All of these roles helped her to establish close relationships with the students, which was critical to gain an understanding of their learning experiences in the classroom settings. As she believed that the research should start from hearing the students' true voices and needs, she spent much time talking over food and chatting online to learn each student's different communication methods and styles. Most of all, although she was an instructor and a researcher at the same time, trying to hear the students' voices helped her to build trusting relationships with them which was essential to a qualitative study. Lastly, the researcher handled the process with care to separate her instructor's role from a researcher's role when analyzing and examining the data to extract relevant themes without bias.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

First, addressing the need for increased understanding of how EFL students experience language learning in a blended learning format, the study looks into the learning experiences of graduate students in a blended EWAP (English Writing for Academic Purposes) course from the students' perspectives with a focus on interactions. More specifically, the study first provides a thick

description of the blended EWAP course to show the learning context³ including a descriptive view of lively interactions that had occurred in the online classroom.

Second, considering the nature of the blended writing course, in which most writing activities take place in an online classroom, the present study focuses on how the student participants interact in an online environment. The main purpose is to identify challenges that hinder students from having meaningful interactions, and to discover how their perceived challenges change as they cope with the difficulties.

Third, the research describes and identifies the values of blended learning in regard to learning academic English writing. This is to find out whether or not students find the blended learning experience helpful for acquiring academic English writing skills.

1.4 Research Questions

This research situates itself in a qualitative study, as it aims to gain in-depth insights about students' experiences from individual voices. Particularly, the study looks into the challenges that the students encounter in online interactions and the value of blended learning in regard to academic English writing course.

³ Learning context is defined as the situation in which something is learned or understood, a situation that can impact how something is learned or what is taught. "Learning Context." *Your Dictionary: The Dictionary You Can Understand* <http://www.yourdictionary.com/learning-context> (Accessed May 5, 2014)

In order to meet the purpose of the study, following questions are being posed:

- 1) What are the challenges Korean graduate students face when interacting online in a blended EWAP course, and how do they cope with them?
- 2) How do Korean graduate students value blended learning in learning academic English writing?

It is expected that the findings of the present study will add to our understanding about how to implement a blended language course in an EFL setting considering difficulties and perceptions about the helpfulness of the course. The study is expected to verify the Community of Inquiry Framework (Garrison et al., 2000) by exploring interactions in Korean graduate classrooms to give further theoretical knowledge in this Korean EFL blended and online course. The findings of the study will contribute to the existing literature of online interactions in EFL settings, especially for adult student learners. And finally, the findings may also serve as a preliminary guideline for program development for instructors, designers and administrators for the purpose of implementing blended learning for second language learners.

1.5 Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the background and the purpose of the study along with research questions. Chapter 2 deals with a review of literature with three subcomponents: blended learning, online interaction, and the Community of Inquiry Framework. Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology used in this study including participants, data collection procedures, and the methods of data analysis. Chapter 4 describes the teaching and learning contexts of English Writing for Academic Purposes course. In Chapter 5, the graduate students' learning experiences in blended learning are delineated in terms of challenges and the way they change. Chapter 6 reports on the value of blended learning for academic writing. Chapter 7 discusses the meanings of the results in relation to previous research. Finally, the thesis ends with Chapter 8 which summarizes major findings, addresses pedagogical implications, and makes suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews literature which influenced the present study and provided a starting point for investigation of blended learning for language learning acquisition. Section 2.1 explains the concept of blended learning and its implementation in higher education followed by Section 2.2 which reviews blended learning in second language acquisition. Section 2.3 presents a review of studies on interactions in an online learning environment, and finally, Section 2.4 introduces the learning process model (Community of Inquiry Framework) used for the study.

2.1 Blended Learning

In this section, blended learning is reviewed in terms of concept (Section 2.1.1) and how it is implemented in higher education (Section 2.1.2).

2.1.1 The Concept of Blended Learning

The term “blended learning” has been used for nearly two decades to refer to a new move in educational delivery that occurs in a combination of face-to-face and online learning. Although blended learning has become a trendy word in

both academia and the business world, some ambiguity exists because it is defined and interpreted in a variety of forms (Graham, 2006). For example, Garrison and Vaughan (2008) defined blended learning as “a design approach whereby both face-to-face and online learning are made better by the presence of the other (p. 5). Lynch and Dembo (2004) characterized blended learning as “a form of distributed education, utilizing both distance and face-to-face modalities to deliver instruction” (p. 1). Graham (2006) took a broad working definition of blended learning which displays the idea that “it is the combination of instruction from two historically separate models of teaching and learning: traditional F2F learning systems and distributed learning systems” (p. 5).

Driscoll (2002) also gave helpful explanations of different understandings of the term *blended learning* as follows:

- 1) To combine or mix modes of web-based technology (e.g., live virtual classroom, self-paced instruction, collaborative learning, streaming video, audio, and text) to accomplish an educational goal
- 2) To combine various pedagogical approaches (e.g., constructivism, behaviorism, cognitivism) to produce an optimal learning outcome with or without instructional technology
- 3) To combine any form of instructional technology (e.g., videotape, CD-ROM, web-based training, film) with face-to-face instructor-led training
- 4) To mix or combine instructional technology with actual job tasks in order

to create a harmonious effect of learning and working (Driscoll, 2002, p.1).

Although blended learning is defined in different ways and has been used under different meanings and forms, it is generally understood as learning which adopts both computer-mediated online learning and traditional face-to-face classroom learning activities. To serve its purpose, the present study adopts the term borrowed from Garrison and Kanuka (2004) which says, "...blended learning is the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with on-line learning experiences..." (p. 96).

Oliver and Trigwell (2005) pointed to a problem that these conceptualizations are drawn from the teacher's or course designer's perspectives rather than the process of learning. These researchers further indicated that "what is needed in future research is a shift away from manipulating the blend as seen by the teacher, to an in-depth analysis of the variation in the experience of the learning of the student in the blended learning context" (Oliver & Trigwell, p. 24). Given such a view, the present study has significance in that it tries to grasp students' learning experience in blended learning classroom.

2.1.2 Blended Learning in Higher Education

The adoption of blended learning in higher education is widely gaining popularity (Bliuc, Goodyear, & Ellis, 2007; Dziuban, Hartman, & Moskal, 2004; Graham, 2006; Oh & Park, 2009; Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). Six advantageous goals of using blended learning were identified by Osguthorpe and Graham (2003): 1) Pedagogical richness, 2) Access to knowledge, 3) Social interaction, 4) Personal agency, 5) Cost-effectiveness, and 6) Ease of revision. The fact that these benefits attract administrators and instructors motivated many researchers to focus on the effectiveness and success factors of blended learning. The previous research on blended learning in higher education showed positive results in terms of learning outcomes. For example, Vaughan (2010) examined the impact of incorporating the use of technology to a psycholinguistics course and found that the students had greater satisfaction, improved retention, and increased scores than in the previous course. In another study done by Collopy and Arnold (2009), students expressed higher satisfaction and motivation to put the learned knowledge into practice. Time flexibility was found to be the primary reason for student satisfaction (Dziuban et al., 2004; Graham & Kaleta, 2002, Percy, 2009) and increased learning outcomes (Dziuban et al., 2005).

The research on blended learning had also discussed the improved classroom interaction which was considered to be the key focus of research and theory in

blended learning (Graham, 2006). Wagner (2006) explained interaction as “the defining attribute for quality and value in online learning experience” (p. 44). The literature related to interaction in blended learning showed that learner-instructor and student-student interactions contributed to student and teacher satisfaction. For instance, Bliuc et al. (2010) showed how learners’ perception of the integration of two different modes of classroom (face-to-face and online) interaction affected their academic achievement. Studies also demonstrated that intellectual interaction came into play. Several studies showed that students’ academic preparedness and understanding of course content increased as learners were more apt to engage in textual dialogues in online discussions (Amaral & Shank, 2010; Shroff & Vogel, 2010).

Although blended learning is believed to provide the best possible option for education, it is not without challenges. The challenges include the lack of a consensual definition of blended learning (Bliuc, Goodyear & Ellis, 2007) and appropriate methods of integrating face-to-face and online learning to bring about the best learning opportunities. Bliuc, Goodyear and Ellis (2007) observed that there is a “need for greater consensus on basic definitions of blended learning, more research that offers different perspectives and methods of collecting evidence about the value of blended learning, and research that is comparatively more holistic or systemic in its focus” (p. 24). Thus, more research is called for to understand the function of blended learning and the

factors required to create high quality blended learning in academia.

2.2 Blended Learning in SLA

It has been only a decade since the researchers began to use the term *blended learning* in relation to language learning. Before that, the field of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) had been examined extensively, including the various formats of blended language learning cases since its beginning in the 1960s. Therefore, many literature reviews on blended learning were dependent on the field of CALL research which has a relatively longer history.

Many researchers of blended learning in second language acquisition also draw upon studies on CALL, although these studies did not use the term *blended learning* (e.g., Hong & Samimy, 2010; Neumeier, 2005; Wiebe & Kabata, 2010). However, it is still ambiguous to demarcate blended learning from CALL and vice versa. Neumeier (2005) even encapsulated that “in the realms of blended learning, there is still a lot of undiscovered territory to be explored and mapped out” (p. 176), which in another sense indicates that blended learning in the field of SLA is still in its early stage. The following sections describe Computer-Mediated Communication used in language learning (Section 2.2.1) and blended learning implementation to writing instruction (Section 2.2.2).

2.2.1 Computer-Mediated Communication in Language Learning Environments

Although there is a growing number of studies that have addressed the value of blended learning from students' perspectives in relation to the learning effect, only a few researchers studied the role of blended learning for second language acquisition. Since previous research has focused mainly on comparison of learning outcomes of traditional and online classes, there is even less qualitative research that reflects EFL students' experiences in online communication. Thus, this section presents a review of literature firstly based on the general findings of Computer-Mediated Communication (hereafter CMC) in distance learning, and then discusses the most relevant points in the area of second language acquisition (hereafter SLA).

Second or foreign language instructors started to implement web-based communication to language teaching as the internet became widely available (Warschauer, 1996). CMC engages people in social interaction by “bridging time and space to develop interpersonal relationships through both synchronous and asynchronous communication” (Barnes, 2003, p. 36). These two types of CMC in second/foreign language classrooms are known to promote interaction⁴

⁴ The concept of interaction in the present research refers to communication between people for information sharing in general. It is different from the concept of L2 classroom interaction which focuses on modified input and negotiation.

(Salaberry, 1996). Positive effects of students' interaction during second language learning in a CMC environment have been discovered by many scholars (e.g., Hartman, et al., 1991 cited in Warschauer 1996, p. 6; Warschauer, 1996; Salaberry, 2001). Some earlier studies on the effect of using CMC in language classroom indicate the increased amount of linguistic input (Beauvois, 1998; Chun, 1994; Kern, 1995) and output (Beauvois, 1998), which are known to be critical factors in language acquisition. Kern (1995) compared the quantity and quality of student discourse in CMC setting and found that the students had received twice as many turns and spoke two to four times more sentences in the CMC discussion than in the face-to-face oral discussion. In addition, Beauvois (1998) examined student-student and student-teacher interactions and found that output was greater in the CMC mode than in the face-to-face interaction. She attributed this to the nature of CMC playing as "conversations in slow motion" (p. 198) which helped students to spend more time in reflecting and composing before speaking.

Firstly, some studies have shown that CMC in language education can increase learners' motivation. Beauvois (1995) reported that the students' motivation increased as they felt "freedom from having to produce target language and in someone else's timeframe; [it] seemed to release the students to create meaningful, more accurate, and even playful conversations with their classmates and instructor" (p. 182). Beauvois (1998) also found that learner's

motivation was higher in the CMC setting than in face-to-face interaction. Other researchers (Chen, 2005; Lee, 2004) found that authentic and meaningful online interactions positively motivate students to participate actively in interactive tasks. Furthermore, Meunier (1998) studied two types of motivation, i.e., situational and task motivation, related to instrumental and integrative motivation introduced by Gardner and Lambert (1972). The study showed that CMC increased the level of motivation, both situational and task, as it helped the learners to engage in more discussions. Moreover, Chang (2005) demonstrated that applying self-regulation strategies in online instruction raised the perception of learner's motivation, especially intrinsic goal orientation, and the learners valued the task more and held stronger beliefs of learning and confidence in class performance.

Secondly, the research has shown that students prefer online interactions to face-to-face ones due to the time convenience; that is, students can easily access the internet any time they want and produce language when they are prepared (Beauvois, 1995, Kern, 1995). In the same vein, online interaction in language classroom is reported to provide learners with more time for reflective learning (Yamada & Akahori, 2007). In a CMC setting, students are allowed to have more time to look back on their experiences and evaluate them using available resources on the internet (Jonassen, 2004). Furthermore, in an asynchronous environment, EFL students can take advantage of time flexibility such as

composing sentences more carefully or reading through peer/instructor feedback. With this learning style, some studies (Warschauer, 1996; Weasenforth et al., 2002) have shown that interactional participation increased especially amongst the quiet students and encouraged critical thinking. This is related to Arnold's study (2002) which reported that students felt less worried and stressed in producing language in online environments, and it helped to raise language awareness as well as their confidence level.

Thirdly, CMC environments are known to foster learner autonomy in language learning (Arnold, 2002; Benson, 2007, Chiu, 2008). The concept of learner autonomy lies in learner independence in which learners take responsibility for their own learning and takes control of their learning process (Benson, 2001; Little, 2000). Chiu (2008) examined the relationship between the teacher's role and learner autonomy in online education and found that using CMC offered more interactions which developed learner autonomy, especially when the teacher played a counseling role. Moreover, learner autonomy was investigated in relation to CMC technology and pedagogy within three different perspectives (an individual cognitive, a social-interactive, and an experimental-participatory approach), and Schwienhorst (2003) suggested tandem language learning can help to realize the principle of learner autonomy by implementing technologies and pedagogies. Tandem language learning is a method of language learning based on mutual language exchange between tandem partners, and

ideally each learner is a native speaker in the language the proponent wants to learn (Wikipedia, 2014). With an instructor playing a facilitator role in CMC settings, learners will be able to “experience autonomy in order to become more autonomous” (Murphy, 2008, p. 83) by receiving more opportunities to interact and participate in online communications.

While it is true that the new technologies have increased advantageous opportunities to the language learners and teachers, they also come with problems. Disadvantages of CMC in language teaching were summarized by Warschauer (1997): 1) more difficulty in achieving consensus in online discussion than in face-to-face, 2) danger of using hostile language, and 3) overloaded information. Huang and Liu (2000) additionally pointed out that the technology in CMC language teaching can be difficult for students.

The use of CMC in language learning has advantages and disadvantages, thus the effectiveness of CMC can only be ensured if technology is used in a way that reinforces traditional language classrooms.

2.2.2 Web-Enhanced Instruction in Second Language Writing

Given the above-mentioned benefits of using computer-aided instruction for general language learning, traditional writing classes also have been employing technology to motivate learners and facilitate learning (Chang et al., 2008; Fidaoui et al., 2010; Goldberg et al., 2003). Although there have not been many

studies done on blended learning in writing courses (Wold, 2011), a few of them have shown that CMC positively influenced L2 learners' writing performance compared to traditional classrooms (e.g., Kupetz & Ziegenmeyer, 2005; Thorne, 2003). Specifically, Zhang, Gao, Ring and Zhang (2007) examined the effects of online discussion on different skills of language and discovered that students showed improvements in essay organization and critical thinking, whereas no significant improvements were found in grammar, vocabulary, or reading skills. However, other studies showed contrasting results that students who utilized computer web resources had higher vocabulary scores (e.g., Chen et al., 2002; De la Fuente, 2003).

Even though the findings of research speak favorably of blended learning for language instruction, there are concerning voices, too. Kannan and Macknish (2000) found that students' experiences had negative effects when there were inadequate motivation, feedback, self-directedness, and computer technology skills. Ho (2005) spoke of teacher's perspective that "in either hybrid or fully online classes, [teachers] encountered various pedagogical challenges..." (p. 4). Most of all, due to the lack of research on blended writing courses, blended learning has not been efficiently applied in writing courses, which calls for more research to meet the needs of students and instructors.

2.3 Interactions in Online Learning Environments

A key to successful online learning centers on a connected system of multiple components such as content, design, communication, interaction, learning environment, and management (Moore and Kearsley, 1996). Among these six components, interaction is at the heart of online learning experience and is considered to have the potential to create a better learning experience online (Wagner, 1997). In order to serve the purpose of the research, the present study examines the students' interactions in an online setting which, in effect, was a dominant arena for learning. Thus, this section reviews the literature on online interaction. Section 2.3.1 defines interaction, and Section 2.3.2 introduces different types of interactions studied in previous literature.

2.3.1 The Concept of Online Interaction

Defining “online interaction” has been a challenge to distance educators since it has been used differently across studies (Battalio, 2007; Muirhead, 2000). Considering the great number of elements involved in interaction, it is not easy to reach a consensual definition. In defining interaction, Moore (1989) notes, “Interaction is another important term that carries so many meanings as to be almost useless unless specific sub-meanings can be defined and generally agreed upon” (p.1).

Wagner (1994) defined interaction with its focus on bringing about a change in a learner's performance as he stated, "An instructional interaction is an event that takes place between a learner and the learner's environment. Its purpose is to respond to the learner in a way intended to change his or her behavior toward an educational goal" (p. 8). Vrasidas and McIsaac (1999) described interaction as "the process consisting of the reciprocal actions of two or more actors within a given context" (p. 25). Moreover, Berge (1999) discussed the essential quality of online learning environments by stating,

"Interaction is two-way communication among two or more people within a learning context, with the purposes of either task/instructional completion or social relationship-building, that includes a means for teacher and learner to receive feedback and for adaptation to occur based upon information and activities with which the participants are engaged" (p. 6).

Lastly, interaction in online learning can be further described in comparison with interaction in face-to-face learning. Moore and Kearsley (1996) gave an overview of the main characteristics of online interaction (as cited in Lie, 2008):

- 1) Instructors are limited in terms of seeing students' reactions.
- 2) Teaching effectiveness is highly dependent on how well one incorporates technology into course design.
- 3) Learners may need more encouragement and more attention needs to be given to students' feelings and motivation.

- 4) Students may need more time to test unfamiliar approaches.
- 5) Most DE (Distance Education) courses involve more than one expert-frequently they involve a collaboration of technical experts, tutors, and other support staff in addition to the lead instructor.

While there are many definitions of online interaction, the present study will define it as any type of reciprocal action in online courses and follow Moore's three types of online interaction which will be discussed in the next section.

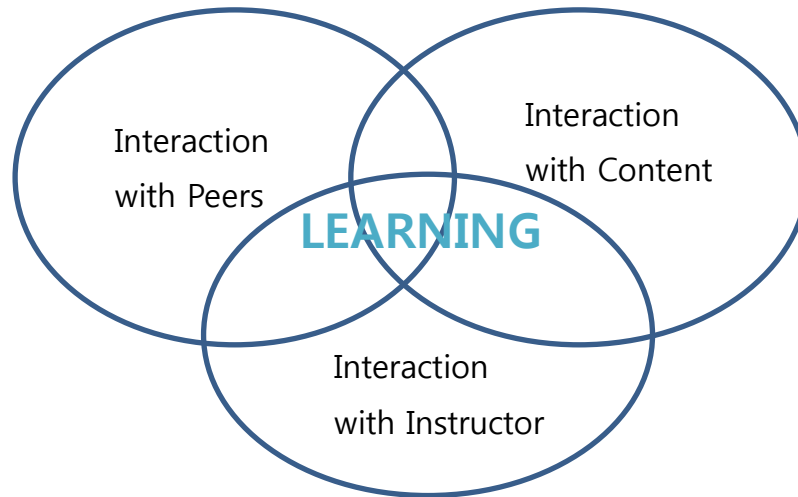
2.3.2 Typology of Online Interaction

Along with a vast number of definitions used under the term, *interaction*, there are different frameworks for categorizing interactions. One of the most widely discussed frameworks is Moore's taxonomy. He classified online interaction into three types within the online classroom: 1) learner-instructor, 2) learner-learner, and 3) learner-content interaction (See Figure 2.1).

Wagner (1997) explains that this interactional framework "implies purpose, intent, and/or intended outcome of an interaction by virtue of indicating who or what is to be involved in a transaction" (p. 21).

To better understand the students' experiences in an online environment, the range of the online interaction of the current research is delimited to the three types of interactions suggested by Moore (1989).

Figure 2.1
Three Types of Interaction in Distance Learning (Moore, 1989, p.1)



First, learner-instructor interaction is “between the learner and the expert who prepared the subject material or some other expert acting as instructor” (Moore, 1989, p. 2). This type of interaction shares similar dynamics with traditional face-to-face classroom interactions in which the instructor plays multiple roles of doing “assistance, counsel, organization, stimulation and support” (Soo & Bonk, 1998, p. 3) to help learners to attain the course content. There are multiple mediums to facilitate instructor-learner interaction such as online office hours, messenger, and e-mails (Battalio, 2007). This type of interaction is valued because it serves several functions: motivating learners and interpreting content (Hirumi, 2002), and encouraging learners and offering

support (Moore, 1989) despite the absence of physical presence. The instructor's role was found to be significant to ensure the quality of learner-instructor interaction (Reisetter & Borris, 2004), and Battalio (2007) concluded that this type of interaction will most likely remain as the only required interaction which "continually rates high" in online research studies (p. 346).

Second, learner-learner interaction occurs when a learner works together with a partner or a group of students (Hirumi, 2006; Moore, 1989). Interaction between learners became more important as the research showed a significant impact on learning and course satisfaction (Gunawardena & Zittle, 1997; Moore & Kearsley, 1996). Interaction between learners can help to compensate for the deficiency of visual or audio cues in real time interactions by building a sense of belonging through a collaborative work (Auyeung, 2004; McIsaac et al., 1999). Moore (2002) noted that learner-learner interaction creates more equal opportunities for shy students who can better participate in online discussions. Although, viewed from a social constructivist perspective, working with other classmates helps to bridge psychological distance (Trentin, 1998), some recent research revealed that not all students have positive perspectives on working with peer group. Thurmond et al. (2002) found that students were less satisfied when asked to work as a group rather than individually.

Third, learner-content interaction occurs between the learner and the subject matter as the learners construct knowledge based on their previous information,

which, according to Moore and Kearsley (2005), is a “defining characteristic of education” (p. 140). Moore (1989) further asserts the importance of learner-content interaction by stating, “Without it, there cannot be education, since it is the process of intellectually interacting with content that results in changes in the learner’s understanding, the learner’s perspective, or the cognitive structures of the learner’s mind” (p. 1). The learner can interact with content matter in a variety of ways, such as the teacher’s introductions of the unit, links to the related websites, teacher-made Power Point presentations, and reflection papers (Arbaugh, 2008; Resietter & Boris, 2004). With such concepts, online interaction can be viewed as going beyond nonhuman activities (Garrison & Anderson, 2003).

2.4. The Blended Learning Process Model

Since the purpose of the present study was to explore students’ experiences in blended learning with a focus on an online setting, it is grounded on the community of inquiry framework, a learning process model that is widely applied to online or blended learning (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000). The concept of the Community of Inquiry framework draws upon the ideas of John Dewey who believed that an educational experience must fuse the interests of the individual and society on which an individual development is dependent upon.

