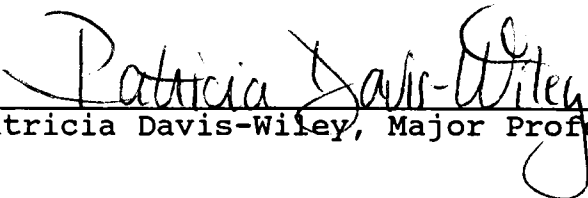
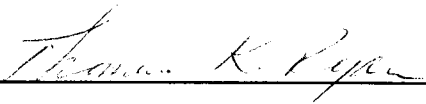


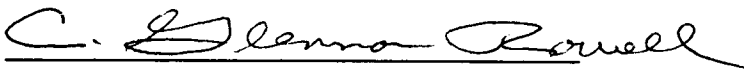
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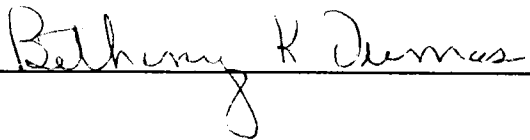
I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Seungbok Lee entitled "Syntactic, Lexical, and Rhetorical Differences in English Prose Written by Native Speakers of English and by Native Speakers of Korean." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Education.

  
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**SYNTACTIC, LEXICAL, AND RHETORICAL DIFFERENCES  
IN ENGLISH PROSE WRITTEN BY NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH AND  
BY NATIVE SPEAKERS OF KOREAN**

**A Dissertation  
Presented for the  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Degree  
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

**Seungbok Lee  
August 1995**

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated  
to my parents,  
Dong-Yeol Kim and Yoon-Koo Lee,  
to my wife, Byung-Hyun,  
to my sons, Hyung-Won and Chan-Won,  
and to all my family members, teachers, and friends  
from whom I have learned life is so precious.

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## Abstract

Comparative rhetoricians of the English language, whose research focus is mainly on identifying differences among different linguistic groups, have assumed that their research findings could be crucial "to comprehending and addressing English as a Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) writer's special needs" (Silva, 1993, p. 660).

The purpose of this research study was in line with that of Silva, identifying and examining in what different ways native speakers of English and native speakers of Korean wrote their expository essays in English in terms of the syntactic structures, lexical choices, cohesion devices, and rhetorical patterns.

Forty writing samples from the Korean students studying at the University of Tennessee/Knoxville and Indiana University of Pennsylvania and 42 writing samples from the American students at the University of Tennessee/Knoxville were used as the corpus for the data analysis in the present study.

The Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), F-Test, and Chi-Square Test were run to test quantitatively whether differences in textual features between these two groups were statistically significant or not. The quantitative differences were then examined qualitatively to better understand the reasons for differences between these two

groups.

The MANOVA results indicated that there were significant differences in the Lexical Variables and the Cohesion Variables at  $p < .01$  but not in the Discourse Fluency Variables (syntactic structure) in English prose written by native speakers of English and by native speakers of Korean. The qualitative results of the data analysis showed that there were conspicuous differences in rhetorical style (idea organization) between these two groups.

Based on the data analysis in the present study, it was concluded that Korean students of English had much difficulty in lexical choices, cohesion devices, and rhetorical patterns when they wrote academic expository prose in English. Thus, these differences in Korean students' essays, when compared to those written by American students, resulted in Korean students' low proficiency in English writing.

The research findings in the present study suggested some pedagogical implications for helping Korean-English composition teachers create effective instructional methods and teaching materials and for helping Korean students of English improve their English composition skills.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background of the Study**

Over the past decades, with the influx of foreign students into English-speaking countries (e.g., Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States), the field of Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) has evolved through a series of changes in its philosophy and instructional methodologies. One of the notable changes which has taken place in the field of teaching English to non-native speakers of English (NNSE) is that a great deal of attention has been devoted to developing effective, specific learning and teaching methods to help NNSE write well enough to achieve their academic goals.

In a study of English for Academic Purpose (EAP) writing instruction, Leki and Carson (1994) clearly state that "the ability to write well is necessary both to achieve academic success and to demonstrate that achievement" (p. 83). Based on her teaching experience with non-native speakers of English, MacGowan-Gilhooly (1991) claims that "too many ESL students do not achieve their educational goals because they do not meet their colleges' writing

standards" (p. 73). Other ESL writing researchers (McKay, 1994; Reid, 1988; Saville-Troike, 1984; Silva, 1993; Spack, 1988) agree that writing competence is the most important one students need to develop in an academic setting. They indicate that ESL students are required to develop their English writing competence as well as their communicative competence if they are to survive in higher educational institutions.

The importance of writing, particularly in colleges and universities, has caused ESL composition researchers and practitioners to conduct numerous empirical research studies in determining effective ways of helping ESL students cope with the difficulty they have in writing acceptable academic prose. One of the various attempts ESL composition researchers have made to achieve such a research goal is through comparative writing research or, in other terms, contrastive rhetoric (Kaplan, 1966).

Comparative ESL writing researchers have attempted to examine the distinct features of English prose written by non-native speakers of English compared to prose written by native speakers of English. One of the general assumptions underlying comparative writing research is that a comparison of written texts made by two groups of different language backgrounds may provide ESL writing researchers and practitioners with insightful clues for devising effective instructional strategies to help ESL learners "promote

Western traditions of academic writing" (McKay, 1994, p. 75).

According to a report of The Chronicle of Higher Education (1994), there are 28,520 Korean students studying in U.S. colleges and universities. This number ranks Korea as the fifth largest country whose students are currently studying in the U.S., following China, India, Japan, and Taiwan. In addition, the fact that there are several million Korean students studying English in Korea encourages us to examine the importance of the teaching of writing in English for Korean students.

To date, a great deal of research in second language acquisition has been done to investigate how Korean ESL/EFL students acquire English. However, when compared to more rigorous research in other areas such as reading and communicative competence, it is certainly not an overstatement to say that the area of ESL/EFL writing research for Korean students is still in its infancy. Such a phenomenon may have been due to a "reading-oriented" English education in Korea. Since the early 1980s, despite Korean-English educators' recognition of the limitations in the traditional grammar-translation instructional method, developing reading competence has been the single most important emphasis in English classrooms in Korea. Many Korean-English educators still believe that teaching written English is a less critical component of English competence.

Thus, writing competence can logically follow as a corollary of other language competencies such as reading and speaking. In fact, with such educational backgrounds, Korean ESL/EFL students appear to have more difficulty in writing adequate academic prose in English.

Some ESL composition researchers (Chang, 1983; Choi, 1988a, 1988b; Eggington, 1987; and Ok, 1991) reveal that there are significant and distinct rhetorical differences between English prose and Korean prose, which are mainly due to culturally different thought patterns of the two language groups. In general, they justify that such rhetorical differences result in the distinct differences in English prose written by native Korean speakers and that written by native English speakers.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the present study was to compare any differences or similarities found in English prose written by native speakers of Korean and by native speakers of English. In short, this research study consisted of three goals as follows:

1. Identifying and comparing the differences in textual features found in the essays written in English by native speakers of English and by native speakers of Korean;

2. Analyzing their differences from the linguistic, educational, and cultural backgrounds of these two groups; and
3. Providing some pedagogical suggestions for helping Korean ESL/EFL students improve their written-English proficiency as required in universities and colleges in English-speaking countries.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Based on the assumption that Korean ESL/EFL learners have not been well trained in English composition but instead have been trained in traditional Korean rhetorical patterns, the present researcher of this study examined what differences existed in English essays written by Korean students compared to those written by American students. In the present study, the linguistic features found in Korean students' English prose were quantitatively compared with American students' English prose and then were analyzed descriptively.

To learn what contrastive differences existed in English prose written by native speakers of Korean and native speakers of English, the researcher used Reid's (1988) contrastive research as a framework for analyzing the data collected in the present study. In her contrastive rhetoric research in many languages (Arabic, Chinese,

English, and Spanish), Reid modified and used the Writer's Work Bench Stylefiles (1980, 1982, 1983), a computer text-analysis software program which was originally developed by AT&T Bell Laboratories and further elaborated upon by a Colorado State University team (1984), to analyze the differences in English prose written by native speakers of different languages.

### **Research Questions**

Using Reid's (1988) variables for text-analysis, the present research was designed to examine the following questions:

1. What differences or similarities exist in English prose written by Korean students and American students in terms of discourse fluency variables such as: 1) average sentence length; 2) percent of short sentences; 3) percent of complex sentences; and 4) percent of subject openers?
2. What differences or similarities exist in English prose written by Korean students and American students in terms of lexical variables such as: 5) average word length; 6) percent of content words; 7) percent of nouns; 8) percent of adjectives; and 9) percent of passive voice verbs?
3. What differences or similarities exist in English prose

written by Korean students and American students in terms of cohesion variables such as: 10) percent of pronouns; 11) percent of prepositions; 12) percent of conjunctions; and 13) percent of subordinate conjunction openers?

4. What differences or similarities exist in English prose among different levels of writing proficiency: high-level of American students, middle-level of American students, low-level of American students, high-level of Korean students, middle-level of Korean students, and low-level of Korean students on the thirteen variables?
5. Are there any patterns of language characteristics found in English prose between the same-level writers of proficiency of the two groups on the thirteen variables?
6. Are there any other factors besides the thirteen variables which affected the quality of students' writings if significant differences were not found in English prose between Korean students and American students in terms of the thirteen variables?

### **Significance of the Study**

Despite a great deal of attention devoted to helping Korean ESL/EFL learners improve their overall English

proficiency, there is a dearth of research in the field of ESL writing for the Korean students. Some research, which dealt with Korean ESL/EFL learners' writing, has investigated how Korean is different from English in terms of discourse styles. Other studies have attempted to explore what writing developmental phases Korean ESL/EFL learners pass through in the process of developing their English writing skills. And still other research examined what types of errors Korean ESL/EFL learners make in writing in English.

Surprisingly enough, however, there are few studies which have examined the differences in English prose on the same topic written by native Korean speakers and by native English speakers. No research to date has ever attempted to show, generally speaking, how different Korean ESL learners' written texts are from native English speakers' written texts.

As an EFL writing teacher, the researcher has been interested in knowing what limitations Korean ESL/EFL learners have in writing in English. The present study was initiated and designed to investigate the comparative differences found in English prose between Korean students and American students to suggest clues for coping with the difficulties Korean students experience in English writing. Analyzing the differences will show some significant characteristics found in English prose written by Korean ESL

writers. Furthermore, it is hoped that the results of the present study will identify some procedures for devising effective instruction methods to help Korean ESL/EFL students improve their competence in writing an adequate academic prose in English.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This research investigation had some limitations as follows:

1. Only foreign students, whose native language was Korean, were involved in this research study.
2. This research investigation was restricted to college students.
3. This research investigated the differences in written texts. Thus, the results of this research study may not necessarily be generalizable to include other language skills such as reading, listening, and speaking.
4. The Korean subjects who participated in this research study were restricted only to Korean ESL students who were studying at the University of Tennessee/Knoxville and at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

### **Definition of Terms**

**American students:** Students who are U.S. citizens whose

first language is English, and whose education was done primarily in U.S. academic institutions where English is the primary medium of instruction and communication. The term is interchangeably used with **Native speakers of English** or **English speakers** in the present study.

**Communicative competence:** This term refers to both knowledge of linguistic rules and knowledge of how these rules are used to communicate meanings (Hymes, 1971).

**Contrastive analysis:** A method of research in the field of second language acquisition that views second language (L2) errors as the result of differences between the learner's first language and the target or second language (Ellis, 1985).

**Contrastive rhetoric:** A method of research in ESL composition that compares English prose written by native speakers of English with that of non-native speakers of English. In the present study, this term is interchangeably used with **comparative writing study**.

**EFL:** English as a foreign language refers to English taught in a culture where English is not the primary language spoken.

**Error analysis:** A research approach in the field of second language acquisition that involves a series of procedures of collecting samples of learner language,

identifying the errors in the sample, describing these errors, classifying them according to their hypothesized causes, and evaluating their seriousness (Ellis, 1985).

**ESL:** English as a second language refers to English taught in a culture where English is the primary language spoken.

**Expository prose:** Writing that has as its objective to explain and to inform; a relatively impersonal form of discourse (Reid, 1988).

**First language:** The term is interchangeably used with **native language** in the present study.

**Foreign language:** Language that a language learner, who has already acquired his/her first language, studies in an environment or in a community where the language is not a dominant, mainstream medium of communication.

**Korean students (learners, speakers):** Students whose nationality and first language is Korean and for whom both primary and secondary education was completed in Korean academic institutions in Korea.

**L1:** First language.

**L2:** Second language.

**Level of writing proficiency:** All the writings from the subjects in this research study were graded holistically from 6 (highest score) to 1 (lowest score):

- 1) High-level (students whose writing score is 5 or 6);
- 2) Middle-level (students whose writing score is 3 or 4);
- 3) Low-level (students whose writing score is 1 or 2).

**Paradigm shift:** A fundamental change in a basic philosophy, assumption, and methodology.

**Prose:** Non-rhymed and non-narrative writing.

**Second language:** Language that a language learner, who has already acquired his/her first language, studies in the community where the language is a dominant, mainstream medium of communication.

**SLA:** Second language acquisition.

**Target language:** Second or foreign language that a language learner studies with some specific learning purpose.

**Thirteen variables for written text analysis:** Since Reid's (1988) contrastive rhetoric research provided a framework for the present research study, her definitions of variables were basically used in the present research study without changing her original definitions (Reid, 1988, pp. 174-175).

- 1) **average sentence length:** the total number of words in a single student essay, divided by the total number of sentences in that essay.
- 2) **percent of short sentences:** the total number of sentences in a single student essay that are five words shorter than the average sentence length, divided by the total number of sentences in the essay.
- 3) **percent of complex sentences:** the total number of sentences in a single student essay that are comprised of one independent clause, with all its attendant modifiers, including one or more subordinate clauses, divided by the total number of sentences in the essay.

**4) percent of subject openers:** the total number of sentences in a single student essay that begin with a noun or pronoun, divided by the total number of sentences in the essay.

**5) average word length:** the total number of letters in a single student essay, divided by the total number of words.

**6) percent of nouns:** the total number of nouns, divided by the total number of words in a single student essay.

**7) percent of adjectives:** the total number of adjectives, divided by the total number of words in a single student essay.

**8) percent of content words:** the total number of "content" words, divided by the total number of words in a single student essay. Content words contain the meaning of the text rather than merely the structure of the text. Therefore, all the articles, auxiliary verbs (including the "BE" verb), conjunctions, and preposition are not counted. Content words include nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives.

**9) percent of passive voice verbs:** the total number of passive voice verbs, divided by the total number of verbs in a single student essay.

**10) percent of pronouns:** the total number of personal and demonstrative pronouns, divided by the total number of words in a single student essay.

**11) percent of conjunctions:** the total number of simple coordinate conjunctions (i.e., and, but, yet, for, so, or, thus, therefore), divided by the total number of words in a single student essay.

**12) percent of subordinate conjunction openers:** the total number of sentences in a single student essay that begin with subordinate conjunctions (i.e., when, while, which, before, after, because, since, although, even though, until, unless, if), divided by the total number of sentences in a single student essay.

**13) percent of prepositions:** the total number of prepositions, divided by the total number of words in a single student essay.

## **Organization of the Research Study**

This study is organized into five chapters, a list of references and appendices.

Chapter I is the introductory chapter and includes the following major components: an introduction of other studies on contrastive rhetoric research, the purpose of the study, a statement of the problem, the research questions, the limitations of the study, the definitions of the term, and the organization the study.

Chapter II is a review of the literature relevant to this research study.

Chapter III includes an explanation about subjects, elicitation topic, data collection, procedures for text analysis, and instrumentation.

Chapter IV presents the analyses of the data that were collected in this study.

Chapter V includes a summary of this study and offers major conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future research.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

This chapter reviews the literature pertinent to understanding how the present research study on the comparison of English compositions between native speakers of Korean and native speakers of English has been conceptually framed. The first section reviews some major paradigm shifts in the area of teaching English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) during the last decades. The second section reviews the attempts made in ESL composition research with the shifts of methodological trends in the nature of ESL learning and teaching. The third section reviews some comparative ESL writing research studies conducted on Korean subjects. The final section reviews the current Korean EFL composition instructions, pointing out some limitations that the traditional teacher-centered approach has exerted upon Korean students of English composition.

#### **Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language**

With the advent of TESOL (Teachers of English to the Speakers of Other Languages) in 1966 and its first publication of the TESOL QUARTERLY in 1967, came the notable

articulation and willingness of ESL researchers and practitioners to explore productive instructional methods to learn and teach English as a second/foreign language more effectively and efficiently. As many researchers (Celce-Murcia, 1991; Davis-Wiley, 1993; Larsen-Freeman, 1986; Nunnan, 1991; Ommagio, 1986; and Richards & Rodgers, 1992) show, ESL/EFL education has experienced an "explosive evolution" in its methodologies and underlying tenets during this century. Simply put, the major changes of the perspectives on second/foreign language instruction which have occurred to date in this century are (a) the behaviorist (scientific or stimulus-response) approach; (b) the cognitive approach; (c) the comprehension approach; (d) the communicative competence; and (e) the proficiency-oriented approach. These major shifts in the approaches to language instruction have come together with several well-known language teaching methods that are in use today: the Audiolingual Method, the Silent Way, Total Physical Response, Communicative Language Teaching, the Natural Approach, Community Language Learning, and Suggestopedia.

