

Textual Output in EFL Academic Writing Beyond the Rhetorical Specification

Myung-Hye Huh*

Huh, Myung-Hye. (2023). Textual output in EFL academic writing beyond the rhetorical specification. *English Teaching*, 78(3), 3-24.

This study explored rhetorical devices and their effect on forming coherent and cohesive wholes in the writing of 61 EFL students. When analyzing their writing using the five-paragraph essay format, 57% of students deviated from the format, with some resorting to their L1 rhetorical structures (the indirect group) and others employing rhetorical preferences presumed to be deterministically influenced by their L1 (the hybrid group). Only 43% adhered to the format (the direct group). Neither the indirect nor the hybrid groups were inferior to the direct group regarding the length and quality of the writing; the direct group was not necessarily better received than the other two. The indirect group had a discernible (even if not statistically significant) impact on the length and quality of the writing. The indirect and hybrid groups were found to have slightly stronger control over cohesion indices. The two groups challenged the English-only orientation of the five-paragraph essay by negotiating rhetorical structures, thereby doing translingual dispositions.

Key words: EFL writing, five-paragraph essay, L1 transfer, translingual dispositions, rhetorical agency

*Author: Myung-Hye Huh, Professor Emeritus, Department of English Language Education, College of Education, Korea University; 145 Anam-Ro, Seongbuk-Gu, Seoul 02841, Korea; Email: myunghuh@korea.ac.kr

Received 30 June 2023; Reviewed 15 July 2023; Accepted 11 September 2023



© 2023 The Korea Association of Teachers of English (KATE)

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0, which permits anyone to copy, redistribute, remix, transmit and adapt the work, provided the original work and source is appropriately cited.

1. INTRODUCTION

When producing academic writing, college students, particularly second language (L2) learners, face considerable challenges. In order to write well academically, students must know how to develop a strong argument. In English academic discourse, explicit discussion of the central ideas related to the text's thesis and overt explication of the writer's views are essential (Swales, 1990; Swales & Feak, 1994). So, L2 students must be able to understand the rhetorical dimension to strengthen and legitimize their writing. When put into practice, this mastery can be the most frustrating job for L2 students (Flower & Hayes, 1980). Particularly Korean college students in a typical English as a foreign language (EFL) context find it especially challenging to adopt Anglo-American written discourse conventions, of which rhetorical directness is a part (Atkinson, 1990), because they lack a shared understanding of these standards.

Contrastive rhetoric (CR) research has traditionally been based on the premise that "rhetorical aspects of each language are unique to each language and culture" (Casanave, 2007, p. 27). And the idea that there was a negative transfer from the student's first language to their second language was the dominant view in the field of contrastive rhetoric (Connor, 1996; DePalma & Ringer, 2011; Grabe & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1966, 1988). Accordingly, the pedagogical approach to L2 writing has tended to focus on teaching the particular textual organization of English. Due to its widespread use as a "composition classroom genre" (Johns, 2015, p. 117) in Korean EFL writing instruction, the five-paragraph essay is highlighted within the community of Korean EFL written discourse. It is generally accepted that learning to write in a second language is just about mastering the five-paragraph essay structure as a new way to write.

It has been assumed that students will probably organize their own writing in the same way they learn to organize the standard five-paragraph essay. However, many Korean EFL college students do not adhere to the five-paragraph essay structure. For example, a study by Lee (2021) provided empirical data demonstrating Korean EFL students' negotiation with rhetorical structures in a highly fluid way. In Lee's study, the indirect presentation of the thesis is still a marked phenomenon in some students' argumentative writing, most likely due to the influence of the preferred structure of argument in the Korean cultural context. And again, in Huh's (2022) case study, two advanced Korean EFL college students produced academic writing that was rhetorically somewhat unconventional when judged using the typical five-paragraph essay structure criteria. The students use all of their rhetorical and cultural repertoires to communicate successfully by reorganizing the five-paragraph essay structure in purposeful and unique ways. They were leaning towards an alternative option for their rhetorical structures. In these ways, they exploited structural deviations from the traditional five-paragraph essay format as a way to achieve specific

communicative purposes in their academic writing.

In both studies, the students broke from the rhetorical directness of Standard Written English (SWE). They develop rhetorical hybridity by incorporating their L1-specific textual organization into their academic writing. One may regard the structural variation in Korean EFL students' academic writing as "a process reaching for the standardization" (Mauranen, Pérez-Llantada, & Swales, 2010, p. 646) of the rhetorical directness of SWE, as EFL students are in the process of gradually marginalizing their indirect Korean rhetorical tradition (Mauranen et al., 2010). However, I think their structural variation itself is an attempt to go beyond an English-only ideology in a Korean context, as EFL students are torn between conforming to or deviating from the five-paragraph essay as the standard academic discourse. I would rather view this structural variation as an example of "doing translingual dispositions," as Lee and Jenks (2016) refer to writers' "general openness to plurality and difference in the ways people use language" (p. 317).

Proceeding from Huh's (2022) and Lee's (2021) findings, this study itself is a sequel of sorts, reiterating the question of how EFL college students structure their academic writing rhetorically. In the Korean EFL college context, writing teachers, many of whom come from Kachru's (1985) Inner Circle of English-speaking countries (U.S., Canada, England, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa), place a strong emphasis on the standard version of the five-paragraph essay. They believe that EFL students need to conform to the five-paragraph essay as Inner Circle rhetorical norms, so they almost always correct every rhetorical deviation in students' writing. Second language writing academics, as Arnold (2021) points out, have generally focused on Inner Circle contexts of writing. Echoing Arnold (2021), I turn to the Expanding Circle (Kachru, 1985) context of Korea to advance discussions of the "local practice" (Pennycook, 2010) of EFL writing by framing my perspective in a translingual disposition. In this study, my additional consideration is whether the ways in which students structure their texts have any effect on forming coherent and cohesive wholes in their academic writing.