As Garrison et al. (2010) claim, “the premise of this framework is that

higher-order learning is best supported in a community of learners engaged in critical reflection and discourse. The philosophical foundation of the community of inquiry framework is collaborative constructivism and, theoretically, it is grounded in the research on deep and meaningful approaches to learning” (p. 32). The community of inquiry framework suggests meaningful learning is achieved through the interaction of three key elements: teaching presence, social presence, and cognitive presence (See Figure 2.2).

Each of the presences is addressed in the following sections from 2.4.1 through 2.4.3 in detail. Community of Inquiry framework has been validated for its adoptability to be used as a tool to examine the dynamics of online interactions (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005; Swan, 2001). Figure 2.3 depicts how the types of interaction are related within the Community of Inquiry framework.

Figure 2.2
Community of Inquiry Framework
 (Garrison, Anderson, Archer, 2000), *The Internet and Higher Education*, 2(2-3), p. 88. Copyright 2000 by Elsevier Science, Inc. Reprinted with permission.



2.4.1 Teaching Presence

Teaching presence is the fundamental element to integrate all the other elements that are necessary to create a meaningful community. In this context, teaching presence is defined as “the design, facilitation and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes” (Anderson, Rourke, Garrison, & Archer, 2001, p. 5). Teaching presence has three categories: 1) instructional design and organization, 2) facilitating discourse, and 3) direct instruction (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007). Instructional design and organization includes “the selection, organization, and primary presentation of course content, as well as the design and development of learning activities and assessment” (Garrison et al., 2000, p. 3). Facilitating discourse is important to sustain interest and motivation of the students (Anderson, Rourke, Garrison, & Archer, 2001). A teacher needs to support students to create a learning community by constantly communicating through postings and discussions. Direct instruction is accomplished when the teacher offers scholarly leadership as a subject matter expert and shares his/her knowledge with students (Garrison et al., 2000). It is critical for the teacher to play multiple roles as described above to boost active learning and interaction for the construction of knowledge (Garrison et al., 2000).

2.4.2 Social Presence

The second element of community of inquiry framework is social presence which is defined as the “ability of participants to identify with the group or course of study, communicate purposefully in a trusting environment, and develop personal and affective relationships progressively by way of projecting their individual personalities” (Garrison, 2011, p. 34). This element is especially important in an online environment because it is challenging to communicate via text only which does not always carry emotion or feelings appropriately. Social presence encompasses three categories: 1) open communication, 2) group cohesion, and 3) affective expression. Open communication encourages learners to have meaningful conversations with mutual respect, and group cohesion is described as “focused collaborative communication that builds participation and empathy” (p. 101). Lastly, affective expression means having to share emotions upon establishing interpersonal relationships, which, according to Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2000), is “indicated by the ability and confidence to express feelings related to the educational experience” (p. 99). Recent research on social presence in online interaction supports that social presence is the foundation for cognitive development and critical thinking, and that collaborative tasks promote social presence in community establishment in online environments (Arbaugh, 2008; Rovai, 2002; Shea & Bidjerano, 2008; Swan & Shih, 2005).

2.4.3 Cognitive Presence

Garrison and Arbaugh (2007) explained cognitive presence as “the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse” (p.161). That is to say, “cognitive presence reflects higher-order knowledge acquisition and application and is most associated with the literature and research related to critical thinking” (Garrison et al., 2001, p. 11). Cognitive presence is further explained by four phases in an “idealized sequence of the process of critical inquiry” (Garrison et al., 2001. p.4). These four phases are 1) triggering event, 2) exploration, 3) integration, and 4) resolution. In the triggering event phase, an instructor poses problems and issues to motivate learners to explore the content. The second phase is exploration in which learners make sense of the issues by gathering information. Then in the next phase, integration, students connect ideas through reflecting on the content. Finally, in the resolution phase, learners identify solutions to the problems by applying new knowledge. In the cognitive presence, learners are expected to take each stage sequentially; however, researchers (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007) note that it seems to be difficult to move beyond the exploration phase to achieve critical thinking.

In summary, building upon the Community of Inquiry framework that has been developed to describe a learning process in online or blended learning environments (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000), the present research adopts

three primary presences, i.e., teaching, social and cognitive presences, to draw a learning and teaching context of the EWAP course and to understand the students' learning experiences.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research methodology, the assumptions guiding that methodology, and the research design. In choosing a research methodology, the primary goal is to ensure that it will address the research questions. Since the focus of the present research is to study students' learning experiences in a blended EWAP course, a qualitative research approach, specifically the case study method is employed. This section begins with a description of the rationale and approach of the methodology (Section 3.1), then goes on to explaining research design (Section 3.2), followed by data collection procedures (Section 3.3), and data analysis (Section 3.4). Finally, Section 3.5 closes the chapter by addressing how validity and reliability are established in this qualitative case study.

3.1 Methodology Rationale and Approach

The design of a research study begins with the selection of a topic and a paradigm. A paradigm is essentially a world view, a whole framework of beliefs, values and methods within which research takes place (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Patton, 1990). It is this world view within which researchers work. The remainder of this chapter delineates rationales for the paradigmatic framework of

the qualitative approach used in this study. This chapter is comprised of two subsections of which the first, Section 3.1.1, introduces an interpretivist approach and the second, Section 3.1.2, explains a case study method which was adopted to the current qualitative research.

3.1.1 Interpretivist Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry

There are a variety of approaches to qualitative study, and the present study takes an interpretivist approach which is defined as, “understanding the meaning of the process or experience” (Merriam, 1998, p. 4). By its nature, the goal of an interpretivist approach is to understand how people behave and interpret the events of their world by pursuing contextual depth. Since the goal of this study is to examine participants’ learning experiences in a blended course environment from their perspectives, the researcher adopts an interpretivist approach, in which, the researcher herself is the chief instrument responsible for data gathering and analysis.

Additionally, according to Merriam, “in interpretive research, education is considered to be a process and school is a lived experience” (Merriam, 1998, p. 4). As the present research attempts to explore students’ experiences with a focus on interaction in a blended educational situation, the researcher assumes every specific context which the participants experience is fluid and dynamic. Erickson also states, “interpretive fieldwork research involves being unusually thorough

and reflective in noticing and describing everyday events in the field setting” (Erickson, 1986, p.3). Therefore, this research puts its focus on observing the setting and listening to the participations’ voices through various mediums to be discussed in Section 3.3.

3.1.2 Qualitative Case Study

In learning about students’ interactional experiences in a blended course and gaining insights from their perspectives, the research process lends itself to the case study method. In contrast to quantitative research, which focuses on verifying hypotheses, qualitative research does not test assumptions but focuses on understanding the phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). The qualitative research allows themes and patterns to emerge from the data, and participants’ perspectives are discovered in their natural settings (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The current study presents emerging themes discovered from observing students’ experiences of interaction in blended learning and discusses their reflections on the effect of blended learning.

Yin (2003) informs the reader that case study methodology is especially appropriate when the researcher wants to account for and describe a real-life context. The present study aims to investigate the phenomenon of a real life environment, that is, graduate students’ perceptions of blended learning, interactional experiences in terms of challenges and values related to the

effectiveness of education. Case studies are also designed to bring out details from the viewpoint of the participants in the study through the use of multiple data sources (Merriam, 1998). The current study adopts various types of data collection such as interviews, reflective journals, and observation notes to capture detailed descriptions of the participants' experiences, which will be described in the next section.

3.2 Research Design

Section 3.2 offers details of research design such as the settings in which the research was carried out (Section 3.2.1), and who participated (Section 3.2.2).

3.2.1 Research Site

The study was conducted at a graduate school located in Gyeonggi-do which is a specialized graduate school whose focus is in conducting in-depth research on subjects of interest in Korean Studies. According to the description on its homepage, it is a research-oriented graduate school in the fields of humanities and social sciences related to Korea, which aims at nurturing scholars who will contribute to the development and globalization of Korean studies. Each semester, there are approximately 240 students, including about 120 international students from 30 different countries.

The school offers three different English courses each semester for Korean students only. The three English courses are Reading Comprehension, English Presentation for Academic Purpose (EPAP), and English Writing for Academic Purpose (EWAP). While both EPAP and EWAP courses are available in a blended type of learning, EWAP was selected for this study due to a higher number of enrollments and greater diversity of the student profiles.

The EWAP class was designed to meet once a week for 2 hours and 40 minutes in a traditional classroom and remaining days were used to continue their work in an online classroom which was created by adopting existing online cafes available for free. The reasons for utilizing popular online cafes were cost and time saving, and ease of access due to their popularity. All the participants were already using an email account that synchronized with the café which eased them into becoming members of the café with no complications.

Each face time class was devoted mainly to the instructor's lecture on ad weekly lesson and announcements which include next week's assignment and activities to be done online. An example of a typical face time classroom, week 12's lesson plan, is introduced in Figure 3.1.

The online classroom involved two types of participation: one was obligatory participation which was subject to evaluation, and the other was voluntary participation which was done at their own free will. Obligatory activities included checking weekly announcements, reading guidelines for assignments,

uploading weekly assignments, posting opinions in group discussion forum, and writing feedback between peers. Voluntary activities included replying to the teacher's diary, writing a short memo, and leaving messages in the student's diary board. Although the students' participation rate was part of the grade scheme, it was not always easy to measure student participation in an online classroom. Counting the number of postings was one way to evaluate, but because it did not measure depth, it could not be used widely. Detailed descriptions of the online classroom will be referred to in the first research question in Section 4.1.

Figure 3.1
Sample Lesson Plan

<p>English Writing for Academic Purpose Lesson Plan: 05/022/2013</p> <p>Objective: Learn about adverbial phrases, abstract writing and argumentative writing Time: 2.4 hours Materials: textbook, handouts, Power Point slides Procedure: 12:40–1:00 Start off by writing in the diary of the week. Each student takes a turn to read aloud his/her diary to share. 1:00–1:30 Lecture on the adverbial phrases used in the academic research. (Handout #1) 1:30-2:00 Lecture on how to write abstracts. (Handout #2) 2:00-02:10 Break 2:10:2:40 Learn about argumentative writing and answer questions in the textbook. (Academic Writing Textbook) 2:40-:3:10 Discussion on some controversial topics. Each group can choose a different topic. 3:10–3:20 Instruction on the assignment and explanation of guidelines for online participation Homework: Each group will continue your group discussion and post up summaries. Abstract writings in one's related fields. Due: 5/28</p>

3.2.2 Participants

The participants of the present study were ten graduate students who were enrolled in English Writing for Academic Purpose (EWAP) course which was one of the optional courses required for degree completion. The participants had a bachelor's or master's degrees, depending on their degree programs. Background information of the participants is presented in Table 3.1 with nicknames.

As shown in Table 3.1, there were six master's students and four doctoral students with different majors ranging in age from 24 to 55. The scores of standardized tests indicate that the average English proficiency level for this class was intermediate. As for online learning experience, except for two students, they had no prior experiences in any type of online learning. These participants were either full time students with a part time job or part time students with a full time job, so most of them were working and studying at the same time.

TABLE 3.1
Background Information of Participants

Name	Age	Gender	Program	Major	Standardized Test score	Online Learning Experience
June	39	F	M.A	Cultural Informatics	TEPS 573	No
BJ	35	M	MA	Politics	TOIEC 850	Yes
Sun	31	F	MA	Musicology	TOEFL 88- 90	No
Jay	29	M	MA	Sociology	IELT 6.5	Yes
Kim	55	M	Ph.D.	Ethics	TEPS 739	No
Yeon	24	F	MA	Korean Culture	IELT 6.5	No
Yong	36	F	Ph.D.	Korean Art History	TEPS 700	No
Blue	33	F	Ph.D.	Musicology	TEPS 750	No
Choi	45	F	Ph.D.	Korean Linguistics	TEPS 669	No
Crystal	28	F	MA	Musicology	N/A	No

*N/A: Not Available

3.3 Data Collection

In this study, data were collected for 17 weeks from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester (15 weeks), with two extra weeks taken for

the last interview and data screening with the participants. The data were collected through online classroom observation notes, interviews, reflective journals, surveys and frequent contacts with students outside the classroom, such as lunch meetings and online chatting, which also provided additional information to the data set.

In the first week of the course, students filled out background information questionnaires (Appendix A) regarding their major, age, gender, program, English proficiency, and online learning experience. From the second week, students started to submit weekly reflective journals (Appendix B) which were guided by five questions: 1) What did I learn this week? 2) What did I find most and least helpful for learning academic writing? 3) What were the challenges about this week's lesson? 4) Any difficulties (a) in a face-to-face classroom? (b) in an online classroom? And, 5) Any recommendations for better class? A total of 12 weekly reflective journals were garnered out of the 15-week course, due to two weeks being missed for midterm and final exams and one week for a school trip.

The interviews were a significant data collection method for this particular study, because interviews support qualitative research by delving into a phenomenon of interest at a given time through the particular understanding of the participants (Merriam, 2009). Semi-structured interviews were conducted

three times: the first interview was done briefly after a needs analysis survey⁵ (Appendix C) in week two, the second time in week seven, and the last interview in week 15 (Appendix D). The interview questions were rehearsed from a pilot study in which the researcher had performed with a small number of students who were representative of the participants in the present study. Informal lunch meetings were held every three weeks, which, although were not part of direct data collection, offered insightful perspectives into their speaking styles and behaviors outside the classroom. In the first three weeks, the researcher met with three to four students per week and asked general questions about participants' previous experiences in and perceptions of blended or online learning, and about their expectations for the course. Then, the second interview focused more on difficulties they faced as they became involved in a blended learning environment and sometimes clarified the contents of their reflective journal data. The last interview was done in week 16 after the students had completed the course and the questions were focused more on evaluative, reflective and suggestive comments about their experiences in blended learning for academic English writing.

The interview was useful in providing a counterbalance to the data obtained from the surveys. Although interview protocols were set in advance, the

⁵ For present study, a framework for analyzing target needs was adopted (See Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, pp 60 – 61 for detailed description).

researcher was careful not to restrict students' responses to one specific area and further allowed flexibility of language usage and interview styles in order to capture the students' experiences. More specifically, the students were free to speak in either English or Korean during the interviews, and, for some students, interviews were done through online chatting if they could not find the proper time. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and for interviews done in the Korean language were translated into English by the researcher.

Online classroom observations were made by counting⁶ and reading each week's postings including the threads of replies to comments. Some notes⁷ were taken each week for any outstanding traces in the classroom to help the researcher's memories in subsequent interviews with the students.

Besides, the researcher also spent some time doing synchronous chatting online with students which was spontaneous, yet provided insightful information about students' feelings and thoughts on blended learning.

3.4 Data Coding and Analysis

The process of data analysis should come about throughout the research

⁶ The numbers of posts and tag lines were counted not for the direct data analysis but to provide a quantitative trend of interaction level for the researcher in order to aid her understanding of the students' experiences.

⁷ The note were part of the researcher's diary which recorded her experience along with noteworthy interactions but was not subject to firsthand analysis.

study not as a separate event occurring after the data collection, but through “consolidating, reducing, and interpreting,” the data should make sense to answer the research questions (Merriam, 2009, p. 175). Following an interpretivist approach, the data of the study were analyzed first by choosing the conceptual framework, which was the community of inquiry framework; then two research questions adopted a thematic analysis.

Prior to analyzing the data, the teaching and learning contexts were depicted based on a community of inquiry coding template (Table 3.2), which requires three elements to be present for meaningful learning. The Community of Inquiry template followed a deductive category application to describe the context in which interaction took place.

The data collected from online classroom observations were coded using the predefined categories of community of inquiry. Each presence was associated with different categories which also created a new set of indicators⁸ from this study. For example, in the area of teaching presence, the researcher posted the deadline for each assignment on the announcement board to inform students of the due dates, which were coded under the design and organization category of teaching presence. Likewise, adapted from the Community of Inquiry template, three presences were described by coding indicators of social, teaching and cognitive presence in the learning context.

⁸ See Table 4.2 for new indicators discovered from this study.

Table 3.2
Community of Inquiry Template

Elements	Categories	Indicators (examples only)
Teaching Presence	Design and Organization	Setting curriculum and methods
	Facilitating discourse	Sharing personal meaning
	Direct Instruction	Focusing discussion
Social presence	Open Communication	Risk-free expression
	Group Cohesion	Encourage collaboration
	Emotional Expression	Emoticons
Cognitive Presence	Triggering Event	Sense of Puzzlement
	Exploration	Information exchange
	Integration	Connecting ideas
	Resolution	Apply new ideas

Adapted from Community of Inquiry Coding Template (Garrison et al, 2000)

The first research question about the challenges of online interaction and the changes of the students' perceptions adopted an inductive thematic analysis. The thematic analysis is "a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Such analysis was well-suited for the present study since this approach is used to report experiences, meaning, and the reality of participants. Table 3.3 shows the phases of thematic analysis and the description of the process that this study implemented in analyzing interview transcripts and reflective journals.

In the first phase, the researcher transcribed the data gathered from

interviews⁹, read all the written data repeatedly, and then started to underline notable features of the data which were collated to each code. The students' reflective journals were also read and analyzed following the same steps. The data in this study first had to be coded according to the Community of Inquiry templates. The three different types of presences were coded using abbreviations: TP for Teaching Presence, SP for Social Presence and CP for Cognitive Presence. For coding online interactions, the researcher used abbreviations such as LI for Learner-Instructor interaction, LL for Learner-Learner interaction, and LC for Learner-Content interaction, all of which, in the next stage, were clustered according to each potential theme.

For example, potential themes in learner-instructor interaction were cultural inhibition, language usage, insufficient technological abilities, lack of motivations, and time limit. Then in stages four through six, the researcher reviewed the themes to check if they made sense to draw a thematic map, named the themes, and finally chose the most vivid extracts to represent the theme under each interaction type.

The latter part of the first research question dealt with the third interview data¹⁰ and reflective journals written after the second interview¹¹ to pick out the

⁹ The interviews were done in both Korean and English. The Korean interview data were translated by the researcher.

¹⁰ The third interview was administered after the course was over.

¹¹ The second interview was administered in week seven during the course.

changes in their perceptions as they coped with the challenges over the course of time. Under the each emerged theme of challenges, students' attempts to overcoming these challenges were highlighted by selecting the representative extracts.

Table 3.3 Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87)

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

The qualitative data analysis for the second research question took a similar step to that of the first research question, which also generated relevant themes in regard to the value of blended learning for academic English writing. Within the Community of Inquiry framework, two sub-themes were extracted for each presence. The analysis was not a linear process but, instead was more of a recursive process. For instance, in the initial thematic map, four candidate themes (promptness, individualization, richness, directness, affectivity of teacher feedback) were created separately, but in the process of reviewing the themes, richness and directness of the teacher feedback were grouped together since while the affectivity of teacher feedback theme was discarded, due to a lack of data to support it. The specifics of the emerged themes were finally presented by selecting the distinguishing extracts only.

3.5 Enhancing Trustworthiness

The concept of trustworthiness was introduced by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as an alternative term to describe the concept of validity and reliability. In order to establish trustworthiness in a qualitative research, a researcher should use a variety of verification techniques. Creswell (2013) presented eight verification procedures common in the literature: 1) prolonged engagement and persistent observation, 2) triangulation, 3) peer review or debriefing, 4) negative case analysis, 5) clarification of researcher bias, 6) member checks, 7) rich, thick

description, and 8) external audits. Merriam (1998) also noted that there are six basic strategies for enhancing internal validity for qualitative research: 1) triangulation, 2) member checks, 3) long-term observation, 4) peer examination, 5) participatory or collaborative modes of research, and 6) clarification of researcher bias.

Creswell (2013) recommended that qualitative researchers engage in at least two of these checks for any given study. For the present study, the researcher used member checks, peer review, external audits, and rich and thick description to ensure the validity and reliability of findings.

In the current research, the authenticity and credibility of the study findings were gained by the researcher's use of prolonged engagement and rigorous observation. The researcher took thorough notes of each week's interactions of the students' involving discussion threads, peer feedback, and all other written traces in the online classroom for fifteen weeks according to the community of inquiry coding frame. In-depth interviews were also conducted for a total of 40 hours with 10 students. Furthermore, multiple data sources (observations, interviews, student surveys, field notes, and reflective journals) were used to verify the accuracy of the data. The researcher also used a member-checking method to receive feedback from the participants in order to ensure congruence of the emergent themes. Moreover, with the help of two English instructors/researchers, interpretation of the data was tested for authenticity.

Lastly, the interview data were screened and reviewed by the participants when the researcher faced with confusing words and needed further clarification.

CHAPTER 4

TEACHING AND LEARNING CONTEXTS

This chapter describes the context of the English Writing for Academic Purposes (EWAP) course using the framework of the Community of Inquiry as the backdrop for a quality education experience. Along with observations of the face-to-face classrooms, all the manuals, postings and taglines in an online classroom were coded according to the Community of Inquiry template to outline actual involvement of students. This model contributes to describing text-based classrooms through the development of three interdependent elements--social, cognitive, and teaching presence (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005; Swan, 2001). Adapted from the original community of inquiry template (Table 3.2), Table 4.1 was developed with new indicators driven from this study to show the learning and teaching context for this particular course.

As Table 4.1 displays, a blended EWAP course was described within the domain of each presence with new indicators driven from the present study. In order to explicate class dynamics with more details, the next sub sections are dedicated as follows: Section 4.1 describes elements of teaching presence embedded in EWAP course; Section 4.2 delineates the specifics of social presence; and Section 4.3 illustrates components of cognitive presence that played a role in this course, altogether describing learning context of blended

EWAP course.

Table 4.1
Community of Inquiry Template with New Indicators
from the Present Study

Elements	Categories	Indicators (examples)
Teaching presence	Design and organization	2.4 hours per week of face-to-face classroom and online classroom were available. OL: Course information, guided rules, and netiquettes were posted. Time parameters (e.g., deadline) were established.
	Facilitating discourse	F2F: Online classroom activities, informal lunch meetings were demonstrated OL: Self-introduction board was created. Frequent email transactions were used. Tips for group discussion were posted. Teacher's diary was uploaded weekly.
	Direct instruction	F2F: Lecture was given. Solved exercise questions as a sample. Writing conferences were held. OL: Introduced discussion topics and related websites available on a link. Assessment: Teacher feedback on writing assignments was given promptly. Questions were posed to motivate self-editing. Writing conferences were held. Students kept short diaries in student's diary board.

Social presence	Affective expression	F2F: Words, voice/facial expressions, and gesture were used. OL: Emoticons were used in the messages
	Open communication	F2F: Ice break time in the first class, lunch meeting, and break time were available. OL: Discussion board as an open lounge was available.
	Group cohesion	F2F: Occasional group discussion and informal luncheon with each group were planned. OL: Thread to a question continued. Different discussion topic was given for each group.
Cognitive presence	Triggering event	F2F: Needs analysis was administered at the first class. Questions and problems posed to stimulate curiosity. OL: Previewed the upcoming week's topic.
	Exploration	F2F: A sample exercise before main writing activity was done. OL: Brainstormed and shared previous experiences related to the given topic or problem.
	Integration	F2F: N/A Individual writing assignment on a weekly basis (e.g., persuasive writing, summarizing, paraphrasing) were given.
	Resolution	F2F: N/A OL: Applied learned lesson to one's own paper (e.g., writing abstract, summary, paraphrasing practice)

* F2F: Face-to-Face / OL: Online Learning / N/A: Not Available

4.1 Teaching Presence in the EWAP Course

The Community of Inquiry framework describes teaching presence as having three categories: *instructional design and organization*, *facilitating discourse (building understanding)*, and *direct instruction* (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007). As it is shown in Table 4.2, each category was found to be present with new indicators and examples from this specific study.