### The Behaviorist Approach

The behaviorist approach, which viewed language learning as a stimulus-response process (Skinner, 1957) and led to the development of the Audiolingual Method (Fries,

1945; Lado, 1964), represents the first attempt by U.S. linguists to influence the teaching of modern second/foreign languages. The basic assumption of this approach to language instruction is that language learning is by habit-formation. Thus, language learners are required to repeat and memorize the target language rules and patterns.

However, the proliferation of research findings which observed and compared the differences in language acquisition between children and adults has caused language researchers and practitioners to believe that humankind's language acquisition is not necessarily a habit-formation process. Such questions on the nature of the behaviorist approach to language acquisition have resulted in different views on humankind's language acquisition. One of the major approaches that criticized the limitations of the behaviorist approach to humankind's language pedagogy is a cognitive approach.

### The Cognitive Approach

The Cognitive Approach, which was further developed by Chomsky (1959) in his reaction to Skinner's (1957) behavioristic approach to language learning, encouraged second/foreign language researchers and practitioners to pay keen attention to developing human beings' innate language ability. This cognitive approach to language instruction,

which was more fully developed by cognitive psychologists (Jackbovits, 1968; Miller & Buckhout, 1973), views language learning as rule-governed behavior rather than habit formation. Proponents for the cognitive approach to language teaching believe that the study of children's native language acquisition process provides them with insightful clues to second language learning.

As Davis-Wiley (1993, p. 13) states, in the 1960s and the 1970s this approach led to the "expiration" of some foreign language teaching methods that were based on the behavioristic view of language learning. Since the influence of the cognitive approach upon the study of children's language acquisition has been so powerful over the last decades, many various instructional strategies have been devised to apply the basic principles of children's language acquisition into second/foreign language classrooms. The following comprehension and communicative approaches are good examples of instructional methods influenced by the cognitive approach.

### The Comprehension Approach

The Comprehension Approach (Winitz, 1981) represents attempts by many language methodologists working in the U.S. during the 1970s and 1980s to recreate the first language

acquisition experience for second/foreign language learners. The major assumption of this approach is that language comprehension is primary and it should, thus, precede language production. Celce-Murcia (1991) shows that proponents of this approach have the view that comprehension can be best taught initially by delaying production in the target language while encouraging the learner to use meaningful nonverbal responses to demonstrate comprehension on the target language. They also believe that a teacher's correction of student errors is unnecessary and even counterproductive, since they feel that errors will gradually self-correct as learners are exposed to more complex, rich, and meaningful input in the target language.

As briefly reviewed above, the comprehension approach has brought new instructional methods in foreign/second language classrooms different from some traditional approaches, which were based on the behaviorist view of humankind's language acquisition. This comprehension approach has been further elaborated with the developments of communicative approaches to help foreign/second language learners improve their oral proficiency in the target language.

### The Communicative Approach

The communicative approach, which was first initiated by Hymes (1972; 1974), views language as an instrument of communication. Gumperez & Hymes (1972) refer to communicative competence as what a speaker needs to know to communicate effectively in culturally significant settings. Proponents of this approach claim that communication is the goal of language instruction and that language instruction should be content-based, meaningful, contextualized, and discourse-based rather than sentence-based (Celce-Murcia, 1991). This approach views the teacher as a facilitator or supporter for effective communication.

### The Proficiency-Oriented Approach

Closely related to the Communicative Competence Approach is the Proficiency-Oriented Approach, which was developed by the U.S. second/foreign language researchers in the 1980s (Davis-Wiley, 1993). This approach, based on the American Council on the Teaching Foreign Languages' (ACTFL) Provisional Proficiency Guidelines (1981), rates language learners' proficiency from Novice, to Intermediate, to Advanced, and to Superior. As Davis-Wiley (1993) states, "one of the most dynamic components of this new measure of proficiency is the specific language function statements

describing one's level of function, content, and accuracy" (p. 14) in "a real-world application of language" (Moeller, 1992, p. 32).

As chronologically traced and briefly reviewed above, the changes in perspectives on language learning and teaching occurred during the past, especially the paradigm shifts in foreign/second language pedagogy that have been taken place since the foundation of the TESOL in 1966. Its first publication of the TESOL QUARTERLY in 1967 has greatly impacted every aspect of second/foreign language study. Simply put, such changes in the perspectives on language instruction have resulted in the following significant shifts in the foci of second/foreign language study:

1. a shift from viewing the learner as a passive recipient to an actively involved participant;
2. a shift from viewing the teacher as a knowledge carrier to a facilitator or supporter of communication;
3. a shift of focus on language form from a formal system to a functional system;
4. a shift of a focus on learning from acquiring forms to acquiring meanings;
5. a shift from acquiring formal grammar knowledge to developing communication skills.

These changes in the theoretical paradigms of language learning and language teaching have led to a wide variety of

changes in virtually all aspects of ESL instruction including reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Such paradigm shifts in the nature of ESL instruction as reviewed above have, in subsequence, encouraged many ESL teachers to attempt many various instructional strategies different from the past. The next section reviews what changes have been caused, particularly in the area of ESL writing instruction, by the paradigm shifts in the nature of foreign/second language learning.

#### **Development of the Teaching of Second Language Composition**

With the changes in the nature of language and language learning and teaching in the past, the field of second/foreign language writing pedagogy has passed through notable paradigm shifts in basic assumptions toward the nature of writing and writing tasks. As shown in much research of surveying the development of the teaching of writing in ESL classrooms (Carson & Nelson, 1994; Johns, 1990; Krapels, 1990; Kroll, 1990; Leki, 1991, 1992, 1993; Leki & Carson, 1994; MacGowan-Gilhooly, 1991; Nelson & Murphy, 1993a, 1993b; Raimes, 1983, 1985, 1987, 1991; Reid, 1988, 1992; Richards, 1990; Rivers, 1990; Silva, 1990, 1993; Silva, Reichelt, & Lax-Farr, 1994), we can observe the proliferation of competing articulations and the willingness to try any methodology appropriate for developing writing

skills.

During the past three decades in particular, "the field of the teaching of ESL composition has expanded significantly" (Reid, 1987, p. 17) in terms of both quality and quantity of research on the topic. However, there has not been any research completed to examine whether today's ESL students' actual writing abilities and skills have significantly improved compared to that of ESL students three decades ago.

Reflecting upon the changes in second/foreign language study over the past three decades, two general trends occurring in the field of the teaching of ESL writing can be observed. One is a shift from the focus on teaching grammar (i.e., sentence level pattern-drills, fill-in-the blank, style, correct usage, and forms) to the focus on writing activities per se (i.e., writing ability, authenticity, creativeness, content-based, audience-expectation, and readability). Until the 1960s and 1970s and even to present day, the focus on teaching grammar has been one of the most widely used instructional approaches to teaching ESL writing. Thus, second/foreign language writing has long been equated with teaching grammar. This grammar-focused writing method called the "Product-Oriented Approach" has been the offspring of the Behaviorist Approach (audiolingual method and grammar-translation method) to language instruction. However, in the 1970s, some researchers (Emig, 1971;

Lawrence, 1972; Zamel, 1976) began to indicate the limitations of the Product-Oriented Approach to the teaching of writing. As shown in Raimes' (1991) survey of the ESL writing history, "in place of accuracy and pattern came process, making meaning, invention, and multiple drafts" (p. 409) in the teaching of writing. The 1980s saw more developments and implementations of learning and teaching methods based on the Process-Oriented Approach (Blanton, 1987; Cumming, 1989; Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Krapels, 1990; Liebman-Kleine, 1986; Raimes, 1985, 1987; Rivers, 1990; Russo, 1990; Zamel, 1982, 1983).

During the 1990s, the instruction of ESL writing did not differ greatly from the 1980s. Many journal articles and textbooks of ESL writing published in the 1990s showed that the Process-Oriented Approach, which attracted strong attention from the majority of ESL writing instructors in the 1980s, still provided the ESL instructors with the major frameworks in designing the writing activities in their classrooms. Process-approach's emphasis on learners' writing activities per se in the 1980s and 1990s led to a variety of new instructional strategies such as journal writing, free writing, personal writing, and portfolio assessment.

In discussing "writing as a linguistic process," Mayher (1983) maintains as follows:

..."the best way to understand and encourage interaction between the child's growing linguistic system and his or her emerging ability to write is to see the latter as a developmental process, which first emphasizes fluency, then clarity, and finally correctness" (p. 4).

The reason fluency is emphasized first is that directing attention to it as the first stage can build a sense of comfort, confidence, and control in the growing writer. Zamel (1987) also argues that if fluency is focused upon first, letting students write about what they want to instead of what they have to, they will be able to describe their personal experience, express their views, convey their thoughts, and discover new ideas through writing spontaneously.

### The Content-Based Instruction

With the popularity of the Process-Oriented Approach in the teaching of writing came content-based writing instruction in ESL classrooms. This approach emerged in reaction to the limitations of the process-oriented approach in helping prepare ESL students to successfully perform their studies at post secondary institutions. This trend of content-based writing instruction has led to the development of other writing instructional approaches such as English for Academic Purpose (EAP), English for Specific Purpose (ESP), English for Science and Technology (EST), English for Limited Proficiency (ELP), and Writing across the Curriculum

(WAC). Such corollaries of content-based instruction as EAP, ESP, EST, and ELP developed as a result of reflecting upon ESL learners' particular need. The late 1980s and the 1990s saw a proliferation of research on those approaches in ESL writing instruction (Currie, 1993; Horowitz, 1986a, 1986b; Jenkins, Jordan, & Weiland, 1993; Leki, 1989, 1991; Leki & Carson, 1994; Raimes, 1992; Reid, 1989; Shih, 1986; Silva, 1993).

#### From the Teacher-Centered to the Learner-Centered

The other general trend in ESL writing instruction which occurred over the past three decades was a shift of the focus of classroom activities from being teacher-centered to being learner-centered. The change of focus in second/foreign classrooms from being the traditional teacher-centered emphasis to being learner-centered has increased ESL learners' awareness of participation in learning. This transition has influenced second/foreign language researchers and practitioners to believe that second/foreign language learners can develop their communicative competence by actively participating in learning activities. Krashen (1982, 1985) and other researchers (Brown, 1980; Ellis, 1985; Gardner, 1979; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991) have indicated that learners' affective factors such as self-esteem, self-confidence,

motivation, belief, perception, and anxiety play crucially important roles in developing second language proficiency. Consequently, this transition from the teacher-centered to the learner-centered has led to new approaches in teaching ESL writing. Above all, ESL practitioners and researchers have come to recognize, as Russo (1990) states, that "writing is not necessarily a solitary activity on the part of the author but can be an intense interaction, involving the instructor, other students, and individuals outside of the formal classroom setting" (p. 83). This change of the nature about writing and writing activity has caused such new concepts about writing instructional methods as collaboration, group writing, community writing, peer response group, writing conference with instructor. Study after study (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Kroll, 1990; Leki, 1993; Mayher, 1983; Nelson & Murphy, 1993a, 1993b; Raimes, 1991; Reid & Powers, 1993; Sheppard, 1993; Spear, 1988; Tudor, 1993) have shown that in effective student response groups of student-centered classrooms, student learning becomes richer, more exciting, and more long-lasting than in teacher-centered classrooms. As Silva (1990) mentions, in student-centered writing classrooms, the learner is not simply a manipulator of previously learned language structure, and furthermore, the instructor is also not simply an editor or proofreader but rather a counselor, facilitator or supporter of developing students' ideas.

Certainly, it is true that the change in theory and philosophy on the nature about language and language learning has brought a new relationship between teacher and students and a new role and responsibility different from the ones in traditional teacher-centered ESL writing classrooms.

Simply put, the changes of the foci taken place in ESL writing pedagogy over the past three decades can be summarized as follows:

1. a shift from form (grammar) to content (function, meaning);
2. a shift from solitary individual activity to collaborative interaction;
3. a shift from sentence level writing to whole text level writing;
4. a shift from language-focused activities to learner-centered tasks;
5. a shift from developing general writing skills to developing specific skills to meet particular needs;
6. a shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered; and
7. a shift from writer-centered to reader-centered.

Even though the field of ESL writing pedagogy has experienced such paradigm shifts up to this point as mentioned above, the changes of the foci do not mean that

certain writing instructional methods have disappeared. It is certain that some instructional methods such as traditional pattern-drill instructional strategy have been diminished. However, as Celce-Murcia (1991a, p. 412) states, those various approaches to the teaching of writing to ESL learners as reviewed above are widely used together in the present 1990s.

### **Comparative Research in ESL Writing**

With such shifts over the past decades in viewing the nature of language and language learning, ESL researchers and practitioners have also made many rigorous attempts to devise theoretically, practically appropriate methods to teach English as a second/foreign language in the most efficient way possible. One of the results is Comparative (Contrastive) Research. This research paradigm generally falls into three categories: (1) comparison between and among English and other languages; (2) comparison between native English speakers' English and non-native English speakers' English, and (3) comparison between non-native English speakers' English and their native languages. As some authorities of this research area state clearly (Kaplan, 1988; Reid, 1988; Silva, 1993), the goal of Comparative Rhetoric Research is fundamentally pedagogical. In other words, comparative rhetoricians have assumed that

their empirical research findings could be crucial "to comprehending and addressing ESL writers' special needs" (Silva, p. 660) and be essential if "ESL teachers are to help non-native English speakers write clearer, more successful English prose and to assist them in understanding and adapting to the expectations of their U.S. academic audiences" (Reid, p. 21).

Most comparative rhetoricians credit Kaplan (1966) as the first proponent of comparative rhetoric. It is true that Kaplan first defined Comparative (in his word, Contrastive) Rhetoric in his Cultural Patterns in Intercultural Education, which played a pioneering role in comparative rhetoric research studies among different languages. However, the origins of Comparative Rhetoric Research of ESL writing can also be traced to the Contrastive Analysis Approach (CAA), which was fully developed by Fries (1945) and became a popular research method of second language acquisition (SLA) researchers in the 1940s through the 1960s. As made clear by Lado (1957), one of the most influential researchers of this area, CAA started from the pedagogic assumption that "the teacher who has made a comparison of the foreign language with the native language of the students will better know what their real problems are and can provide for information solving the problems" (Ellis, 1985, p. 22).

CAA was based on behaviorist learning theory which

views language learning as a habit formation process. As Ellis (1985) points out, CAA was developed in order to predict the areas of difficulty that learners with specific L1s would experience. Thus, the CAA proponents believe that classroom activities in foreign/second language classrooms should be designed to provide massive practice to eliminate the chance of errors induced by first language interference. However, despite its groundbreaking insights into second/foreign language research, CAA had been challenged by many researchers (Dulay & Burt, 1973; Wardhaugh, 1970) because of its limitations in fully investigating the language acquisition process of second language learners.

CAA in the field of ESL instruction was then modified to the Error Analysis Approach (EAA), which was a theoretically more advanced and valid approach to the study of SLA than CAA. EAA was considered by ESL researchers to be a more developed research paradigm because it dealt with real languages produced by the second language learners. The major difference between these two research paradigms is that EAA, which was mostly systemized by Corder (1967; 1971), sees language learners' errors as a developmental process to provide L2 teachers with information for devising the most efficient way to teach the target language. Unlike EAA, the goal of CAA is to identify the differences between language learners' native language and their target language and practice the differences repeatedly to prevent them from

making errors in learning the target language.

As briefly reviewed above, CAA, EAA, and Kaplan's study of intercultural communications appear to have affected ESL writing researchers and practitioners to attempt to enhance more rigorous research in the field of ESL writing. The 1980s and 1990s saw a plethora of more rigorous studies of comparative writing. To develop a clear understanding of the distinct nature of L2 writing, Silva (1993) collects and examines the comparative writing research conducted by ESL writing researchers over the past three decades. As shown in Appendix A, by categorizing and examining 72 reports of empirical research comparing L1 and L2 writing, Silva shows which distinct features L2 writing generally has in terms of composing processes and features of written texts such as fluency, accuracy, quality of effect contents, and structure (discoursal, morphosyntactic, and lexicosemantic). Overall, the findings of Silva's report, that examined past ESL writing research in order to understand the distinct nature of L2 writing, indicate what types of learning and teaching strategies ESL writing researchers and practitioners are able to devise, and what types of research they should elaborate upon to enhance this area of research.

On the other hand, in conducting comparative writing research, some (Leki & Carson, 1994; McKay, 1993; Spack, 1988) have raised the question of what ESL composition goals should be in terms of initiating ESL students into the

academic community. Spack makes it clear that "the role of L2 composition educators is to help students master the language and culture of the university; the role of the university writing teacher is to initiate students into the academic discourse community" (1988, p.30). McKay (1993), while surveying a good deal of L2 composition research, assumes that "it is the responsibility of L2 composition educators to promote Western traditions of academic writing" (p. 75). However, he cautions that ESL writing teachers must strive to understand ESL learners' unique characteristics that inform academic discourse in various cultures, keeping in mind that each one reflects different ways of approaching and sharing knowledge. For Leki and Carson (1994), since "ability to write well is integral to academic success" (p. 83), helping ESL students improve their writing skills has been one of the primary institutional goals of most of ESL programs in U. S. higher academic institutions over the past two decades. Therefore, the recognition of the importance of writing in achieving academic success has led ESL writing researchers and practitioners in the 1990s to conduct more rigorous research concerning comparative writing between non-native English speakers and native English speakers. One of the frequent attempts conducted in the comparative ESL writing research studies is to understand the major characteristics of L2 writing and ESL writers' special needs.

