Korean EFL Middle School Students' L2 Reading Self-Efficacy and Reading Experience in an Extensive Reading Program

This mixed methods study investigates the effect of L2 extensive reading on reading self-efficacy of Korean EFL students. After implementing an in-class individual reading program for the duration of 15 weeks, students’ confidence and perception of L2 reading ability were examined. Experiences in L2 reading were also explored to suggest some influencing factors and to see if experiences varied with different levels of reading self-efficacy. The participants (N=132) were seventh grade students in a co-educational middle school in Seoul. For the interviews, two students with the highest, lowest and average level of reading self-efficacy at the beginning of the program were selected. During the extensive reading period, students read English books for the first 15 minutes of each lesson, three times a week. Data was collected from five sources: a reading self-efficacy questionnaire, the reading self-perception scale (RSPS), reading logs, post-program surveys and semi-structured interviews. Statistical analyses were used to interpret the quantitative data and the interviews were examined through qualitative analysis. Several meaningful findings emerged from the study. First, Korean EFL students indicated that they felt more confident about reading in English after extensive reading. The participants’ reading self-efficacies were improved for 11 out of 14 different types of English texts as well as in various aspects within reading self-efficacy such as social feedback and physiological states. Second, the study explored the students’ reading attitude and the social influences during the ER program. Transfer of L1 reading attitude on L2 was found to be of greater strength for low RSE students, and social influences from peers and parents affected students’ reading experiences. Furthermore,
interviewees within the same reading self-efficacy group indicated similar reading experience. The results showed that participant Korean students regarded extensive reading positively and suggested one method in which L2 extensive reading can be implemented in the Korean EFL setting. These findings stress the value of extensive reading in the Korean EFL context. Extensive reading can provide students with a more enjoyable and preferred reading experience and moreover, increase their reading self-efficacy. The study also provides an understanding of Korean students’ reading experience that can be used to help language teachers better facilitate learning in L2 reading.
Index Terms—extended reading activity, graded readers, reading comprehension, reading strategies. I. INTRODUCTION. In this study, an extensive reading was conducted and the researcher used graded readers as reading material. The participants were asked to read three books selected from Penguin reader series. The three books were at Level 2 (L2), Level 3 (L3), and Level 4 (L4) respectively. C. Selecting Reading Material Related to the Reader’s Life Experience Most instructors assume that EFL learners’ comprehension problems are related to deficiencies in general linguistic skills; thus, they are dedicated to the instruction of the vocabulary knowledge, the grammatical rules and other linguistic knowledge. This study explores whether an extensive reading (ER) approach can enhance L2 learners’ writing performance in an English for Academic Purposes context. Two classes were compared in terms of writing improvement after one semester: a ‘traditional’ writing class primarily focused on writing practice and grammar instruction, and an ER class in which students engaged in ER in and out of class, along with completing reading-related writing activities. Essay tests were administered at the beginning and the end of the semester to measure students’ writing improvement.