2. TRANSLINGUAL DISPOSITIONS IN EFL WRITING

Written discourse in various languages and cultural communities is frequently conventionalized and not always shared with rhetorical norms from other traditions (Cushman & Kincaid, 1987; Kachru, 1988). Comparing discourse patterns across cultures reveals that different cultures have distinct preferential patterns of discourse, with the Western preference for the deductive pattern and the Oriental preference for the inductive pattern. For example, the English rhetorical structure is described as direct, whereas the Korean rhetorical style is indirect (e.g., Choi, 1988; Connor, 1996, 2003; Hinds, 1990;

Hinkel, 1997; Kaplan, 1966). In this regard, Korean EFL students would be at a significant disadvantage when composing in English. Consequently, in the local Korean college, an emphasis has been placed on particularly perfect mastery of the ubiquitous North American five-paragraph essay structure. In its practices, the current EFL writing pedagogy in the Expanding Circle context of Korea perpetuates the English-only ideology and the deficit model.

With longer historical precedents in Korea, English rhetorical conventions and norms can be equated in a simplistic manner with the five-paragraph essay structure. Teaching EFL writing is synonymous with teaching the five-paragraph essay. Such pedagogy promotes the view of EFL writing classes as prescriptive, enforcing conformity in a formulaic rhetorical way and requiring unquestioning replication of the five-paragraph essay conventions. So, students should uncritically subscribe to the prescriptivist notion of the five-paragraph essay structure. And again, any traces of rhetorical patterns deviating from the five-paragraph essay structure are relegated to nonstandard, error, and incompetency and seen as associated with a lack of EFL writing proficiency (e.g., Kang & Oh, 2011), so they are treated as grave problems to be fixed and wholly obliterated. This way of teaching often leads to a “deterministic stance and deficit orientation as to what students can accomplish in English and what their writing instruction should be” (Zamel, 1997, p. 341).

A translingual approach (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011) challenges the hegemony of dominant Anglophone standards and acknowledges that deviations from dominant expectations are not necessarily errors, thereby affirming the performative representation of language rather than its essentialist representation (Canagarajah, 2013a). Specifically, a translingual approach goes beyond the deficit view of L2 writers who do not adhere to so-called standard English (Canagarajah, 2021); for example, a translingual approach, or disposition, does not associate Korean EFL students’ rhetorical deviations from the five-paragraph essay with deficit but rather with “problematizing conventional (monolingualist) notions of writing” (Horner, 2021, p. 63). Likewise, this approach enables L2 students to experience their first language as a resource rather than a barrier to honing their English rhetorical hybridity (Canagarajah, 2006; Donahue, 2016; Kang, 2020). Korean EFL students can still negotiate the norms of a five-paragraph essay by meshing multiple varieties of their rhetorical repertoires. In the Expanding Circle of Korea, however, myths about traditional standards for the five-paragraph essay structure have always regarded such EFL writing practices as being deemed deviant or substandard.

Translingual scholars acknowledge that “the institutional enactment of [rhetorical] standards is repressive in some cases and restrictive in all” (Gilyard, 2016, p. 284). Consequently, they are considerably more tolerant of various forms of rhetorical structures and offer a more nuanced perspective on students who employ deviated forms from the

five-paragraph essay structure. According to Jordan (2021), a translingual approach “shifts focus from composers’ apparent lack of competence toward the competencies they already have that are obscured by a pedagogical insistence on correctness” (p. 31). So in seeking to displace a traditional idea of mastery as correctness, a translingual approach creates mastery of a different sort (Jordan, 2021). In Huh (2022), for example, two advanced EFL college students replace the rhetorical default (i.e., the five-paragraph essay structure) with their best rhetorical options. They rhetorically hybridized their academic writing by strategically negotiating the five-paragraph essay structure. That is to say, they are already rhetorically masterful, even if their mastery is always recognized as a deficiency by their expat English teachers.

In translingual literature, it is Lu and Horner (2013) who provide the fundamental argument for strong writer agency. In Korean EFL writing classes, “agency resides completely within the instructor” (Kubota & Lehner, 2004, p. 21), who has already compelled EFL students to adhere to the five-paragraph essay structure. A translingual approach, on the other hand, insists on the agency of each individual writer in each rhetorical situation as participating in that process (Lu & Horner, 2013). Here, “[agency] is not an either/or matter of choosing whether to follow or to defy the rules of a standardized language, but rather of finding strategies for situating oneself, as a writer” (Hall, 2018, p. 31). And again, Huh’s two EFL students adopted yet another way of perceiving rhetorical norms as not being static and deterministic (Baker, 2013). As active rhetorical agents, they were not passive conduits of the five-paragraph essay structure but rather exploited a broader range of rhetorical options to their advantage (e.g., Campbell, Fernandez, & Koo, 2020). This case study motivates me to conduct a more comprehensive analysis of whether EFL college students use the five-paragraph essay structure as their default rhetorical structure or whether they organize their text translingually.

Regardless of how EFL students construct their rhetorical structures, good writing recognizes cohesion and coherence as the two basic aspects that determine the quality of a written text (Richards, 1990; Scott, 1996). Cohesion is the surface-level syntactic and lexical aspects of a text and “refers to the presence or absence of explicit cues in the text that afford connecting segments of texts together” (Crossley, 2020, p. 425). On the other hand, coherence is the overall semantic unity of a text and refers to the understanding that an individual reader derives from the text (Crossley, 2020). Although cohesion can be measured using text features, coherence can vary as a result of both cohesion features and reader differences, such as their background knowledge and language proficiency (McNamara, Kintsch, Songer, & Kintsch, 1996). Depending on the rhetorical demands, the use of cohesive devices greatly influences one’s ability to produce coherent discourse. So, I proceed to further investigate whether rhetorical variations of their texts, if any, have an impact on the cohesive properties of their texts. As a result, the following research

questions serve as a guide for the study:

- 1) As instructed, do Korean EFL college students adhere to the five-paragraph essay structure in their academic writing?
- 2) If students deviate from the five-paragraph essay structure in their writing, do these deviations (or rhetorical variations) affect the quality and fluency of their writing as well as organizational features such as cohesion indices?