The first component in the teaching presence is *instructional design and organization*. Anderson et al. (2001) referred to design and organization as the development of the process, structure, evaluation, and interaction components of the course. This course blended 2.4 hours of face time class per week with an online classroom available all day throughout the course for a continuation of the learning. Since the course was born of students' needs¹² for more time to study, an online classroom was carefully designed to provide more learning opportunities. The instructor in this study utilized the most well-known online café (Naver)¹³ as the online classroom for its easy access and economy of time instead of creating an independent web space. The instructor opened the online classroom and restricted it to only allow registered students, and reorganized the

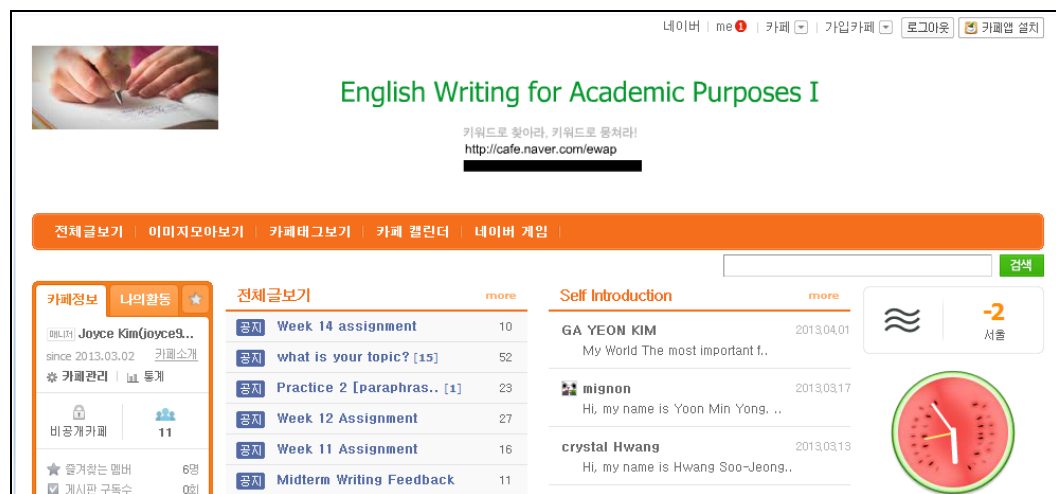
¹² The students' needs were identified through the collection of the comments received from two previous semesters of English Writing for Academic Purposes courses.

¹³ Naver is a popular internet search engine in South Korea. Among Naver's features is café which provides an online space for a group of people who shares similar interests or topics.

formats of the classroom by putting in an English title with a new web address.

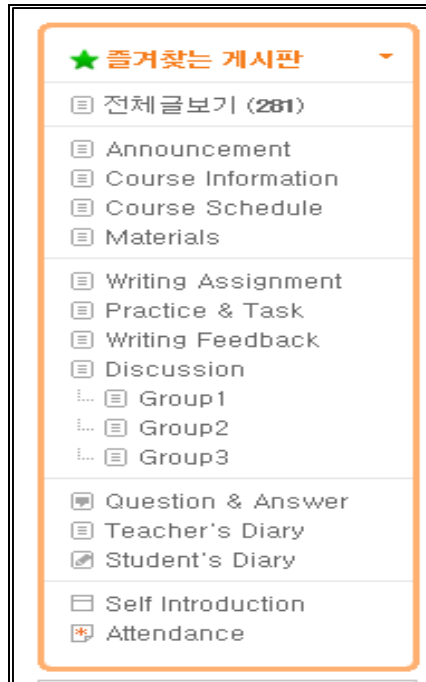
The front page of the online classroom is depicted in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1
Front Page of the Online Classroom



New manuals were created to serve different functions for online classroom communication, for which the disposition is shown in Figure 4.2. All the menus were written in English and their role was introduced on the first day of class. The description of each manual including its function is listed in Table 4.2. As the table shows, online course manuals (or tools) were used to serve different purposes. Most of the titles were self-explanatory but their usage had to be explained and demonstrated.

Figure 4.2
Configuration of the Online Classroom Menus



The instructor set the curriculum and methods by posting the course syllabus on the course information board, established time parameters by putting up the deadline, and wrote guided rules and netiquettes for students to follow for online communication. Since this was a blended course, the instructor used the very first day of the face-to-face class time to introduce the course including course objectives, methods, assignments and technical logistics as to how the course would run for 15 weeks. This course blended 2.4 hours of face time class per week with an online classroom available throughout the course for a continuation of the learning.

Table 4.2
Description of Manuals and Tools in the Online Classroom

Manuals	Functions
Announcement	Any new messages regarding classroom instruction, assignment and exams are posted (e.g., assignment deadline, discussion topic, guidelines for online classroom usage).
Course Information	Course syllabus is attached.
Course Schedule	Weekly review of classwork is listed.
Materials	Downloadable materials are put up.
Writing Assignment	Students upload their writing assignment.
Practice & Task	Students upload the answers to exercises from the main textbook.
Writing Feedback	Instructor and peer feedback is given.
Discussion	Group discussion is open.
Question & Answer	Any type of questions is welcome to be asked.
Teacher's Diary	The instructor keeps a diary on a weekly basis.
Student's Diary	Students write diary voluntarily.
Self-Introduction	Each student writes self-introduction in the beginning of the course
Attendance	Students may leave a short memo to show their presence in online classroom

The second element of the teaching presence is *facilitating discourse* which Anderson et al. (2001) described as establishing and maintaining classroom interaction through the modeling of behaviors, encouragement, support, and the

creation of a positive learning atmosphere. This was especially important for the participants since most of them said they had never experienced participating in blended learning; there were two students who said they had listened to commercial online lectures which were limited to one-way communication. The first day of the face-to-face class was spent on course introduction and self-introductions through an ice-breaking activity. In order to familiarize students with a new type of class format, much effort was given in explaining how to use an online classroom with an emphasis on the importance of communication with each other. For example, the self-introduction board (Figure 4.3) was utilized first, and it asked students to write five words that described themselves, then they received feedback from the instructor and classmates. This activity was performed in a face-to-face class and the instructor posted her self-introduction as a sample for the students to follow.

In order to facilitate group discussion, tips for group discussion were provided, as can be seen in Figure 4.4. Some of the administrative dialogues were done in Korean to minimize confusion in the initial stage.

Figure 4.3
Self-Introduction Board

카페 글쓰기

★ 즐겨찾는 게시판 ▾

☐ 전체글보기 (281)

☐ Announcement

☐ Course Information

☐ Course Schedule

☐ Materials

☐ Writing Assignment

☐ Practice & Task

☐ Writing Feedback

☐ Discussion

⋮ ☐ Group1

⋮ ☐ Group2

⋮ ☐ Group3

☐ Question & Answer

☐ Teacher's Diary

☑ Student's Diary

Self Introduction

☐ Attendance

• 최근 댓글 · 답글

▪ Comparison and contr...

▪ Democracy vs Dictator...

▪ country living & city livi...

▪ C&C(edited)

▪ 2nd draft of Compariso...

이전 | 다음

Five words in my world:

first time, Korean traditional music, smile, friends, Paulo Coelho.

^ 댓글 2개 | 등록순 ▾

moccojy2 삭제

My lovely children
Teaching Korean, literature, and Studying on Korean
Dream of new challenge
Hunminjeongeum
Heart to Heart

^ 댓글 2개 | 등록순 ▾

daretobetrue 삭제

Five words in my WORLD:

New start at the AKS
Dynamic Busan
Social problems
FF camera and RR car
Health

^ 댓글 1개 | 등록순 ▾

gyukim626 삭제

Five words in my World:

Family Love
Health
English
Partnership
An Academic Degree

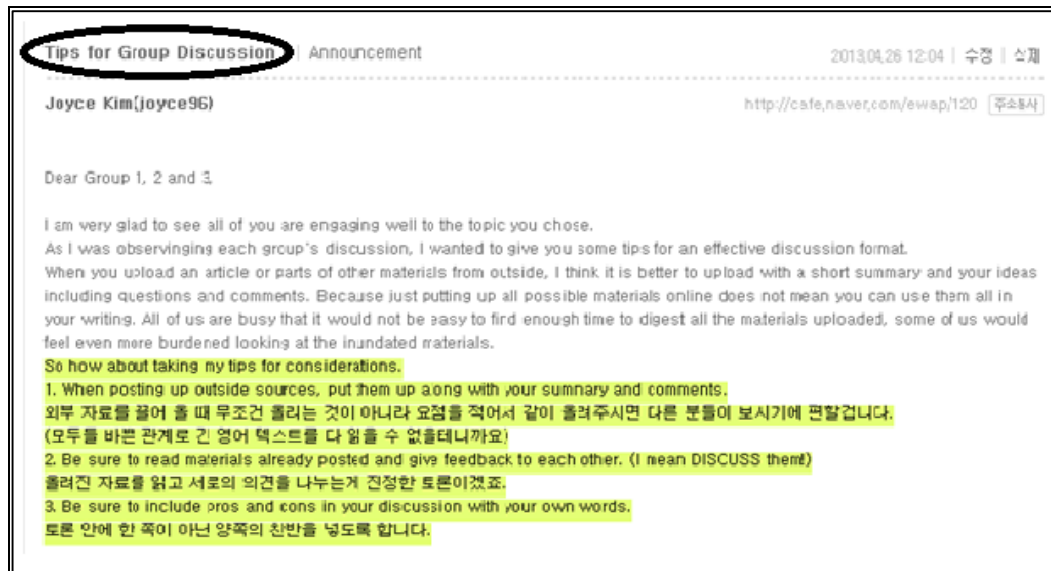
^ 댓글 1개 | 등록순 ▾

Joyce Kim 수정 | 삭제

Five words in my WORLD:

Campus
Ruby
Heaven
California & New York

Figure 4.4
Tips for Group Discussion



The students interacted with the instructor through various mediums, such as email and café boards, among which was the teacher's diary board that drew comparatively active replies from the students. The teacher's diary board was used for the instructor to write her personal stories to share ideas and feelings with the students. Interaction through email was frequently done, at least three times a week. Communicating with the instructor through email served two purposes: first, students received general announcements about the course schedule and assignments; and second, students also wrote emails to the instructor for more personal issues such as asking for advice on learning English or an excuse to be absent. Since the general board in the café was open to all the participants, email was a better way for them to contact the instructor more in a

more private way which in return facilitated discourse between the instructor and the learner. Besides these online features, informal lunch meetings were held three times during the course period.

The third element, *direct instruction* describes the instructor's role as a subject matter expert, sharing knowledge with the students (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007). Since this was a blended course, weekly content was first delivered face-to-face in a lecture mode which included solving exercises from the main textbooks¹⁴. For extra materials, students were able to download handouts from the materials board, and several website links were introduced for extra references. Figure 4.5 shows an example of materials board.

They could also click on the linked websites for additional information and check the writing samples before starting their weekly assignments. The discussion board was activated when the writing assignment needed pros and cons opinions which were used at a brainstorming stage. Considering the features of the EWAP course, an additional component, 'assessment' was added to direct instruction which mostly provided feedback and solicited self-editing. The instructor provided personalized feedback for each assignment using the Practice/Task and Feedback board. Figure 4.6 introduces one example of teacher

¹⁴ Main textbook for this course were: 1. Oshima, A. & Hogue, A. (2006). *Writing academic English* (4th ed.) New York: Pearson Longman. 2. Swales, John M., & Feak, Christine B. (2004). *Academic writing for graduate students*, (2nd ed.) Michigan: The University of Michigan Press.

feedback on a cause-and-effect essay which includes both Korean and English. Teacher feedback was a very important element for this course, which will be discussed later in Section 4.3.

Figure 4.5
The Materials Board

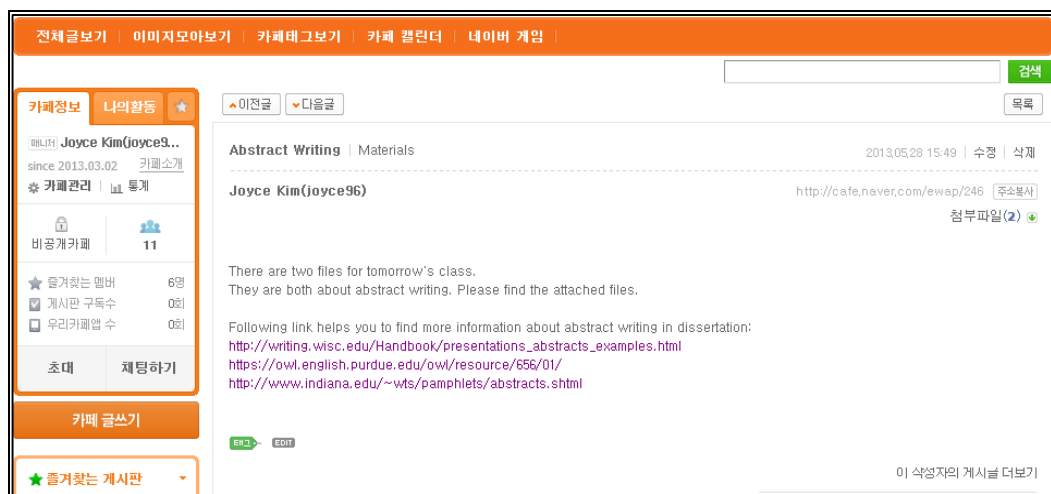


Figure 4.6
Teacher Feedback

Cause & Effect Essay(2nd draft , May 21, 2013)

Causes and effects of my stress

In psychology, stress is a feeling of strain and pressure. Stress can be external and related to the environment, but may also be created by internal perceptions that cause an individual to have anxiety or other negative emotions surrounding a situation, such as pressure and discomfort. Symptoms may include a sense of being overwhelmed, feelings of anxiety, overall irritability, insecurity, nervousness. It may also cause more serious conditions such as heart problems. However, small amounts of stress may be desired, beneficial, and even healthy. Positive stress helps improve athletic performance. It also plays factors in motivation, adaptation, and reaction to the environment.(Wikipedia)

As lives of modern society become complex, people are easy to suffer from stress. I am also among the rest. This essay aims to describe the causes and effects of stress which annoy me. (<-- This sentence can go together with the 1st paragraph not separating them. How about adding this paragraph to the first paragraph?)

There are three main causes which my stresses are originated from. Firstly, I feel stress due to the tight schedule of my academic life. For example, I am taking five subjects at (---> in) this semester. It gave me considerable pressure spiritually and made me exhausted physically. Secondly, I am worrying about my son who joined the Air Force last March and have been under training for twelve weeks to be commissioned a second lieutenant. My daughter is another source of my strain. She began to work at Samsung Medical Center as a nurse two months ago. Coming home from her workplace, she sometimes cries because of a hard burden (---> of hard burden). Whenever she sheds tears, whole my family members are seized with something like depressive mood. (---> Can you think of other phraes to subsitute for this?)

I exert my efforts to cope with these kinds of stresses. To begin with, I do a regular exercise (---> 'I exercise regularly' is more approparite in English. 운동을 하다는 우리말을 그대로 옮기면 어색) about two hours almost every night to replenish (replenish---> get rid of / replenish 는 보충하다란 뜻이니 없애다의 get rid of 가 적절함) mental fatigue and to preserve my health. In the second place, I kneel down in prayer for my children to relieve their strain. Also, I write a letter to my son every day through internet and encourage my daughter to be valiant. Lastly, I began to think (시제 고려: 위의 문장들이 현재시제로 되어 있으니 이 문장도 I begin to think 로 하는 것이 좋을까요?) about transfer of my daughter's job.

In conclusion, my stess is mainly related to the external circumstances. What is worse, as I have to handle the stresses of my son and daughter, those of mine is trebled (---> troubled). However, as I believe in positive stress, I endeavor to overcome anything afflicts me and make it a positive momentum.

Overall comment: Your essay is improving in terms of organization, vocabulary, and content. I also see that you are able to self edit grammatical mistakes. Please check my editing and clarify some sentences. Your 3rd draft needs to include above mentioned corrections. Good work!

4.2 Social Presence in the EWAP Course

Social presence is an essential element in a blended course in order to construct interactions between learners with or without the involvement of the instructor. Despite the perceptions that online learning is an independent study, community of inquiry framework emphasizes the important role of interactions between learners such as sharing ideas and asking and answering questions in groups. Garrison and Arbaugh (2007) suggested that the online learning process is based on a collaborative and constructivist educational experience within a community of learning which entails three categories: *affective expression*, *open communication*, and *group cohesion*, all of which have been analyzed as part of the description of this blended EWAP course.

Affective expression includes expressions of emotion, attitudes and sharing personal insights (Rourke et al., 2001). Learners can express themselves better when there is a feeling of solidarity and a sense of belonging which builds up trust amongst them. When meeting face-to-face, emotions and feelings are rather easily transferred through explicit words, voice, gestures, and facial expressions. However, although learners got to know each other better when they met in a traditional classroom once a week, this was not easy to be replicated within an online educational environment, because interaction heavily relied on text-based communication mode. In the present study, the participants used emoticons and

different types of facial icons available in the café. Figure 4.7 introduces an example of a student's diary which has some emoticons and icons used to express feelings.

Figure 4.7
Student's Diary (with Emoticons)

The screenshot shows a Naver Café post from a user named '[wife 77]'. The post is a diary entry about a massage experience in Spain. Several emoticons are used throughout the text and in the comments, with some circled to highlight their use.

Post Content:

I was totally get used to taking a rest, it made me hard to "Re-adapting to studying" during today. Seriously I was thinking of Thai-massage during the topic of korean culture class. I felt a bit guiltiness but I couldn't stop doing it, because I would like to destress my body after having long holidays. I wasted 30mins imagining getting massage in my favourite massage shop located in Zaragoza, Spain.

The massage in Spain was the most amazing in my life. I enjoying spa in the big bath which was fullfill of wine-water mixture, and got massage with dark chocolate and milk instead of just common masage oil. It wasn't painful at all. I even fall asleep during it. I miss the most comfortable time in my life since I could walk.

Prof said I was supposed to write diary, therefore I wrote down very private diary here.

Emoticons used in the post:

- ☺ (circled)
- yeah I know I m a massage manic !!!

Comments:

- Joyce Kim** (2013/09/24 15:57): I didn't know Spain had such a luxurious massage. It sounds tooooo good to be true. Thanks for sharing, 가연. (Emoticon: 😊)
- Yoonkyong Byon** (2013/09/25 13:11): You always makes me happy, Gayeon ☺ thank you~! (Emoticon: ☺ circled)
- YeSeul Hong** (2013/09/26 22:32): wow! I want to go that spa in spain envy you! (Emoticon: 😊)
- Sori Seo** (2013/09/26 01:10): when i went to China, i got a foot massage. It was very very... painful. (Emoticon: T_T circled)

Although the instructor led the way in guiding a friendly environment through multiple mediums such as email, teacher's diary, attendance, and synchronous chatting, learners' interaction did not enclose affective expression much. The accounts for this will be discussed later in Chapter 5.

The element of open communication is described as "reciprocal and respectful exchanges [exemplified by] mutual awareness and recognition of each other's contributions" (Garrison et al., 2000, p.100). This indicates risk-free expression, continuing a thread, agreeing/disagreeing, giving advice, and questioning and answering. In a face time class, open communication was activated during a limited time of group discussion. In an online classroom, these were achieved through various activities such as an ice breaker, group discussion, and peer feedback. The discussion board was utilized whenever there was a group discussion. Figure 4.8 shows an example from the group discussion forum.

A group discussion was initiated in an off-line classroom which subsequently led the discussion to be continued to online. After the initial discussion in the face-to-face classroom, the learners had more time to research the topic and upload related sources for exchanging opinions. As for the assignments, the students were asked to write an essay based on the information shared in group discussion. The teacher's diary also played an important role to inspire learners to write their opinions and draw feedback from each other. Figure 4.9, the teacher's diary, intrigued students to talk more freely of their thoughts.

Figure 4.8
Group Discussion Forum

<input type="checkbox"/>	151	Standardized Testing		2013.05.01	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	150	Standardized Testing: Good or Bad for Assessment of Teacher Performance, Assessment of the Education System?		2013.05.01	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	142	[Essay]Standardized test should be banned-pros.		2013.04.29	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	141	[Essay]Standardized test should be banned-cons.		2013.04.29	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	139	moronic standardized tests do not allow a student to show their full potential and intellect		2013.04.29	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	138	Do we want a child who can pass exams or one who is good at the subject		2013.04.29	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	137	Relation Between Social Responsibility and Academic Achievement		2013.04.29	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	133	Some con arguments		2013.04.29	9
<input type="checkbox"/>	132	시험점수의 증가가 과연 실제 학습에서의 향상을 나타낸다고 할 수 있나?		2013.04.29	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	131	(General Information from WIKIPEDIA)		2013.04.29	6
<input type="checkbox"/>	130	(IMPORTANT) TOPIC of DISCUSSION		2013.04.29	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	128	No, standardized test scores are not representative of a school's worth.		2013.04.27	6
<input type="checkbox"/>	127	Yes, standardized test scores are a good indication		2013.04.27	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	126	Byeong joo! Didn't we select the topic 'Are test scores a good indication of a school's competency'?		2013.04.27	10
<input type="checkbox"/>	125	Test scores can be a good indication of the schools competency while selecting a middle or high school for kids.		2013.04.27	6
<div><input type="checkbox"/> 전체선택</div> <div><div>이동</div><div>삭제</div><div> 글쓰기</div></div>					

The instructor also integrated peer editing into the requirements of the group discussion. For example, after being trained to give feedback to other's writings, students were responsible for choosing three essays and providing written feedback in terms of grammar, content, and organization. This helped to increase learner-learner interaction. In the first month of course, learners' interaction was relatively low and they would only write replies when there was an instructor's intervention. However, the interaction increased gradually once they got used to an online setting.

Figure 4.9
Teacher's Diary Board

Irony of Life | Teacher's Diary
2013.04.06 11:46 | 수정 | 삭제

Joyce Kim(joyce96)
<http://cafe.naver.com/ewap/73> 주소복사

Week 5

Title: Irony of life

Remember the story I shared with you about how my nanny takes her time and money to care for her beauty when I, the employer, am short on money and time to do even small luxuries. On top of that, she and her husband are quite rich in Philippine owning two big houses with swimming pools and run small business to generate money for the whole household. How ironic is that! You know people say life is full of ironies but it didn't really hit me till now. I look around and I find that it is so true. I remember hearing greatest irony of life is "Loving the right person at the wrong time, having the wrong person when the time is right and finding out you love someone right after that person walks out of your life..."

I was wondering if any of you experience irony of life.
Can you share some of your ironies with me?

댓글 14개 | 등록순 ▾ | 조회수 40
★ 북마크 |

2013/04/06 21:55 → 답글

신고 | 삭제 | 활동 중지

for me, in order to study and do homework, first thing to do is turning on TV for my son.

Joyce Kim 2013/04/09 16:29 → 답글

수정 | 삭제

I understand, it's like you're trading TV for your time. ^^

2013/04/08 11:22 → 답글

신고 | 삭제 | 활동 중지

Nowadays many Korean parents have their children learn English at private institute, 학원. Some English teachers who are Korean and teach at middle school or high school also make their kids go to the private institute to learn English. They usually have to instruct students how to read and write English in regular classes at school, even through supplementary lessons. However, they have no time to teach their own sons and daughters English. It is the Irony of Life.