The following Chinese proverb, originated by a military strategist in ancient China, seems to more clearly indicate the roles and responsibilities of current ESL writing researchers and practitioners:

知皮知己 百战百承

The English translation of this proverb is that "you can win 100 times out of 100 battles if you know both yourself and your counterpart(s)." Even if the proverb may have been overgeneralized by this researcher in a different context from that of the ancient Chinese, ESL writing researchers and practitioners seem to be able to deduce some wisdom from the proverb. Simply put, ESL writing teachers need to be sensitive to and know the sociocultural, rhetorical, and linguistically distinct nature of both English and the ESL student's native language if they hope to be in a better position to help their ESL students improve their writing skills.

#### **Comparative ESL Writing Studies on Korean Subjects**

Much research has been conducted on the nature of Korean ESL learners' English. However, most of it has attempted to examine structural differences between English and Korean. It may not be an overstatement to say that the Chomskian revolution in linguistics has led many Korean ESL researchers to pay more attention to Chomsky's linguistic

theory than to Krashen's second language theory, even in the field of ESL writing studies. Such an academic atmosphere in which Chomskian followers have led the English education in Korea over the past two decades has naturally affected most of Korean ESL researchers to pay more attention to the theoretical aspects of English language study. This is one of the reasons why the number of studies of Korean ESL writing is smaller than any of the other research areas on the subject.

There were only a few studies on Korean ESL writing until the 1970s. Since the 1980s, some Korean ESL researchers (Ahn, 1990; Choi, 1988; Hwang, 1991; Jung, 1993; Kim, 1983; Min, 1989; Ok, 1991) have turned their attention to the field of comparative writing research between Korean and English.

In the rest of this chapter, several research studies that have been conducted for identifying the linguistic characteristics Korean students of English showed in their compositions are reviewed.

Ahn (1990) investigated errors and error types in English composition written by Korean students. His research findings showed that Korean students' lexical choice errors were less comprehensible than either sentence- or discourse-level errors compared to native speakers of English.

Choi (1988) compared textual coherence in English texts

and Korean texts. Her study revealed that Korean writers and American writers shared the following types of linguistic strategies in developing their ideas: connectiveness, modal verbs and tense, and specific types of lexical items.

Choi's study also showed that Korean writers had different notions of text coherence from American writers and that these differences, which were closely related to their cultural background, influenced them to develop different types of text structure in their argumentative writings.

Hwang (1991) investigated the developmental processes of writing proficiency among Korean ESL students. Her study results indicated that as the extent of Korean students' exposure to English rhetoric through more practice increased, their writing proficiency also increased. In her study, Hwang revealed that the most frequent errors made by Korean ESL writers were omission of articles, wrong verb usage, and wrong choice of words.

By observing the revision processes of three advanced Korean ESL writers, Jung (1993) argued that revision was one of the most important components for his Korean subjects to improve the quality of their English writing. According to the results of his research, most linguistically competent Korean ESL writers had the similar revision processes as did native speakers of English, reading more, detecting, and diagnosing more while composing. He suggested that Korean ESL researchers dedicate more attention to English writing

revision pedagogy and research on the basis of the process-centered paradigm.

It is interesting to find out from his research results that even though Korean ESL students improve their writing skills through the revision processes, there are certain types of difficulty or linguistic error(s) they have when writing in English.

To identify and better understand the errors Korean students of English have in their writing commonly, Kim (1983) examined the types of errors (syntactic, morphosyntactic, lexicosemantic) in English composition written by Korean ESL writers. His analysis showed that when writing in English, his Korean subjects had much difficulty in (a) use of basic structural patterns, (b) vocabulary usage, (c) use of articles, conjunctions, prepositions and tenses, and (d) understanding the rhetorical organization of English.

On the other hand, some Korean ESL researchers have conducted experimental research on the development of effective instructional strategies to help their students improve their English composition proficiency. For example, Min (1989) investigated the relationship between Korean ESL students' perception of assignments in their English writing class and the quality of their English writing. The results of his study concluded that although an assignment in Korean ESL writing class played an important role in having the

students practice writing, it did not help them write much better than he expected. Statistically speaking, there was not a significant relationship identified between Korean ESL students' perception of assignments of English writing and the quality of their English writing. However, Min's study on writing assignments for Korean ESL students encourages us to conduct more rigorous efforts to examine what we can do to help the Korean ESL/EFL students improve their English composition skills.

In developing an effective and productive instructional method to teach English composition to Korean students, some researchers have tried to approach the differences between English and Korean from the perspectives of cultural and linguistic backgrounds of both language groups.

In his comparative writing research between Korean expository prose and English expository prose, Ok (1991) revealed that there were notable, contrastive differences between these two languages in terms of textual structure, theme markers, and assertive expressions. One of the differences found in his research was that English writers favored a three-unit textual structure (introduction-body-conclusion), whereas Korean writers generally preferred a four-unit textual structure (ki-sing-cen-kyel) which might cause native English speakers' difficulty in understanding Korean writers' prose. The explanation about the four-steps for developing ideas by Korean writers will be fully

examined in the Analysis of Rhetorical Patterns section in Chapter IV. His analysis also showed that Korean readers had much difficulty in understanding native English writers' essays and that such difficulty on the part of Korean readers was mainly caused by the differences in text structures between these two languages.

In addition to the comparative ESL writing research conducted by native Korean researchers, some studies on Korean ESL learners' writing have been done by ESL writing researchers whose native languages are not Korean. For example, Norton (1978) examined how the structure of Korean essays were developed differently from English ones. His research showed that in general, the main topic was developed inductively in Korean essays, but deductively in English essays.

By looking closely at the differences observed in written texts between Korean writers and English writers, Eggington (1987) also revealed that the majority of the Korean population were not familiar with a linear style of English prose and presented information in the more traditional non-linear style of Korean discourse style.

In addition to Norton and Eggington, some foreign researchers (Benson, Deming, Denzer, & Valeri-Gold, 1992; Campbell, 1987, 1990; Frodesen, 1991; Masterson, 1993; Myers, 1992; Scacella, 1984a, 1984b) have attempted to examine the differences between English and Korean.

The following section reviews what is going on in Korean EFL composition classrooms. It is necessary to review the current Korean EFL composition instructions since understanding the educational backgrounds, that Korean students of English experienced, provides some clues into understanding the linguistic characteristics found in English prose written by native Korean speakers different when compared to those written by native English speakers.

### **Current English Composition Instructions in Korea**

As noted earlier, the paradigm shift on approaches to ESL/EFL writing instruction has opened up new prospects for exploring composition. When the winds of these changes blow across the Korean peninsula, what will happen?

Most of the EFL teachers in Korea have been and are still holding onto the belief that writing is product-oriented. In a sense, writing is equated with grammar. Therefore, correctness (accuracy) is deemed as the most important thing measurable in grading compositions. Other aspects of composition such as ideas, organization, and logic are important, but they have not been considered to be the business of the EFL teachers. Instead, the burden rests upon the shoulders of high school teachers who teach writing in Korean. Underlying this idea is the assumption that EFL students have developed adequate abilities to write in

Korean, thus if they are taught English grammar and skills at college, they will be able to write well. And how well they write depends on their mastery of English grammar. This leads to another assumption that writing in English is simply a process of translating Korean into English.

In recent years, through frequent exchanges with American teachers, Korean practitioners have found that students seem to have responded rather positively to some foreign teachers who put emphasis on other aspects than correctness and adopted an open, student-centered pedagogy in teaching. Unfortunately, however, Korean teachers' realization of the change in teaching methods has not made them change their own traditional pedagogy. Otherwise, they tend to attribute foreign teachers' success to their mastery of the English language and cultural differences rather than to their pedagogy. Thus, foreign teachers' influence has not been able to bring about a similar perceptible paradigm shift in the Korean EFL arena.

Reports on the part of the teacher about students' not being confident or even fearful about writing are not uncommon at annual conferences of practitioners or in journals of foreign language teaching in Korea. No serious inquiry, however, has been made into the root cause of students' lack of confidence. Instead, attention has been drawn to the fact that English is not the native tongue of Korean students. Students are afraid to experiment with

ideas because they are not confident about accuracy, which has long been held to be an important criterion for evaluating writing. To infuse students with confidence, the teachers, therefore, need to focus on the mechanics of writing. Various drills ranging from spelling to sentence-combining should be constantly practiced. Paradoxically, however, the more stress the teacher lays on correctness, the less confident the students become. In fact, some students who are weak in grammar have developed a kind of "writing phobia." And worse, the more afraid they are to make mistakes, the more mistakes they tend to make. Other students would direct their attention to surface correction, ignoring the deep structure. Often, those who are creative and talented have suppressed the spark of inspiration for fear of being singled out for error-analysis.

Students in the Korean EFL situation fall within the category of "developing writers". Their ability to write in Korean, their native tongue, obviously surpasses their ability to write in English. In a sense, however, in learning English they are at a similar level of language development as children in a native language environment. But they are deprived of the abundant and contextualized exposure to language interaction to which native speakers are daily exposed. Also, they have already passed the optimal or critical age for language acquisition. How can we expect students at such level to produce flawless

compositions that are even difficult for native developmental writers to attain? It's no wonder that when the teacher focuses on the accuracy of the surface text, students decline to write.

Pointing out the misplaced emphasis on correctness (accuracy), however, does not mean Korean EFL students do not have to abide by the rules. The concern now is about the order of importance given to the three different stages involved in writing development. To put correctness first is to ask a child just learning to walk not to teeter. As is known to EFL teachers, there are errors that EFL students at all levels tend to make because of their native language interference. According to his experience as a composition teacher, this researcher feels that there are errors that freshmen make more frequently than sophomores, but those errors become increasingly infrequent or even disappear as students move up to higher levels. What's the point of asking students not to make errors that they inherently cannot avoid making? Moreover, is there any point in having a correct paper without clear content? Is correctness (accuracy) the sole goal of teaching writing in the Korean EFL situation?

The answer lies absolutely in the negative. Unfortunately, many Korean teachers of English have the misconception deeply-rooted in their minds. They have been working dogmatically to realize the goal. Students indeed

have learned how to present a rule-governed surface text, but that is not composition in its true sense. As writing is treated as a grammar-oriented course, students' potential in writing true composition is not tapped, but rather it is left wasted.

As briefly examined above, such educational backgrounds Korean students of English experienced must have influenced how they composed in English, which subsequently motivated the principal investigator to examine what difficulty or limitations Korean students of English had when they wrote academic essay in English.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter has reviewed previous research that provided the present research study with theoretical backgrounds on examining linguistic differences observed in the essays written in English by native speakers of English and by native speakers of Korean.

In reviewing the literature that the researcher deemed pertinent to this research study, his focus has been on the major changes which have taken place in the past toward the nature of effective teaching and learning strategies in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language (EFL/ESL) pedagogy and the influences that such paradigm shifts brought particularly to the area of comparative ESL

composition research.

As reviewed above, with the changes of such methodological trends in the ESL education as have occurred in the past decades, many contrastive rhetoricians have tried to better understand the difficulties non-native speakers of English have in writing their academic essays in English and to create effective, efficient teaching and learning methodologies to help the non-native speakers of English improve their written English proficiency. As mentioned earlier, however, the changes taking place in the Western hemisphere have not yet reached the Korean EFL composition classrooms. The third section of this chapter has reviewed some previous research on Korean subjects that shows Korean students of English have much difficulty in writing an appropriate academic essay in English because of their educational backgrounds in Korean-English classrooms.

In short, the findings of previous research on comparative ESL writing studies among different linguistic backgrounds have been consistent with one another in demonstrating that the writings written by non-native speakers of English have conspicuous linguistic characteristics different from those written by native speakers of English.

As noted in this chapter, the fact that the linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds of non-native English speakers affect their quality of English composition

encouraged the principal researcher to fully understand what differences or difficulties Korean students of English composition had when compared to native English writers. At the initial stage of this research study, therefore, the researcher assumed that the findings from this comparative writing research between native Korean speakers and native English speakers would provide him with some clues into devising some effective instructional methods and materials to help Korean students of English improve their English composition skills.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE AND METHODOLOGY

The two preceding chapters provided conceptual frameworks for this comparative composition study between native Korean speakers and native English speakers. Chapter I made it clear why this comparative composition study was initiated. Chapter II reviewed the literature relevant to supporting this research project on comparing the linguistic differences to be found in English prose written by these two groups. The literature review in Chapter II ensured that such a comparative composition like the present one was necessary to better assist Korean students of English to improve their English composition proficiency.

Before beginning to analyze the data, it is appropriate to explain who the participants were, how the writing samples were collected from them, and how the data were analyzed in the present study. Thus, this chapter first presents the demographic characteristics of the subjects who were involved in this study. Then, the elicitation writing topic that was selected for the subjects to compose is discussed. Finally, the procedures of data collection and analysis are explained.

## Subjects

Since this research study's focus was a direct comparison of English prose written by Korean speakers with that of English speakers, the present study needed to include both native Korean speakers and native English speakers.

The Korean group was selected from Korean students whose nationality and first language were both Korean and whose primary and secondary education was completed in Korean academic institutions in Korea. Other Korean students whose nationality was Korean but whose primary and secondary education was completed in foreign institutions inside or outside Korea, were excluded from the present study. Since the English proficiency of this latter group was expected to be near a native English speakers' level, the researcher assumed that the findings from them might decrease the validity of the present study to generalize the distinct characteristics of Korean ESL students' writing when compared to native English speakers' writing.

The English group in the present study was selected from American students who were U.S. citizens, whose first language was English, and whose education was completed in U.S. academic institutions where English was the dominant, primary medium of instruction.

To select subjects for this study, the principal

investigator contacted potential students on an individual basis by either visiting them directly or by telephoning them. The researcher first explained the purpose and significance of the study and asked them whether or not they would be willing to participate in the project. Based on their positive response, the researcher then sent them a consent letter (Appendix B) with the essay topic and writing directions for their writing task (Appendix C).

The primary sites for the selection of the Korean subjects were The University of Tennessee/Knoxville (UTK) and Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). From a potential total population of 150 Korean ESL students at UTK and IUP who satisfied the subject selection criteria mentioned above, 40 students were selected to participate in the present study. The primary site for selecting the English subjects was UTK and 42 American students sent their writing samples back to the researcher. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, the subjects who were involved in the present study represented a variety of demographic characteristics in terms of educational level and academic major.

For the present study, the principal investigator assumed that students of a higher education level write better than students of a lower education level (MacGowan-Gilhooly, 1991). Therefore, undergraduate students and graduate students were assigned to both Korean and American groups without screening or pretesting the subjects' writing

**Table 1**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Subjects (N=82)**  
**(Educational Level)**

| <b>KOREAN</b>        |                 | <b>AMERICAN</b>      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Undergraduate</b> | <b>Graduate</b> | <b>Undergraduate</b> | <b>Graduate</b> |
| <b>10</b>            | <b>30</b>       | <b>20</b>            | <b>22</b>       |

**Table 2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Subjects (N=82)**  
**(Majors Represented)**

| <b>KOREAN</b>  |                   | <b>AMERICAN</b> |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <b>Science</b> | <b>Humanities</b> | <b>Science</b>  | <b>Humanities</b> |
| <b>24</b>      | <b>16</b>         | <b>18</b>       | <b>24</b>         |

ability. The procedure of selecting and assigning the sample written texts for the direct comparison in the present study will be explained in detail in the Data Collection section in this chapter.

In selecting the subjects, other variables such as age, sex, marital status, and family backgrounds were not considered in the present study since there was no empirical research to show that these variables are either positively or negatively correlated with one's academic achievement at

the college and university level.

### **Elicitation Writing Topic**

Because the purpose of this study was to compare the differences in writing academic prose in English between native Korean speakers and native English speakers, several considerations were made in selecting an appropriate writing topic.

In her comparative composition study, Reid (1988, p. 39) states that the topic to be developed for contrastive rhetoric study among different language groups should avoid content with cultural bias, culture-bound vocabulary, and concepts that might penalize non-native speakers of English. Reid's topic selection criteria for comparative writing study between and among non-native speakers of English and native speakers of English are in line with those developed by the Test of Written English (TWE) specialists of Educational Testing Service (ETS). To evaluate the written English proficiency of non-native speakers of English who wish to study in colleges or universities in English-speaking countries, ETS introduced the TWE as a required component of the TOEFL test in 1986. To increase the degree of validity and reliability of the TWE test, the ETS TWE specialists considered many criteria in developing TWE topics. Some of their selection criteria such as the

following, were identified for selecting the essay question in the present study:

1. The topic should be accessible to examinees from a variety of linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds;
2. The task to be performed by examinees should be explicitly stated;
3. The wording of the prompt should be clear and unambiguous;
4. The task should not be biased, inflammatory, or misleading;
5. The task should not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any subgroup because of cultural differences (Test of Written English Guide, 1992, p. 7).

The ETS TWE specialists have developed writing topics that they deemed as typical and similar to those required for college and university course work in North America. Furthermore, since TWE topics were designed to measure examinees' ability to write lexically and syntactically adequate academic prose, the present researcher assumed that one of the TWE topics could be an appropriate writing topic for this comparative writing study. Based on this assumption, the researcher reviewed the four TWE sample essay questions administered by ETS (1992), carefully considering the topic selection criteria aforementioned. The

researcher then surveyed English composition teachers in the English department at The University of Tennessee/Knoxville, asking them to decide which essay question among the four would be the most appropriate one to test students' ability to write an academic expository prose required at colleges and universities (Appendix D).