3. THE STUDY

3.1. The Participants and Data

This study was carried out during regular class time at a Korean university in Seoul. Sixty-one ($n = 61$) students from one intact class participated in the study. The students were enrolled in a compulsory course in the English language education program. This course was required for English teacher certification and provided a comprehensive overview of the principles of language learning and teaching. The majority of the students were in their third year, with a few in their second. This course was taught by the researcher during the 2019 spring semester. There was no official documentation available regarding the students' English proficiency. However, based on the ACTFL proficiency guidelines for writing, I, as the course instructor, rated the students' proficiency as ranging from *advanced* to *advanced-plus*.

For the midterm essay exam in this course, students wrote an essay in response to a given question: If you were teaching English as a foreign language in Korea, what recommendations would you make regarding the age at which English instruction begins? What research would you draw on to support your recommendations? The essay exam, with its high information load, required students to explain and persuade regarding the age at which English instruction begins, taking specific positions on age and second language acquisition. In particular, students had to react to an essay question by drawing on a connection to readings in the class, and their writing was evaluated holistically based on a 10-point scale and 3 levels (superior, competent, and incompetent). They wrote in the classroom under the supervision of an instructor and were given thirty minutes to complete their essays. The word count of 61 students' writings ranged from 164 to 504, with an average of 284 words.

The students had already completed a number of required English language courses covering the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In EFL writing classes, the five-paragraph essay is always favored as a pedagogical solution to the problem of

English organizational structures. Moreover, the five-paragraph essay structure is used as the basic structure of English. In the class, the students were thoroughly introduced to and overlearned to master the five-paragraph essay structure. Through error correction in their writing, they were also taught standard versions of English and its grammar. In this way, EFL writing classes entail the coexistence of goals related to writing itself (the learning-to-write dimension, LW) and writing as a tool for language learning (the writing-to-learn language dimension, WLL). If lexicogrammatical variations from standard English or rhetorical variations from the five-paragraph essay structure are noticed, it can quickly lead to sentences, texts, or students being perceived as deficient.

3.2. Data Analyses

In the initial phase of the analysis, handwritten student writings were typed. The two raters, a generation 1.5 speaker of English with experience teaching a five-paragraph essay and using holistic scoring, and the course instructor analyzed the rhetorical organization of the students' writings before evaluating their quality. To analyze the structure of students' writing, we used the five-paragraph essay format, which is comprised of five paragraphs at its most basic level: one introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs, and one concluding paragraph. We stressed organization above all. This means that the thesis of the essay is introduced in the introduction paragraph, followed up with a topic sentence and supporting sentences in each body paragraph proving the thesis, and then restated in the concluding paragraph with a summary of the topic sentences. In reality, we evaluated whether students' writing exhibited a high level of structure, text progression, and clarity.

Following Johnson (1983), a holistic scoring scale (also known as a "rubric") for evaluating the quality of writing was developed. The numerical scale ranks performance as superior (9), competent (5-8), and incompetent (1-4), with an additional one point awarded for a coherent and well-organized essay. Each paper was assigned a single score. Features that most contributed to a high holistic score included: thorough development of the thesis; logical sequencing of ideas; proficiency and variety in grammatical usage with few significant errors; and broad command of vocabulary and idiomatic language. Identifiable features that lowered the score of a paper included: limited knowledge of the subject; poor thematic development; ideas not well connected; weak use of language with little control of grammatical structures; limited vocabulary; frequent use of anglicisms.

The length itself was not a criterion for evaluation of student writing, except as raters gauged in their holistic assessments the extent to which a topic was given sufficient treatment by each student. The two raters, whose reliability was monitored throughout the study, read and holistically rated the essays on a scale from 1 to 10. For the scores that showed a difference of one point, the average of the two was recorded; for the scores that

showed a difference of two or more points, the two raters resolved the discrepancies through discussions, and the final score was recorded. Fluency was measured by length of production, following Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim (1998), who define fluency as “rapid production of language” (p. 117). This study used the number of words produced in class and under pressure of time (text length) as a measure of fluency (Wolfe-Quintero et al. 1998).

Cohesion indices were obtained with the use of the Coh-Metrix 3.0 (<http://cohmetrix.memphis.edu/cohmetrixhome/>) program, which provides spatial, temporal, intentional, and causal cohesion indices and identifies the frequency of different types of connectives to assess the logical relations in the text. Connectives were selected because they are important devices to signal relations in text and, as such, contribute to coherent discourse (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Connectives can be characterized as positive when they extend the information provided in the text (e.g., and, because, after), and negative when they restrict and cease to elaborate information (e.g., but, until, although) (Kormos, 2011). Connectives can also be classified as additive, temporal, causal, and logical (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Coh-Metrix uses Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA) to measure similarity between text segments (for both sentences, paragraphs, and across the text) (Crossley, Kyle, & McNamara, 2016). Four LSA indices were selected to evaluate the similarity of meaning between sentences, paragraphs, or texts (Chen & Cui, 2022). Table 1 summarizes the cohesion indices used in this study.

TABLE 1
Summary of Cohesion Indices Used in this Study

Cohesion	Connectives	Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA)
Casual	Additive	LSA sentence adjacent
Temporal		(Semantic overlap between adjacent sentences)
Spatial	Causal	LSA sentence all
Intentional		(Semantic overlap between all sentences in the paragraph)
	Temporal	LSA sentence paragraph adjacent
		(Semantic overlap between adjacent paragraphs)
	Logical	LSA given/new
		(The ratio of given/new information in each sentence in the text)

4. RESULTS

The first aim of this study was to investigate whether EFL students adopt the standard rules of the five-paragraph essay structure. As Table 2 indicates, many students did not follow the rigid essay structure or the linear approach of the five-paragraph essay. The students construct their rhetorical patterns differently, with some adhering to the five-

paragraph essay structure (direct group). Some students tend to employ indirect rhetorical structure from their L1 (Korean) to the substance of their writing, or they are more likely to rely solely on their L1 rhetorical structure (indirect group). Compared to the indirect group, the other students employed a more structured thesis statement and topic sentences, but they often meshed their L1 indirect discourse into their English writing. Their structures look like the typical five-paragraph essay introduction-body-conclusion pattern, but mainly the development of the body is indirect (hybrid group). When they were grouped into different rhetorical structures in English, the highest percentage of rhetorical patterns used was found in the direct approach (43%). However, a fairly large percentage of students (57%) used indirect (23%) or hybrid (34%) structures in their writing.