Joyce Kim 2013/04/09 16:30 → 답글

수정 | 삭제

2013/04/09 17:17 → 답글

신고 | 삭제 | 활동 중지

Joyce Kim 2013/04/09 16:32 → 답글

수정 | 삭제

Heeju 2013/04/08 21:36 → 답글

신고 | 삭제 | 활동 중지

Lastly, *group cohesion*, described as “focused collaborative communication that builds participation and empathy” (Garrison et al. (2000), p. 101), is created when the learners perceive themselves as members of the community who have the responsibility to collaborate and share ideas when necessary. In the first interview, students said they were reluctant to share socially because the purpose of taking this course was not to make new friends but solely to improve their writing ability. Although group cohesion was hard to find in the online classroom, online postings and interview data showed group cohesion still existed to some extent. Students used group language, ‘we’, ‘us’, or ‘our’ during the interview. For example, Choi said in the first interview, “*We* are not young students, so *our* expectations for the course may be different.” Kim also said, “*We* all thank you for your quick response to *our* questions. You are very good to *us*.” The usage of group words can be an indication that the students considered themselves as members of the same group with a common goal. Moreover, the instructor allowed free chat time during the off-line classroom and provided free lunch with each group respectively for social sharing. Group cohesion was also developed through on/off group discussion activities in which a different topic was given for each group. Each group had to work together and make a commitment to contribute to a quality discussion which served as the brainstorming stage for essay-writing. Even with this effort, group cohesion did not seem to be strong although the peer interaction increased throughout the course. The reason for this

phenomenon will be accounted for later in Chapter 5.

4.3 Cognitive Presence in the EWAP Course

Cognitive presence is directly related to course content and serves course objectives. These graduate students registered for the course expecting to gain knowledge; that is to say, the content of the course is the core of educational experience and that is what brings about the development of learners' knowledge (Garrison et al., 2000).

The activities of this course were composed of lectures, practice/task exercises, writing assignments, reflective journals, one-to-one teacher feedback, peer feedback, group discussion, and tests. The weekly lessons are introduced in Table 4.3.

The first category of cognitive presence is a *triggering event* which can be defined as an issue, dilemma, or problem (Garrison et al., 2001). In this study, the instructor administered a needs analysis on the first day of the face-to-face class, and the contents (Table 4.3) were adjusted according to the results of the survey (Appendix C).

The instructor tried to raise a sense of puzzlement by picking the topics they needed to improve as requested on the survey. For example, all ten of the learners said that they wanted to learn to write an abstract in English. These graduate students had to write a dissertation, and English abstract writing was

part of the requirement. Thus, the instructor uploaded materials that began with the phrase ‘What is an abstract writing?’ and provided sample abstracts in different fields.

Table 4.3 Weekly Contents

Week	Content
1	Planning a course / Self Introductory paragraph writing
2	Ch.1 Paragraph structure / Unit1 An Approach to Academic Writing
3	Ch. 2 Unity and Coherence / Unit 1 An Approach to Academic Writing
4	Ch. 3 Supporting details: Facts, Quotations Unit 2. Writing General-Specific Texts
5	Ch. 4 From Paragraph to Essay / Unit 2 Writing General-Specific Texts
6	Ch. 5 Chronological Order: Process Essays Unit 3 Problem, Process, and Solution
7	Ch. 6 Cause/Effect Essays Unit 3 Problem, Process, and Solution
8	Midterm Examination
9	Ch. 7 Comparison/Contrast Essays / Unit 4 Data Commentary
10	Extracurricular activities / Unit 4 Data Commentary
11	Ch. 8 Paraphrase and Summary / Unit 5 Writing Summaries
12	Ch. 9 Argumentative Essays Unit 6 Writing Critiques / Abstract Writing
13	Ch. 10 Types of Sentences / Unit 7 Constructing a Research Paper I
14	Ch. 11 Using Parallel Structures and Editing Unit 8 Constructing a Research Paper II
15	Final Examination

Assignments were also given to trigger the event trying to motivate the students to think about the problem and start analyzing it. The range of assignments included everything from completing exercises in the textbook, to writing short sentences, to writing four to five paragraph long essays. Figure 4.10 introduces examples of the assignments used for the EWAP course.

Figure 4.10
Examples of Assignment

Week 6 Assignment

1. Complete tasks 19, 20, 21, and post your answers on the Practice/Task Board by Monday (4/1).
2. Edit your first draft of the problem-solution text and post the second draft up in Task board by Tuesday (4/2). Entitle your postings 'Problem-Solution 2nd'

Week 12 Assignment

1. Read others' argumentative essays and write feedback according to the writing rubric discussed in the off-line classroom. You may download it from the Materials Board.
2. Complete a cause & effect essay (1st draft) by 5/28. Potential topics are listed on Materials Board.

In the stage of *exploration*, students search for information to gain knowledge and understand the problem (Garrison et al., 2000). Through this process, students interact with content by reflecting on the questions and ideas shared within the community. The participants were engaged in a brainstorming activity in the offline classroom and shared their personal experience related to the topic. This activity was extended to the online classroom by the students putting a summary of the discussion and the related literature on the Discussion Board. Through this stage, students were trained to integrate course content and

the ideas derived from their previous experiences and new findings.

Students then moved into the integration stage in which learners combined and gathered all the information to construct a meaningful solution (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007). In this stage, students worked on an individual writing task (e.g. persuasive writing, problem-solution writing, and abstract writing), trying to connect theory with a practical application. They were asked to submit three drafts from the first to the last, and between each draft, instructor feedback and peer feedback were provided. The students utilized multiple sources to write a comprehensive essay through synthesizing the ideas, creating solutions, and applying them to academic writing.

The final stage of cognitive presence is the *resolution* in which students start to apply learned knowledge to a new issue or problem (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007). Students can implement the solution and evaluate the outcomes, and this will lead them to the new start of another triggering event. (Garrison et al., 2001). In the present course work, the objective was to develop academic writing skills of different genres, but ultimately the students wanted to learn to write research papers in English to publish internationally. To meet such needs, the final project was to write a short version of a research or review paper within their specialty, including an English abstract. This activity offers learners a chance to interact with the content in a more concrete way by constructing a meaningful framework and helping them to discover specific solutions to real world tasks.

CHAPTER 5

CHALLENGES OF ONLINE INTERACTIONS AND OVERCOMING THEM

The purpose of this section is to present a summary of the findings regarding the first research question, which asked, ‘What are the challenges Korean graduate students face when interacting in a blended EWAP course, and how do they change as the students cope with the difficulties?’ The answer to this question was a synthesis of students’ perspectives collected through their weekly reflective journals and interviews. The challenges found in instructor-learner interactions (Section 5.1), learner-learner interactions (Section 5.2) and learner-content interactions (Section 5.3) were identified.

5.1 Learner-Instructor Interaction

This section introduces two recurrent themes that emerged as the challenges in instructor-learner interactions and how the students overcame them. The first challenge lay in the relationship between the instructor and the student (Section 5.1.1), and the second challenge in the students’ prior experiences in online communication (Section 5.1.2).

5.1.1 Cultural Inhibition in Korean Classrooms: From “How can I say *No* to the professor in *English* even *Online*?” to “I tried to write in English more.”

In the first interview, about two thirds of the participants mentioned that ‘speaking in English only’ was a stumbling block in communicating with the instructor online. Although all of them registered for the course understanding that this was an English-only lecture, they still talked about inconveniences of communicating in an English-only environment. They said that every time they wrote something online, they could not help being self-conscious about making mistakes, which prevented them from writing a quick response to the instructor. This issue was resolved gradually as the instructor incorporated the Korean language in overall classroom interactions upon students’ request including announcements, written feedback, class materials, and emails. At the end of the course, the students said that the instructor’s feedback in Korean was helpful but, in retrospect, they did not think Korean was necessary because they soon became used to reading guidelines and instructions in English.

The next challenge was the uneasiness about speaking with the instructor. The reason behind this, as one student representatively stated, was “the hierarchical relationship between the professor and students that is unique to Korean culture.” Except for two students who had studied abroad, the students expressed uncomfortable feelings in communicating with the instructor, which

was not due so much to a language issue, but because of the caution they took whenever they had to respond to the instructor. Only a small number of replies to teacher feedback were made. Excerpts (1) and (2) describe the students' feelings about instructor-student interactions.

- (1) I don't have any problems putting up my assignment in the café, but I feel kind of shy to talk to the professor because I don't want to look bad. That's why I choose to stay quiet even if I have questions. I ask classmates for help instead of writing questions to the professor. I just don't want to make her [instructor] feel bad about my stupid questions. And, even if I have different opinions from the professor, I wouldn't say it because... what if she doesn't like me... you know. How can I say 'No' to the professor in English even 'Online'?¹⁵ (Blue, journal_April_17)
- (2) *We all know in Korean society, a professor and student relationship is not an equal relationship. It's more like professor is a master and a student is a servant. Just like that, I think all students are reluctant to say any negative opinions about classwork and teacher feedback. We have no choice but to agree or just be quiet. I think that's why there are not many lines from the students in the café.* (BJ, interview_April_17)

This type of uneasy feeling was easily observable in written feedback activities, too. Almost no opposing opinions were received during discussions in either online or offline classrooms. Student participants did not want to do anything that might look offensive to the instructor's eyes, so they stayed quiet or only left simple answers such as 'yes' or 'thank you' most of the time. The students also said even in a traditional classroom, according to Excerpts (3) and

¹⁵ Interview data are written in italics to differentiate them from journal data.

(4), that they tend to stay reticent and passive in interacting with the instructor; so a lot of active interaction in the online classroom was not really expected.

(2) *Korean students including myself don't vocalize their opinions in classroom that much. Even in my other class where the lecture is done in Korean, most students are shy to talk out aloud. Only one or two talk. Why? Hmmm... for me, I can't talk when I'm not prepared but generally, we are not used to an open discussion class. So, even if we know what to say, we remain quiet unless the teacher calls my name to answer.* (Yong, interview_April_17)

(3) I don't know if this is like an Asian style, but it's hard to expect active communication between a teacher and a student in Korean classrooms. Especially in an English class like this, we are already stressed to write things in English, thus talking to the instructor online is kind of extra work. (Sunny, journal_April_01)

Excerpt (5) also added to a reason why students did not communicate actively with the instructor. They seemed to attribute their particular behaviors to Korean classroom culture and personality issue.

(4) *I hope you [instructor] are not too disappointed because you don't see many interactions. We all feel that the instructor is trying too hard, but in fact, everyone has different characteristics and because we are adult learners we are quite conscious about other's eyes. We all want to look good to the teacher as well as to other students. We are too embarrassed to make mistakes in public.* (Kim, interview_April_19)

In order to overcome such an issue, the instructor tried to lower inhibition by opening up herself through writing in the Teacher's Diary Board and having casual lunch meetings once a month. On the Teacher's Diary Board, several

topics were shared such as family events and past experiences, which facilitated more student dialogues.

The students' main motivation to interact with the instructor was to receive clear instructions on the writing lessons and teacher feedback on their drafts. Thus, the students with higher motivations for learning seemed to try harder to communicate with the instructor. Even though Korean was allowed to be used in the classroom, these motivated students intentionally used English to speak with the instructor and utilized the Feedback Board to ask more questions about their writing skills.

As time went on, students interacted more with the instructor, albeit very slowly, for example, replying to the instructor's feedback by leaving notes or asking questions either in English or Korean. They talked about how they learned to write more freely to the instructor and ask questions more effectively based on their needs. The following comments describe how students overcame the difficulty.

(5) *Honestly, I started to respond only because you [instructor] kept asking us to do. You always asked me questions so I had to reply even if I didn't like it. But I gradually came to think that because our class was a writing class, it made sense that we learn more if we write more. So I tried to write in English more.* (Jay, interview_June_09)

(6) *I think I was actually the most active one in the classroom so far. Because I am a teacher myself, I knew how important it is to interact with the teacher in the classroom. So I tried to maximize chances to*

write things in English especially to the teacher and through this, I felt like I was really learning. (Choi, interview_June_12)

In deciphering interaction between the teacher and the students in terms of challenges, two interesting observations were made upon the completion of the last interview. First, students rarely responded to the instructor's group emails but still took them seriously. In the final interviews, some students gave interesting perspectives that interaction can happen quietly though it was not visible in written form. Sunny said, "I know we [students] don't respond so actively or outwardly but that doesn't mean we don't interact. For example, I know everybody reads your [instructor] email or feedback because they are the most important part in learning, but we don't necessarily say 'yes, we read it,' or 'I agree with you.' I think it is part of Korean culture that we don't necessarily say it out loud but acknowledge with our eyes more."

Second, some students preferred to use personal email accounts to interact with the instructor more than writing in the café. These students mentioned how they were somewhat conscious of exposing their writings (including written product and conversational text) to everyone in the online classroom, so they preferred to write privately to the instructor through emails. Excerpts (8) and (9) describe students' motives to choose personal email to interact with the instructor.

(7) I enjoy writing a personal email to the professor more because I feel secure. I don't like the idea of online café because everything I write, the other classmates can see them, too. I wouldn't feel comfortable if

they have to see my questions or homework essays that are open to everyone. So I would rather use emails to ask you [instructor] a question. (Crystal, interview_April_18)

- (8) *I thank you [instructor] for allowing me to use Korean but still, I am very shy to leave my thoughts in the café unless I really have to. I think the other students also feel the same. We always think about how others see us. Although it is not easy to have a comfortable talk with the professor, I email to you if I have to say something personal. (Blue, interview_April_18)*

To sum up, these students expressed how the interaction with the instructor was not without difficulties, and in most cases, it was grounded in an unequal relationship between the instructor and the students. However, the students with the higher motivation attempted to purposely use English to communicate with the instructor to practice English writing. In regard to communicating with the instructor, the students' tendency to rely on personal emails rather than online forum was seen as a result of their wanting to avoid their writing being shown to other students.

5.1.2 Unfamiliarity with Online Communication: From “I don’t know what to say or how to say.” to “I tried to write some questions instead of being hesitant.”

The second challenge had to do with the students' previous experiences with online learning. The result of the individual background survey done in the first week showed that no participants had experiences of taking an online course

except for two students. One student talked about his experience of taking a writing course at the British Council¹⁶ where everybody used an online café to upload writing assignments and receive the instructor's feedback, which he found useful for learning English writing. Another student shared her experience of taking an English writing course in the university. She said her previous university had a system of providing a cyber-classroom to be added to a traditional class, so some instructors utilized the cyber space to upload materials and post announcements. In her case, she said there was no visible interaction in the cyber space, but that it served as a station for students to visit to check class materials.

The participants pointed out that they were not familiar with the online classroom so they were simply not sure how and what to write in English to the instructor, which caused them to be inactive in teacher-student communications. Excerpts (10) to (13) illustrate students' hesitation to communicate with the instructor in this regard.

- (10) I don't know how much or how often I need to write in the café. This is new for me. I have joined some other cafés before but I only read information there. It is not natural for me to write something to the instructor. So I usually wait to the last moment to see how other students write first. But I think they are also hesitant, too, because they don't know either. I am also very conscious of my English skills, so if I

¹⁶ According to the website of British Council in Korea, "The British Council is the UK's international organization for educational opportunities and cultural relations."
<<http://www.britishcouncil.org/>>

have to write something, I check my vocabulary and grammar first which takes up much time. (Blue, journal_April_09)

- (11) *I understand that interaction is important in the online classroom, but I am not so sure of how to interact with the instructor. Do I need to write as if I speak or do I need to write as if I write... because I have never done this before. I had never joined online cafés either. I am not really an internet guy. Maybe it's because I'm old.* (Kim, interview_April_19)
- (12) Although I am familiar with internet, blended learning is quite new for me. Even if you [instructor] explain what to do online every week, I think I need more instruction and time to really learn to participate in the online classroom. When it comes to writing something, especially to the instructor, I don't know what to say and how to say. (June, journal_April_29)
- (13) *I prefer to talk to you in person like this [face-to-face] because this is more natural for me. I think I only communicate with the instructor online when I have a question that is directly related to the assignment. Other than that, I only read and check your posts.* (Jay, interview_April_18)

Thoughts behind this were negative preconceptions that the students held about the effectiveness of online classroom. In the first three weeks of their weekly reflective journal, eight students wrote that they were somewhat dubious about whether or not an online classroom would be effective for an academic writing class which made them demotivated to take part in online classroom activities.

To encourage the students inexperienced in taking a language course in a blended learning format, firstly, the instructor took much time to post useful information and provide individualized writing feedback as much as possible

which attracted them to visit the online classroom more frequently. Secondly, the instructor tried to elicit more learner responses by guiding them on how they could write online and reminding them of the importance of expressing one's opinion in a learning community. For example, the demonstration included examples from a simple 'yes' or 'no' response, to a longer response such as 'what do you mean by this?' and 'I don't quite agree with your comment because...'

Moreover, students made an attempt to initiate the discussion of writing topics and to ask questions about the undigested parts of the lesson. For instance, in week seven, students were asked to discuss social problems in Korea, prior to writing a cause and effect essay. Instead of waiting for the instructor to narrow down the topic, they tried to post specific problems of Korea's society that they wanted to write about such as the high suicide rate, unbalanced private education, and false advertising on plastic surgery. Such attempts added to the increase of learner-instructor interactions. Excerpts (14) and (15) illustrate how the students tried to practice online communications with the instructor in an active way.

(14) I found my name more than others in the online boards because I tried to write more to practice my English writing. I also replied to the instructor's feedback almost every time. (Choi, journal_June_12)

(15) *I think we got used to online communication after a while. You always reminded us to write if we had any questions. So I tried to write some questions instead of being hesitant.* (Jay, interview_June_09)

At the end of the course, all of the students stated that after some time, they

accustomed themselves to communicating online with the instructor but the new challenge that came about was the feeling of never-ending study. As much as the online classroom highlights the benefit of time flexibility, the learners felt like they were constantly being watched for the same reason. This will be discussed in relation to learner-content interaction in Section 5.3.

5.2 Learner-Learner Interaction

There were varying voices of the students who found interacting among learners to be challenging. Section 5.2.1 reports on the issue of trust in providing peer feedback and how it was resolved and, Section 5.2.2 notes the difficulty of insufficient face-to-face interaction and the way the students coped with it.

5.2.1 Distrust and Discomfort of Peer feedback: From “Why would I contaminate my eyes by reading something that’s full of errors?” to “Peer feedback training helped me to see which areas I needed to make comments on.”

The most frequently mentioned challenge in terms of learner-learner interaction had to do with writing feedback. Even after peer feedback training, the students had distrust of each other’s feedback for several reasons. In the first interview and reflective journals, eight students said that they felt like they were disqualified to write any feedback on others’ papers, and for the same reason,

they did not take others' comments seriously. Simply put, they did not think peer feedback was reliable, as illustrated in (16) and (17).

(16) *Well, I think peer feedback can be useful if we were all high level English learners. But I think except for one or two students, not everybody is confident in their abilities. When I am not sure of my own writing ability, how can I correct others' papers? I don't think it's practical for us to give feedback to each other although working together is good in theory.* (Yeon, interview_April_20)

(17) *Hmmm....first, everybody's level is different, and everybody's writing product is different. If you are poor at English writing, you cannot give proper feedback to a better English essay and, if you are good at writing, you also don't want to look at poor English because you don't get anything from it. Why would I contaminate my eyes by reading something that's full of errors?* (Kim, interview_April_19)

Other reasons for not putting weight on peer feedback came from difficulties in conveying messages in an online setting. The participants noted that a lack of mutual understanding and real time communication were the reasons why they did not think peer feedback was reliable. Because of these obstacles, the quality of peer feedback turned out to be less productive than teacher feedback, yielding mostly simple grammatical corrections or a 'Good job' type of neutral remark. This was observed from the students' interview data below (Excerpts 18 and 19).

(18) *I think people in this class don't trust peer feedback that much because communication is not thorough. I sometimes cannot understand what they're saying. If it was in a traditional classroom, I could ask what it means on the spot, but it's hard to do that online. You know, feedback is another type of writing which is time consuming, and you usually have to wait for answers. It's not like real time communication, so tension disappears in an online setting.* (Jay, interview_April_18)

(19) *Honestly, I am not active in peer feedback activities because it takes too much time to read others' writings and understand the content especially if there's a lot of errors. Moreover, when I write feedback, I have to double check whether or not my sentence is ok. For me, even if I write feedback in Korean, it still takes much time.* (BJ, interview_April_17)

As one student strongly expressed a negative attitude toward peer feedback saying, "Why would I contaminate my eyes by reading something that's full of errors?" (Extract 17), the students seemed to have a negative perception of group work activities to a greater or lesser degree in the first place. These participants were graduate students whose mindset was on the practicality of education, rather than socializing with other students thus they were more prone to individual activities.

The students talked about hurting other's feelings by pinpointing each other's mistakes on writing assignments. They were afraid to write any negative feedback which could be taken personally and look offensive. The students in this graduate school came from different backgrounds in terms of education, experiences and age, which influenced them to be much more careful in interacting with classmates. Thus, they were disciplined to say things in a more subtle rather than straightforward way in order to avoid conflicts. Excerpts (20) and (21) present how these students felt about commenting on each other's writing products.

- (20) *It's more difficult to talk to each other especially in this school because you have to be careful about how others feel. I know Koreans are good at criticizing people so we need to be more careful in writing. I don't want to hurt others' feelings by telling them what is wrong with their essays. You know, there was an incident in other class during a discussion time. Some students got emotionally hurt because they took the opposing opinions offensively and personally. So they got into an argument and still in a bad relationship.* (Kim, interview_April_19)
- (21) *I feel like I can't really say bluntly, 'this is wrong because blah blah blah' although I know it is wrong. I mean who's gonna like it if somebody picks on your mistake. Teacher feedback is ok because that's a teacher's role, but I think peer feedback can be different if you really don't trust each other. For me, I try to write very softly or just say a 'Good job, I like it' type of feedback only.* (Yeon, interview_April_20)

These show Korean students' tendency to avoid writing negative feedback, which sometimes ended with leaving only superficial comments such as 'it looks like you wrote well' or 'good job'.

In an effort to encourage student interactions, an error correction session was given for peer feedback and demonstrated in an off-line classroom. In this class, two types of error correction were employed: local and global revisions. Local revision was to detect grammatical errors and global revision was on text organization. A total of four peer feedback training sessions were held in the offline classroom. The first two sessions were held in a traditional classroom where the instructor demonstrated the three steps of text revision which included task definition, evaluation, and modification of the text. In the first step, students learned to understand the purpose of the writing task; then the next step guided

them to detect errors based on grammatical and organizational knowledge; and finally in the last step, students tried to offer error correction. The next two sessions were held in a computer lab where the students were seated with individual computers so they were able to practice peer feedback in a face-to-face class time. Excerpts (22) and (23) include students' comments on how they progressively got over the barriers to peer feedback.

(22) *After practicing peer feedback in a computer lab, I think finally, we got to learn to do it properly. Peer feedback training helped me to see which areas I needed to make comments. After all, I think it was not bad as I thought previously.* (Kim, interview_June_04)

(23) *It is true that the peer feedback training helped us to provide better feedback on each other's essays, but I still felt uncomfortable in pointing out their mistakes.* (Yeon, interview_June_09)

Owing to the increased number of peer interactions, Kim and Yeon's comments above illustrate that their perceptions on peer feedback changed after the trainings. However, discomfort still existed amongst the students because of the differences in their English abilities and sensitivity about critiquing each other's writings.