Based on the above survey results, the following essay question was selected for comparative analysis in the present study:

**Inventions such as eyeglasses and sewing machines have had an important effect on our lives. Choose another invention that you think is important. Give specific reasons for your choice.**

### **Data Collection**

Generally speaking, in academic situations, excluding classroom-test situations, students usually are not controlled or supervised closely when writing their papers in terms of time and settings. Some ESL researchers (Reid, 1988) assume that students in a closely-controlled situation are most likely writing at their highest level of ability, given the conditions of time and settings. Although it may be true that students perform at their highest level in closely-controlled test time and settings, it may not be valid to generalize this assumption as a fact that the students in such controlled conditions always are able to

produce the highest level of writing. The latter generally requires the process of revision in which sufficient time is essential. Consequently, the final products students submit in test situations tend to be nothing but a first draft with few revisions or editions. In general, academic writing tasks are usually not spontaneous nor are students asked to submit their first draft when they are required to write formal academic prose.

In comparing written texts, the present study was not intended to examine the students' first drafts but rather their revised, edited, and polished writings. Therefore, the subjects involved in this research were not controlled or supervised at all in terms of writing time and settings. Instead, the students completed their writing tasks in untimed, comfortable environments.

In writing the essays in this study, Korean subjects were allowed to use a bilingual dictionary (English and Korean). However, they were not allowed to consult with anyone or ask a native English speaker's help.

The corpus of essays for this study was collected over a period of three months from the middle of January of 1995 to early March of 1995. As mentioned earlier, a total of 40 writing samples from the Korean group and 42 samples from the English-speaking group were collected for data analysis.

## **Procedure for Text Analysis**

The procedures for text analysis in this study consisted of four phases. During the first phase, all the writings written by the subjects were holistically scored by Dr. L. Bensel-Meyers, a composition specialist and director of freshman composition at the University of Tennessee/Knoxville, following the TWE scoring guide of ETS revised in February, 1990. Her expertise in college writing over the last decade has made her nationally recognized as a college composition expert. Furthermore, Dr. Bensel-Myers was quite familiar with the holistic score scales developed by the ETS when she rated the writing samples that were collected in the present study.

As shown below in Table 3, the TWE guide (1992) uses the following six scales in rating a paper from 6 representing the highest score to 1 representing the lowest score.

During the second phase, all the papers were divided into several subgroups for comparison between and among them. First, all the writing samples were divided into two subgroups based on the subjects' native language: Korean group and American group. Second, the writing samples from both Korean group and American group were separated into six subgroups based on their scores and language backgrounds: high level of Korean students (score 5-6), middle level of

**Table 3**  
**Score Scales for Rating a Writing**

- 
- Score 6:** Demonstrates clear competence in writing on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels, though it may have occasional errors.
- Score 5:** Demonstrates competence in writing on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels, though it will probably have occasional errors.
- Score 4:** Demonstrates minimal competence in writing on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels.
- Score 3:** Demonstrates some developing competence in writing, but it remains flawed on either the rhetorical or syntactic level, or both.
- Score 2:** Suggests incompetence in writing.
- Score 1:** Demonstrates incompetence in writing.
- 

(Test of Written English Guide, ETS, 1992, p. 23)

Korean students (score 3-4), low level of Korean students (score 1-2), high level of American students (score 5-6), middle level of American students (score 3-4), and low level of American students(score 1-2).

Each paper was then calculated by the researcher in terms of its textual features. Table 4 shows the 13 variables selected for the analysis of the corpus in the present comparative rhetoric study between Korean students and American students. The 13 variables shown in Table 4 were selected by Reid (1988) from the WWB. Stylefiles, a computer program for written text analysis, was originally

**Table 4**  
**Variables for Text Analysis**

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**Discourse Fluency Variables**

1. Average Sentence Length
2. Percent of Short Sentences
3. Percent of Complex Sentences
4. Percent of Subject Openers

**Lexical Variables**

5. Average Word Length
6. Percent of Content Words
7. Percent of Nouns
8. Percent of Adjectives
9. Percent of Passive Voices

**Cohesion Variables**

10. Percent of Pronouns
  11. Percent of Prepositions
  12. Percent of Conjunctions
  13. Percent of Subordinate Conjunction Openers
- 

developed by AT&T (1980) and further elaborated by a composition research team at the Colorado State University in 1984.

Following the statistical analysis for the mean differences between and among the subject groups, the similar pattern of language characteristics observed between the same levels of writing proficiency of the two language backgrounds was identified and interpreted.

During the third phase of data analysis, the differences in rhetorical patterns found in the essays between the two linguistic groups were discussed in some

detail beyond syntactic and lexical perspectives.

Finally, the results of the textual analysis in this research study will be concluded in Chapter V, along with some pedagogical suggestions for introducing a new paradigm of composition instruction to Korean English classrooms, particularly focusing on instructional methods and textbook selection criteria which are believed to help Korean ESL/EFL students improve their English writing proficiency.

### **Instrumentation**

In this comparative rhetoric research study, some inferential statistical formulae were needed to determine whether the differences in English prose between and among groups were statistically significant or not. SAS, a computer program for statistical calculations, was used to obtain the statistical analyses needed for the mean comparisons between and among the subject groups.

For example, Chi-Square was run to detect any association between the subjects' language backgrounds (English and Korean) and their writing scores (1-6). Since the initial probability level from this Chi-Square test was at  $p < .0000$ , the principal investigator was interested in comparing the differences in the 13 textual variables between and among subject groups.

In testing mean differences between and among the

subject groups in the present research study, two-types of statistical errors (Type I and Type II) were carefully considered before conducting the computerized statistic analysis. Lauer and Asher (1988) state in their composition research methodology that "it is generally not a good analytic procedure to perform a separate analysis of variance for each criterion variable without attempting to control Type I error rates" (p. 248).

The separate results of the 13 variables analyzed in the present study were not independent of one another in the sense that those variables were all associated with quality writing. In case of the composition research like this present one, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) is the most appropriate statistic method to control Type I errors that could occur in the present research.

The 13 variables for analysis were grouped as three sets: discourse fluency variables, lexical variables, and cohesion variables. A MANOVA was then run to test whether or not the mean differences in each set of variables between the whole Korean group and the whole American group, and among Korean high-level writers, Korean middle-level writers, Korean low-level writers, American high-level writers, American middle-level writers, and American low-level writers were statistically significant at  $p < .05$  level.

Since the results of the MANOVA indicated that there

were significant differences on some sets of variables between two language backgrounds (English and Korean) at  $p < .01$  level, an F-Test was run to test whether or not the mean difference in each variable and within each set of variables between the Korean subjects and the American subjects was statistically significant.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The present study was designed to detect any statistical differences in discourse fluency variation, lexical variation, cohesion variation, and rhetorical organization among the essays written in English by American students and Korean ESL students. In this chapter, the computerized statistical results of the data are presented, followed by a discussion of their interpretation. The first part of this chapter will present the relationship between the subjects' native languages and the quality of their writing rated by the holistic score scales from 1 (lowest score) to 6 (highest score) (Table 3). The second part will present what differences or similarities were found in Discourse Fluency Variables between and among subject groups. The third part will present the differences or similarities found in Lexical Variables. The fourth part will explain Cohesion Variables. In the final part of this chapter, the rhetorical patterns, which were co-occurred in the essays of each group and considered to be conspicuously different from each other, will be examined.

## Language Backgrounds and Writing Scores

The rating result for the total 82 subjects' essays, as shown in Table 5, was that the American students' writings were generally distributed in higher scores than those of the Korean students. The mean score of the American students' writing was 4.6 and the Korean students' mean score was 3.1 on a scale of 6. The difference in the frequency distribution of writing scores from the two subject groups compelled the researcher to test whether or not the language background variable and the writing score variable in the present study were related. The Chi-Square result in Table 6 indicated that the subjects' language backgrounds were statistically associated with the scores

Table 5  
Distribution of Writing Scores  
(Holistic Score 1-6)

|                   | Low<br>(score 1-2) | Middle<br>(score 3-4) | High<br>(score 5-6) |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| American Students | 2                  | 17                    | 23                  |
| Korean Students   | 14                 | 22                    | 4                   |
| Total<br>(N=82)   | 16                 | 39                    | 27                  |

they received for their writings. In other words, the Chi-Square result in Table 6 very strongly indicates that the students' use of English either as a native language or as a second/foreign language plays a significant role in influencing the quality of their essays when they wrote in English.

The initial Chi-Square result which established a statistically significant relationship between language backgrounds and quality of writing, corroborated the assumption that there would be certain differences on the text features of the essays between American students and Korean students.

To detect any difference or similarity on the 13 variables selected for the analysis of the essays between the two subject groups, the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used with a significance at the  $p < .05$  level. As shown in Table 7, the MANOVA result indicated that there existed statistically significant differences between the American students and the Korean students on Lexical Variables (average word length, percent of content words, percent of nouns, percent of adjectives,

Table 6  
Chi-Square Result for the Relationship  
between Language Backgrounds and Writing Scores

| <u>df</u> | <u>Chi-Square</u> Value | <u>Probability</u> |
|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 2         | 22.976                  | 0.000              |

**Table 7**

**Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) Results  
between American Students and Korean Students**

| <b>Variable</b>                            | <b>F-Value</b> | <b>Probability</b> |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>Discourse Fluency Variables:</b>        | <b>1.86</b>    | <b>0.13</b>        |
| 1. Average Sentence Length                 |                |                    |
| 2. Short Sentences (%)                     |                |                    |
| 3. Complex Sentences (%)                   |                |                    |
| 4. Subject Openers (%)                     |                |                    |
| <b>Lexical Variables:</b>                  | <b>3.36</b>    | <b>0.01</b>        |
| 5. Average Word Length                     |                |                    |
| 6. Content Words (%)                       |                |                    |
| 7. Nouns (%)                               |                |                    |
| 8. Adjectives (%)                          |                |                    |
| 9. Passive Voice Verbs (%)                 |                |                    |
| <b>Cohesion Variables:</b>                 | <b>3.82</b>    | <b>0.01</b>        |
| 10. Pronouns (%)                           |                |                    |
| 11. Prepositions (%)                       |                |                    |
| 12. Conjunctions (%)                       |                |                    |
| 13. Subordinate Conjunction<br>Openers (%) |                |                    |

and percent of passive voice verbs) and Coherence Variables (percent of pronouns, percent of prepositions, percent of conjunction, and percent of subordinate conjunction openers). The specific interpretations of the differences will be discussed in detail in the variable analysis sections of this chapter.

One interesting finding in Table 7 was that there was not a statistically significant difference between these two subject groups on Discourse Fluency Variables (average sentence length, percent of short sentences, percent of complex sentences, and percent of subject openers). The reason for the insignificance on these variables will also be examined in the Analysis of Discourse Fluency Variables section of this chapter.

Because some significant differences on lexical variables and cohesion variables were found in the essays of the American students and the Korean students, the researcher wanted to investigate whether or not there were certain patterns of language characteristics which co-occurred in the essays when the corpus was divided into subgroups according to their language backgrounds (English and Korean) and levels of writing proficiency (low, middle, and high): American-Low, American-Middle, American-High, Korean-Low, Korean-Middle, and Korean-High.

In order to identify any differences and test their statistical significance on the 13 variables among the six

groups, a MANOVA was run. The reason the researcher used MANOVA instead of ANOVA in calculating the multiple mean comparison among the six groups was due to the fact that, as shown in Table 5, the subject numbers of each group were small. Thus, there was a potentially strong possibility of containing a Type I error because of the small sample size. "In MANOVA, the criterion set of variables is essentially factored into a lesser number of their fundamental dimensions (three sets of variables in the present study), which are relatively independent of each other" (Lauer and Asher, 1988, p.248). In spite of such a careful consideration for a statistical method as mentioned above, the MANOVA results among the groups of American-High, American-Middle, American-Low, Korean-High, Korean-Middle, and Korean-Low, as shown in Table 8, indicated that there were not any significant differences among the six groups when they were subgrouped according to their language backgrounds and their writing scores and when their means in the 13 textual variables were compared to one another. Although there was not any statistically significant differences among the six groups (American-High, American-Middle, American-Low, Korean-High, Korean-Middle, and Korean-Low), certain patterns of language characteristics co-occurred in the essays of each group. Those patterns will be examined in more detail at the end of each of the Analysis of Variables section.

**Table 8**

**MANOVA Results of Language Backgrounds and  
Levels of Writing Proficiency:  
American-High, American-Middle, American-Low,  
Korean-High, Korean-Middle, and Korean-Low**

| <b>Variable</b>                            | <b>F-Value</b> | <b>Probability</b> |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>Discourse Fluency Variables:</b>        | <b>0.76</b>    | <b>0.63</b>        |
| 1. Average Sentence Length                 |                |                    |
| 2. Short Sentences (%)                     |                |                    |
| 3. Complex Sentences (%)                   |                |                    |
| 4. Subject Openers (%)                     |                |                    |
| <b>Lexical Variables:</b>                  | <b>1.22</b>    | <b>0.28</b>        |
| 5. Average Word Length                     |                |                    |
| 6. Content Words (%)                       |                |                    |
| 7. Nouns (%)                               |                |                    |
| 8. Adjectives (%)                          |                |                    |
| 9. Passive Voice Verbs (%)                 |                |                    |
| <b>Cohesion Variables:</b>                 | <b>1.11</b>    | <b>0.36</b>        |
| 10. Pronouns (%)                           |                |                    |
| 11. Prepositions (%)                       |                |                    |
| 12. Conjunctions (%)                       |                |                    |
| 13. Subordinate Conjunction<br>Openers (%) |                |                    |

#### **Analysis of Discourse Fluency Variables**

Four textual features were analyzed in terms of Discourse Fluency Variables to compare the essays of American students and Korean students: average sentence length, percent of short sentences, percent of complex sentences, and percent of subject openers. As shown in Table 7, the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)

result indicated that there was not any statistically significant difference in the four discourse fluency variables between these two subject groups.

Table 9 shows the statistical result of each variable from both subject groups. Even though the sample size was so small that the probability level was set at  $p < .20$  for accepting the difference as a meaningful or respectable value for a practical consideration, there was not any significant difference observed in the four discourse fluency variables between American students and Korean students.

In her contrastive rhetoric research among different language backgrounds among English, Chinese, Arabic,

**Table 9**  
**Mean Differences in Discourse Fluency Variables**  
**(F-Test Results)**

| Variable                   | <u>Mean</u>        |                  | F-Value | Prob. |
|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------|-------|
|                            | American<br>(n=42) | Korean<br>(n=40) |         |       |
| 1. Average Sentence Length | 18.44              | 17.33            | 0.89    | 0.35  |
| 2. Short Sentences (%)     | 26.75              | 26.96            | 0.01    | 0.94  |
| 3. Complex Sentences (%)   | 41.21              | 45.57            | 1.24    | 0.27  |
| 4. Subject Openers (%)     | 29.33              | 26.70            | 0.65    | 0.42  |

Spanish, Reid (1988) approached the statistically insignificant differences in all discourse fluency variables observed in the essays written in English by native English speakers and those written by native Spanish speakers, from cultural and linguistic perspectives. According to her analysis, the reason for the insignificant difference in discourse variables between these two groups was due to the fact that "Spanish is a language in the same language family as English, and shares with native speakers of English a western heritage" (p. 65). In the case of Korean and English in the present study, however, the insignificant differences in all four discourse fluency variables in their English essays between American students and Korean students had nothing to do with the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of these two languages. According to previously cited studies, native speakers of Korean and native speakers of English do not share any similarities in terms of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, these two different linguistic groups exhibited many more differences rather than similarities.

Probably, one of the reasons for explaining the statistically insignificant differences in discourse fluency variables between Korean students and American students in the present study is the perspective of educational backgrounds which the English and the Korean students had. All the Korean subjects who participated in the present

study were enrolling either as an undergraduate student or as a graduate student in a U.S. college and university when the data were collected for this study. When the data were surveyed, all the Korean students in the study either had already taken or were taking more than one freshmen English composition course (e.g., EN 100 and EN 101) as a requirement for enrollment. Some of the Korean subjects had already studied how to compose academic writings at an English Language Institute before they were admitted to their respective U.S. college or university. In addition, all the Korean students in the present study had had more than six years of English language learning experience in Korea before they came to the U.S. Because the English education in Korea had been more reading and grammar-translation oriented for the past few decades, it may not be an overstatement to say that Korean students are generally well prepared in the use of written English grammar. Being exposed in English classrooms where the dominant learning emphases were on reading and grammar, Korean students may have been taught that good English structure always consists of long, difficult, and complex sentences. This reason may explain why the probability level on the percentage of complex sentences between the American students and the Korean students was much lower than that of any other variable of the discourse fluency variables.

As examined above, such educational backgrounds that

the Korean students of English had may have resulted in the statistically insignificant results of the differences in all four discourse fluency variables in the essays written in English by American students and Korean students in the present study.

As the MANOVA result indicated in Table 8, although there were not any statistically insignificant differences in all four discourse fluency variables when the subjects of the present study were divided for group comparisons into the four subgroups by language backgrounds (English and Korean) and their holistic writing scores (low score 1, 2, 3 and high score 4, 5, 6), some patterns of language characteristics among these groups were found. Table 10 below shows the contiguous patterns which co-occurred in the essays between the American low-score group and the American high-score group and between the Korean low-score group and the Korean high-score group.

First of all, the high-score groups of both language backgrounds had longer means in average sentence length than the low-score groups. This is consistent with the results of previous contrastive rhetoric research which reported that "essay length correlates positively with high quality writing" (Reid, 1988, p. 55). However, as the sample essays below indicate, it is not mere length of sentences which is always and necessarily an indication of good writing.