TABLE 2
Three Different Rhetorical Structures

Rhetorical Structure	Direct	Indirect	Hybrid
Percentage of Students	43% (<i>n</i> = 26)	23% (<i>n</i> = 14)	34% (<i>n</i> = 21)

The second question this study aimed to answer was how differences in rhetorical structure affect students' writing quality and fluency. For writing quality, the indirect group was the highest, averaging 7.35 (*SD* = 1.34), with the other two groups (6.90 vs. 6.89 on the 10-point scale) closely clustered around the mean writing quality of total students (*M* = 7.00). The length of the 61 students' essays varies. The length of each essay ranges from 164 to 504 words, with the average word count for the entire group being 283.66 (*SD* = 77.82). The indirect group also wrote longer essays (*M* = 319; *SD* = 88.02) than the direct (*M* = 266; *SD* = 55.48) or hybrid (*M* = 281; *SD* = 89.70) groups. The essays from the indirect group were over 50 words longer than those from the direct group (319 vs. 266), which had the shortest text length. However, the standard deviation around the group mean of the direct group score (55.48) is rather low, indicating more homogeneity in this group than in the other two groups. In short, the indirect group shows better performance on average, both in the quality and fluency of their writing. Why students in the indirect group wrote better and longer essays than those in the other two groups is open to speculation.

For the statistical analysis, SPSS 24.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used. We then conducted a one-way ANOVA analysis to see whether there were significant differences among the three groups regarding quality and length of writing. As illustrated in Table 3, the ANOVA analysis shows that the different rhetorical structures across the three groups did not lead to statistically significant differences in either of the two measures by the 95% confidence interval values. In other words, despite the fact that the average of the three groups in quality and fluency differed, the differences observed were not statistically significant. As a result, students' deviations from the five-paragraph essay

structure had no effect on the quality and fluency of their writing on a timed essay exam.

TABLE 3
Comparison of Three Groups' Writing Quality and Length

	Total (<i>n</i> = 61)		Direct (<i>n</i> = 26)	Indirect (<i>n</i> = 14)	Hybrid (<i>n</i> = 21)	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
	Min	Max	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)		
Writing Quality	4.7	9.3	7.00 (1.19)	6.90 (1.14)	7.35 (1.34)	6.89 (1.16)	.786 .460
Text Length	164	504	283.66 (77.82)	266 (55.48)	319 (88.02)	281 (89.70)	2.119 .129

The subsequent question was how students' performance across the three groups differed in terms of cohesion indices. Table 4 displays the results of this analysis. In terms of cohesion, the hybrid group produced more casual and intentional cohesion than either the indirect or direct groups. With regard to temporal cohesion, the three groups were closely concentrated on a similar number of averages. The results concerning the frequency of connectives reveal that the indirect group produced more additive and temporal connectives than the other two groups, while the hybrid group produced the lowest frequency of additive and temporal connectives on average. The direct group produced the most logical connectives on average, while the hybrid group produced the most causal connectives. All LSA indices were centered around the same average.

As Table 4 indicates, however, one-way ANOVA analysis reveals that only spatial cohesion ($p = .04$, $p < .05$) and causal connective ($p = .02$, $p < .05$) showed statistically significant differences among the three groups. Cohen's *D*-value was used to measure the effect sizes. *D*-values below .5 indicate small, between .5 and .8 indicate medium, and above .8 indicates large effect size (Cohen, 1988). The students in the indirect group elicited slightly higher spatial cohesion measures. It needs to be noted, however, that the effect size for differences in spatial cohesion is in the small range. The frequency of the number of causal connectives was significantly higher in the hybrid group with a large effect size. In addition, intentional cohesion approached significance ($p = .06$). By comparison, no statistical differences appeared in the four Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA) indices, which evaluate the similarity of meaning between sentences, paragraphs, or texts.

TABLE 4
Comparison of the Cohesion Indices Among Three Groups

Category	Index	Group	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Cohen's d</i>
Cohesion	Casual	Direct	.84 (.46)	2.07	.14	.26
		Indirect	.60 (.27)			
		Hybrid	1.14 (1.20)			
	Intentional	Direct	1.04 (.67)	3.03	.06	.31
		Indirect	.74 (.47)			
		Hybrid	1.29 (.16)			
	Spatial	Direct	.48 (.09)	3.40*	.04	.10
		Indirect	.55 (.08)			
		Hybrid	.53 (.09)			
	Temporal	Direct	.80 (.08)	1.03	.36	.05
		Indirect	.80 (.08)			
		Hybrid	.83 (.09)			
Connective	Additive	Direct	49.05 (12.19)	.57	.57	.49
		Indirect	52.61 (9.36)			
		Hybrid	48.20 (14.42)			
	Casual	Direct	32.79 (12.30)	4.18*	.02	1.22
		Indirect	25.09 (8.12)			
		Hybrid	34.88 (8.05)			
	Logical	Direct	54.60 (16.56)	.09	.92	.21
		Indirect	52.49 (14.91)			
		Hybrid	53.31 (16.45)			
	Temporal	Direct	25.34 (10.64)	.06	.94	.15
		Indirect	26.17 (9.21)			
		Hybrid	24.88 (11.36)			
LSA	Sentence adjacent	Direct	.27 (.09)	1.62	.21	.08
		Indirect	.22 (.05)			
		Hybrid	.26 (.02)			
	All sentence	Direct	.28 (.10)	2.13	.13	.08
		Indirect	.22 (.06)			
		Hybrid	.25 (.08)			
	Sentence paragraph adjacent	Direct	.42 (.17)	.39	.68	.05
		Indirect	.46 (.11)			
		Hybrid	.46 (.19)			
	Given/new	Direct	.34 (.04)	1.36	.27	.04
		Indirect	.32 (.02)			
		Hybrid	.34 (.04)			