5.2.2 Lack of Face-to-Face Interaction Time: From “It is not possible to have a true discussion online.” to “I felt much more comfortable talking with the classmates online after we had more real time classes.”

The second challenge in learner-learner interaction was in the connection between the face-to-face and online classrooms. Although these students did not have online learning experiences, they believed in the effectiveness of blended learning in that learning can happen continuously from a traditional classroom to an online classroom. The majority of the students affirmed the benefit of taking the blended course over either traditional or fully online course because of the increased opportunities for interacting with the instructor and fellow students. And, in the first interview, when they were asked about the role of interaction in learning, all of them answered that interaction was the key to learning. However, the students found interacting with their classmates challenging, because they did not feel comfortable openly talking to each other. As Excerpts (24) through (26) below describe, students seemed to think that not knowing each other well was a hindrance to learner-learner interactions.

(24) I have no doubt that interaction is very important in learning. During an online discussion time, I was hoping that I could talk more freely with others. However, it wasn't easy to do that because I didn't really know my members well. How can I discuss the benefit of using smart phones when I don't know who am I speaking to. It is not possible to have a true discussion online until we get to know each other. More face-to-face time, more interaction...? (Choi, journal_March_31)

(25) *I feel like I can talk more freely to the ones that I already know. For example, Sharon and Mary¹⁷ are my close friends. We are all Korean Music majors, so when I talk with them online, I feel comfortable but when I was asked to discuss with others appointed by the teacher, I*

¹⁷ Pseudonyms were used for student participants.

couldn't really engage myself in either off or online discussions. (Blue, interview_April_18)

(26) I think we need to have more face time classes to get to know each other better. Real communication should begin from seeing each other than online. If we have more face-to-face classes, maybe we can talk more online. I think it is better to make this class twice a week instead of once a week? Or, how about a year long course? (Jay, interview_April_18)

Group discussions in this course were mainly done as a brainstorming tool prior to writing activities, which usually began in the face-to-face classroom and continued in the online classroom by having students posting resources on the topic and opinions throughout the week. Contrary to the instructor's expectation of active interactions between the students, the group discussion board ended up serving like a storage space where students kept posting their own materials rather than discussing the topic with each other. In the students' views, being acquainted with each other should precede an online discussion.

Reflecting their suggestions, the face-to-face discussion time was expanded and extra offline gatherings were set up to help the students become familiar with each other. These students also seemed to engage in offline discussions more actively when they were engaged in an in-depth discussion in an online classroom. For instance, one of the groups were discussing the topic of advantages and disadvantages of using tablets in schools. This group showed active participations in online discussions, which led to building strong group solidarity. This, in turn, created a synergetic effect as the students were inspired

to produce a better quality of academic writing with rich context. Excerpts (27) and (28) describe how students were able to interact better in an online classroom, and establish group solidarity.

(27) *I felt much more comfortable talking with the classmates online after we had more real time classes and informal lunch hours. However, it still was not enough time to learn about each other. Well, maybe it's just me thinking like that but I really think getting to know each other helped me to build group solidarity which encouraged us to talk more online.* (Yeon, interview_June_20)

(28) *I learned to enjoy group activities after I got to know my members better. We had a good discussion both in online and off line. I think my group was special in that we all came from the same majors.* (Crystal, _June_07)

Since there was only one 2.4 hour-long face-to-face class time once a week that was filled with lectures and exercises, not enough time was allotted for socializing. A frequently raised issue was that if they knew each other better in person, they could talk to each other better in the online classroom, which points to a suggestion of extending face time. In sum, students felt that in order to facilitate interactions amongst the learners, more communication during face time classes should precede. After lengthening the face-to-face time including an offline group discussion to help brainstorm writing topics, students' involvement in group activities increased, and active participation in online group discussions also synergically prompted them to develop a rich context for writing activities.

5.3 Learner-Content Interaction

Learner-content interaction focuses on students' opportunities to access course content materials like textbooks, lectures, handouts, and multimedia. In an online learning environment, students can easily interact with learning content through a variety of modalities. This section delineates two major challenges students experienced as they interacted with content and coped with that situation. The data are drawn from student's reflective journal and interviews. The first challenge deals with the overloaded work amount put on students (Section 5.3.1), and the other covers the higher level of English materials (Section 5.3.2).

5.3.1 Class and a Half Syndrome: From “There are too many activities which I never have enough time for.” to “After I learned to enjoy group work, I did not mind extra work in the online classroom.”

The first emergent theme in terms of learner-content interaction had to do with the amount of work imposed on the students. The students' comments were related to a “class and a half” syndrome, which refers to the condition where an instructor adds more online components to a course than it is possible to complete in the limited time of a face-to-face class, so that it ends up being a class that really has too much in it. This phenomenon could be found in Excerpts

(29) through (31).

(29) I think we have too many things to do in our class. It feels like we have two classes that run 24 hours and 7 days. When we meet in the classroom, we are overwhelmed to do all the work like listening to a lecture, solving problems on textbook, reviewing the materials, understanding the guidelines for online work, group project and more. My brain is burning. (BJ, journal_May_06)

(30) *I think you are a very passionate teacher. We are amazed at how active you are in both classrooms. I just feel sorry that we don't meet your expectations. You know it's because we are too busy with other studies, work and this English homework, too. I think it would be nice if the workload was less heavy. There are too many activities which I never have enough time for.* (Kim, interview_April_18)

(31) [We would like] if this class gave us more time for work and less work activities. I don't know maybe it's only me but it seems like online classroom is like extra work that is optional so I don't get to participate in an online class unless you tell me it is part of grade points. On top of that, I seemed to have never enough time for all school work. (Jay, journal_May_13)

The participants in this study were careful to say that the blended course was too demanding, because a traditional classroom was running parallel in tandem with the online classroom like two courses without fully integrating the two. They also said that the instructor seemed to try too hard to add on extra materials and activities online, which required too much of the students' time.

Moreover, the students' comments described the difficulty of completing assignments on time with a satisfactory quality. It was partly due to the nature of the assignments which included solving practice/tasks from the textbook, summarizing, paraphrasing, writing drafts on different types of academic

writings, and giving feedback on others' work. These students had to spend a substantial amount of time on each task. In order to lessen the students' burden of being tight on time, the instructor was lenient with extending the assignment deadlines, but reducing the amount of workload could not be negotiated.

The students' efforts to overcome the difficulties of handling much work were found in a variety of strategies. Coming from diverse educational backgrounds and personalities, each student had different expectations of the course including individual learning goals and the levels of involvement in their learning community. For example, Choi, Yeon, and Sunny approached learning academic English writing in a constructive way, in which they believed that without interactions between the instructor and classmates, no meaningful learning would be achieved. Therefore, they welcomed sharing ideas in groups and did not mind lengthy feedback activities in an online classroom. Excerpts (32) and (34) provide their views on learning and how it influenced their attitude about doing many tasks.

(32) *I first thought we had too many homework and online activities, but after I learned to enjoy group work, I did not mind extra work in the online classroom. I mean it's not extra but it felt like extra.* (Yeon, interview_June_09)

(33) *I'm a teacher myself and I believe a learning community is very important. I felt burdened to try to finish all the work, but it was easier for me to solve the questions when I discussed with the group.* (Choi, interview_June_03)

(34) *For me, sharing feelings with the classmates helped me to feel better. I was not the only one being stressed out because writing took too much*

time. (Sunny, interview_June_04)

Some students also demonstrated their ability to manage their time effectively and self-regulate their learning, which aided them in handling many required activities and assignments. As these students became familiar with the blended learning method, it became a part of their routine to listen to lectures in the face-to-face class, work on the weekly assigned writing task, and exchange ideas on the web boards. Thus, they were able to keep up the learning pace better. Excerpts (35) and (36) describe students' disciplinary efforts to carry out the classwork.

(35) *I think because we were all adult learners, we were somewhat skillful to manage the time and workload. Although we whined about too much classwork, I think we all managed to complete it, after all. We knew what we were supposed to do.* (BJ, interview_June_09)

(36) *I knew my strengths and weaknesses pretty well, so I tried to allocate enough time to complete the writing tasks. I spent many weekends working at the assignments in the library.* (Kim, interview_June_04)

In sum, it was discovered that despite the overloaded work activities, these students exercised different strategies to overcome the difficulties such as effective time management, self-regulation, and self-discipline.

5.3.2 Difficulty of All-English Materials: From “It’s too difficult to understand the all-English textbooks.” to “Mixing English with Korean was not necessary.”

In terms of learner-content interaction, nine students said that the English textbook and extra handouts provided by the instructor were difficult to understand because the content was all in English. As English-only was the classroom policy from the beginning, it appeared to cause a major challenge both in instructor-student interactions (mentioned above) and learner-content interactions as well. Excerpts (37) and (38) delineate the students' opinions on using all-English materials for learning academic English writing.

(37) *I am not fluent in English so it's actually very time consuming when I have to deal with all-English textbooks. I mean... think about it, having to read, understand and write in English are so challenging. I think you can use some Korean for the sake of understanding.* (Blue, interview_April_18)

(38) *I think we don't need to stick to all-English materials because this is not a speaking or listening class. It's like we don't use an English-English dictionary. It's too difficult to understand all English textbooks. We'd rather use some Korean when we learn technical skills which are more effective time wise.* (Sunny, interview_April_17)

These comments illustrated students' opinions that the all-English policy was not really effective for this particular class for two reasons: one was that the purpose of this course was not for speaking and listening in English but for writing an academic English paper with the ultimate goal of publishing it internationally. The other reason was that, since this particular academic writing course for graduate students deals with many mechanical skills such as formulaic expressions used in the abstract, certain vocabulary for research papers, and

organization of the experimental paper, these could be delivered more conveniently in Korean.

To care for this matter, extra materials were provided incorporating Korean to substitute for the difficult concepts and terminologies used in the English textbook. Additionally, students were allowed to use Korean during group discussion time. However, the students' concluding remarks questioned whether the use of Korean in the materials was necessary or not. Excerpts (39) and (40) illuminate how their perceptions on the challenges of all-English materials changed.

(39) *I was very scared to read everything in English in the beginning, but after all, mixing English with Korean was not necessary. When I started to see the Korean words in the materials and the web board, my eyes automatically moved to the Korean materials only.* (Jay, interview_June_09)

(40) *I first thought that academic writing can be taught better in Korean because it is not a conversation class. But, when I look back on the effectiveness of our class, I think using Korean was not needed except for maybe a few occasions, like explaining the concept of unity and coherence. Mixing English with Korean was not necessary.* (Sunny, interview_June_04)

These comments showed that the students' perceived challenges of the difficulty of all-English materials changed after they found the benefit of learning materials in English. Furthermore, they were able to reflect on their study habits as they said that due to their tendency to rely on Korean, using Korean would not be recommended.

CHAPTER 6

VALUE OF BLENDED

LEARNING FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

This section answers Research Question 2 which asked, ‘How do Korean graduate students value blended learning in learning academic English writing?’ This was answered by the data collected from the end-of course interview along with reflective journals. The following subsections are dedicated to describing the value of teacher talk (Section 6.1), value of peer interaction (Section 6.2), and value of online resources and time flexibility (Section 6.3).

6.1 Value of Teacher Feedback

The importance of teacher feedback in a blended writing course was examined by the value students placed on it. A majority of the students referred to online teacher feedback as the most important interaction in blended learning. There emerged two major value points shared by the participants. The first point can be titled ‘Teacher Talk as a One Stop Solution’ because it is associated with the multiple roles of the teacher (Section 6.1.1), and the second point can be titled ‘Prompt and Personalized Written Feedback’ because it discusses the value of individualized feedback for academic writing (Section 6.1.2).

6.1.1 Teacher Talk as a One Stop Solution: “Teacher feedback-the more the merrier.”

There was an in-depth discussion about the course effectiveness and satisfaction of each participant in terms of learning academic writing. The students and the instructor were able to communicate through a number of modes, including face-to-face instructions, group or personal emails, postings on the board, and on-and-offline writing conferences. These various communication channels enabled the students to interact well with the instructor.

The most common remark on the learner-instructor interaction was that although face-to-face lecturing was effective in itself, receiving on-and-offline teacher feedback was most helpful. The helpfulness of teacher feedback can be summarized into three areas: 1) direct instruction on their writing products, 2) clarification on peer feedback, and 3) affective talk in the online classroom.

All of the students expressed their gratitude for asynchronous written feedback provided by the instructor on each assignment including essays, short paragraphs, and task practices from the textbook, which was considered as direct instruction. Moreover, face-to-face or online writing conferences were held twice a month and offered more lively tutorial sessions for each student. Such interactions were directly related to students' writing development because as one student assessed, “The teacher's feedback for me was like a doctor's prescription on one's illness.”

Specifically, the students talked about the importance of writing conferences. Depending on their preferences, they could choose either online or offline writing conferences. The students with higher motivations seemed to register for the writing conferences more frequently. Among them, the relatively younger students preferred to choose the synchronous online writing conferences while the older ones tended to choose the face-to-face writing conferences. Excerpts (41) through (43) show the students' positive evaluations of writing conferences.

- (41) *In my case, writing conference was most helpful to improve my writing skills. I felt like I was taking a private tutorial. As you now, I was an English major, so many students seemed to think that my English should be better than other classmates, so I was kind of shy to upload my work in the online classroom, but the one-to-one writing conference made me feel more comfortable to discuss weaknesses in my essays.* (Yong, reflective journal_June_03)
- (42) *I always signed up for the face-to-face writing conference because I could ask many questions. I am kind of slow in typing, so it was better for me to choose a face-to-face session. It helped me to see what I was missing.* (Kim, interview_June_12)
- (43) *Dear teacher, I would like to thank you for giving me a flexible time to get feedback on my writing. I have a full time job so it was good for me to have an online writing conference at night times... your suggestion such as vocabulary choice and sentence organization were helpful. Teacher feedback- the more the merrier.* (Jay, journal_June_10)

These excerpts manifest that regardless of communication mode, students valued the interactive nature of writing conferences through which they were able to have open dialogues with the instructor about their writings.

Additionally, the teacher's attempt to clarify peer feedback in the online

classroom was valued because, in many cases, students were not sure if their feedback was meaningful as it was reported to be one of the challenges in the online environment in Section 5.2. Excerpts (44) and (45) describe how the teacher's comments on peer feedback aided them to decide which feedback to consider when correcting their essays.

(44) *Many times, because we were not sure how valid peer feedback was, we waited for your recheck on peer feedback. With your feedback on our feedback, it helped us to pick and choose which was a right one to adopt to our writing.* (Choi, interview_June_09)

(45) *I thank you for answering my questions diligently. I was not sure if my feedback was right or wrong so I wrote, 'Teacher, please check' so you cleared my question. It was helpful to see which vocabulary was more appropriate in an academic context.* (Sunny, interview, _June_09)

Another area of usefulness in the teacher's feedback was in the intervention of group discussions. As many had written in their weekly reflective journals, students appreciated the teacher feedback not only for the direct instruction for academic writing but also for the indirect feedback on a group discussion and peer feedback (Excerpts 46 and 47).

(46) *I would like to thank you for being a passionate teacher. You were kind enough to provide us with detailed feedback for my essay and answers to my questions. Clarifying confusing comments provided by other peers were very helpful, too. It was a good practice to learn through a blended format because written messages were always saved automatically.* (Sunny, reflective journal, June_12)

(47) *I think without teacher's intervention in a group discussion, it may not have been fruitful because we could go off the topic. Last time, when we*

were discussing on the use of tablets in school, if you hadn't told us to narrow down the topic, we might not have been able to reach an agreement. (Crystal, interview, June_12)

Lastly, students also mentioned that they were able to learn not only through immediate written feedback but also through the reading of the teacher's diary and frequent email messages. These helped them to feel encouraged; moreover, they gave them extra input regarding English writing styles as illustrated in Excerpts (48) through (50).

(48) *In my opinion, teacher is the key to successful online education. Because we were very dependent on teacher for everything like writing instruction, assignment check-up, reminder of deadlines, and even group discussion, we have to feel that the instructor is all around to help us. So it was a good idea to use emails to remind us of head news for our class. (BJ, interview_June_12)*

(49) I really really enjoyed reading the teacher's diary. The writing had a good personal story, so I not only liked the content but also learned writing styles, too. I think when we are online, it is important to feel like "real" not a superficial interaction. (Yeon, journal_May_20)

(50) *I appreciate the activeness of teacher involvement the most. You [instructor] gave us good information as well as reminding us many times about the assignments. I think we received at least three emails and announcements every week from you with encouraging comments. I learned from reading English emails, too. (June, interview_June_14)*

These quotes spoke to the dominant role of the teacher whose job has many folds in developing academic English writing.

Although on and offline teacher talk was found to be most effective for

learning academic English writing, some students, on the negative side, said that they did not feel comfortable having the instructor all along, because it decreased their morale to write freely. Excerpts (51) and (52) describe why some students were hesitant to learn English writing in a blended learning format.

(51) *Even though we were dependent on the teacher's feedback and instructions, I felt like I was being watched all the time either in offline or online. Because there were always new information, I was busy reading them than practicing my own writing. This was one of the reasons why the blended EWAP course was tiring. (Jay, interview_June_09)*

(52) *Although I said teacher intervention was necessary, I sometimes felt that too much teacher guidance deprived me of the chances to write my opinions. For example, when you write your comments first, it is difficult to write mine. In that sense, I was not so sure if blended learning was good for me. (June, interview_June_14)*

Despite some negative opinions on the frequent teacher interventions, students valued teacher feedback in general because it was instructive and encouraging.

6.1.2 Prompt and Personalized Teacher Feedback: “I appreciated the teacher’s immediate and personalized feedback.”

In this academic writing course, teacher feedback was both a tool for and outcomes of active interactions with the students. All of the participants valued teacher feedback as the most effective form of instruction for this particular class, and timely feedback was a very important factor. In most cases, students’ weekly assignments were read, commented on and evaluated within 24 hours of the

posting time. The instructor utilized a mobile application which enabled the online café to be synchronized with a cellular phone, thus immediate notice was provided whenever there was a new posting. Excerpts (53) through (55) describe how the students felt about teacher feedback.

(53) Interaction with the instructor is more important than any other interactions. More specifically, writing feedback was most helpful. After we uploaded assignments, the instructor gave us feedback within less than a day so I was able to check it before I forget about my writing. (Choi, journal_June_03)

(54) *Teacher feedback helped me a lot to find out my habitual mistakes and grammatical errors in my writing. Although I was sometimes embarrassed to post my assignment because I knew there were full of errors, I appreciated when you [instructor] provided me corrective feedback not just saying 'good job'.* (Yong, interview_June_09)

(55) *I think everybody wanted more teacher feedback and more quickly, too. It was the most productive and effective way to learn writing skills. After the lecture time in class, we didn't have enough time to write and receive feedback but because teacher feedback was provided at length in the online classroom, it helped me to see my weaknesses and the way to develop it.* (Sunny, interview_June_09)

All three students showed improvement in their writing skills in terms of content, mechanics, and organization. To show the evidence of the improvement, the first paragraph of one of Yong's writing samples are provided below as an example.

Sample 1. The First Draft on Compare and Contrast Essay

Facebook Vs Twitter

With propagation of smartphones, online social network service (SNS) becomes a part of modern life. In case of Korea, smart phone users are estimated to 33 million in 2013. One of the radical changes with smartphone is a way of communication. Instead of using phone calls or SMS (short message service), people lately communicate through SNS like Kakaotalk, Twitter or Facebook using application on smartphone. Except these SNS, there are lots of SNS applications and their speed of growth is very rapid. Especially, Facebook and Twitter which are shown in mid-2000 are represented as the prominent.

Sample 2. The Second Draft on Compare and Contrast Essay

Facebook Vs Twitter (2nd draft)

With propagation of smartphones, online social network service (SNS) becomes a part of modern life. At present, In case of Korea, Korean smart phone users are estimated to 33 million in 2013. One of the radical changes with smartphone is happened in a way of communication. Instead of using phone calls or SMS (short message service) to communicate, people lately communicate through use SNS like Kakaotalk, Twitter or Facebook on using application on in smartphone. Except these SNSs, there are lots of SNS applications for communication and their speed of growth is very rapid. Especially, Facebook and Twitter which are shown in mid-2000 are represented as the prominent.

Sample 3. The Third Draft on Compare and Contrast Essay

Facebook Vs Twitter

With propagation of smart phones, social network service (SNS) becomes a part of modern life. At present, Korean smart phone users are estimated to 33 million in 2013. One of the radical changes with smart phone happened in a way of communication. Instead of using phone calls or SMS (short message service) to communicate contact, people use SNSs like Kakaotalk, Twitter or Facebook on application in one's smartphone. Not only these SNSs, but also there are lots of applications for communication. Besides, their speed of growth is very rapid. Especially, Facebook and Twitter which are shown in mid-2000 are represented as the prominent.

In this assignment, students were asked to write a compare and contrast essay. Yong received teacher feedback twice. Her first through third drafts show the improvement of her writing skills in terms of vocabulary, mechanics, and organization of the essay.

The students felt good about receiving personalized comments on their essays because they were able to sense that the instructor was thoroughly reading their work and trying to provide constructive feedback. Since personalized feedback in an online classroom is known to be more consistent than classroom feedback (Tsutsui, 2004), the students in the study also voiced that receiving consistent feedback helped them to see the progress at their own pace (Excerpts 56 and 57).

(56) *After some weeks passed, it became a routine for me to visit the online classroom to check teacher's feedback on my writing. At first, I was somewhat self-conscious about posting my writing in public, but it was good for me to keep a track of my mistakes and corrections on a weekly basis, which helped me to see what I lack in my writing better.* (Kim, interview_June_12)

(57) *My cell phone buzzes whenever there is a new post or a reply to my postings. So, I can naturally check the reply [feedback] real time to see your feedback. I keep looking at them to write better for the next draft.* (Jay, interview_June_09)

In addition to the regularity of receiving teacher feedback, the students noted that receiving one-to-one feedback enabled them to build a closer relationship with the instructor, this in turn eased them to transition from the traditional

classroom to the online classroom and to reflect the teacher's direct comments on their next writing assignment (Excerpts 58 through 60).

(58) *I thank you [instructor] for giving us individualized comments on our writings. I know everyone is at a different level so it won't be easy to provide feedback but when you give us feedback, it's very helpful. For me, it is my motivation to visit the café more often. I appreciated the teacher's immediate and personalized feedback.* (Kim, interview_June_12)

(59) *You know, when learning academic writing in a blended format, it is important to practice and apply what we learned in the class, that's why we dedicated much time to the online classroom. Going to the online classroom to check the teacher feedback was quite exciting although I didn't always get the positive feedback. Because it's personalized, I felt that it was more convenient to ask personal questions than in our face-to-face classroom.* (BJ, interview_June_12)

(60) *It was helpful to receive straightforward feedback on my essay. I preferred to know a direct solution to a problem so that I could be more careful not to make the same mistake again in my next writing. After I became used to receiving teacher feedback, even the negative ones, I was able to ask you [instructor] questions more freely.* (Jay, interview_June_09)

As opposed to the students' reluctance to give feedback to each other, they desired more teacher feedback in a timely and personalized manner. They seemed to rely on direct teacher feedback, which they referred to as 'the most effective interactional activity' in teacher-learner interaction.