Table 10

**Patterns of Language Characteristics  
on Discourse Fluency Variables  
by Different Levels of Writing Proficiency and  
Language Backgrounds**

| Variable                                | American        |                  | Korean          |                  |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
|                                         | <u>High</u>     | <u>Low</u>       | <u>High</u>     | <u>Low</u>       |
| 1. Average Sentence Length              | long<br>(18.99) | short<br>(16.88) | long<br>(18.37) | short<br>(16.71) |
| 2. Short Sentences(%)                   | high<br>(27.95) | low<br>(23.35)   | high<br>(29.28) | low<br>(25.57)   |
| 3. Complex Sentences(%)<br>Sentences(%) | high<br>(43.16) | low<br>(35.71)   | high<br>(47.83) | low<br>(44.20)   |
| 4. Subject Openers(%)                   | low<br>(28.10)  | high<br>(32.81)  | low<br>(26.27)  | high<br>(26.96)  |

**Korean/Television**

Among many other beneficial devices for human being as time has passed, I would like to choose the televisions as one which has influenced much on people. Like other devices, of course, the television has effected positively or negatively on daily lives of people. In the beginning of development of this device, most people might not expect these bunches of effects on many people. However, these days of that most countries on the world have developed their own cultures, the media including the television network have showed an outstanding role. Even though an interesting cultural events is held at one part of the earth, we, living at the other part of the earth, can have the chance to watch and thereby indirectly participate in the events...(1105)

holistic score: 1      average sentence length: 23.4 words

**American/Microwave oven**

There has been many helpful inventions over the years. Each invention has had many important effects on our lives. One example of a helpful invention is the microwave oven. Microwaves are convenient, fast and easy to operate. One reason for the success of microwaves is their convenience. Cooking is easier in a microwave. One example is popping popcorn. Instead of setting up the air popper, measuring the corn, and melting the butter, one can use microwave popcorn

bags and have the corn popped within three total minutes. Cleaning is also considered convenient for microwaves. One can wipe the microwave out within minutes...(2216)  
**holistic score: 6            average sentence length: 10.8 words**

As indicated in the two examples above, although the average sentence length of the American student was much shorter than that of the Korean student, the American student had the highest holistic score on her writing, whereas the Korean student had the lowest score despite his long sentences. Concerning the length of sentences, Hillocks (1986) states that "a specific and effective piece of writing may be relatively short" (Reid, 1988, p. 55). As indicated in the above writing samples, it is not mere length of sentences which necessarily increases the quality of an essay, yet, the findings from the present study and other research concerning syntactic structures of English indicate that in general, high quality writing consists of longer sentences than those writings which are considered to be of a low quality.

As for the percent of short sentences and complex sentences, the results of the present study were consistent with those of previous research. As shown in Table 10, the essays of the higher score groups of both American students and Korean students contained a higher percentage of short sentences and complex sentences than those of the low score groups. The fact that the essays with a higher holistic score had a higher percentage of short and complex sentences

than those of the essays with a lower score seems to indicate that proficient writers tend to use varied syntactic structures more effectively than less proficient writers. Such a skillful capacity of using varied structures compatible with proper speech acts has been proven by many previous research studies as an important factor in influencing the quality of writing. Based on their contrastive rhetoric research results, some researchers state that syntactic maturity correlates with the quality of writing (Carlson, 1988; Cooper, 1976; Reid, 1988; Stewart & Grobe, 1979).

However, the result of the percentage of short and complex sentences in Table 9 between the total groups of Korean students and American students, seems to contradict the general pattern that was shown in Table 10 and indicated by other previous research. In spite of their distribution on the lower writing scores, the Korean subjects' overall percent of complex sentences was much higher than that of the American subjects, although the difference was not statistically significant. Table 10 also shows that there was almost no difference in the mean percentage of short sentences between these two groups. As considered earlier, the reason for Korean students' higher percent of complex sentences compared with that of the American students, must be due to the educational background in English that the Korean students experienced.

At this point, however, an interesting question is raised concerning the positive correlation between syntactic maturity and quality writing that has been found by many researchers: Why did the essays of the Korean subjects in the present study not have equal holistic scores to the American subjects in spite of their overall high percent of syntactic maturity in writing their essays? This question subsequently compelled the principal researcher to look at other textual elements that were related to quality writing.

As shown in the sample below, the answer to this question seems to be found beyond the syntactic features of the essay. Probably, the essay's low score may have resulted from other factors such as lexical variables, cohesion variables, or other factors like organization structure of ideas. The other variables beyond the syntactic features of texts that influenced the quality of writings will be discussed later.

#### **Korean/Cars**

There is not doubt for the fact that time is probably most importantly considered in our lives. It is not difficult to see how much people want to save their time if we look around the inventions such sewing machines, clocks, electric lamp, cars, and etc. Among these inventions, this paper first reviews what the effect of cars is on our lives. When we turn on the electric power, instantaneously all the areas of the darkened room become bright. This well represents the speech of inventiveness that has developed within the past century. We are not largely surprised that the design of the numerous cars is tremendously changed every years. Driving a car is properly thought in modern times...(1108)  
**holistic score: 2                      percent of complex sentences: 92.3**

Another interesting pattern of language characteristics which co-occurred in the corpus of the present study was found when the subjects of each linguistic group were divided into two groups based on their holistic writing scores. The MANOVA results on Discourse Fluency Variables in Tables 7 and 8 indicated earlier that there was not a statistically significant difference between and among the groups in the mean of percent of subject openers when the subjects were divided into several subgroups according to their language backgrounds (English and Korean) and levels of writing proficiency (low, middle, and high) and when their means were compared to one another. Although the mean differences in percent of subject openers among the groups were not significant, the pattern which co-occurred in their differences seems to indicate the relationship among percent of subject openers, syntactic maturity, and quality of writing. The tendency of the low percentage of subject openers from the essays of the higher score groups, as shown in Table 10, can be explained from two perspectives. Before explicating this issue on percent of subject openers, for a better understanding it seems necessary to keep in mind the definition of "percent of subject openers" used in the present study: the total number of sentences in a single student essay that begin with a noun or pronoun, divided by the total number of sentences in the essay. The noun or pronoun subject was not counted as a subject opener if it

was preceded by an article (i.e., a, an, the, any, some), possessive pronoun (i.e., my, your, our), preposition, adverb, or adjective. Only a single noun or pronoun without any other modifications words that begins a sentence as a subject was counted as a subject opener.

First, the co-occurring pattern in percent of subject openers between low-level writers and high-level writers of both language groups was due to the basic word order of English (subject + verb + object). In general, an English sentence takes a noun or pronoun as its subject. The lower the level of writing proficiency that writers exhibit, the more they tend to follow strict rules of grammar. In other words, the less proficient writers tend to construct sentences following the SVO structure without varying their style of sentences much, whereas the more proficient writers create various types of sentence structures to effectively convey their ideas. Such a tendency of low-level writers using a high percent of subject openers may make the evaluators feel that the essays written by the low-level writers are boring or monotonous.

Second, the reason for the low means of percentage of subject openers observed in the essays of the higher groups of both language backgrounds was related with the high-level writers' ability of creating various syntactic structures and their knowledge of vocabulary. For example, the high-level writers in the present study began a sentence with

fewer nouns and pronouns. When they began a sentence with a noun as the subject, the high-level writers put more articles or adjectives before the noun than did the low-level writers. By adding more articles or adjectives to the nouns that were subjects of sentences, the high-level writers made the meaning of the subjects in their sentences far clearer. Another reason for the low means in percentage of subject openers in the high-level writers' essays was their less frequent use of pronouns as a subject in their sentences. The relationship of percentage of pronouns with quality writing will be discussed in the Analysis of Cohesion Variables section of this chapter. In constructing a sentence in their essays, the high-level writers of both language groups began the sentence with varied syntactic structures more frequently than the low-level writers did. For example, the high-level writers began their sentences with a higher number of subordinate conjunctions or they changed the basic SVO word order of English, putting an adjective or adverb at the very beginning of their sentences. The difference in percentage of subordinate conjunctions between and among different levels of writing proficiency will also be discussed in more detail in the Analysis of Cohesion Variables section.

As mentioned above, although the differences in percentage of subject openers in the essays between American students and Korean students and among American-High group,

American-Middle group, American-Low group, Korean-High group, Korean-Middle group, and Korean-Low group were not statistically significant, the pattern of the percentage of subject openers which co-occurred in the essays between different level groups of both native speakers of English and native speakers of Korean was indicative of the development of sentence structures for a quality writing.

### **Analysis of Lexical Variables**

In this part of the analysis, differences and similarities in the use of vocabulary observed in the essays of American students and Korean students are discussed in terms of average word length, percent of content words, percent of nouns, percent of adjectives, and percent of passive voice verbs.

The MANOVA result in Table 7 indicated that the differences in the lexical variables between the American students and the Korean students were statistically significant at  $p < .01$  level. The significant value of difference in the group of lexical variables consequently compelled the researcher to investigate in which variable(s) the American students and the Korean students had a significant mean difference.

Before beginning to discuss the results of the lexical variables, it seems necessary here to briefly review the

definitions of some variables used in the present study. In counting the number of nouns, a gerund (a form of verb functioning as a noun) was not counted as a noun even though it functioned as a subject or object of a sentence (e.g., Traveling has become easy and convenient.). When a noun supported another noun (e.g., television set), the first noun was not counted as a noun. In counting the number of adjectives, a noun functioning as an adjective (e.g., travel agency) was not counted as an adjective. The content words in the present study consisted of nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and pronouns, excluding articles, auxiliary verbs, conjunctions, and prepositions.

Table 11 shows the F-Test results of the mean differences in all lexical variables observed in the essays

**Table 11**  
**Mean Differences in Lexical Variables**  
**(F-Test Results)**

| Variable                  | Mean               |                  | F-Value | Prob. |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------|-------|
|                           | American<br>(n=42) | Korean<br>(n=40) |         |       |
| 5. Average Word Length    | 4.79               | 4.69             | 1.32    | 0.25  |
| 6. Content Words(%)       | 60.88              | 62.06            | 2.04    | 0.16  |
| 7. Nouns( %)              | 25.00              | 23.15            | 6.85    | 0.01  |
| 8. Adjectives(%)          | 8.99               | 9.35             | 0.44    | 0.51  |
| 9. Passive Voice Verbs(%) | 14.64              | 8.75             | 8.33    | 0.01  |

of the American students and the Korean students. As shown in Table 11, the American students used a higher number of nouns and passive voice verbs in their essays than the Korean students. The results on these two variables will be discussed later. Although the calculated mean differences in average word length and content words between these two groups were not statistically significant, the computerized probability levels were high enough to consider those two variables as an indication of associating them with quality writing. The American students used longer vocabulary words and fewer content words than the Korean students. However, the difference in percentage of adjectives between these two linguistic groups was not significant.

Because the MANOVA results in Table 7 indicated that there were a number of significant differences in lexical variables between the American students and the Korean students, the researcher divided the subjects into several subgroups based on their language backgrounds (English and Korean) and their holistic writing scores (low, middle, and high) to test whether or not there were any statistically significant differences and to identify any co-occurring patterns of language characteristics found in the five lexical variables among these six groups. As shown in Table 8, however, there were not any statistically significant differences observed in the essays among those six groups.

Although the computerized statistical results on the

lexical variables were not significant, some patterns of language characteristics which co-occurred in the essays were found when the subjects in each group were divided into two groups of high and low levels of writing proficiency and when the intra-group (high and low level groups of the same linguistic background) language patterns were compared to those of the inter-group (English and Korean). Table 12 shows the patterns of language characteristics found in the lexical variables between and among the intra-(high level and low level) and inter-(English and Korean) groups.

Although the mean difference in average word length between the Korean students and the American students was, as shown in Table 11, not significant, the latter group's mean was higher than that of the former group. And the pattern of word length in Table 12 shows that the high-level writers of each language background used longer words in their essays than the low-level writers. The pattern of average word length found in the present study was consistent with previous research. Concerning the average length of words in essays, some researchers have stated that "longer words convey more specific, specialized meanings than shorter ones" (Reid, 1988, p. 68) and that "high average word length indicates highly exact presentation of informational content in a text, conveying maximum content in the fewest words" (Biber, 1986, p. 394)

Table 12  
Patterns of Language Characteristics  
on Lexical Variables  
between Different Levels of Writing Proficiency

| Variable                  | American        |                 | Korean          |                 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                           | <u>High</u>     | <u>Low</u>      | <u>High</u>     | <u>Low</u>      |
| 5. Average Word Length    | long<br>(4.87)  | short<br>(4.56) | long<br>(4.74)  | short<br>(4.66) |
| 6. Content Words(%)       | high<br>(60.89) | low<br>(60.85)  | high<br>(62.87) | low<br>(61.56)  |
| 7. Nouns(%)               | low<br>(24.99)  | high<br>(25.01) | low<br>(22.67)  | high<br>(23.43) |
| 8. Adjectives(%)          | high<br>(9.32)  | low<br>(8.07)   | high<br>(10.53) | low<br>(8.64)   |
| 9. Passive Voice Verbs(%) | high<br>(15.54) | low<br>(12.09)  | low<br>(7.76)   | high<br>(9.34)  |

With regard to the percentage of content words, the Korean students' mean score was higher than that of the American students, although the difference was not statistically significant. However, the computerized probability level on this variable seemed high enough to consider the difference.

Carefully looking at the content words themselves of the two sample writings below without considering their contexts in the sentences, there was not much difference between those two writings.

### **Korean/television**

There are many inventions accumulated through long history in human society. Certainly, those inventions have helped human beings make their lives better and easier than before. Although every invention has a important place and its own value, I want to mention, especially, television that has greatly changed human life style. I intend to suggest following some examples for importance of television. In other words, I will explain what effects television has had on human's lives. First, today, television has a function as information source, which is most important aspect of television. Television gives people a variety of information including the weather forecasting, news, education and so on. In modern times, we have a great deal of information through television...(1107)

**holistic score: 2**

**percent of content words: 67.6**

### **American/Computer**

The invention of the computer will probably be the single most powerful new piece of technology created by man during my life time. The computer has provided tremendous benefits to all aspects of our daily life and really changed the look of our culture. It has led us out of the industrial age and into a total information society. We can now perform millions of calculations instantaneously, store, and retrieve all forms of data, and communicate with others around the world all thanks to the computer. Computers can be found in all disciplines from medicine to transportation to art to music and even to sports. Life is much easier thanks to these electronic brains...(2206)

**holistic score: 6**

**percent of content words: 53.9**

In spite of the higher percent of content words in his essay, however, the Korean writer's holistic score was much lower than that of the American writer. The result from these samples was not consistent with previous research that indicated a higher percent of content words is generally associated with the quality of writing. The reason for Korean students' overall lower holistic scores in their writing, in spite of their higher percent of content words compared to that of native speakers of English, can be found in their word choice and other factors. Based on his

analysis of errors and error types in English composition written by Korean students, Ahn (1990) reported that Korean students' lexical choice errors were less comprehensible than either sentence- or discourse-level errors compared to native speakers of English. On the other hand, a pattern for the percentage of content words was observed in the present study when the subjects of each language group were divided into two groups according to their writing scores (high and low). As Table 12 showed earlier, the higher-level writers of each language background used a higher number of content words in their essays than the low-level writers. This pattern of content words coming from the comparison between the inter and intra groups of the subjects in the present study was consistent with that of previous research.

In much contrastive rhetoric research done previously, the percentage of nouns in essays written by the writers of different language backgrounds and different levels of writing proficiency has frequently been compared to detect its association to the quality of writing. The result from the previous research, as pointed out by Reid (1988), has demonstrated that in general, "a high percent of nouns is reflective of high informational density and exact information context...and a high percent of nouns would result in highly explicit, somewhat condensed meaning in English prose" (p. 68). Reid's point regarding the percentage of nouns in essays seems to indicate that a high

percentage of nouns is generally associated with quality writing. The result in the present study, as indicated in Table 11, showed that the American students' essays contained a higher percentage of nouns than the Korean students' essays. Considering the fact that the American students of the present study were distributed in higher writing scores than the Korean students, the result from this study on percentage of nouns was consistent with previous research. However, the pattern on percentage of nouns in Table 12 seems to contradict that of previous research and Table 11. That is, the low-level writers of each language background had a higher percentage of nouns in their essays than the high-level writers. This contradicting result concerning the pattern of percentage of nouns shown in Table 12 needs to be further examined in a future study.

In the percentage of adjectives, as shown in Table 11, the mean difference between the American students and the Korean students was not statistically significant at all. However, the pattern which co-occurred between the intra and inter groups by writing proficiency and language backgrounds, showed that the high-level writers of both language backgrounds used more adjectives in their essays than the low-level writers. The result concerning the percentage of adjectives in the present study can also be interpreted from the same perspective as examined in the discussion of the percentage of nouns.

The writing samples below represent another difference in word choice observed in the essays of the present study between native speakers of English and native speakers of Korea.