Note. Direct ($n = 26$), Indirect ($n = 14$), Hybrid ($n = 21$)

* $p < .05$

5. DISCUSSION

Concerning how EFL students adopt the standard rules of the five-paragraph essay structure, the results indicate that more than half of the students deviated from the standard five-paragraph essay structure in their texts. This is quite surprising given that these

students have already taken an EFL writing course as a prerequisite; some of them have even taken an advanced EFL writing course as an elective. About 23 percent of student writing is marked by what may be called an approach by indirection, with 34 percent of student writing marked by hybrid texts. Students in the indirect group disregard new (English) standards and incorporate old (Korean) discourse knowledge in their writing, thereby placing their “rhetorical identity above the perfect English norm” (Kang, 2020, p. 92). The hybrid group appears to resort to the guidelines outlined in the five-paragraph essay. The use of L1 rhetorical structures, mainly in body paragraphs, is a salient phenomenon in this group of students’ writing. When writing, they blended the five-paragraph essay structure with L1 rhetorical patterns, thereby creating rhetorical idiosyncrasies in their writing.

The following are the introduction and conclusion paragraphs written by a female student in the indirect group. This student has strong general English proficiency, but she disregards the rhetorical and organizational formality of the five-paragraph essay. In other words, in the introduction paragraph, she neither develops the basic ideas of what she will cover nor provides the thesis statement for the writing. Some readers may dismiss her writing on the grounds that it appears to be less proficient in the traditional sense of the five-paragraph essay. However, she provides evidence of a critical period for second language acquisition, including Piaget’s theory of cognitive development in a child, in body paragraphs (which are omitted here due to space constraints), and concludes that English instruction should begin during puberty (10-15). In the concluding paragraph, her summary seems to be, in fact, partially a thesis statement and partially a summary. This writing appears to be a byproduct of the transfer of L1 patterns of thinking (inductive reasoning).

(introduction) In Korea, everyone knows the importance of English as a world language. And as the idea of ‘the earlier the better, the younger the better’ is widespread in the country, Many parents are sending their children to English kindergartens, private institutions, and camps even though they are so young. If I were teaching English as a foreign language in Korea, I would recommend the students and parents begin the institution at a moderate, adequate pace.

(conclusion) To sum up, I recommend English learners begin English instruction at an adequate, moderate period, during puberty (10–15), so that using their metalinguistic knowledge, they can make the most of their language acquisition and reach their potential.

The two body paragraphs below were written by a male student from the hybrid group. This student follows the basic structure of a five-paragraph essay. His writing includes an introduction with a thesis statement, two body paragraphs, and a conclusion with a brief summary, with the topic sentence at the end of each body paragraph. As underlined below, he began two body paragraphs with the evidence or facts that support his argument and stated his claim at the end of the paragraph, as shown in the underlined below. The indirect development is fairly evident in his two body paragraphs (for this student's full text, see Huh, 2022).

(body 1) If we consider neurological aspects, we might say that hemispheric lateralization finished around puberty, and the plasticity of child's brain make it easier to acquire English. Also certain functions are assigned to left hemisphere, but right hemisphere also participated in pragmatic aspects of language. Therefore, neurological consideration cannot give us evidence to "earlier, the better."

(body 2) Also, if we consider accent, we might think that there is a critical period. In the 20th century, there was emphasis on authentic control of accent of foreign language which gave support to CPH. But many scientific research only applied to "accent." This doesn't imply that children are universally sufficient and efficient in acquiring language. Also accent is not the only criteria, and communicative, functional aspects of language is far more important.

In traditional standard written English (SWE) environments, cross-language transfer from Korean to English is perceived as interference. Most EFL writing instructors point to a reliance on L1 rhetorical structure in EFL writing as evidence of poor writing performance (e.g., Mauranen, 1992; Simpson, 2000). Again, they may put on the deficit labels often affixed to those who produced texts that deviated from Anglo-American writing conventions. However, the seemingly contradictory result was found in the analysis of the students' rhetorical variations and written performances. Neither the indirect nor the hybrid groups are inferior to the direct group in terms of the length and quality of the writing; that is, the direct group conforming to the five-paragraph format is not necessarily better received in length and quality than the other two groups. The indirect structures had a discernible (even if not statistically significant) impact on the length and quality of the student writings.

Similar evidence comes from a study by Albertson (2007), which investigated the five-paragraph essay's efficacy for the purpose of obtaining higher scores on standardized

writing assessments. In this study, over a thousand essays were analyzed. The variables of interest in this study were the organizational pattern chosen by the writer and the essay's level of development. While the five-paragraph essay format was the most commonly used organizational style in the essays, students were just as likely to receive high scores using a different, non-formulaic organizational style. Specifically, every essay that received a high score was composed using an organizational scheme other than the five-paragraph essay format. Once again, this finding is important because it suggests that the rhetorical deviations from the five-paragraph essay did not come at the expense of the overall quality of the writing.

Moreover, cohesion measures indicated an advantage of the indirect and hybrid groups over the direct group. With regard to cohesion measures, the indirect group demonstrated slightly stronger spatial cohesion, suggesting that, when writing, students in this group have greater control over cohesion related to the use of location nouns and motion prepositions. The results concerning the frequency of connectives suggest that the hybrid group relies more on connectives to create cohesion in their writing. In fact, causal connectives are among the most crucial building blocks of language at the discourse level. When they have the communicative goal of persuading readers in their writing, the hybrid group of students is more capable of producing epistemic relations, marking them with causal connectives (Evers-Vermeul & Sanders, 2011). These findings, in turn, may be interpreted as indicating that rhetorical hybridity or flexibility has induced students to use more connectives.