6.2 Value of Peer Interaction

The value of peer interaction was found to be high for learning certain aspects of academic English writing. This section reports on two themes emerging from the students' statements. The first theme is on the usefulness of peer feedback on mechanics (Section 6.2.1), and the second theme concerns the helpfulness of group discussion for content development (Section 6.2.2).

6.2.1 Students' Written Feedback for Mechanics: "Peer feedback was pretty useful but only for checking mechanical errors."

While these students believed that online communication is an excellent medium for language learning, their ideas of meaningful learning depended mostly on the quality of peer feedback. Peer feedback in this study was mostly done in English but Korean was also allowed depending on the students' preferences and needs. The most common type of peer feedback in online was explicit correction on form rather than meaning. In a discussion on the effectiveness of peer feedback, the students mentioned its effect on grammatical checks.

Interview comments and reflective journals suggested that the students valued peer feedback greatly only when it was pedagogical. The following comments, (61) and (62), provide several reasons why these students thought

peer feedback was instructive.

(61) *After some trainings, we started to provide helpful comments to each other, but I think most of comments were related to grammatical errors such as tense correction and subject-verb agreement. (Sunny, interview_June_09)*

(62) *I think peer feedback was pretty useful but only for checking mechanical errors. You know we [Korean students] are very good at finding faults of others especially grammatical mistakes although we cannot correct our own mistakes. So I say, peer feedback was pretty useful but only for checking mechanical errors. (Kim, interview_June_12)*

One of Sunny's writing samples is provided below to show the improvement of her writing skills after receiving peer feedback. These samples are from the second paragraphs of the cause and effect essay.

Sample 1. The First Draft of Cause and Effect Essay

The stress

A lot of stress to do so from the heart. A lot of stress from the heart, the biggest part of me is the "deadline".(?). Everything has a deadline. Especially the students, we are always many challenges in deadline and need to worry about the next deadline after the deadline. Time is not always enough, so due to the challenge, you should study until late at night.

Sample 2. The Second Draft of Cause and Effect Essay

The stress

A lot of stress ~~to do so~~ **are** from ~~the~~ heart. A lot of stress from the heart, the biggest part of me (mine) is the "deadline".
(?) Everything has a deadline. Especially **for** the students, we ~~are~~ always **(have)** many challenges ~~in deadline~~ and need to worry about the next deadline after the deadline. Time is not always enough, so due to ~~the~~ **(this)** challenge, you should study until late at night.

Sample 3. The Third Draft of Cause and Effect Essay

The stress

There are three main causes which my stresses are originated from. I feel **stressed** due to the tight schedule of academic life. Time is not always enough, so due to **this** challenge, I should study until late at night. Everything has a deadline. Especially for students, we always have many challenges and need to worry about next deadline after other deadlines.

Sunny's second draft has many grammatical corrections received from peer feedback sessions. Along with the teacher's feedback, her final draft shows better organization and sentence structures.

The reason for students' leaning toward grammar corrections may be attributed to their relatively high capacity of grammar skills and the ease with which they can give feedback as part of required course activities. Commenting on the contents or the organization of the essay seemed to be beyond their ability; as one student said, "I don't think we can actually say anything about the content since academic writing usually deals with the technical knowledge." Another student also mentioned, "The content is too difficult to understand for me." For these reasons, peer feedback activities were confined to mechanical error

correction.

On the other hand, there were also concerns regarding peer feedback which lessened the pedagogical value of peer activities. The following quotations illustrate why some students felt that the peer feedback was limitedly effective (Excerpts 63 and 64).

- (63) *Since peer feedback was a required activity which was monitored by the instructor, I took it pretty seriously to give pedagogical comments but many times, I found myself correcting spelling mistakes or grammatical mistakes which are also important, I guess.* (Yong, interview_June_09)
- (64) *Peer feedback was helpful to see grammatical mistakes that I made. Many students in this classroom were good at pinpointing what seemed wrong, but sometimes there were no alternatives to the problem.* (Jay, interview_June_12)

Some students also noted that the peer feedback did not always receive equal attention as the teacher's (Excerpts 65 through 67).

- (65) *I think peer feedback could be sometimes superficial. People tried to leave some comments on others' essays because it was part of participation grade, but I honestly thought their comments didn't really do much to improve my writing ability to the next level as much as the teacher's individual comments did.* (Yeon, interview_06_09)
- (66) *I think peer feedback was not always meaningful because we did it out of formality. It took too much time to give quality feedback because you had to read a lengthy essay first, then read again to evaluate what's good and bad, and then you had to read your comments again to check whether they made sense or not.* (Crystal, interview_06_12)
- (67) *When I received stupid comments, I got annoyed. I'm busy doing lots of things. Why should I even reply to those messages when they are not*

helpful? This is why I preferred the teacher feedback all the more.
(Kim, interview_06_12)

In sum, the learners selectively showed satisfaction with social interaction; that is, they appreciated it when it was meaningful such as feedback on grammatical mistakes. However, there were limitations to producing effective feedback for each other. This seemed to gear the students to prefer interactions with the instructor.

6.2.2 Group Discussion for Content Development: “A group discussion was good for brainstorming ideas.”

A group discussion in an online setting can be valued differently depending on the purpose and function of the activity. An occasional group discussion in the face-to-face classroom which was extended to the online classroom throughout the week functioned as a triggering activity to stimulate students' interests to help them generate rich ideas for the academic writing content. The nature of academic writing imposes a highly specialized context that learners must acquire prior to learning the linguistic features of academic writing. As Mahn (2008) explained, academic writing in a second language should be viewed within a sociocultural environment in which interaction between the L2 writer and the academic context takes place. Working from this point of view, the instructor intentionally incorporated a group discussion activity in each lesson plan for both off-and-online classrooms to support the learners in interacting actively with the

content by exposing them to richer contexts.

Although these students agreed that the online discussion was an essential element in developing critical thinking for content development, the interviews and journals revealed additional insights into where the most satisfaction came from and where disappointment resulted from. Students' comments in general describe the positive role of group discussion for idea development and higher order thinking for academic writing, but different experiences were shared depending on the classroom environment. Some students preferred face-to-face group discussions to online group discussions, whereas others preferred online group discussion to face-to-face group discussions. Excerpts (68) through (71) describe advantages of face-to-face discussion over online discussion.

(68) *Group discussion is believed to be important in any type of learning especially for academic writing course. It was important because we could share more ideas and create better content. However, I felt that a face-to-face discussion was better than online because it was real time and energy was felt on the spot.* (Crystal, interview_June_07)

(69) *My group was good at discussing because every member was active. I personally learned a lot about the topic necessary to write an academic paper, but when we moved to the online discussion, it was different. Everybody just uploaded their own thoughts but no discussion continued.* (Yeon, interview_June_09)

(70) *A group discussion was good for brainstorming ideas before writing. You need to have good materials to produce a good academic writing. We sometimes discussed in Korean face-to-face, which I think was more effective than online because it helped us to engage in a high quality discussion rather than superficial one.* (BJ, interview_June_12)

(71) *For me, a group discussion was either very satisfactory or disappointing. It was satisfactory when everybody was interested in topic so there were many brainstormed ideas. However, it was disappointing when everybody was just uploading extra materials only without any discussions.* (Sunny, interview_June_09)

As an example of content development after group discussions, the last paragraph of BJ's writing samples are provided below. In this assignment, students were supposed to write a problem-solution essay.

Sample 1. The First Draft of Problem-Solution Essay

Unemployment rate in South Korea

Though it is difficult for the government to make job creation, efforts to reduce an employment rate should be continued through every program. Firstly, universities should give more practice time for students such as interns. Secondly, companies should make the program which offers selected students a scholarship. Lastly, above all, the government should make an effort to create full-time jobs and companies should participate in job sharing program. Also the government should form public opinion which can make people take part in this campaign.

Sample 2. The Second Draft of Problem-Solution Essay

Unemployment rate in South Korea

Though it is difficult for the government to make job creation, efforts to reduce an employment rate should be continued through every program. **Firstly**, if there are many connected programs with a job between high schools and universities, students who prepare for a job have a little preparatory period. **Secondly**, companies should make the program which offers selected students a scholarship, and they have to take lectures to meet the firm's requirements. **Finally**, above all, the government should make an effort to create full-time jobs and companies should participate in job sharing program. Also the government should form public opinion which can make people take part in this campaign.

Sample 3. The Third Draft of Problem-Solution Essay

Unemployment rate in South Korea

Though it is difficult for the government to make a job creation, efforts to reduce an employment rate should be continued through every ~~ways~~~~programs~~. **Firstly**, if there are many connected ~~consulting~~ programs with a job between high schools and universities, students who prepare for a job have a little preparatory period. **Secondly**, companies should make the program which offers selected students a scholarship, and they have to take **compulsory** lectures to meet the firm's requirements. **Finally**, the government should make an effort to create full-time jobs and companies should participate in **job sharing program**.

BJ's first draft was weak in content but after two sessions of face-to-face and online group discussions, the content developed to have more concrete examples and solutions.

Some students valued face-to-face discussions to learn academic writing more for other reasons, such as real time effect, liveliness, and seriousness of the talk. However, there were other voices that seemed to value online group discussions more as illustrated by the following excerpts from (72) through (75).

(72) I wasn't so active in a group discussion because I was kind of shy, but I think it was helpful to listen to others' ideas. You know, sometimes, you can't write because you don't know what to write about. It helped me to think better and create more ideas... in fact, it was better for me to write in the online discussion forum because I could write with more time. (Yong, journal_June_04)

(73) The online discussion was different from the in-class discussion. It required more thorough thinking and clear opinions to write. It helped me to organize my thoughts and to improve my writing skills, too. I liked it because I was kind of shy to talk in public, but online was more comfortable. (Blue, journal_June_02)

(74) *I think online discussion was twice more helpful because online communication was done through writing which gave me more chances to practice English writing. Well, sometimes we discussed in Korean in the traditional classroom but in online, we used more English. So I guess it was helpful.* (Choi, interview_June_03)

The online discussion was credited with generating better ideas for content building in writing. The reasons varied from more time for reflection, to comfort, to communication through writing. It is also noteworthy that some students acted differently from a face-to-face discussion in an online discussion than an online discussion because they were ‘shy’ (as they described themselves). Some introvert students felt more comfortable having discussions online rather than offline, because they had more time to organize their thoughts, which enabled them to interact with the content and target language more.

Another aspect of online group discussion was related to teacher presence. Students participated in the online group activities more when they realized that they would count for participation points and when there was an intervention of the teacher. Excerpts (75) through (77) illustrate this.

(75) *When you [teacher] said you would check whether everyone writes his/her personal opinion on the board, that's when I started to take online classroom seriously. Otherwise, honestly I wouldn't have participated much. You know, I already had too many things to do.* (Jay, interview_June_09)

(76) *I think we [Korean students] needed to be pushed to study. Especially in an online setting, we tended to stay quiet if we didn't find teacher's presence.* (Yong, interview_June_09)

(77) *Everybody was busy in this campus so it was hard to log in to the café every day. I came to the online classroom maybe twice a week to check announcements and comments from you [instructor]. Whenever there was a group discussion and if there was no teacher's guide, I only read the announcements and left the classroom.* (BJ, interview_June_09)

These statements talk about the teacher's role in a group discussion activity, which was mainly designed to invite learners' free thinking even without the teacher's presence.

As for the shortcomings of group discussions in the blended EWAP course, some students mentioned that it was hard to have meaningful discussions for two reasons. First, because of the different level of English skills, in-depth discussion could not be done. For example, some students with better English speaking skills were more active in face-to-face discussions whereas those with better English writing skills participated more actively in online discussions (Excerpt 78).

(78) *Group discussion was not always good in a blended learning format. Some people were very good in speaking so they talked more in a face-to-face discussion, but a person like me who was weak in English speaking skills rather stayed quiet.* (June, interview_June_09)

Second, having to connect a face-to-face group discussion to an online group discussion was not always easy. When the face-to-face discussion ends without

the concrete directions to a subsequent discussion in an online classroom, a group discussion petered out (Excerpt 79).

(79) I felt difficult to engage myself in a group discussion because a face-to-face discussion did not always make a smooth transition to the online classroom. (Yeon, interview_June_09)

In short, similar to the findings on peer feedback activities, although students found group discussion helpful for building content of the writing, it should be guided by the instructor. Not only did this reveal the students' different experiences in developing content knowledge through critical thinking through group discussions, but also the teacher's role as a facilitator encouraging online interactions between peers was discovered.

6.3 Value of Online Resources and Time Flexibility

This section is related to the student-content interaction as Moore (1989) defined to be "the process of intellectually interacting with the content that results in changes in the learner's understanding, the learner's perspective, or the cognitive structures of the learner's mind" (p. 2). According to Moore (1989), the student-content interaction defines education, for without it, education cannot occur. This section describes how the participants valued academic resources used for the course, including the textbooks, instructor-made handouts, students'

written papers, and web resources available for academic writing courses. The two themes that were discussed most by the students were the benefit of writing from “Lurking” others papers (Section 6.1.1) and the practicality of classroom materials and time flexibility (Section 6.1.2).

6.3.1 Learn to Write from “Lurking”: “I could benchmark others’ essays.”

One of the advantages of using blended learning is that an online classroom is utilized as a storage room which allows the class to keep track of each student’s work including assignments, threaded lines of discussion, teacher/peer feedback, and classroom materials that are retrievable anytime anywhere. For instance, the students in this study reported that although they sometimes looked like invisible online participants, they still took time to look at others’ works and learned from them. The following excerpts evidently describe what they called “Lurking¹⁸”, which could be a strategy for learning academic English writing (Excerpts 80 through 82).

(80) *I learned to write better from reading others’ homework. I was kind of guilty to wait till the last moment to upload my homework. That was because I wanted to read others’ papers first to compare with mine. Was it a bad idea?* (Jay, interview_June_09)

(81) *I may not have been the most active participant, but that doesn’t mean I*

¹⁸ In actual interview, Korean word ‘눈팅’ was used.

didn't care for studying. I always read your [instructor] diary, others' comments, and clicked on the extra web sources to get the information I needed. I believe that it all helped me to develop my writing skills, too. (Crystal, interview_June_09)

(82) *Do you know the word, "Lurking?" It is like reading but not writing a reply. I did that a lot because I could benchmark others' essays. Whenever I wasn't sure how to write a paper, I opened others' essays and looked through. It helped me to see how I could write better in terms of length and organization.* (Blue, interview_June_12)

The students were used to "Lurking" as many of them said at the beginning of the course that they had joined online cafes, but did not participate actively. The main reason for joining the online community was to lurk and get the information they needed. Such a habit seemed to play a role in a blended academic writing course where students read materials and used them as they liked. This explained why there existed smaller numbers of tag lines compared to the numbers of hit on postings.

In other words, the students used the strategy of lurking to write their own writing. This may be partly explained by the relationship between reading and writing. Online activities relied heavily on text-based interaction which entailed a big amount of reading as studies prove its positive effect on writing development (Krashen & Lee, 2004). In the present course, the students had to share their written works with other classmates to make them subject to peer-feedback activities. One student said, "Although in the beginning of the course, we were self-conscious about exposing our works to others, it was motivating to

see how others write to compare them with.” For these adult students, the tendency to lurk was a natural phenomenon, and they used it as a strategy to learn writing styles.

6.3.2 Usefulness of Classroom Materials and Time Flexibility: “All the uploaded materials are good references.”

For this academic writing course, two textbooks¹⁹ were used for face-to-face lecture, and other materials were either developed by the instructor or introduced via web links that were free to use. Since this was an EAP (English for Academic Purposes) course, a needs analysis was done in the first week of the course to modify class materials. To meet individual needs, extra materials were introduced online upon students’ requests. The following responses explain how they found online classroom materials helpful for learning academic English (Excerpts 83 and 84).

(83) In retrospect, I think learning materials were bountiful in this course because we used online resources. Since we were dealing with different genres of academic writing and different disciplines, it was more practical to search on the web to find useful resources myself as you guided. (Kim, journal_June_04)

(84) The *textbooks we used for the lecture were useful in that they taught us*

¹⁹ 1) Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2006). *Writing academic English* (4th ed.). New York: Pearson Longman

2) Swales, J. M., & Feak, B. (2004). *Academic writing for graduate students*, (2nd ed.). Michigan: The University of Michigan Press

general guidelines, but more practical help was from weekly downloadable materials you provided us with. For example, learning about expressions to write the limitation and summary sections was helpful. (Sunny, interview_June_04)

These responses were somewhat contradictory to the remarks in Section 5.3.2 in which students talked about the difficulty of all the English materials. Students felt that the classroom materials were challenging because of the high level of content and all-English textbooks, but at the same time, they seemed to find them useful as academic writing references. The difference was when they would be helpful. The students' comments on the difficulties of the materials were referring to the present time; for instance, they were overburdened to comprehend the lesson but believed these materials would come in handy in the future as one student said, "All the uploaded materials are good references." Excerpts (85) through (87) are illustrated such a view.

(85) *I wanted to learn many expressions that are frequently used for academic writing. The downloadable handouts you provided us with helped me a lot. It made me feel safe to keep those useful materials for future writing.* (Choi, interview_June_12)

(86) *Although I did not have enough time to review all the materials thoroughly, I'm sure I can use them later when I have to write English articles.* (Blue, interview_June_12)

(87) *Content was not simple to digest, but for me, expressions learned for abstract writings were quite useful. I am working on my thesis these days and I need to write an English abstract soon.* (Kim, interview_June_12)

Another aspect of the helpfulness of content had to do with time. In addition to utilizing practical materials available online, the students' responses illustrated that the blended course provided more opportunities to work on the writing skills and to digest the content on a continuum as shown in Excerpts (88) and (89).

(88) *I think the best benefit of blended learning for academic writing was that I was able to learn something on a daily basis. Often times, once a week class is easy to be forgotten but the online cafe available all the time kept me alert on learning.* (Yong, interview_June_04)

(89) *I was probably the slowest learner who always needed extra time to finish the assignment. If it had not been for a blended learning, I may not have been successful in completing writing tasks. In class, I was always behind so I had to spend extra time to solve the questions to put the answers on the board.* (Blue, interview_June_12)

Since the blended writing course was designed to expand learning opportunities serving individual needs, each student utilized time differently with the given information and activities available online. As the saying goes, "Time is money", the students took the time issue seriously. They took time to learn the materials, do their assignments, and give feedback to each other. Spending much time with contents and producing written work were helpful in developing writing skills.

In short, as these testimonials illustrate, despite the difficulty of the content, these graduate students appreciated the usefulness of the content and learned that the extended time to deal with content was instrumental in developing writing skills.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to interpret the findings in terms of their significance and implications to serve the purpose of the study as articulated in Chapter 1. The present study provided an interesting view into students' experiences in blended learning and illustrated difficulties and values students experienced as they were taking a blended EWAP course. From the results, insights could be drawn to consider the implementation of a blended course for EFL learners. The insights are as follows: interactivity of second language writing in blended learning (Section 7.1), variation in second language learners' experiences in a blended writing course (Section 7.2), and strengthening the teaching presence and weakening the social presence (Section 7.3).

7.1 Interactivity of Second Language Writing in Blended Learning

Students in the present study experienced the interactive and collaborative features of the blended writing course that could be explained from the viewpoint of Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural theory. His theory posits that learning cannot occur in isolation, but it must be understood within the social

context in which it takes place. Seen through this premise, second language writing is a collaborative experience of knowledge building upon constant interactions with the instructor, peers, and content. In the current study, this was created by combining face-to-face and online instructions. The students acquired knowledge from listening to a face-to-face lecture which accompanied problem-solving exercises and in-class group discussions. Then, the writing activities stretched to the online classroom, in which the students shared knowledge through a cyclic pattern of reading original posts and writing responses, and writing feedback to each other. The online classroom especially was found to be beneficial in developing writing skills, because students considered a written communication to be a continuous writing practice that required them to be more conscious of producing well-developed sentences.

Conrad and Goldstein (1999) suggested that the composition classrooms should be designed in a way that “the students gain information that could be used as evidence for their papers (p.174).” Owing to the time and space flexibility provided by the blended learning, students in the English Writing for Academic Purposes course had the advantage of exchanging and sharing knowledge on the writing topics (e.g., nuclear power plants in Korea, standardized college entrance exams) in various ways that supported their development of content. One student explained that the group discussion was an important step in the writing process, because they could share more ideas and

create better contents in the writing process.

In particular, the present study signifies that the factors influencing the students' learning experiences in a blended academic writing course is closely connected to the role of interactive feedback. The student participants spoke in one voice of the dynamic cycle of receiving and responding to the teacher/peer feedback, indicating that it not only helped them to see the exact areas that required revisions in their essays, but how it also enabled them to refine their writing processes when they were engaged in active feedback activities such as writing conferences and group discussions. This means that, as the sociocultural theory of learning considers feedback in L2 as a dialogic process, it serves as clarification signposts for students (Hyland & Hyland, 2006), and helps them to reflect on their writing processes based on the support received from the feedback sessions (Prior, 2001).

Moreover, students in the present study preferred the teacher's written feedback, because it was clear and supported them into polishing their writings (Bitchener, 2008; Hyland, 2003). In particular, the students valued teacher feedback for its individualization, as feedback was given differently from one student to another depending on their learning styles and the level of writing skills. For example, direct correction was given to the students who were inclined towards explicit feedback, and for those who had difficulty comprehending the written feedback, Korean was incorporated in written

speeches.

On-and-offline writing conferencing was another mode of feedback that was effectively implemented in the EWAP course. The benefit of writing conferencing as opposed to asynchronous written feedback is that it is a conversational dialogue that features two-way communication (Freedman & Sperling, 1985). Through these interactions, the students were able to clarify meaning and have their voice in the writing revision on the spot. They said that the writing conference helped them to have an open discussion on the parts to be revised, and have a clear idea about the strong and weak areas in their writings (Hyland and Hyland, 2006).

Overall, the underlying concept of these types of feedback and interactions draw upon Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory that sees interaction as a social process, in which students and instructors jointly build the new knowledge. The students in the present study were intensively engaged in on-and-offline interactions, which challenged them to see the weak points of their writing abilities and move to the next level under the guidance of the instructor and through the cooperative work with their peers. In this light, second language writing classes in a blended learning format can help learners to improve their writing skills when they are situated in an interactive context.

7.2 Diversity of Second Language Learners' Experiences in a Blended Writing Course

The data analysis revealed that the graduate students' learning experiences in a blended English writing course appeared in various forms across the patterns of interactional challenges and in the ways they coped with them. The diversity of the students' experiences seemed to stem from the different expectations and interpretations they ascribed to interactions in blended learning and the different personalities each student brought to the course.

Although all the students spoke positively about the effectiveness of the blended course with the belief that online or web-based communication is an excellent medium for social interactions, each student held different definitions and put different values on online interactions. These different views seemed to attribute to the actual involvement in the L2 writing activities. For example, some students found the instructor's diary to be comforting and helpful for learning, because it helped them to interact with her more openly, whereas other students did not find it conducive to learning per se, because it was not part of the direct instruction. The thoughts behind this were different interpretations of what interaction was and how it played its role in language learning. Some students believed that the meaningful interactions should be based on sharing deep thoughts and emotions, thus the instructor's diary was a good source of help

in establishing a closer relationship with her; however, other students thought that the interactions in an online environment could not be real in the first place, so their purpose of interaction was concentrated in receiving direct instructions.