#### **Korean/Car**

As a matter of fact, there are many kinds of inventions of the world. I think that one of the most important inventions is a car. Just imagine! Who can live without a car nowadays? Our society changes so fast. We have to use the car everyday. There are many conveniences to use the car. We can go anywhere by anytime with the car. We don't have to walk or run for our work. If you have a emergent problem, you will call 911. Do you think does the officer to be there on foot? How do you have a pizza at late night? How do people who live in Knoxville eat sea food everyday? They don't have any beach or sea side, but they eat the sea food if they want to. Some times car driving might help you to break your stress. If you drive on the avenue while listen to the music, the stress will be disappear. Some people believe that the cars are not a present or civilization but weapons to kill people. It could be...(1109)

**holistic score: 2**

**percent of passive voice verbs: 0**

#### **American/Pencil**

In a time when technological advances are so numerous and new discoveries in the sciences are so common place I would like to point out that the invention of the seemingly lowly pencil was a tremendous break through and has remained a integral part of our culture even today. The modern pencil was made possible by the discovery in 1564 of an unusually pure deposit of graphite in Borrowdale, England. According to legend the mineral was found after a three was uprooted during a storm. Initially the mineral was used in chunks called marking stones. Later, shaped rods of graphite were wrapped in string and unwound as the material was needed. Pieces were also inserted into tubes and were later held in metal holders called porte-crayons. These were the forerunners of the mechanical pencil...(2218)

**holistic score: 5**

**percent of passive voice verbs: 56.5**

As represented by those two samples and shown in Table 11, the American writers' essays contained much higher

percentage of passive voice verbs than those of the Korean writers. The pattern of passive voice verbs observed in the essays written by the American writers, as shown in Table 12, indicated that the high-level American writers used a higher percentage of passive voice verbs than the low-level American writers. Based on the results between language backgrounds (English and Korean) and between levels of writing proficiency (American high and American low), it can be concluded that mature writers use passive voice verbs in writing academic essay more frequently than immature writers do. The finding concerning passive voice verbs in the present study was consistent with previous research. Based on her analysis, Reid (1988) points out that "the passive voice in academic writing is used to impart abstract information and to establish and maintain social distance between the writer and the reader...the higher the occurrence of passive constructions, the higher the holistic score" (p. 68). Regarding an expectation in academic prose in English-speaking countries, many composition researchers are in line with their position that passive voice verbs are used more in objective, academic expository prose than in other genres of writing because passive voice verbs mark "a highly abstract, nominal content and a highly learned style" (Biber, 1986, p. 395) necessarily required in a formal academic prose.

As discussed above, the American writers used a far

higher percentage of passive voice verbs in their essays than the Korean writers, and the high-level American writers used more than the low-level American writers. However, a contradicting result to previous research concerning the use of passive voice verbs was found when the Korean subjects were divided into high and low level writers and their means were compared. Although the mean difference in passive voice verbs between the two Korean groups was not statistically significant, the fact that the low-level Korean writers used more passive voice verbs than the high-level Korean writers was indicative of further examination in the future study.

#### **Analysis of Cohesion Variables**

Before beginning to discuss the results from this section, it is necessary at this point to clarify once again what the term cohesion means in the present study. During the past decades, numerous composition researchers have made more or less different definitions of coherence and cohesion. To synthesize the terms briefly, coherence is the underlying structure, such as organization and information flow, that makes words and sentences united. Cohesion is the connection or relationship between and within both sentences and paragraphs. According to Reid (1988), "cohesion devices are words or phrases that act as signals to the reader, those words or phrases make what is being stated relate to

what has already been stated or what soon will be stated" (p. 79). Following Reid's definition of cohesion, the present study analyzed the differences and similarities in the essays between native speakers of English and native speakers of Korean in terms of percent of pronouns (i.e., I, you, he, it, my, his, its, them, their, us, this, those), percent of prepositions, percent of conjunctions (i.e., and, or, but, yet, so, for, thus, however), and percent of subordinate conjunction openers (i.e., although, nevertheless, because, since, if, before, after, until, when, while, whereas).

Table 13 below shows that the mean difference in percent of pronouns between these two linguistic groups was

**Table 13**

**Mean Differences in Cohesion Variables  
(F-Test Results)**

| Variable                                      | <u>Mean</u>        |                  | F-Value | Prob. |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------|-------|
|                                               | American<br>(n=42) | Korean<br>(n=40) |         |       |
| 10. Pronouns (%)                              | 4.94               | 7.69             | 14.02   | 0.00  |
| 11. Prepositions (%)                          | 11.36              | 10.99            | 0.49    | 0.49  |
| 12. Conjunctions (%)                          | 3.35               | 3.71             | 1.17    | 0.28  |
| 13. Subordinate<br>Conjunction<br>Openers (%) | 6.99               | 9.07             | 1.99    | 0.16  |

significantly different to each other and that the American writers used a lower percentage of pronouns in their essays than the Korean writers. When these two linguistic groups were divided into high and low level writers according to their writing scores and their mean differences in percentage of pronouns were compared, a similar pattern between these two linguistic groups concerning the use of pronouns in essays was found.

Table 14 below shows that the high level writers of each language background used a lower percentage of pronouns than the low level writers. The results in Tables 13 and 14

**Table 14**

**Patterns of Language Characteristics  
on Cohesion Variables  
between Different Levels of Writing Proficiency**

| <b>Variables</b>                                       | <b><u>American</u></b> |                 | <b><u>Korean</u></b> |                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
|                                                        | <b>High</b>            | <b>Low</b>      | <b>High</b>          | <b>Low</b>      |
| <b>10. Pronouns (%)</b>                                | low<br>(4.66)          | high<br>(5.74)  | low<br>(7.02)        | high<br>(8.09)  |
| <b>11. Prepositions (%)</b>                            | low<br>(11.32)         | high<br>(11.46) | low<br>(10.39)       | high<br>(11.34) |
| <b>12. Conjunctions (%)</b>                            | low<br>(3.20)          | high<br>(3.78)  | low<br>(3.51)        | high<br>(3.84)  |
| <b>13. Subordinate<br/>Conjunction<br/>Openers (%)</b> | high<br>(7.34)         | low<br>(5.97)   | high<br>(9.58)       | low<br>(8.76)   |

concerning percent of pronouns in essays indicated that high level writers use fewer pronouns than low level writers when they write academic prose.

The following writing samples represent the difference in the use of pronouns in essays between the Korean writers and the American writers.

#### **Korean/Television**

We have lots of useful inventors but television is the most familiar one with us. Almost everyone has it and we can get a lot of information from it easily. It can let us know the events that happen in the world and give us a entertainment. However, it has harmful factors like a violence, sex and commercials. These days, we can get information from newspaper and magazine etc. But these are less impressive and indirect to us than television. Therefore, most of us prefer television to paper. We can know events that happens right now. Without it, we are frog in the well...(1101)

**holistic score: 2**

**percent of pronouns: 17.5**

#### **American/Laser Technology**

Until recently, most surgeries were done by the invasive method, i.e., cutting into the patient. This methodology was used because it was the most successful way of taking care of certain illnesses and injuries. While in most cases this was successful, the time involved for the surgeries, the cost of lengthy in patient hospital stays, and the time needed for recuperation caused researchers of surgical methodology to delve deeper into the art of surgery...(1230)

**holistic score: 6**

**percent of pronouns: 1.7**

By quoting some researchers (Bartholomae, 1985; Biber, 1985, 1986; Chafe, 1982; and Grabe, 1987), Reid (1988) points out that "limited use of pronouns in discourse marks more informational, detached, formal, and, often, written discourse" (p. 82).

Pronouns are used in a way that ties them to certain nouns in the text. Those two writing samples above show a significant difference in the use of pronouns between Korean students and American students and support Reid's points on the use of pronouns in academic prose written in English. The use of pronouns as connectors between and within sentences or phrases in the Korean student's essay may make the reader either feel that the sentences and phrases were loosely connected or he/she may have some difficulty in catching which previously mentioned noun the pronoun signaled. On the other hand, in writing academic expository essays whose style characteristics are formal, objective, and unbiased, the high percentage use of pronouns may make the reader feel that the writing samples are lacking these elements necessarily required in the academic discourse community. The frequent use of pronouns in academic essays may subsequently decrease the quality of the writing.

Another cohesion variable tested in this study was the percent of prepositions. As an important cohesive device, prepositions have been demonstrated by Covitt (1976) to be the second most difficult aspect of the English language following articles for ESL/EFL students. Much recent research and Reid's (1988) contrastive rhetoric research among different language backgrounds have reported that native speakers of English use a significantly higher percent of prepositions in their essays written in English

than non-native speakers of English.

However, the results on percent of prepositions used in the essays between the native speakers of Korean and the native speakers of English in the present study were different from those reported in previous research. As shown in Table 13, the mean difference in percent of prepositions between these two linguistic groups was not statistically significant at all. Although the calculated statistical result indicated no significant difference in percentage of prepositions, it may not be correct to state that the Korean writers of English have the same level of writing proficiency of using prepositions in the English language as that of the American writers. Based on the analysis of ESL writers' (Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Greek) composition, Dalgish (1984) pointed out that preposition errors were one of the most numerous errors made by the ESL writers. Although the present research study did not analyze the type of preposition errors Korean writers of English made, many preposition errors were observed in the essays written by the Korean writers (see writing samples taken from both language backgrounds in Appendix E). As mentioned above, because preposition errors are one of the most numerous errors made by Korean students of English, further examination on this cohesive device will be necessary to help Korean students of English improve their writing proficiency.

As a cohesive device, conjunctions play an important role in the relationship between and within sentences, clauses, or phrases. Concerning the role of conjunctions in essays, many contrastive rhetoric researchers pointed out, based on their analysis from native speakers of English, that low proficiency writers used more conjunctions, whereas high proficiency writers relied on other cohesive devices rather than on explicit conjunctions to avoid redundancy and prevent ambiguity (Crowhurst, 1987; Norment, 1982; Scarcellar, 1984).

When the means of percentage of conjunctions were compared to each other, the mean difference between the Korean students and the American students in the present study was not statistically significant. However, the calculated probability level on this cohesion variable was respectable enough to reflect the difference as a meaningful indication of quality writing between these two linguistic groups. Table 13 showed that the American writers relied on conjunctions less than the Korean writers. Table 14 showed a similar pattern concerning the use of conjunctions, which indicated that the high level writers of both language backgrounds used fewer conjunctions in their essays than the low level writers. In light of the fact that the American writers were distributed in higher scores than the Korean students in the present study, the patterns concerning the use of conjunctions in the essays between these two language

groups were consistent with previous research, indicating that immature writers rely more on conjunctions than mature writers. The writing samples below represent well the general difference in the use of conjunctions between native speakers of English and native speakers of Korean.

#### **Korean/Automobile**

...As a result, the production have competitive power, and selling benefits may increase. In spite of many advantages, automobiles are causing some serious problems, such as air pollution, traffic congestion, and traffic accident. However, those problems are unavoidable and accompanying results, and can be solved by the technical development and efforts for the prevention of air pollution and traffic congestion... (1110)

**holistic score: 2                      percent of conjunctions: 6.0**

#### **American/Velcro**

...The advent of velcro fasteners has also made a marked difference in the retailing of many other common clothing items. Pants, shirt, outerwear, body suits, and many personal female items have succumbed to the convenience of velcro. Velcro has also been instrumental in the development of novel items, such as "fanny pack." This basically unisex purse which is worn around a person's waist is surely yet another example of velcro's versatility. Another particularly useful aspect of velcro is its relative ease of use. This simplicity of tearing off or connecting a velcro fastener requires limited manual dexterity...

**holistic score: 5                      percent of conjunction: 1.2**

By quoting the analysis conducted by Thury (1988), Reid (1988) pointed out that in using conjunctions, less proficient writers relied more on coordinate conjunctions (i.e., and, but, or, yet), whereas more proficient writers depended more on subordinate conjunctions (i.e., because, when, if). Concerning the use of subordinate structures, she also pointed out that native speakers of English teachers,

students, and raters clearly believed that subordinated structures are more sophisticated in written prose. Such points concerning the use of subordinated structure made by Reid and Thury indicate that high level writers use a higher percentage of subordinate conjunctions in their essays than low level writers.

The findings on percentage of subordinate conjunction openers in the present study supported previous contrastive rhetoric research. As shown in Table 14, the high level writers of both linguistic groups (Korean and English) used a higher percentage of subordinate conjunction openers than the low level writers. However, the result concerning this cohesive device in Table 13 contradicted to that of previous research because the Korean writers used more subordinated structures than the American writers although their mean difference in this variable was not statistically significant.

#### **Korean/Key and Lock**

...When you leave you house, what do you do? You lock door with your key. Unless you do that, then you know what will happen. When you go somewhere by your car, you need the key. Of course, you lock the door of the car. If you have an office, there may be some desks and boxes for the important documents. How do you keep the documents or letters? Probably you put them in the box or the drawer of the desk, then lock them up. Since that kind of situation, we do need key and lock all the time for our safety. If there were only good and nice people in this world, we didn't have to use this metal...(1102)

**holistic score: 2    % Sub.Conj.Openers:33.3**  
**% Complex Sen.:42.9**

As the sample above represents, in general, Korean students in the present study relied more on subordinate conjunction openers in supporting their ideas. However, as indicated in the writing sample above, the Korean writer's heavy reliance on subordinate conjunctions produced the similarly negative effect to that of heavy use of coordinate conjunctions in essays as considered earlier. Such a high percentage of subordinate conjunction openers in Korean students' essay consequently resulted in the higher percent of the use of complex sentences as shown in Table 9. The reason for the Korean writers' more reliance on subordinate conjunctions than the American writer can be approached from their respective educational backgrounds in English. As examined earlier in Analysis of Discourse Fluency Variables section, the grammar-translation and reading-oriented English education in Korean schools may have caused the Korean students of English to rely heavily on subordinated structures, believing that long and sophisticated sentences produce a better English written prose. This is one of the major reasons for Korean students' high percentage of the use of subordinate conjunctions, such as: because, that, which, who, and when, in their English compositions.

So far, the differences and similarities found in the essays between Korean students and American students have been discussed in the preceding three parts, focusing on the 13 textual features in terms of discourse fluency variables,

lexical variables, and cohesion variables.

In the rhetorical pattern analysis section which follows, conspicuous differences in idea organization between Korean writers and American writers will be discussed in detail.

### **Analysis of Different Rhetorical Patterns**

The purpose of this part is to identify and examine in what ways the Korean students and the American students argued or described their propositions in written English. By going beyond the discourse fluency variables, lexical variables, and cohesion variables examined in the previous parts, this part analyzes the different rhetoric patterns of either argumentation or description noted in written English prose by Koreans and Americans.

Much comparative research across different cultures and languages has shown that speech acts are accomplished in different ways in different cultures. For example, Kaplan (1966) studied paragraph organization in the essay, the written genre most often imposed on the U.S. college students, NNS and NS alike. After examining the writing samples he collected, Kaplan concluded that the principles of organization were strikingly different from one language (or language group) to another. According to his analysis, different cultures have different ways of paragraph styles

and different organizational patterns as they approached writing. In general, English showed a linear style, Semitic organization showed development through parallelism, the Asian method was circular, Romance writers digressed from the main topic, and Russian organization allowed even more loosely connections.

In their comparative discourse analysis between English and other languages, in particular second language acquisition (SLA) researchers (e.g., Corder, 1971; Dickerson, 1976; Dulay & Burt, 1973; Ellis, 1985; Hatch, 1992; Krashen, 1981; Selinker, 1972; Tarone, 1983) and comparative ESL writing researchers (e.g., Leki, 1991; McKay, 1994; Reid, 1988; Saville-Troike, 1984; Silva, 1993; Spack, 1988) have attempted to examine the distinct features of English prose written by non-native speakers of English compared to prose written by native speakers of English. One of the general assumptions underlying comparative discourse analysis is that a comparison of written texts made by two groups of different language backgrounds may provide ESL researchers and practitioners with insightful clues into devising effective instructional strategies to help ESL learners "promote Western traditions of academic writing" (McKay, 1994, p. 75).

Assuming that Korean ESL learners have not been well trained in the writing of English and have been educated by their unique, traditional Korean rhetoric patterns in quite

a different manner from English rhetoric patterns, in this part different paragraph organizations noted in written English prose between Korean students and American students are compared.

The subjects in the present study were asked to write the topic below in an academic prose form:

**Inventions such as eyeglasses and sewing machines have had an important effect on our lives. Choose another invention that you think is important. Give specific reasons for your choice.**

The writing samples (1-13) below represent a distinctive difference in the beginning part of their essays between the Korean students and the American students.