Many pedagogical strategies of the translingual approach have so far more or less focused on code-meshing, which is "putting together diverse semiotic resources for meaning" (Canagarajah, 2013b, p. 6), as their end product. Indeed, a translingual approach to writing invites students to negotiate existing language ideologies through the mixing of languages and by using their first language. However, the students in the indirect and hybrid groups did not exhibit translingual strategies at the lexical or grammatical level touted in many translingual writing studies (e.g., Canagarajah, 2011, 2013a, 2013b; Donahue, 2016; Horner & Tetreault, 2017). I would argue that their writing is still richly translingual, with its rhetorical boundaries being porous and always emergent rather than fixed in a discrete set of five-paragraph essay forms. These students are not "rhetorical failures" (Canagarajah, 2021), but rhetorical agents in an ideological position to produce texts that better reflect the fluid nature of translingual communication and challenge the dominance of the five-paragraph essay structure.

Looking at the above findings from the standpoint of transfer and translingualism (DePalma & Ringer, 2011; Leonard & Nowacek, 2016), the rich connections between transfer and translingual dispositions were evident in the writing of the students. Perkins and Salomon (1988) distinguish between what they call "low-road" and "high-road"

transfers. Low-road transfer “reflects the automatic triggering of well-practiced routines in circumstances where there is considerable perceptual similarity to the original learning context” (p. 25). High-road transfer, on the other hand, “depends on deliberate, mindful abstraction of skill or knowledge from one context for application to another” (p. 25). Applying Perkins and Salomon’s conception of transfer in this study, the hybrid group can be defined as “high roaders” and the indirect group as “low roaders” (Reiff & Bawarshi, 2011). Perkins and Salomon’s (1988) conception of transfer does capture the kind of transfer that is going on as the students in the two groups develop translingual dispositions. I argue that EFL students’ transfer of their L1 discourse knowledge into EFL writing practices is a starting point for them to develop a translingual disposition toward rhetorical norms (Horner, NeCamp, & Donahue, 2011; Lee & Jenks, 2016).

Although the “English-only” orientation of EFL writing classes served as a guide for students in Korea, 53% of the students in this study negotiated the rhetorical standards of the five-paragraph essay or turned to the L1 rhetorical structure instinctively. One could argue that because this essay exam was written in the content class and not the EFL writing class, the students’ concentration was more on producing content and less on the structure of writing. EFL students differentiate their focus when performing writing tasks based on whether their writing is the end goal of EFL writing classes or a means of demonstrating academic achievement outcomes in the content class (Ortega, 2011). Thus, the students in the indirect and hybrid groups specifically weighed the content of the writing more heavily. Perhaps it is partially possible and partially a limitation of this study; nonetheless, I continue to argue that the flexible use of their rhetorical resources is one of their strategies that allows for translingual dispositions. Therefore, future studies with various writing tasks and with more students from a longitudinal perspective might be needed to corroborate the findings of this study.

6. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to determine how rhetorical patterns were represented in the academic writing of Korean EFL college students. This study also examined whether different rhetorical structures employed in EFL students’ writing had differences in their written performance, including quality, fluency, and cohesive features. Even though EFL writing instruction in Korea maintains a firm commitment to the five-paragraph essay structure and the importance of the organizational structure of texts, many students in this study resorted to their L1 rhetorical structures or employed rhetorical preferences presumed to be deterministically influenced by their L1. They embraced standard five-paragraph essay norms for modeling persuasion while transferring conventions of their native language and

culture (e.g., rhetorical patterns or argument structure) into their English text. As active rhetorical agents, they negotiated the rhetorical norms of their academic writing by prioritizing rhetorical effectiveness over rhetorical correctness. There were no significant differences in written performance among the three groups, showing no evidence that the deviation from the five-paragraph essay structure disadvantaged the students.

Despite being indoctrinated in the five-paragraph essay format, the EFL college students strived to merge multiple varieties of their rhetorical repertoires into their academic writing. Despite the perception that students conforming to the five-paragraph essay structure should be the norm in their academic writing, in reality, the production of differences—deviations from the standard—seems to be the default for the students in the indirect and hybrid groups. Students' deviant rhetorical structure is, to only slightly paraphrase Canagarajah (2011, 2019), a distinctive realization of translingual practice in their texts. More importantly, they came to exercise writer agency as they negotiated rhetorical and cultural resources for their purposes, rather than letting the dominant tradition (i.e., the five-paragraph essay structure) determine their rhetorical option. It comes as a surprise, then, that these students “may have contributed to galvanizing the development of translingual language ideology” (Horner, 2021, p. 58) prior to its development into an explicit manifestation in Korean contexts.

To negotiate the new writing context of the content course, many of the students in this study transferred L1 text organization and rhetorical preferences to their EFL text, with some students “breaking down their [L1 text organization] into useful strategies and repurposing it” (Reiff & Bawarshi, 2011, p. 312) and others maintaining their L1 rhetorical structures in their EFL text. However, they did not code-mesh in their academic writing. This is most likely because Korean EFL students, as language learners, may be imbued with the ideology of standard English. On the other hand, as EFL writers, they bring with them certain predispositions about how to organize writing from their native language and culture. Thus, simultaneous resistance and accommodation to the formulaic knowledge of the five-paragraph essay are perfectly possible for them. In the end, their language use in EFL writing cannot be freed from native speaker standards, making code-meshing unlikely, even as their rhetorical skills and strategies appeared translingual.

I consider these conclusions to be important for developing pedagogical grounds for EFL writing. As EFL writing instructors, we must encourage flexible rhetorical use and a wider range of rhetorical options for EFL students rather than resorting to the traditional, often rigid, ways of approaching writing (Donahue, 2016; Horner, 2020; Lu & Horner, 2013). We must also satisfy the needs of the local context of Korea and local student populations “through weighing English” (Wang & Silver, 2021, p. 8). In the Expanding Circle context of Korea, English carries a heavier weight for linguistic accuracy and standardized language rules. A pedagogical emphasis on the language learning potential of

writing (writing-to-learn language, WLL) should therefore be one of the goals of our EFL writing instruction, which is to develop our students' language competencies. In other words, EFL writing instruction must play a role in "supporting the synergistic learning of writing and language" (Ortega, 2011, p. 249). Otherwise, students' sense of insecurity about their language competence leads them to anticipate failures in writing.