The changes in the students' perceived challenges of online interaction came about with the instructor's treatment and the students' efforts to overcome the difficulties. The attributes of these challenges, such as cultural inhibition and distrust of peer feedback, seemed to be related to their previous experiences; thus, the way they dealt with the challenges varied depending on their motivation and learning styles. With varying degrees of motivation, learning styles, and backgrounds, these students demonstrated self-directedness (Bandura, 1986) and the cooperativeness with their learning community in the process of learning writing skills. For instance, when they had to handle a large amount of information, they tried to allocate time effectively for each activity, and when they were engaged in a group activity, such as peer feedback and group discussion, they tried to provide helpful comments for each other.

Setting personal goals, reflecting on one's learning progress, and asking for help from the instructor or more experienced classmates were part of the motivated students' strategies in learning English writing in the blended learning format. These results concur with those of the previous studies (Carpenter, Brown, & Hickman, 2004; Kannan & Macknish, 2000), which noted that motivation is the essential element of positive experience in blended learning.

Moreover, the emergent themes in the study reveal that depending on learners' needs and preferences, EFL learners may face double-edged issues in accordance with the students' different needs and preferences. For example, one of the repeated themes in discussing challenges and helpfulness of interaction was time management and the amount of work including assignments, peer feedback activities, and online discussion. These students appreciated timeliness, a personalized approach in receiving teacher feedback, and easy access and time flexibility to view resources in the online classroom.

Specifically, many students said that because they were given more time to write feedback or respond, it helped them to organize their thoughts and it enhanced their writing ability. One student reflected on her online learning experience in relation to the improvement of writing skills:

When you post things online, it is another type of writing practice. You get to double check grammar and read again to make sure the sentences are correct and thorough. You know, we are adult learners and don't want to be embarrassed so it takes much time to write one nice reply in English. So I think blended course is really helpful for writing class although it's time consuming. (Kim, interview_June_12)

This corresponds to the findings of previous research that supported computer-mediated communication, because it encouraged reflective learning

styles for achieving similar benefits (Jonassen; 2004; Weasenfort et al.; 2002). Weasenforth et al., (2002) reported that the asynchronous computer-mediated communication environment provided more time to prepare messages which motivated quiet students to interact more actively.

In the current study, unfamiliarity with the online environment and an awkward relationship with the instructor were challenges reported by the students; two of the recurrent words found in students' statements were 'shy' and 'quiet'. Some students had a tendency to categorize themselves as 'shy' students which they perceived as an obstacle to interacting with the instructor and other students.

However, what is interesting is that for the same reason, these "shy" students were able to benefit more from the online environment. Because they were shy, they took advantage of asynchronous online interaction. Online interaction provided extra time for the learners to work on the message and structure of the text. For introverted or self-conscious students, writing feedback, joining in a group discussion and uploading completed assignments were carefully performed unlike in face-to-face interactions where contributions were made spontaneously.

It is also noteworthy to discuss blending off-line and online classrooms to raise the efficiency of social interactions and interactions with content. As much as students valued the time flexibility and usefulness of the content materials and

activities, too much demand on learners could cause demotivation to interact effectively. Some students remarked on how they were bound by two different types of responsibilities: technical demands to familiarize themselves with different ways of communication in a different environment. All of these students had to adapt to a new learning environment and learn new ways of interacting with the instructor and other students; this was reported to be challenging, but on top of that, they were responsible for completing weekly assignments, participating in on and offline discussions, and following up on the instructor's emails and requests.

More specifically, the students complained that the course workload was too much for a 3-credit course. One participant said, "Blended course is like taking two courses; there's always additional work apart from 3 hours of face time lecture. I first thought online work was optional, but, in fact, there was more work to do throughout the week in an online classroom. I was always short on time and exhausted." While it is true that these graduate students appreciated flexibility regarding the time to interact with the instructor, other learners, and content, the increased workload appeared to be a challenge; therefore, the extended time surfaced as a double-edged element of the blended learning experiences.

To sum up, while this study addressed the changes and diversity in the students' experiences of learning academic English writing in a blended learning

environment, it should be noted that students in a blended EFL writing course could be situated in a rather conflicting learning environment where students may find one situation conducive for learning, yet may also feel troubled at the same time.

7.3 Strengthening the Teaching Presence and Lessening the Social Presence

In the present study, which adopted Moore's (1989) three types of interactions (learner-instructor, learner-learner, learner-content) within the online environment, teaching presence, social presence and cognitive presence were identified as the essential elements to facilitate online interactions as suggested by the community of inquiry framework (Garrison & Anderson, 2003). Out of the three essential elements, the findings imply that teaching presence should be highlighted more than social presence for Korean students in an online or blended classroom. Teaching presence, as explained in Chapter 2, entails three categories: design and organization, facilitation of discourse, and direct instruction, all of which are linked to fostering interactions in the area of social and cognitive presence.

The students in the present study explicitly or implicitly showed the role of instructor in all three types of interactions. For example, the students expressed inefficiency in dealing with content, because they were inundated with a flood of

information and activities that could not be grasped in a short period of time. This challenge could be resolved by carefully developing a curriculum and methods that were appropriate for the students' capacities. Some students also reflected that having seen the teacher "everywhere" actually helped to build a sense of belonging to the community and even helped them get closer to other members. This is similar to the findings by Shea (2006) who examined 2,314 students about what factors influences their feeling of membership and concluded that teacher presence was highly related to students' feelings of connectedness to their peer groups. Another example can be found in the learner-learner interaction, in which all of the students found group discussions helpful, but mentioned that the teacher's role such as a facilitator of discourse and provider of timely feedback was absolutely necessary in order to bring out a meaningful interaction amongst the learners. This is congruent with some of the previous findings that suggested it is difficult in computer-mediated communication education to achieve meaningful interaction when there is not enough teaching presence being exercised (Gunawardena, 1991; Hiltz & Turoff, 1993).

More recent research emphasizes that the students gain valuable experience when the instructor exercises scholarly expertise and guides the conversations (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005; Northrup et al., 2002), this was congruent with what the students noted in the present study as many of them described

teacher feedback as “the most helpful interaction for learning”.²⁰ Kim and Moore (2005) reported that students who had more interactions with the instructor showed greater satisfaction with the online course; similarly, the students in the present study continually appreciated having more interactions with the instructor whether it be scholarly or social interactions. In short, as Garrison et al. (2000) contend in their article about computer-mediated communication, in order to secure worthwhile interactions in social and content related areas, teaching presence is needed to help the parameters and to offer specific direction.

As for the teacher’s role in online interactions, the present study implies that the graduate students highly valued the teacher’s presence for two reasons: first, they were not accustomed to autonomous learning; and second, they found interactions with the instructor more conducive for learning than other interactions. They seemed to engage in learning more when the instructor monitored the online discussion and supervised them step by step. This finding is quite contradictory to the commonly understood idea that online learning develops learner independence or independent learning. As it was discussed in Chapter 2, studies suggest that there is a positive correlation between learner autonomy in language education and computer-mediated communication learning (Arnold, 2002; Benson, 2007; Chiu, 2008). However, the students in the

²⁰ This quotation is from Kim’s second interview data.

current study mentioned that they were more used to the spoon-fed type of education, so having freedom to participate online was not always motivating.

Interview analysis also indicates that the students expected the instructor to be present at all times, not only to provide prompt feedback but also to supervise students in group discussions thoroughly. One student said, “I think nobody likes to be the first one to write on the board so it is better for you [instructor] to tell us what to do one by one instead of giving us more working time.” This statement reflects how the Korean students were reluctant to interact with one another until there was a clear directive from the instructor. They were also hesitant to initiate writing feedback on each other’s assignments without a reliable source, which in this case was the teacher’s presence and confirmation of the validity of their comments.

The abovementioned discussion leads to the issue of whether to lessen the role of social presence by alleviating the burden of group activities such as online discussion and peer feedback, or emphasize it more by incorporating the peer interaction activity into the required course work. The graduate students in the current study shared mixed feelings about online group activities. Although they all seemed to agree that interactions amongst them are important in online learning, they did not find the interactions meaningful in all cases. They specified that peer feedback was helpful for checking mechanical errors, indicating that learner-learner interactions were meaningful in a limited way.

Meaningful interaction should be for educational value. However, in the current study, students experienced frustration with writing superficial comments on each other's written work or with posting individual opinions out of formality because it was enforced by the instructor. This could possibly lead the class work to be grade-driven rather than building a community of inquiry. They also reported on the distrust of peer feedback as a challenge to learner-learner interactions, thus resulting in meaningless interactions at times.

Another interpretation of these students being less inclined to participate in social interactions among themselves can be made from the perspective of learner characteristics. According to Hargis (2001), while younger participants preferred to learn in a constructivist approach which is based on peer collaboration, the older participants performed better in an objectivist model that emphasizes memorization of facts. In the presents study, the participants were all graduate students who had been educated in the Korean educational system where students are more disciplined to learn through an objectivistic method. Korean students' disinclination to autonomous interaction online can be a natural phenomenon.

Thus, imposing online discussion as part of required course activities may bring an increased number of interactions, but it is hard to expect that these interactions will result in a meaningful knowledge-based growth. In this respect, it is ambiguous whether it is necessary to incorporate student participation in

online discussion as part of required course activities, which, according to many studies, should encourage co-construction of knowledge within a learning community (Brown, 2001; Curtis, 2004; Gerber et al., 2005) or to lift from the students the burden of posting and participating in order to provide more opportunities for individual meaning making.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The final chapter of this dissertation briefs on the major findings (Section 8.1), presents pedagogical implications (Section 8.2) and concludes by naming the limitations of the present study and making suggestions for further study (Section 8.3).

8.1 Major Findings

The present study aimed to explore learning experiences of graduate students in a blended EWAP (English Writing for Academic Purposes) course. The study started off with a thick description of blended learning and teaching context. Then, it tried to understand the students' online interactional difficulties and examine how they overcame them. It finally analyzed the value of blended learning in an academic English writing course. The study adopted a community of inquiry framework to understand the students' experiences in a blended learning context. In particular, the study paid careful attention to students' voices concerning the challenging factors of online interactions and examined through reflective journals and interviews, how they overcame these barriers. Furthermore, the study picked out significant themes about the value of blended learning for academic English writing as evaluated by the students through

interviews and reflective journals. Major findings are as follows.

First, the students in the study had faced different challenges in different interaction types, and they made various attempts to overcome these challenges. In the instructor-learner interactions, students found cultural inhibitions in interacting with the instructor Korean classrooms and unfamiliarity with online communication as major challenges. In one of the students' phrases, "the hierarchical relationship between the professor and students" caused them to feel uneasy to talk to the professor in the online classroom, and because they were inexperienced in learning English in a blended format, they were hesitant to write their opinions in the online space. However, these students started to interact better with the instructor as they intentionally tried to practice English writing through written communication, and as they gradually became accustomed to online communication.

In the learner-learner interactions, students felt that the distrust of peer feedback and lack of face time interaction prevented them from having meaningful interactions. The students felt unqualified to give educative feedback on each other's essays and self-conscious about hurting others' feelings by pointing out their mistakes. They also felt that had they gotten to know each other better in the face-to-face meetings, they could have interacted more effectively in the online classroom. Interactions among the students increased after peer feedback trainings, extended face-to-face discussion time, and

voluntary informal offline gatherings.

In the learner-content interactions, students complained about heavy workload and the high level of materials. At first, they felt burdened to handle many assignments and online activities that looked like extra work, but depending on one's expectations and learning goals for the blended language course, these students exercised different strategies to deal with these challenges, such as time management and the use of group discussion time.

Second, as for research question two, the students considered blended learning to be effective for learning second language writing for several reasons. In terms of teacher feedback, students wanted to receive teacher feedback in all cases regardless of delivery mode. The instructor's personalized and prompt feedback was best appreciated by the students, because they were directly related to error correction of their writings. Moreover, students found teacher feedback helpful when it clarified confusing peer feedback, and when they were encouraged by the teacher's diary or emails. In regards to peer feedback, students found it helpful but mainly for grammar checking; group discussion was valued for developing content when they were engaged in a meaningful brainstorming activity rather than in superficial interactions. Learners also thought that online resources including each student's written products and web resources were valuable. Based on the themes that emerged from the study, three issues were discussed. First, second language writing in a blended learning environment

features interactivity in that writing is a collaborative experience of knowledge being built through interactions with the instructor, peers, and content. Particularly, on and offline feedback activities are the essential interactions that influence L2 learners' writing development. Second, students' learning experiences result from different educational backgrounds and needs. Students' different interpretations of interaction, varying degrees of motivation, learning strategies, and personalities altogether contribute to variations in learners' experiences. Lastly, students' heavy reliance on teacher feedback and their hesitations involving group activities imply that teaching presence should be highlighted more than social or cognitive presence for Korean EFL students in a blended course. This means that the EFL blended course calls for multiple roles of the instructor, which is to be discussed in the subsequent section.

8.2 Pedagogical Implications

Drawing upon the conclusions from the study, several salient implications can be made to create a more conducive environment for EFL blended learning.

The students in the study pointed out to the importance of the instructor to their learning experiences. This means that instructors need to be aware of the multiple roles that they need to play in two different environments (face-to-face and online).

First, instructors need to invoke students' active participation through a clear

demonstration of what and how to complete assignments in the online classroom. As shown in the study, peer feedback training during the face-to-face class time was necessary to encourage students' online interactions and to improve their writing skills. It is important for instructors to model online interactions through specific guidelines and examples, because students, whether experienced or inexperienced, need to learn the value of meaningful interactions and take responsibility for learning in a community. In addition, the instructor's written communications through emails or web boards prompt students' involvement in the classroom activities and help them to read more English text. This means that the instructor needs to consistently communicate with the students through various mediums.

Second, instructors need to approach students' learning needs and styles individually to help them overcome learning barriers. Since blended learning combines two different formats of learning, face-to-face and online learning, students can benefit from a wide choice of learning modes. However, instructors still need to be concerned about the individual differences of each student's academic progress and their preference in learning styles. For instance, in the present study, students with relatively higher motivations asked for more writing conferences, and students who described themselves as shy preferred online feedback sessions. Likewise, EFL instructors should integrate different web resources and instructional tools such as chat rooms, and hypertexts into the

language curriculum.

Third, as the study findings showed that a careful blending of online and face-to-face activities affect students' satisfaction with online interactions, course designers or instructors should focus on connecting the face-to-face class to the online class. When instructors involve themselves in designing and organizing online classrooms, they should not overload students with assignments to avoid "class and a half syndrome". Connecting face-to-face class discussions to online ones is equally important to ensure the students' social interaction and group solidarity. It was also suggested by the students that because Korean students tend to stay rather reticent in classrooms until they get to know each other better, frequent face-to-face sessions, including informal meetings, help to build familiarity with other classmates and the instructor. When sequencing the face-to-face class and online class, the instructor should consider students' familiarity with each other as the critical factor for overall activities, because it helps lead to meaningful interactions in the online environment.

In regard to teaching academic writings, instructors need to provide prompt and comprehensible feedback that is customized to each learner's learning progress. Not only written feedbacks on essays, but also writing conferences via face-to-face or synchronous online meetings are suggested to improve students' writing skills. In addition, instructors need to incorporate group discussions and peer feedback activities, because they help students to build richer context for

their writings and to receive corrections on mechanical errors. However, the instructor's intervention in both peer feedback and group discussion is required to clarify confusing comments and to ensure reliability of the contents. Besides, all the materials, including students' writing samples saved in the web space, can be of help to students, because they can benchmark others' essays with time flexibility. Thus, it is important for instructors to organize the resources in the online space, too.

The present study suggested some directions for teaching and designing EFL writing courses in a blended learning format. It is crucial to understand that a blended EFL course is not just an expanded version of a traditional classroom, but a continuation of learning activities which calls for the instructors' dedication to students' success.

8.3 Suggestions for Further Study

Even with an attempt to closely examine the students' experiences of online learning, the present study has a number of limitations. Since most data were gathered from the students, they might have been burdened with handing in weekly journal and several interviews during the period of experiment. This might have weakened students' integrity to produce truthful answers, and bound themselves to more work at the sacrifice of classwork. Additionally, this study was undertaken in a class of 10 students in one of the graduate schools in Korea,

and thus generalizability of the findings is diminished due to the small number of the sample size. Nevertheless, the study findings could help usher further studies with several recommendations.

First, since the study encountered many variables affecting students' learning experiences in a blended writing course such as motivations, learning strategies, learning processes, and student characteristics; it would be worthy to narrow down the scope of research to a few variables to investigate its relation to successful language learning in detail.

Second, although the study infers that the students' writing abilities have improved, it did not assess individual students' outcomes. In order to have a deeper understanding of the blended learning effect on second language writing, students' quantitative outcomes can be included.

Third, the present study focused solely on students' learning experiences; however, examining the instructor's teaching experiences can also bring valuable insights as to what trainings instructors need to receive to teach language courses in a blended learning environment effectively. Approaches from both the instructor's and students' perspectives will enable us to see the big picture of the EFL blended situation.

Lastly, the current study was conducted on the premise that interactions increase learning opportunities, thus resulting in better learning outcomes. However, more research is needed to evaluate the relationship between the

students' level of on-and-offline interactions and learning outcomes. Such potential research could answer to the question, "Do students who interact more in online classrooms tend to have a better learning outcome?" Additionally, studying the effect of collaborative learning activities on students' outcomes will help us to see how interactions facilitate language learning.

In conclusion, it is the researcher's genuine hope that the present research will draw attention of those who administer and carry out language courses in a blended learning format; thus both students and instructors can work together to bring in joyful experiences in an EFL class.

REFERENCES

- Amaral, K., & John D. S. (2010). Enhancing student learning and retention with blended learning class guides. *EDUCAUSE Quarterly*, 33(4). Retrieved May 5, 2014 from <http://www.educause.edu/ero/article/enhancing-student-learning-and-retention-blended-learning-class-guides>
- Anderson, T. (2003). Modes of interaction in distance education: Recent developments and research questions. In M. Moore (Ed.) *Handbook of distance education*. (pp. 129-144). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum
- Anderson, T., Rourke, L., Garrison, D. R., & Archer, W. (2001). Assessing teaching presence in a computer conferencing context. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 5(2), 1-17.
- Arbaugh, J. B. (2008). Instructors as facilitators of learner-learner interaction in third-generation learning environments. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 1(4), 487-490.
- Arnold, M. N. (2002). *Computer-mediated communication: Writing to speak without foreign language anxiety*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin.
- Auyeung, L. H. (2004). Building a collaborative online learning community: A case study in Hong Kong. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 31(2), 119-136.
- Barnes, S. B. (2003). *Computer-mediated communication: Human-to-human communication across the internet*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Battalio, J. (2007). Interaction online: A reevaluation. *The Quarterly Review of Distance Education* 8(4): 339–352.
- Beauvois, M. H. (1995). E-talk: Attitudes and motivation in computer-assisted classroom discussion. *Computers and the Humanities*, 28(2), 177-190.
- Beauvois, M. H. (1998). Conversations in slow motion: Computer-mediated communication in the foreign language classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue Canadienne des Langues Vivantes*, 54(2), 198-217.
- Beldarrain, Y. (2006). Distance education trends: Integrating new technologies to foster student interaction and collaboration. *Distance Education*, 27(2), 139–153.
- Benson, P. (2001). *Teaching and researching autonomy in language learning*. Harlow, England: Longman.

- Benson, P. (2007). Autonomy in language teaching and learning. *Language Teaching*, 40(1), 21-40.
- Berge, Z. (1999). Interaction in post-secondary web-based learning. *Educational Technology*, 41(1), 5-11.
- Bitchener, J. (2008). The value of written corrective feedback for migrant and international students. *Language Teaching Research*, 12(3), 409-431.
- Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative Research for Education: An introduction to theories and methods (4th ed)*. New York: Pearson Education Group.
- Bonk, C., Kim, K., & Zeng, T. (2006). Future directions of blended learning. In C. Bonk & C. Graham (Eds.), *The handbook of blending learning* (pp. 550-567). San Francisco: Wiley.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Brown, H. Douglas. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching (3rd ed.)*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Brown, R. E. (2001). The process of community-building on distance learning classes. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 5(2), 18-35
- Bliuc, A.-M., Goodyear, P., & Ellis, R. A. (2007). Research focus and methodological choices in studies into students' experiences of blended learning in higher education. *Internet and Higher Education*, 10(4), 231-244.
- Freedman, S.W., & Sperling, M. (1985). Written language acquisition: The role of response and the writing conference. In S.W. Freedman (Ed.), *The acquisition of written language: Revision and response*. (pp. 106-130). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Green, K. C. (2003). Campus computing survey 2003. *The campus computing project*. Retrieved February, 9, 2013, from <http://www.campuscomputing.net/2003-campus-computing-survey>
- Carpenter, T. G., Brown, W. L., & Hickman, R. C. (2004). Influences of online delivery on developmental writing outcomes. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 28(1), 14-35.
- Choi, S. Y., Ko, Y. J., & Baek, H. (2009). The effects of differentiated blended learning on speaking for college students. *Multimedia-Assisted Language Learning*, 12(3), 229-255.
- Chang, M. (2005). Applying self-regulated learning strategies in a web-based instruction - An investigation of motivation perception, *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 18(3), 217-230.

- Chang, Y-C., Chang, J. S., Chen, H-J., & Liou, H-C. (2008). An automatic collocation writing assistant for Taiwanese EFL learners: A case of corpus-based NLP technology. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 21(3), 283-299.
- Chapelle, C. (1997). CALL in the year 2000: Still in search of research paradigms. *Language Learning and Technology*, 1(1), 19-43.
- Chen, Y. H. (2005). Computer mediated communication: The use of CMC to develop EFL learners' communicative competence. *Asian EFL Journal*, 7(1), 167-182.
- Chen Wang, L., & Sutton, R. E. (2002). Effects of learner-control with advisement on English-as-a-second-language students in a Web-based learning environment. *International Journal of Instructional Media*, 29(3), 317-324.
- Chih-Hua, K. (2008). Designing an online writing system: Learning with support. *RELC Journal*, 39(3), 285-299.
- Chiu, C. Y. (2008). The discourse of an English teacher in a cyber writing course: Roles and autonomy. *Asian EFL Journal*, 10(1), 79-110.
- Chun, D. M. (1994). Using computer networking to facilitate the acquisition of interactive competence. *System*, 22(1), 17-31.
- Clark, M., & Olson, V. (2010). Scientific method: A blended instructional model. *Journal of College Teaching and Learning*, 7(6), 35-38.
- Colakoglu, O., & Akdemir, O. (2010). Motivational measure of the instruction compared: Instruction based on the ARCS motivation theory vs traditional instruction in blended courses. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 11(2), 73-89.
- Collopy, R. M. B., & Arnold, J. M. (2009). To blend or not to blend: Online and blended learning environments in undergraduate teacher education. *Issues in Teacher Education*, 18(2), 85-101.
- Conrad, S. M. & L.M. Goldstein. (1999). ESL student revision after teacher comments: Text, context and individuals. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8(2), 147-180.
- Creed, C., & Koul, B. (1993). Language issues in English medium, tertiary level, DE courses for ESL learners. *Language issues in distance education* (p. 48 - 52). England, United Kingdom: Dunford Seminar Report. ERIC Document #: ED370 406.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Curtis, R. (2004). Analyzing students' conversation in chat room discussion groups. *College Teaching*, 52 (4), pp.143-148.