**(1) Korean/Photograph**

The rapid advance of modern science has brought new renovation in human life. Human beings have been absorbed in studies which enable to enjoy comfortable and convenient lives...(1104)

**(2) Korean/Air conditioner**

In these days, the effect of modern technology on our lives is quite overwhelming. Mostly, all those inventions we, human beings, created have made lives easier and more convenient therefore they have furthered the happiness of the human race...(1210)

**(3) Korean/(topic not clear)**

The people can have their own idea about what is most influence on human beings' or their own life. Most people will try to find their objects from their surroundings or major. The objects can be visible or invisible things, but only visible things will be considered in this story...(1216)

**(4) Korean/Bearing**

There are many excellent inventions that have had an important effect on our lives. Although some of the inventions play an important role on our lives, we very frequently overlook their precious roles because we can get them easily whenever we want...(1217)

**(5) Korean/Dictionary**

As a member of club where all the members are struggling to survive in this exotic place called the United States of America, I, myself, am also trying to be awarded with the trophy of "Hole in One" which we might say the degree of excellence in each individual's academic field...(1221)

**(6) Korean/Computer**

The history of human kind is the tradition of the invention. Many people, famous or anonymous in the history, have tried to make something which make our life easy and comfortable...(1226)

**(7) Korean/Car**

A human being has been made a lot of tools for the convenience of life. However, we contact with these tools without a sufficient knowledge and a ready for use, thus occasionally it happens to make mistakes independent with our will...(1228)

**(8) American/Automobile**

The most important invention, in my opinion, is the automobile. I feel it is very important because it allows me to get from some place to other place in no time flat...(2113)

**(9) American/Microwave oven**

One invention that has made life more convenient is the microwave oven. The microwave oven has revolutionized cooking...(2203)

**(10) American/Velcro**

One of space travel's most significant contributions to common everyday life is the invention of velcro. This seemingly innocuous piece of fabric has effected many changes in society's manufactured products...(2204)

**(11) American/Computer**

The invention of the computer will probable be the single, most powerful new piece of technology created by man during my life time...(2206)

**(12) American/Automobile**

An invention I believe has had a tremendous effect in

the lives of many is the automobile. Cars have become an important part of our society...(2207)

**(13) American/VCR**

The video cassette recorder has been my favorite piece of equipment that has come down the technology turnpike. This piece of ingenuity has definitely had an impact on my life...(2220)

As indicated in the examples (1-13) above, a difference was noticed between the Korean students and the American students in opening the introductory part of their writings. The majority of Korean students involved in this research study began to write about the topic by constructing a context in the beginning part, which played a warming-up role, to imply what the writer would write about. From the examination of the introductory parts of the Korean students' writing, one interesting tendency was noticed: Korean students rarely mentioned or presented the core point (thesis) at the beginning of their writing. Instead, they tended either to imply more or less abstract contexts at the beginning or to start to write by paraphrasing the topic, adding their philosophy to it. In a sense, however, such an introduction made by the Korean students may be considered to be redundant to native readers of English. Unlike the Korean writers, however, as shown in the examples from (8) to (13), American writers began to write their essays by placing the focal point at the very beginning of their writings. From the examples above, it was concluded that in general, in the American students' writing the first

sentence implies the thesis of the essay.

However, in reading Korean writers' essays, it is not easy for the reader to guess using the first sentence, what the Korean writer will write about. This seems to be the most significant difference in rhetoric patterns between Korean writers and American writers.

In addition to the differences in the opening part in essays, other differences of rhetorical patterns between Korean students and American students were found in supporting their propositions. Let's take the following examples:

**(14) Korean/Television**

...we can get information from newspaper and magazine etc. But these are less impressive and indirect to us than television. Therefore, most of us prefer television to paper. We can know events what happens right now. Without it, we are frog in the well...(1101)

**(15) Korean/Key and Lock**

...When you leave your house, what do you do? You lock the door with your key. Unless you do that, then you know what will happen...(1102)

**(16) Korean/Semiconductor**

...However, the computer is impossible without the semiconductor. In other words, owing to use the semiconductor, we are enjoying more comfortable life than a yesterday life...(1206)

**(17) American/Television**

...Television became popular and proved to be great competition for the rest of the broadcast mediums, especially radio. One reason for televisions success is the aural and visual stimulation that a viewer receives...(2102)

**(18) American/Computer**

...The computer is an invention of choice because it opens numerous realms. With a computer, a person can speak to someone across the world, access information in the

library across town, or simply prepare a document...(2105)

**(19) American/Telephone**

...The telephone is very important to me because I do not live near my family members and would not be able to hear their voices otherwise...(2106)

Although it was not true for all cases, there was a general tendency which distinguished the Korean group from the American group in supporting their propositions. The Korean writers, as shown in the examples from (14) to (16), tended either to further or to rationalize their discussion of the main idea by introducing the oppositional and comparative concepts (generally, by using a negative form) or by hypothesizing an unreal situation. In these cases, the majority of the Korean writers chose subordinated structures such as without..., unless..., if... not..., or ..., because..., not...

However, the American students' writings showed a somewhat different structure of augmenting ideas from that of the Korean students. For example, as shown in (17) to (19), the American writers supported their proposition by introducing positive examples. Just a few American writers in this research study showed the similar way of supporting ideas to the way most Korean writers did.

The following examples taken from both language groups showed another rhetorical pattern different from each other.

#### **(20) Korean/Automobile**

When I am coming back from shopping, I cannot help thanking my car for giving me a comfort and mobility. I cannot imagine myself walking back and forth for a bag of grocery. Carrying heavy mild and rice would be a problem. But what if I have to take my two year old child during the hot summer or cold winter? I think I would rather starve or become a farmer. I enjoy walking as a part of aerobic exercise, but it sounds different if I have to do such a thing without any choice.

Most of all, the greatest advantage of the invention of the automobile is the mobility. With a thankful of gas, I can go wherever I want to. For instance, Disney World is just a matter of time. If I have to walk to Florida, I am certainly sure that Disney World would not sound magical at all. What kind of fun would I have after two weeks of painful journey on foot?

These days, everybody is busy and we all say that we do not have enough time to do anything. I run most of errands on Fridays and it is impossible to finish small yet important things at a certain given time. I have 8:30 a.m. class every morning from Monday through Thursday, raining or snowing. Without my car, forget about my education. I cannot imagine the world without a car. Automobile must be one of the most important inventions for our human beings...(1106)

#### **(21) American/Antibiotics**

One very important invention to the survival of mankind has been antibiotics. Antibiotics have help us to overcome illnesses that had been killing millions of people for many years. These illnesses can now be eliminated within a matter of days.

One particular antibiotic that has saved thousands of lives is penicillin. This drug was found accidentally. It was formed from a mold spore that had formed on a agar plate in a laboratory. This just goes to show that anything is possible. If scientists can create miracles like penicillin accidentally, then it is hard to tell what they will come up with next.

Antibiotics have saved a number of people from death but some are now becoming worthless. Many of the bacteria have become what is known as antibiotic resistant. This means that they have no reaction to the medication. This is partly because of the wide use of certain antibiotics by physicians. When people have an infection or disease that the doctor is not sure what it is, they sometimes prescribe a powerful antibiotic that is known to wipe out several things. This causes some strains of the microorganism to resist the drug. An example of an antibiotic resistant organism is staph. Antibiotics are still helpful and new ones are being created constantly, but so are new strains of resistant microorganisms. With modern research being as far

advanced as it is, I feel that it will be a very long time before we will run into a large problem...(2104)

These two examples of (20) and (21) above represented a certain distinction between Korean writers and American writers in paragraph organization pattern. As considered earlier in this part, the American writer's essay in (21) showed a linear development; a topic is stated, and every fact or opinion in the paragraph is explicitly related to it. However, the Korean writer (#20) developed the topic from a number of different outside perspectives. Like the Asian method of development as mentioned in the Kaplan's analysis among multiple linguistic groups, the Korean writer approached her conclusion via the circular way of supporting the topic.

In summary, those differences between the Korean writers and the American writers in paragraph organization made the latter group's writings far clearer and the former group's writings more ambiguous. In other words, American writing was explicit, logical, and direct, whereas Korean writing was implicit, contextual, and indirect. This result of the rhetorical patterns observed in the comparison between native speakers of English and native speakers of Korean in the present study was consistent with previous research, demonstrating that such a rhetorical difference in paragraph organization was due to the differing cultural backgrounds of the different linguistic groups. Concerning

the difference in rhetorical style between Korean writers and English writers, Ok's (1991) and Eggington's (1987) analysis pointed out that English writers favored a linear three-unit textual structure (introduction-body-conclusion), whereas Korean writers generally preferred a four-unit structure:

- 1) Ki: begins the argument;
- 2) Sung: develops the argument;
- 3) Chon: immediately after finishing the argument, abruptly changes the direction of the argument toward an indirectly connected sub-theme; and
- 4) Kyul: reaches a conclusion (Eggington, 1987, p.156).

As for the contents of essays written by the Korean group and the American group, another interesting rhetorical characteristic was found in the present study. Let's take the following examples from the Korean writers:

**(22) Korean/Television**

...However, television is harmful because it urges to us violence and commercial...in spite of the advantages television gives us, we have to be very careful in making it more helpful to human beings...(1101)

**(23) Korean/Science tool**

...Whenever the high level of tools are made by developing of science, we must think about moral of tools and spirit of community between man and tools. If we do not, it becomes only source of unhappiness...(1228)

**(24) Korean/Bureaucracy**

...However, bureaucracy could be oppressive and detrimental to personal freedom...(1223)

Obviously, the writing topic for the participants of the present research study was not one that asked them to try to be judgmental in their writing. However, many Korean writers, as represented by the examples of (22) to (24), furthered their discussion or described their ideas by adding a moral or ethics to their propositions. Few American writers developed their essays by adding their moral or ethics as the Korean writers did. Such an ethical tendency that Korean writers showed in their essays may have native readers and raters of English think that Korean students' writings tended to deviate from the main topic.

As examined above, several distinctively different rhetorical patterns were found between the Korean writers and the American writers. Based on the result of analyzing their differences in rhetorical styles, it is concluded that Korean writers of English represented certain differences from those of American writers in organizing their ideas and developing their paragraphs in English and that the differences found in Korean students essays were due to their linguistic, educational, and cultural backgrounds.

### **Chapter Summary**

As discussed, the essays from the Korean subjects showed many different textual characteristics in lexical choice and cohesion devices when compared with the essays

from the American subjects. The statistical results from the data analysis showed that these two linguistics groups had significant and respectable differences, in particular, in average word length, percent of content words, percent of nouns, percent of passive voice verbs, percent of pronouns, percent of conjunctions, and percent of subordinate conjunction openers.

However, these two subject groups did not show a significant difference in syntactic structure in terms of discourse fluency variables. The analysis in this chapter showed that this insignificant difference in the discourse fluency variables between these two groups might be due to the educational backgrounds that the Korean students of English passed in their teacher-centered, grammar-translation and reading oriented English classrooms in Korea.

In addition to the differences in lexical and cohesion variables, the results from the qualitative data analysis showed that there were conspicuous differences in rhetorical style between the native speakers of English and the native speakers of Korean.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

##### Introduction

The goal of comparative rhetoric research is fundamentally pedagogical. In other words, comparative rhetoricians have assumed that their research findings could be crucial "to comprehending and addressing ESL/EFL writers' special needs" (Silva, 1993, p. 660) and be essential if "ESL/EFL teachers are to help non-native English speakers write clearer, more successful English prose and to assist them in understanding and adapting to the expectations of their U.S. academic audiences" (Reid, 1988, p. 21).

##### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study was in line with the statements made by Silva and Reid in their comparative discourse analysis, identifying and examining in what different ways native speakers of Korean (Korean ESL students) and native speakers of English (American students) wrote their essays in English.

Using Reid's (1988) contrastive rhetoric research among multiple language backgrounds (Arabic, Chinese, English, and

Spanish) as a framework, the present study was initiated to identify syntactic, lexical, and rhetorical differences observed in the essays written in English by Korean ESL students and American students, to test whether their mean differences were statistically significant or not, and to examine in some detail the differences and similarities in essays between these two language backgrounds. In short, in the present study the differences in the following textual elements were examined:

1. Discourse Fluency Variables: a) average sentence length, b) percent of short sentences, c) percent of complex sentences, and d) percent subject openers.
2. Lexical Variables: a) average word length, b) percent of content words, c) percent of nouns, d) percent of adjectives, and e) percent of passive voice verbs.
3. Cohesion Variables: a) percent of pronouns, b) percent of prepositions, c) percent of conjunctions, and d) percent of subordinate conjunction openers.
4. Rhetorical Style Characteristics

#### Procedure and Methodology

The Korean group in the present study consisted of Korean students whose nationality and first language were both Korean and whose primary and secondary education was completed in Korean academic institutions in Korea. The English group consisted of American students who were U.S.

citizens, whose first language was English, and for whom most of their education was completed in U.S. academic institutions where English was the dominant, primary medium of instruction.

Forty essays from the Korean students and 42 two essays from the American students studying in U.S. colleges and universities were used as the corpus for data analysis. The essay topic selected for the participants of the present study to write about was taken from the Test of Written English (TWE) sample essay topics that Educational Testing Service's TWE specialists created for the students who are preparing for the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language).

To test whether or not mean differences in those variables between and among the subject groups were statistically significant, Multivariate Analysis of Variances (MANOVA) and F-Tests were conducted by the SAS computer statistic program.

## Results

The MANOVA results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in the set of Discourse Fluency Variables between native speakers of English and native speakers of Korea. Because the MANOVA results on both the Lexical Variables set and the Cohesion Variables set indicated that there were significant differences between

these two linguistic groups, an F-Test was performed to identify which textual element in each set of variables had a significant mean difference. The F-Test results showed that there were statistically significant differences in percent of nouns, percent of pronouns, and percent of passive voice verbs at  $p < .05$  level, and that the mean differences in percent of complex sentences, average of word length, percent of content words, percent of conjunctions, and percent of subordinate conjunction openers were high enough to consider at  $p < .30$  level although they were not statistically significant.

In short, compared with American students' writings, Korean students' writing had:

- a higher percent of complex sentences
- a shorter word length
- a lower percent of content words
- a lower percent of nouns
- a lower percent of passive voice verbs
- a higher percent of pronouns
- a higher percent of conjunctions
- a higher percent of subordinate conjunction openers

When the participants were divided into six subgroups by their language backgrounds (English and Korean) and their writing proficiency (Low, Middle, High), the MANOVA result on the multiple group comparisons indicated that there was not any statistically significant difference in all three sets of variables among these six groups. Although their mean differences were not statistically significant, certain patterns of language characteristics were found between the

same level writers when the subjects in each language group were divided into high and low level writers based on their holistic writing scores.

In short, the findings in the present study indicated that mature writers' writings had the following patterns compared to those of immature writers:

- a longer average sentence length
- a higher percent of short sentences
- a higher percent of complex sentences
- a lower percent of subject openers
- a longer average word length
- a higher percent of content words
- a higher percent of passive voice verbs
- a lower percent of pronouns
- a lower percent of conjunctions
- a higher percent of subordinate conjunction openers

The findings on these 10 textual elements were consistent with previous contrastive rhetoric research with native speakers of English and non-native speakers of English.

In addition to the findings on syntactic, lexical, and cohesive devices, some differences in rhetorical style were found in the present study. The findings on the differences in rhetorical styles were consistent with Kaplan (1966) and other previous contrastive rhetoric research with native speakers of English and native speakers of Korean (Eggington, 1987; Norton, 1978; Ok, 1991). In short, the results from comparing the essays between Korean students of English and American students also showed that in general, American writers preferred to deductively and explicitly

develop their essays with a three-unit of linear style (introduction - body - conclusion), whereas the majority of Korean writers tended to inductively and implicitly organize their ideas with a four-unit of circular style (beginning - developing - changing - concluding).

### **Conclusions**

This comparative composition research study examined some linguistic characteristics that were found in academic English prose written by native English speakers and by native Korean speakers. In answering the study questions, the researcher approached the differences between these two groups from their linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds.

As discussed in detail and summarized in brief in the preceding chapters, the findings in the present study showed that there were certain differences in essays written in English between native speakers of English and native speakers of Korean. When each dependant variable for the data analysis was examined, the computerized statistical results indicated that there were more differences in lexical choices and cohesion devices than in syntactic structures (discourse fluency variables) between these two groups.

With respect to the different distribution of their

holistic writing scores, no significant differences in the discourse fluency variables between these language backgrounds implied that the Korean students' lower holistic scores on their writings resulted from their weakness and difficulty in using proper lexical items, cohesive devices, and rhetorical patterns that were expected for academic prose of English in U.S. colleges and universities.

Although the present study was not focused on examining the errors and error types that Korean students made in writing their essays in English, it was clear from the analysis of the corpus that more errors by the Korean writers were found in lexical choice and cohesive devices than in syntactic structures and grammars.

The reasons for no significant difference in discourse variables and much significant difference in lexical variables, cohesion variables, and rhetorical patterns in the essays between Korean students of English and American students seem to result from the English education backgrounds Korean students had. That is, some factors of language education performed in Korean academic institutions, such as the grammar-translation and reading-oriented classes, rote learning of English in a void context, and deficient instruction of written English rhetoric by non-specialists of composition, seem to have resulted in Korean ESL/EFL students' difficulty in lexical choice, cohesive devices, and written academic rhetorical

patterns of English.

In the implications section which follows, some possible pedagogical suggestions for improving the current situation for English composition education in Korean-English classrooms will be discussed first in some detail, focusing on composition instructional methods and on the criteria for selecting a proper textbook for teaching English composition to Korean EFL students. Next will follow some implications of the results drawn from the present research study. Finally, then, some recommendations for future research on the contrastive rhetoric research between native speakers of English and native speakers of Korean will be provided.

### **Implications**

#### **Suggestions for Introducing a Paradigm Shift in the Korean EFL Composition Classrooms**

As reviewed and discussed in detail in Chapter II, it is not an overstatement to say that the current English composition instructions in Korea have many limitations caused by the traditional teacher-centered, grammar-translation and reading-oriented approach.

Silva (1990) clearly put the roles of teacher and students in the traditional composition classroom:

In the traditional teacher-centered approach the writer is simply a manipulator of previously learned language structures; the reader is the teacher in the role of editor or proofreader, not especially interested in quality of ideas or expression but primarily concerned with formal linguistic features (p. 13).

By this traditional teacher-centered approach, EFL students in Korea driven by writing phobia tend to keep themselves out of trouble by showing hyperattention to surface correction (accuracy). Naturally, this diverts them from a sense of self. They are not able to write what they want to but put down on paper what they have to.