To close, I would like to address the changing practices for EFL writing instruction. In Korea, many academic institutions are still profoundly attached to the five-paragraph essay format. And again, EFL writing instructors associate rhetorical variations with deficits and therefore focus all their energy on correcting rhetorical variations. Caplan (2019) argues that the five-paragraph essay is reductive and overgeneralized because it disregards the writing's situatedness, including its context, audience, purpose, and structure. When this is understood, it becomes clearer why some Korean EFL students would abandon the traditional five-paragraph essay format in favor of their L1 rhetorical structures. In Korea, one topic that is closely related to classroom EFL writing instruction but has mostly remained unexplored is the five-paragraph essay. Now may well be the time for the field of EFL writing in Korea to have a focused, in-depth scholarly discussion on advancing beyond the five-paragraph essay.

Applicable level: Tertiary

REFERENCES

- Albertson, B. (2007). Organization and development features of grade 8 and grade 10 writers: A descriptive study of Delaware student testing program (DSTP) essays. *Research in the Teaching of English, 41*(4), 435-464.
- Arnold, L, R. (2021). Weighing English: Accounting for power in translingual writing. In T. Silva & Z. Wang (Eds.), *Reconciling translingualism and second language writing* (pp. 189-198). New York: Routledge.
- Atkinson, D. (1990). Discourse analysis and written discourse conventions. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 11*, 57-76.
- Baker, W. (2013). Interpreting the culture in intercultural rhetoric: A critical perspective from English as a lingua franca studies. In D. Belcher & G. Nelson (Eds.), *Critical and corpus-based approaches to intercultural rhetoric* (pp. 22-45). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

- Campbell, S., Fernandez, R., & Koo, K. (2020). Artifacts and their agents: Translingual perspectives on composing processes and output. In A. Frost, J. Kiernan & S. B. Malley (Eds.), *Translingual dispositions: Globalized approaches to the teaching of writing* (pp. 33-62). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and University Press of Colorado.
- Canagarajah, S. (2006). Toward a writing pedagogy of shuttling between languages: Learning from multilingual writers. *College English*, 68, 589-604.
- Canagarajah, S. (2011). Codemeshing in academic writing: Identifying teachable strategies of translanguaging. *The Modern Language Journal*, 95, 401-417.
- Canagarajah, S. (2013a). From intercultural rhetoric to cosmopolitan practice: Addressing new challenges in lingua franca English. In D. Belcher & G. Nelson (Eds.), *Critical and corpus-based approaches to intercultural rhetoric* (pp. 203-226). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Canagarajah, S. (2013b). Introduction. In S. Canagarajah (Ed.), *Literacy as transnational practice: Between communities and classrooms* (pp. 1-10). New York: Routledge.
- Canagarajah, S. (2019). *Transnational literacy autobiographies as translingual writing*. New York: Routledge.
- Canagarajah, S. (2021). Addressing language statuses in the writing of multilingual students. In T. Silva & Z. Wang (Eds.), *Reconciling translanguaging and second language writing* (pp. 41-54). New York: Routledge.
- Caplan, N. A. (2019). Have we always taught the five-paragraph essay? In N. A. Caplan & A. M. Johns (Eds.), *Changing practices for the L2 writing classroom: Moving beyond the five-paragraph essay* (pp. 2-23). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Casanave, C. (2007). *Controversies in second language writing: Dilemmas and decisions in research and instruction*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Chen, M., & Cui, Y. (2022). The effects of AWE and peer feedback on cohesion and coherence in continuation writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 57, 100915.
- Choi, Y. H. (1988). Text structure of Korean speakers' argumentative essays in English. *World Englishes*, 7(2), 129-137.
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Connor, U. (1996). *Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second-language writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Connor, U. (2003). Changing currents in contrastive rhetoric: Implications for teaching. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Exploring the dynamics of second language writing* (pp. 218-241). New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Crossley, S. A. (2020). Linguistic features in writing quality and development: An overview. *Journal of Writing Research, 11*(3), 415-443.
- Crossley, S. A., Kyle, K., & McNamara, D. S. (2016). The development and use of cohesive devices in L2 writing and their relations to judgments of essay quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 32*, 1-16.
- Cushman, D. P., & Kincaid, D. L. (1987). Introduction and initial insights. In D. L. Kincaid (Ed.), *Communication theory: eastern and western perspectives* (pp. 1-10). San Diego, CA: Academic Press, INC.
- DePalma, M.-J., & Ringer, J. M. (2011). Toward a theory of adaptive transfer: Expanding disciplinary discussions of “transfer” in second-language writing and composition studies. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 20*, 134-147.
- Donahue, C. (2016). The “trans” in transnational-translingual: Rhetorical and linguistic flexibility as new norms. *Composition Studies, 44*(1), 147-150.
- Evers-Vermeul, J., & Sanders, T. (2011). Discovering domains – On the acquisition of causal connectives. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43*(6), 1645-1662.
- Flower, L., & Hayes, J. R. (1980). The dynamics of composing: Making plans and juggling constraints. In L. Gregg & E. Steinberg (Eds.), *Cognitive processes in writing* (pp. 31-50). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Gilyard, K. (2016). The rhetoric of translingualism. *College English, 78*(3), 284-289.
- Grabe, W., & Kaplan, R. B. (1989). Writing in a second language: Contrastive rhetoric. In D. M. Johnson & D. H. Roen (Eds.), *Richness in writing: Empowering ESL students* (pp. 263-283). New York: Longman.
- Hall, J. (2018). The translingual challenge: Boundary work in rhetoric and composition, second language writing, and WAC/WID. *Across the Disciplines, 15*(3), 28-47.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- Hinds, J. (1990). Inductive, deductive, quasi-inductive: Expository writing in Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Thai. In U. Connor & A. M. Johns (Eds.), *Coherence in writing: Research and pedagogical perspectives* (pp. 87-109). Alexandria, VA: TESOL.
- Hinkel, E. (1997). Indirectness in L1 and L2 academic writing. *Journal of Pragmatics, 27*(3), 361-386.
- Horner, B. (2020). Afterword. In A. Frost, J. Kiernan & S. B. Malley (Eds.), *Translingual Dispositions: Globalized approaches to the teaching of writing* (pp. 295-303). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and University Press of Colorado.
- Horner, B. (2021). Language difference, translinguality, and L2 Writing: Conflations, confusions, and the work of writing. In T. Silva & Z. Wang (Eds.), *Reconciling translingualism and second language writing* (pp. 55-66). New York: Routledge.