- De la Fuente, M. J. (2003). Is SLA interactionist theory relevant to CALL? A study of the effect of computer-mediated interaction in L2 vocabulary acquisition. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 16(1), 47-81.
- Driscoll, M. (2002). Blended learning: Let's get beyond the hype. *E-learning*, 3(3), 54. Retrieved January 12, 2014 from <http://elearningmag.com/ltimagazine>.
- Dziuban, C., Hartman, J., & Moskal, P. (2004). Blended learning. EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research bulletin. Retrieved February 14, 2014 from <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ERB0407.pdf>
- Erickson, F. (1986). Qualitative methods in research on teaching (pp.119-161). In M. Wittrock, (Ed.) *Handbook of research on teaching*. Washington, DC: AERA.
- Fidaoui, D., Bahous, R., & Bacha, N. N. (2010). CALL in Lebanese elementary ESL writing classrooms. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 23(2), 151-168.
- Flottemesch, K. (2000). Building effective interaction in distance education: A review of the literature. *Educational Technology*, 40(3), 46-51.
- Fulford, C. & Zhang, S. (1993). Perceptions of interaction: The critical predictor in distance education. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 7(3), 8-21.
- Gardner, R. C. & Lambert, W. E. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second language learning*. Newbury House: Rowley, MA.
- Garrison, D. R. (2011). *E-learning in the 21st century: A framework for research and practice (2nd Ed.)*. London: Routledge/Taylor and Francis.
- Garrison, D. R., & Arbaugh, J. B. (2007). Researching the community of inquiry framework: Review, issues, and future directions. *Internet and Higher Education*, 10(3), 157-172.
- Garrison, D. R., & Cleveland-Innes, M. (2005). Facilitating cognitive presence in online learning: Interaction is not enough. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 19(3), pp. 133-148.
- Garrison, D. R., & Vaughan, N. (2008). *Blended learning in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T. & Archer, W (2000). Critical inquiry in a text-based environment: Computer conferencing in higher education, *The Internet and Higher Education* 2(2-3), 87–105.
- Garrison, R. & Kanuka, H. (2004). Blended learning: Uncovering its transformative potential in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 7(2), 95-105.

- Gerber, S., Scott, L., Clements, D. H., & Sarama, J. (2005). Instructor influence on reasoned argument in discussion boards. *Education Technology Research and Development*, 53(2), 25-39.
- Goldberg, A., Russell, M., & Cook, A. (2003). The effect of computers on student writing: A meta-analysis of studies from 1992 to 2002. *The Journal of Technology, Learning, and Assessment*, 2(1), 1-52.
- Graham, C. (2006). Blended learning systems: Definitions, current trends and future directions. In C. Bonk & C. Graham (Eds.), *The handbook of blended learning: Global perspectives, local designs*. San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons.
- Graham, C. R., Allen, S., & Ure, D. (2003). *Blended learning environments: A review of the research literature*. Unpublished manuscript, Provo, UT.
- Green, K. C. *The 2003 Campus computing survey* (Encino, Calif.: The campus computing project, 2003); Retrieved September 27, 2013 from <http://www.campuscomputing.net/>
- Gruba, P., & Hinkelman, D. (2012). *Blended technologies in second language classrooms*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gunawardena, C., & Zittle, F. (1997). Social presence as a predictor of satisfaction within a computer-mediated conferencing environment. *American Journal of Distance Education*, 11(3), 8-26.
- Hargis, J. (2001). Can students learn science using the Internet? *ISTE Journal of Research on Computing in Education*, 33(4), 475-487.
- Hinkelman, D., & Gruba, P. (2012). Power within blended language learning programs in Japan. *Language Learning & Technology*, 16(2), 46-64.
- Hirumi, A. (2002). The design and sequencing of e-learning interactions: A grounded approach. *International Journal of E-Learning*, 1(1), 19-27.
- Hirumi, A. (2006). Analyzing and designing e-learning interactions. In C. Juwah (Ed.), *Interactions in online education: Implications for theory and practice* (pp. 46-71). New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis.
- Ho, A., Lu, L., & Thurmaier, K. (2006). Testing the reluctant professor's hypothesis: Evaluating a blended-learning approach to distance education. *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 12(1), 81-102.
- Hong, K. H., & Samimy, K. K. (2010). The influence of L2 teachers' use of CALL modes on language learners' reactions to blended learning. *CALICO Journal*, 27(2), 328-248.
- Huang, S., and Liu, H. (2000). Communicative language teaching in a multimedia language lab. *Internet TESL Journal* 6(2). Retrieved June 17, 2014, from <http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/>.

- Hyland, K. (2003). *Second language writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2006). Feedback on second language students' writing. *Language Teaching*, 39(2), 83-101.
- Jiang, M., & Ting, E. (2000). A study of factors influencing students perceived learning in a web-based course environment. *International Journal of Educational Telecommunication* 6(4), 228-317.
- Jonassen, D. H. (Ed.). (2004). *Handbook of research on educational communications and technology (2nd Eds.)*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Jung, S. K. (2010). A study on the effective blended learning model for cyber English classes at the college level. *Multimedia-Assisted Language Learning*, 13(3), 253-278.
- Kannan, J., & Macknish, C. (2000). Issues affecting online ESL learning: A Singapore case study. *The Internet TESOL Journal*, 6(11). Retrieved May 1, 2014, from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Kannan-OnlineESL.html>
- Lie, K. (2008). *Virtual communication: An investigation of foreign language interaction in a distance education course in Norwegian*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. The University of Texas, Austin, TX.
- Kearsley, G. (1999). *Explorations in learning & instruction: The theory into practice database*. Retrieved March 4, 2014, from <http://tip.psychology.org/theories.html> ?
- Kern, R. (1995). Restructuring classroom interaction with networked computers: Effects on quantity and characteristics of language production. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79(4), 457-476.
- Krashen, S., & Lee, S. Y. (2004). Competency in foreign language writing: Progress and lacunae. *Literacy across Cultures*, 12(2), 10-14.
- Kupetz, R., & Ziegenmeyer, B. (2005). Blended learning in a teacher training course: Integrated interactive e-learning and contact learning. *ReCALL*, 17(2), 179-196.
- Kim, K. S., & Moore, J. L. (2005). Web-based learning: Factors affecting students' satisfaction and learning experience. *Peer-Reviewed Journal on the Internet*, 10(11). Retrieved January, 2014, from http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue10_11/kim/index.html
- Kitade, K. (2000). L2 learners' discourse and SLA theories in CMC: Collaborative interaction in Internet Chat. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 13(2), 143-166.

- Lao, T., & Gonzales, C. (2005). Understanding online learning through a qualitative description of professors and students' experiences. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 13(3), 459-474.
- Lee, L. (2004). Learners' perspectives on networked collaborative interaction with native speakers of Spanish in the US. *Language Learning and Technology*, 8(1), 83-100.
- Lee, S. H., & Lee, J. H. (2007). Blended learning revisited: A new approach to foreign language education. *Multimedia-Assisted Language Learning*, 10(2), 142-157.
- Lee, O., & Im, Y. (2006). The emergence of the cyber-university and blended learning in Korea. In C. J. Bonk & C. R. Graham (Eds.), *The handbook of blended learning: Global perspectives, local designs* (pp. 281-295). San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer Publishing.
- Liu, M., Moore, Z., Graham, L., & Shinwoong, L. (2003). A look at research on computer-based technology use in second language learning: A Review of the Literature from 1990-2000. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 34(3), 250-273.
- Liaw, S., & Huang, H. (2000). Enhancing interactivity in web-based Instruction: A review of literature. *Educational Technology*, 40(3), 41-45.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E., G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.), (pp. 163-188). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications,
- Little, D. (2000). Learner autonomy and human interdependence: some theoretical and practical consequences of a social-interactive view of cognition, learning and language. In B. Sinclair, I. McGrath and T. Lamb (Ed.), *Learner autonomy, teacher autonomy: Future directions*, (pp.15-23). Harlow: Longman/Pearson Education
- Lynch, R., & Dembo, M. (2004). The relationship between self-regulation and online learning in a blended learning context. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 5(2). Retrieved May 7, 2014 from: <http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/viewFile/189/799>
- McIsaac, M. S., Blocher, J. M., Mahes, V., & Vrasidas, C. (1999). Student and teacher perceptions of interaction in online computer-mediated communication. *Educational Media International*, 36(2), 121-131.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (2nd ed.), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Meunier, L. E. (1998). Personality and motivational factors in computer-mediated foreign language communication. In J. A. Muyskens (Ed.), *New ways of learning and teaching* (pp. 145-197). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Moore, M. G. (1989). Three types of interaction. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 3(2), 1-6.
- Moore, M. G. (2002). What does research say about the learners using computer-mediated communication in distance learning? *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 16(2), 61-64.
- Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. (1996). *Distance education: A systems view*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Muirhead, W. D. (2000). Online education in school. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 14(7), 315-324.
- Neumeier, P. (2005). A closer look at blended learning: Parameters for designing a blended learning environment for language teaching and learning. *ReCALL* 17(2), 163-178.
- Northrup P. (2001). A framework for designing interactivity into web-based instruction. *Educational Technology*, 41(2), 31-39.
- Northrup, P. T. (2002). Online learners' preferences for interaction. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 3(2), 219-226.
- Oh, E., & Park, S. (2009). How are universities involved in blended instruction? *Educational Technology & Society*, 12(3), 327-342.
- Oliver, M. & Trigwell, K. (2005). Can 'blended learning' be redeemed? *E-Learning*, 2(1), 17-26.
- Osguthorpe, R. T., & Graham, C. R. (2003). Blended learning systems: Definitions and directions. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 4(3), 227-234.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Paulus, T. M. (1999). The effect of peer and teacher feedback on student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8(3), 265-289.
- Prior, P. A. (2001). Voices in the text, mind, and society: Sociohistoric accounts of discourse acquisition and use. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 10(2), 55-81.
- Reisetter, M., & Boris, G. (2004). What works: Student perceptions of effective elements in online learning. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, (5)4, 277-291.

- Ross, B., & Gage, K. (2006). Global perspectives on blended learning, In C. J. Bonk & C. R. Graham (Eds.), *The handbook of blended learning - Global perspectives, local designs*, (pp.155-167). CA: Pfeiffer: Wiley.
- Rourke, L., Anderson, T.; Garrison, R. & Archer, W. (2001). Assessing social presence in asynchronous text-based computer conferencing. *Journal of Distance Education* 16(2), 1-14.
- Rovai, A. P. (2002). A preliminary look at structural differences in sense of classroom community between higher education traditional and ALN courses. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks* 6(1), 41-56.
- Rovai, A.P., & Jordan, H.M. (2004): Blended learning and sense of community: A comparative analysis with traditional and fully online graduate courses. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 5(2). Retrieved May, 9, 2014, from <http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/viewArticle/192/274>
- Salaberry, M. R. (1996). A theoretical framework for the design of CMC pedagogical activities. *CALICO Journal*, 14, 5-36.
- Salaberry, M. R. (2001). The use of technology for second language learning and teaching: A retrospective. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85(1), 39-56.
- Schwienhorst, K. (2003). Learner autonomy and tandem learning: Putting principles into practice in synchronous and asynchronous telecommunications environments. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 16(5), 427-443.
- Shea, P. (2006). A study of students' sense of learning community in online environments. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 10(1), 35-44.
- Shea, P., & Bidjerano, T. (2008). Measures of quality in online education: An investigation of the community of inquiry model and the net generation. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 39(4), 339-361.
- Shieh, R., Gummer, E., & Niess, M. (2008). The quality of a web-based course: Perspectives of the instructor and the students. *TechTrends: Linking Research & Practice to Improve Learning*, 52(6), 61-68.
- Shroff, R., & Vogel, D. (2010). An investigation on individual students' perceptions of interest utilizing a blended learning approach. *International Journal on E-Learning*, 9(2), 279-294
- Singh, Harvey (2003). Building effective blended learning programs. *Educational Technology*, 43(6), 51-54.

- Soo, K. S., & Bonk, C. J. (1998). *Interaction: What does it mean in online distance education?* Paper presented at the Ed-Media and EdTelecom 98 conference, Freiburg, Germany.
- Swan, K. (2001). Virtual interaction: Design factors affecting student satisfaction and perceived learning in asynchronous online courses. *Distance Education*, 22(2), 306-331.
- Swan, K., & Shih, L. F. (2005). On the nature and development of social presence in online course discussions. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 9(3), 115-136.
- Thurmond, V. A., Wambach, K., Connors, H. R., & Frey, B. B. (2002). Evaluation of student satisfaction: Determining the impact of a web-based environment by controlling for student characteristics. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 16(3), 169-189.
- Trentin, G. (1998). Computer conferencing systems seen by a designer of online courses. *Educational Technology*, 38(3), 36-43.
- Tsutsui, M. (2004) Multimedia as a means to enhance feedback. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 17(3/4), 377-402.
- Turuk, M. (2008). The relevance and implications of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory in the second language classroom. *Annual Review of Education, Communication & Language Sciences*, 5, 244-262. Retrieved May 10, 2014 from <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/ARECLS/>
- Valiathan, P. (2002). Blended learning models. *Learning Circuits*. Retrieved January 12, 2013, from <http://www.learningcircuits.org/2002/aug2002/valiathan.html>
- Vaughan, N. D. (2010). A blended community of inquiry approach: Linking student engagement and course redesign. *Internet and Higher Education*, 13 (1-2) 60-65.
- Vrasidas, C., & McIsaac, M. S. (1999). Factors influencing interaction in an online course. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 13(3), 22-36.
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in Society. The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wagner, E. D. (1997). Interactivity: From agents to outcomes. In T. E. Cyr (Ed.), *Teaching and learning at a distance: What it takes to effectively design, deliver, and evaluate programs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Wagner, E. D. (1994). In support of a function definition of interaction. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 8(20), 6-26.

- Warschauer, M. (1996). Comparing face-to-face and electronic discussion in the second language classroom. *CALICO Journal*, 13(2), 7-26.
- Warschauer, M. (1997). Computer-mediated collaborative learning: Theory and practice. *Modern Language Journal*, 81(3): 470-481.
- Weasenforth, D., Biesenbach-Lucas, S., & Meloni, C. (2002). Realizing constructivist objectives through collaborative technologies: Threaded discussions. *Language Learning and Technology*, 6(3), 58-86.
- Wiebe, G., & Kabata, K. (2010). Students' and instructors' attitudes toward the use of CALL in foreign language teaching and learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 23(3), 221-234.
- Wikipedia: The free encyclopedia. (2014, June 13). FL: Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. Retrieved May 30, 2014, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tandem_language_learning
- Wold, K. A. (2011). Blending theories for instructional design: Creating and implementing the structure, environment, experience, and people (SEEP) model. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 24(4), 371-382.
- Yamada, M., & Akahori, K. (2007). Social presence in synchronous CMC-based language learning: How does it affect the productive performance and consciousness of learning objectives? *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 20(1), 37-65.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods (3rd ed.)*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Young, J. R. (2002). Hybrid teaching seeks to end the divide between traditional and online instruction. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 48(28), 33-34.
- Yoon, S. Y. (2011). The impact of blended learning on teaching and learning English pronunciation. *Language Teaching*, 66(4), 139-163.
- Yoon, S. Y., & Lee, C. H. (2010). The perspectives and effectiveness of blended learning in L2 writing of Korean university students. *Multimedia-Assisted Language Learning*, 13(2), 177-204.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. Background Information Questionnaire	162
APPENDIX B. Reflective Journal Entry	164
APPENDIX C. Results of the Needs Analysis	165
APPENDIX D. Interview Protocol	166

Appendix A

Background Information Questionnaire

Welcome everyone to EWAP (English Writing for Academic Purposes) Course! This is a questionnaire to understand you better in prior to proceeding the course. Please take time to read the questions and answer.

1. Nickname: _____ 2. Age: _____

3. Gender: Male _____ Female _____

4. Grade: MA _____ (semester) Ph.D. _____ (semester)

5. Major: _____

6. How much do you study English besides English course at school?

(1) less than 30 minutes (2) 30 min ~ 1 hour (3) 1 hour ~ 2 hours

(4) 2 hours ~ 3 hours (5) more than 3 hours

7. Have you lived abroad in English speaking country?

1) Yes _____ 2) No _____

If yes, which country? _____

For how long? _____

8. Have you taken standardized tests such as TOEFL, TOEIC, IELTS, TEPS?

If yes, please write test score.

1) Yes. (TOEFL: _____ TOEIC: _____ IELF: _____ TEPS: _____ Others: _____)
(_____)

2) No.

9. How do you evaluate your English proficiency? Please mark (√) for each category.

	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
Speaking			
Listening			

Reading			
Writing			
Grammar			
Vocabulary			

10. Have you taken any online course or blended course (off line + on line classroom)in the past?

1) Yes_____ 2) No_____

If yes, please write the name of the course.

Appendix B

Reflective Journal

Nickname:

Date:

Think about your learning experience last week in both off line and online classrooms and write as freely as you want. This will not be graded.

Questions	Answers
1. What did I learn this week?	
2. What did I find most and least helpful for learning academic writing?	
3. What were the challenges about this week's lesson?	
4. Any difficulties you have (a) in the face to face classroom? (b) in the online classroom?	(a) (b)
5. Any recommendations for better class?	

Appendix C

Results of Needs Analysis

1. Why is the language needed?
 - 1) All students answered ‘for study’.
2. How will the language be used?
 - 1) All the students answered all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing
 - 2) Types of text or discourse: academic texts and lectures were most popular answers
3. What will the content areas be?
 - 1) Subjects varied depending on students’ majors:
Cultural informatics, politics, music, sociology, ethics, Korean culture, Korean history, linguistic
 - 2) Level: postgraduate
4. Who will the learners use the language with?
 - 1) Native speakers and non-native
 - 2) Expert, layman, student
 - 3) Relationship: colleague, professor (superior)
5. Where will the language be used?
 - 1) Physical setting: e.g. lecture room, workshop
 - 2) Human context: meetings, demonstrations
 - 3) Linguistic context: Korean and abroad
6. When will the language be used?
 - 1) Now and later after graduation
 - 2) 50%: frequently / 50%: seldom in small amounts.

Appendix D

Interview Protocol

1st interview

<Previous experience>

1. Have you ever taken blended course or online course?
Do you understand the concept of blended learning?
2. If you have taken online courses, tell me about your experiences?
3. What is your motivation of taking this course?
4. What do you think interaction is?
5. What are the expectations of interaction in the course?

2nd interview

<Challenges in learner-instructor interaction>

1. What was it like to interact with your instructor?
2. Were there any difficulties for you to interact with the instructor?
If so, what kind of difficulties?

<Challenges in learner-learner interaction>

3. What was it like to interact with your peers?
4. Were there any difficulties for you to interact with the instructor?
If so, what kind of difficulties?

<Challenges in learner-content interaction>

5. What did you think about course content and instructional activities?
6. Were there any difficulties for you to understand course content or follow instructional activities? If so, what kind of difficulties?

3rd interview

<Overall evaluation>

1. What was it like to complete blended EWAP course?

<Teaching Presence>

2. What did you find valuable to your learning?

What did you like about learner-instructor interaction?

3. What did you not like about learner-instructor interaction?

<Social Presence>

4. What did you find valuable to your learning?

What did you like about learner-learner interaction?

5. What did you not like about learner-learner interaction?

<Cognitive Presence>

6. What did you find valuable to your learning?

What did you like about course content or activities?

7. What did you not like about course content or activities?

<Final remark>

8. Anything else you would like to add or clarify?

국 문 초 록

지난 수십 년간 온라인과 면대면 수업의 이점을 접목시키는 블렌디드 러닝(Blended Learning)이 새로운 교수법으로 떠올랐다. 한국의 대학과 EFL 상황에서도 블렌디드 러닝의 관심이 높아지면서 의미 있는 언어학습 경험을 위해 블렌디드 수업 환경에서 학생들이 어떻게 학습하는지를 이해하는 추가적 연구가 필요하다.

‘어떻게’란 부분을 답하기 위해 본 연구는 학문적 목표를 위한 영어 쓰기(English Writing for Academic Purposes) 블렌디드 수업을 수강하는 대학원생들의 학습 경험을 Garrison, Anderson, & Archer (2000)의 탐구공동체틀(Community of Inquiry Framework)을 바탕으로 연구하였다. 첫째로 교수와 학습 환경을 묘사하였고, 둘째로 실질적인 작문 활동이 이루어지는 온라인 수업에서의 상호작용의 어려운 점과 그것을 어떻게 극복하였는지를 Moore의 세가지 상호작용(Moore, 1989), 학습자-교사, 학습자-학습자, 학습자-내용간으로 나누어 연구하였다. 마지막으로 대학원생들이 블렌디드 수업모형을 학문적 영어쓰기 학습과 관련해 어떠한 가치를 두는지를 분석하였다. 이러한 질문에 답하기 위해 교실관찰기록, 인터뷰, 성찰일지와 설문을 통해 자료를 수집하였고, 중요한 주제를 도출하기 위해 주제분석을 하였다.

본 연구의 결과는 학생들이 겪는 어려움의 다양성과 이를 극복하고자 하는 여러 가지 다른 시도들이 있다는 것을 보여주었다. 학습자-교사의 상호작용에서는 문화적 거리감과 온라인 대화의 어색함이, 학습자-학습자 상호작용에서는 동료 피드백의 불신과 면대면 상호작용 시간의 부족, 학습자-내용 상호작용에서는 부담스런 양의 과제와 수업 자료의 수준이 방해요소로 나타났다.

그러나 학습자들이 서면으로 이루지는 발화를 통해 영어작문을 의도적으로 연습하기 시작하면서 교사와의 상호작용이 나아지게 되었고, 면대면 수업에서 이루어진 동료피드백 훈련과 면대면 시간을 늘리면서 서로간의 상호작용도 효

과적으로 이루어지었다. 또한 어려운 내용이나 온라인 학습활동을 대처하는 다양한 학습전략을 사용하는 것을 볼 수 있었다.

작문학습과 관련해 블렌디드 수업에 대한 가치 평가의 결과는 여러 곳에서 발견되었다. 교수의 개인화되고 즉각적인 피드백이 작문 기술 향상에 가장 도움이 되었고, 반면 학습자간의 피드백이나 집단 토론 활동은 문법적 오류의 수정이나 내용 개발의 측면에서 제한적으로 도움이 된 것을 알 수 있었다. 마지막으로 수업 내용의 어려움에도 다른 학생들의 작문을 벤치마크 할 수 있다는 점과 미래에 참고할 수 있는 온라인 자료들이 도움이 된 것으로 나타났다.

본 연구의 결과는 블렌디드 수업 형태에서의 영어작문은 교사, 학습자, 내용과의 지속적인 상호작용을 통해 이루어지는 지식 축적의 협동적 경험이라는 점에서 상호성이란 특성을 갖고 있다는 것을 시사한다. 또한, 학습자들의 학문적 배경, 필요, 동기, 학습 전략, 성향에 따라 다양한 경험을 한다는 것을 암시한다. 끝으로, 한국의 EFL 블렌디드 수업 환경에서는 사회적 또는 인지적 실재감 보다 교수 실재감이 더 크게 작용한다는 것을 보여주며, 따라서 교사는 가르치는 일 외에, 설계자, 조력자의 역할을 해야 할 것으로 제시되었다.

주요어: 학문적 목표를 위한 영어 작문, 블렌디드 러닝, 탐구공동체,

온라인 상호작용, 제2 언어 작문 피드백

학번: 2004-31101