- Horner, B., Lu, M.-Z., Royster, J. J., & Trimbur, J. (2011). Language difference in writing: Toward a translingual approach. *College English*, 73(3), 303-321.
- Horner, B., NeCamp, S., & Donahue, C. (2011). Toward a multilingual composition scholarship: From English only to a translingual norm. *College Composition and Communication*, 63(2), 269-300.
- Horner, B., & Tetreault, L. (2017). Introduction. In B. Horner & L. Tetreault (Eds.), *Crossing divides: Exploring translingual writing pedagogies and programs* (pp. 3-16). Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.
- Huh, M.-H. (2022). The writing-to-learn dimension of L2 Writing: Towards rhetorical hybridity and flexibility. *English Teaching*, 77(3), 29-52.
- Johns, A. (2015). Moving on from genre analysis. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 10, 113-124.
- Johnson, L. W. (1983). *Grading the advanced placement examination in French language*. Princeton, NJ: Advanced Placement Program of the College Board.
- Jordan, J. (2021). Future perfect tense: Kairos as a heuristic for reconciliation. In T. Silva & Z. Wang (Eds.), *Reconciling translingualism and second language writing* (pp. 25-37). New York: Routledge.
- Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification, and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. Widdowson (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* (pp. 11-30). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Kachru, B. B. (1988). ESP and non-native varieties of English: Toward a shift in paradigm. In D. Chamberlain & R. J. Baumgardner (Eds.), *ESP in the classroom: Practice and evaluation* (pp. 9-28). London: Macmillan.
- Kang, Y.-K. (2020). Translingual approaches as institutional intervention: Implementing the single-language writing group. In A. Frost, J. Kiernan & S. B. Malley (Eds.), *Translingual dispositions: Globalized approaches to the teaching of writing* (pp. 81-100). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and University Press of Colorado.
- Kang, S., & Oh, S. (2011). Rhetorical patterns in L1 and L2 argumentative essays of Korean EFL students. *Korean Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 27(2), 1-42.
- Kaplan, R. B. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language Learning*, 16(1), 1-20.
- Kaplan, R. B. (1988). Contrastive rhetoric and second language learning: Notes towards a theory of contrastive rhetoric. In A. C. Purves (Ed.), *Writing across languages and cultures* (pp. 275-304). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Kormos, J. (2011). Task complexity and linguistic and discourse features of narrative writing performance. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 20, 148-161.

- Kubota, R., & Lehner, A. (2004). Toward critical contrastive rhetoric. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13*, 7-27.
- Lee, I. (2021). *An analysis of Korean university students' rhetorical performance of academic English argumentative essays*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Korea University, Seoul.
- Lee, J. W., & Jenks, C. J. (2016). Doing translingual dispositions. *College Composition and Communication, 68*(2), 317-344.
- Leonard, R. L., & Nowacek, R. S. (2016). Transfer and translingualism. *College English, 78*(3), 258-264.
- Lu, M., & Horner, B. (2013). Translingual literacy, language difference, and matters of agency. *College English, 75*(6), 582-607.
- Mauranen, A. (1992). Reference in academic rhetoric: A contrastive study of Finnish and English writing. In A. C. Lindberg, N.E. Enkvist & K. Vikberg (Eds.) *Nordic research on text and discourse, NORDTEXT Symposium 1990* (pp. 237-250). Abo, Finland: Abo Academic Press.
- Mauranen, A., Pérez-Llantada, C., & Swales, J. M. (2010). Academic Englishes: A standardized knowledge? In A. Kirkpatrick (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of world Englishes* (pp. 634-652). London: Routledge.
- McNamara, D. S., Kintsch, E., Songer, N. B., & Kintsch, W. (1996). Are good texts always better? Interactions of text coherence, background knowledge, and levels of understanding in learning from text. *Cognition and Instruction, 14*, 1-43
- Ortega, L. (2011). Reflections on the learning-to-write and writing-to-learn dimensions of second language writing. In Manchón, R. M. (Ed.), *Learning-to-write and write-to-learn in an additional language* (pp. 237-250). Amsterdam, The Netherlands: John Benjamins.
- Pennycook, A. (2010). *Language as a local practice*. London: Routledge.
- Perkins, D. N., & Salomon, G. (1988). Teaching for transfer. *Educational Leadership, 46*(1), 22-32.
- Reiff, M. J., & Bawarshi, A. (2011). Tracing discursive resources: How students use prior genre knowledge to negotiate new writing contexts in first-year composition. *Written Communication, 28*(3), 312-337.
- Richards, J. C. (1990). *The language teaching matrix*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Scott, V. M. (1996). *Rethinking foreign language writing*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Simpson, J. M. (2000). Topical structure analysis of academic paragraphs in English and Spanish. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 9*(3), 239-309.

- Swales, J. M. (1990). Discourse analysis in professional contexts. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 11, 103-114.
- Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (1994). *Academic writing for graduate students*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Wang, Z., & Silver, T. (2021). Introduction: Reconciling translanguaging and second language writing. In T. Silva & Z. Wang (Eds.), *Reconciling translanguaging and second language writing* (pp. 1-10). New York: Routledge.
- Wolfe-Quintero, K., Inagaki, S., & Kim, H. (1998). *Second language development in writing: Measures of fluency, accuracy, and complexity*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.
- Zamel, V. (1997). Toward a model of transculturation. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(2), 341-352.