Based on her experiences with ESL students, Zamel (1987) insightfully stated:

If we put fluency first, letting students write what they want to instead of what they have to, they will be able to describe their personal experience, express their view, convey their thoughts, and discover new ideas through writing spontaneously. (p. 267)

As implied by this statement, the absence of writing phobia caused by overemphasis on accuracy will motivate and instill confidence in Korean students of English composition. They will be able to derive their longed-for pleasure from the writing processes. As they move up along the scale of language development, they will be able to make themselves more and more clearly understood. Once the fluency and clarity levels are relatively achieved, the accuracy level will rise to desirable levels. Of course, as Mayher (1983) pointed out, the three dimensions continuously overlap. It is impossible to teach them in isolation. We

cannot give them equal importance either. This researcher believes, however, that mechanics should be the last thing to look for in Korean-English composition classrooms. When we do not give too much importance to correctness (accuracy), Korean EFL students will learn to write confidently. And when they write confidently, they will be able to improve their English composition skills.

To foster confidence in Korean EFL students, this researcher suggests that Korean EFL teachers take a more liberal and charitable attitude toward students' errors. As Allwright and Bailey (1991) indicated, teachers should look at student errors as not a constant feature but a marker in the development of a learner. Teachers of English composition should not see student errors as a result of inability to learn.

Another suggestion is related to the classroom environment. According to Richards (1990), the effective writing teacher is not one who has developed a method for the teaching of writing, but one who "can create an effective environment in which novice writers feel comfortable about writing and can explore the nature of writing" (p. 115).

To create an effective environment and to improve the situation, the principal investigator that suggests Korean EFL teachers change the classroom from teacher-centered to student-centered.

Teaching, as we know, is a two-way process involving both teacher and student. When the teacher and student meet for class, they are engaged in a special kind of social communication. In that process of communication, the teacher monitors and modifies his/her input through student's feedback. To a large extent, the success of teaching and learning relies upon whether the maximal communication takes place between the teacher and the student. And whether the maximal communication takes place depends upon the interpersonal relationship between the teacher and the student.

In the Korean culture, which is authority-dominated, the teacher always gives and the students are passive receivers. Teaching in such a situation involves mainly a teacher-to-student communication. Seldom do students have the opportunity to ask questions or discuss an important issue. The teacher is looked up to as an authority. The students are thought of as learners, who learn because the teacher teaches. An important criterion for evaluating teaching is how much the teacher teaches. Thus, both the teacher and the students tend to think, "the more, the better." The students, therefore, hardly have a chance to communicate with the teacher. Another reason for lack of mutual communication is that the authoritative teacher tends to make judgments about what should or should not be included in a given lesson. This attitude discourages

students from voicing their opinions in the presence of the teacher. Thus, a communication barrier develops between the teacher and the students.

The problem with authoritarian teachers and their interpersonal relationships is not hard to comprehend: it distances the teacher from the students. The students must keep the teacher at a respectful distance. Although the teacher sometimes also organizes classroom discussions, the students' fear of making mistakes and their lack of confidence often keep them silent in the classroom. In short, all activities of teaching and learning seem to revolve around the concept of authority, which is closely bound to the concept of correctness. As is the case with the correctness approach, the authority-dominated ambience can increase the students' writing phobia in an English classroom.

As Rivers (1987) put it, teacher-centered directed and dominated classrooms limit, by their nature, a constructive and exploratory atmosphere because the classrooms cannot be interactive. Thus, teachers need to step out of the limelight, to concede a full role to the student in developing and carrying through activities, to accept varieties of opinions, and to be tolerant of the errors students make while attempting to communicate.

How can we improve the situation for students in the Korean EFL classrooms? First, this researcher suggests that

the composition class should be student-centered rather than teacher-centered. As witnessed in our daily lives, children can participate in their work or play more actively when they are voluntarily involved in the work or play which is authentic for them.

Second, it is suggested that the Korean EFL teacher practice group writing in the classroom. Rather than evaluating students' papers authoritatively, Korean EFL teachers might ask their students to share their writings with the teacher and the other students. As Russo (1987) indicated, writing is not necessarily a solitary activity on the part of the author but can be interactive, involving the instructor, other students and individuals outside of the formal classroom setting. Russo showed how ESL students develop their writing skills through group activities. It is recommended that Korean EFL teachers apply the techniques Russo suggested to their classroom situations. As he put it, however, a cautious word is necessary here. That is, under no circumstance should grammar be the sole criterion by which a student's writing effort is judged.

Korean EFL teachers may be concerned about their students' capacity to respond to writing in a teacher-acceptable way. Such concern, however, is not necessary. Students do not need responses from their peers that are similar to those their teachers would give. What they need are genuine, honest, and helpful responses from their peers.

Students can learn from one another.

Finally, related to peer response groups, it is suggested that Korean EFL teachers practice the writing conference technique with their students. This is perhaps the most effective means for a teacher to establish good working interpersonal relationships with students. Teacher comments written in the margins of students' papers are beneficial to some extent, but many problems are best solved through face-to-face communication. The conference setting offers teachers the opportunity to tell their students what their strengths or weaknesses are. It enables teachers to humanize and, thus, maximize student learning.

Also, in a conference setting, the teacher is able to play an authentic reader's role. Through interaction with a knowledgeable and sympathetic reader, students may feel that the teacher is trustworthy and someone with whom they can talk. This should lead to a trust-based interpersonal relationship between the teacher and students. As a result, the students also may be less plagued by writing phobia.

As Rivers (1987) indicated, "once students feel appreciated and valued, they are anxious to show what they can do, to propose and participate in activities" (p. 10). According to her, whatever promotes student participation in a relaxed and enthusiastic atmosphere stimulates the interaction that is essential to successful language learning.

A word of caution is necessary here, though. Conference settings with the teacher or with the other students will not necessarily encourage interaction between the teacher and students. If the teacher continuously maintains her or his assumed authority and uses a directive language strategy, the teacher is then creating a teacher-centered classroom in miniature. This is a very important factor that Korean EFL teachers must keep in mind. Talking style may vary from teacher to teacher, but only when the teacher adopts a non-directive talking strategy will he or she be able to foster the students' confidence and encourage them to greater growth. Greater confidence should, in turn, enable students to write more fluently and clearly.

**Conclusion.** This researcher has reviewed some of the negative aspects of teacher-centered and grammar-based approaches to teaching writing found in the Korean EFL situation and has suggested new directions (student-centered, group writing, and the one-to-one writing conference with teacher) to be practiced effectively in the writing classroom of English.

In arguing for a confidence-fostering paradigm, the researcher emphasized the need to motivate Korean EFL students and develop their confidence as a basis for fluency and continued growth of writing in English. It is believed that a confidence-fostering approach as discussed above will

eventually lead to the growth of a increased competence than grammar confidence. This increased confidence will enable students to write fluently, clearly, and correctly.

In the following section, instructional material, particularly textbooks selection criteria for EFL composition class in Korea will be discussed. Generally speaking, in EFL situations where non-native speakers of English are not exposed to linguistically rich environments of the target language, both instructional materials and teaching methods are the most important factors which influence the productivity of the target language study. Therefore, in the next section, this researcher will suggest some factors for Korean EFL composition teachers to keep in mind in developing their English composition curriculum.

#### Textbook Selection Criteria for Teaching English Composition to Korean EFL students in Korea

A variety of factors influence foreign language study, such as teacher qualifications, teaching materials, classroom environment, administration, and learners' motivation and attitude. As stated by many educational researchers, it is not an overstatement to say that after the teacher, the teaching materials are the next most important factor in the foreign-language classroom. Since teaching materials are so important in helping students

improve their learning achievement, it is natural that suitable teaching materials should be selected for our students.

As for the teaching of foreign language grammar, usage, and semantics, many researchers and practitioners have suggested practical strategies and ideas about how teachers can teach more effectively and how students can learn more productively. For example, the sentence-combining practice or pattern drill in a composition classroom is one way that has been suggested for foreign language learners to practice for mastery of the target language structures.

However, compared to the plethora of suggested teaching or learning methodologies for studying English language, the suggestions for the criteria for selecting suitable textbooks are much fewer than we might expect. Much has been written about the differing techniques and philosophies of teaching grammar, but little has been written on the equally important area of textbook selection.

A good text is the heart of studying the English language in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom. If the textbook is well selected, it can stimulate student interest in the English language and can be a major contributor to increasing students' English language proficiency. If it is not well selected, the instructors, no matter how talented they are, will find it difficult to lead their students to an increased level of

proficiency.

Concerning the criteria for selecting textbooks to study English composition, the suggestions to be made in the present study were based on the following assumptions:

1. The rote practice of foreign language without the understanding of their situational contexts is meaningless.
2. Learners' motivation and attitude toward the target language play a crucial role in foreign language study.
3. Textbooks influence the students' motivation and attitude toward studying a foreign language.

Based on these assumptions, Korean EFL teachers need to keep in mind some key elements before selecting textbooks to teach English composition to their students.

**Students' level.** The students' current level is one of the most important factors teachers should consider in selecting a textbook. Many researchers (Fox, 1989; Gebhard, 1989; Lotherington, 1988; Melvin & Stout, 1987) agree that it is fundamental for instructors to know which materials are suitable for the students' current intellectual level. According to Krashen (1980, 1982), who has been a leader in the field of second language acquisition, students should be given comprehensible input ( $i + 1$ ) to develop their language ability. By "comprehensible input" ( $i + 1$ ), Krashen means a

language that is just beyond the student's present comprehension level. He suggests that the reading materials also should be one step beyond the students' current language ability. In other words, the teaching materials are most effective when they are selected at a slightly higher level than the students' current level. They should not be too easy nor too difficult.

Gebhard (1989) asserts that the materials should not be too far beyond the students' present comprehension level. He has found that if materials are not comprehensible to the students, they often become frustrated, lose interest, or spend countless hours looking words up in a dictionary devoid of the contexts in which those words are presented.

Although Krashen and Gebhard seem, in a sense, differ from each other in their positions on selecting materials depending on the students' level, they agree with each other in claiming that the teaching materials to be selected should not be far beyond the students' current level.

Melvin & Stout (1987) claim that the level of the students also influences the selection of reading materials. However, they admit that this factor is not as important as content. They agree with Fox (1989) that the most important criterion for selecting reading materials is content.

**Content.** Comprehensible input is necessary for language acquisition, but it is not the sole factor. According to Fox

(1989), "the students, like everybody else, read for meaning" (p. 34). By this, he means that any reading material teachers use in their classrooms must stimulate their students' interest in order to make the students successfully achieve their learning. This is an important point for the Korean EFL teachers to keep in mind when selecting composition textbooks for their students. Teachers should find textbooks in which their students are likely to be interested. Much empirical research shows that if students are interested enough in the content, they are more successful in their foreign language study even if the materials are a bit difficult for them. No matter how well organized a textbook might be or how easy it is to read, students will be bored if they are not interested in the content, which in turn may result in a high anxiety level for students in the foreign language classroom.

**Relevance.** According to Richards (1990), learning materials should be related to real world purposes. Without a close relationship to real world experiences, the study of composition and grammar will be meaningless. In other words, potential utilization will motivate students to learn the target language. It is not probable that knowledge about the target language acquired by rote learning without considering its contexts will not help be utilized in a real life situation. This is a general phenomenon found in a

majority of Korean students who are learning English as a foreign language. It is very important for teachers to consider whether the contents of textbooks chosen closely relate to real world purposes.

Another factor related to the relevance of textbooks is the needs of students. Gebhard (1989) claims that "understanding the needs of students in specific fields can provide the means through which materials can be selected and created" (p. 88). This researcher wonders how many Korean EFL teachers seriously consider and assess their students' learning needs before they select textbooks. There has been a great deal of agreement among researchers that a teacher's analysis of students' needs is a very important aspect of the selection of the teaching and learning materials in language pedagogy. Researchers such as Cray (1988), Gebhard (1989), Lotherington (1988), and Melvin & Stout (1987) assert that students' needs should be taken into account when selecting the teaching materials.

**Background knowledge.** Another key aspect of materials selection is the students' previous knowledge. It is necessary for the Korean EFL teachers to have at least a general idea of the students' background knowledge in order to teach at the proper level. As frequently uttered by Korean EFL students, some of English textbooks were either too hard or too easy for them. Korean EFL composition

teachers need to seriously consider their new students' background and current level of knowledge in order to provide them with teaching that will be compatible with the students' level of proficiency.

Recent research has emphasized the importance of background knowledge in language study. Smith (1988), for example, affirms that language study cannot be separated from the students' previous knowledge. Referring to ESL students in particular, Lotherington (1988) asserts that the lack of background knowledge may cause more difficulties for the ESL students than the language complexity. In addition, Fox (1989) states that background knowledge is an important part of a student's ability to read and understand a particular text. Similarly, Nunnan (1989) claims that this factor is particularly significant for ESL/EFL learners, affirming that a student's background knowledge is more important in language study than language complexity.

As repeatedly mentioned in the research of many foreign language researchers, understanding students' background knowledge must be considered in the process of material selection for the Korean EFL class.

**Authenticity.** There is not much agreement among researchers as to whether ESL/EFL materials should be authentic or not. On the one hand, some authors advocate the use of authentic materials. Melvin & Stout (1987), for

example, state that teachers should take full advantage of the potential benefits of authentic materials. Moreover, Gebhard (1989) points out that authenticity should be one of the criteria for material selection. On the other hand, some researchers believe that teachers should create or adapt their own materials. Cray (1988) says that teachers should develop materials that take into account the students' needs. As mentioned previously, students will soon forget what they learned by rote memorization without considering any context of usage. As proved in experimental research, introducing authentic materials will provide some clues for solving many problems resulting from memorizing grammar rules without considering the context of usage.

**Conclusion.** In this part of implications for this chapter, the criteria for selecting the texts for composition study in the Korean EFL learning situations have been briefly considered and some suggestions have been made to assist the Korean EFL teachers in selecting proper textbooks that will help the Korean EFL students improve their English writing proficiency.

In short, it has been stated in this part that the Korean EFL composition teachers should keep in mind, at the very least, the following questions in order to make their composition classes more productive, effective, and authentic for their students:

1. Are the instructional materials matched to the purpose of improving English writing proficiency?
2. Are the instructional materials reasonably matched to the level of learners, not too easy or difficult?
3. Are the instructional materials interesting enough to hold the attention of learners?
4. Do the instructional materials include the appropriate sociocultural, linguistic, and rhetorical significance of the English language?
5. Are the materials in the textbook adaptable to the learners' life outside the classroom?

#### Pedagogical Implications of the Findings

Teacher and instructional materials are the two most important factors in determining the quality of foreign language education. In the Korean EFL situations, however, these two factors have always been problematic, particularly in the area of English composition pedagogy. In summary, one of the major reasons for Korean students' limitations in writing an essay in English must have been due to those two factors: unqualified, non-specialized English composition teachers and inappropriate teaching materials.

To improve the current situations for the Korean-English teacher training programs and ultimately to help Korean students of English improve their English composition

skills and proficiency, the researcher suggests that the curricula and teaching materials for both teacher training programs and English composition classrooms in Korea should include the following elements:

1. linguistic elements: a) various pattern-drills from simple sentences to complex sentences and b) practice to understand the meanings of dictions in context;
2. sociolinguistic elements: a) awareness of different rhetorical patterns generally required in different writings such as academic prose and personal writing, b) understandings of different writing styles, voices, audience expectations, and c) critical reading of various writings;
3. cultural elements: a) use of authentic materials and b) awareness of the roles of written discourse in the target language culture; and
4. instructional elements: a) practice of writing across the curriculum and b) holistic evaluations of students' writings.

Lastly, in the Recommendations section which follows, some suggestions for drawing a better understanding of the nature of Korean ESL/EFL students' composition and for ultimately contributing to helping them improve their English composition skills will be recommended.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Because of its pioneering trials in examining the differences that Korean writers of English showed in their English composition, the result of the present study does not seem to have greatly contributed to understanding the whole picture of the language characteristics which co-occurred in the essays written in English by native speakers of Korean. To identify and better understand the differences Korean students' English writing has when compared to those of native speakers of English as a model, future research needs to go beyond the textual elements examined in the present study.

Based on her analysis, Hwang (1991) pointed out that as the extent of Korean students' exposure to and practice of English rhetoric increased, their writing proficiency also increased. Her research results indicate that length of residence in academic institutions in English-speaking countries is positively correlated with English writing proficiency. To understand what differences Korean students of English show in textual elements such as those investigated in the present research study as a function of their length of exposure to English rhetoric, and to test the association of length of residence with quality of writing, further research will be necessary.

Basically, the present study approached the syntactic,

lexical, and rhetorical differences of both native speakers of English and native speakers of Korean showed in their essays written in English from a quantitative perspective. To better identify and examine the nature of the differences between these two language backgrounds, various research methods such as, empirical, descriptive, and qualitative ones will need to be used in future research.

To increase the validity for finding the general patterns which co-occurred in essays from the Korean students of English, the sample size of the subjects will need to be increased in future research. In addition to validity, the issue of reliability on data collection and analysis will also need to be considered more carefully in future research for the contrastive rhetoric between and among different language backgrounds.

The present study examined the differences in academic expository prose. Future contrastive rhetoric research on the differences in textual elements between native speakers of English and native speakers of Korean will need to deal with other various types of written English to examine whether or not there exist any differences or similarities in the different types of writing when the written texts from both language backgrounds are compared to each other.

As mentioned earlier in the Limitations of the Study section in Chapter I, this research study has a limitation regarding the Korean subjects. In other words, the Korean

subjects who participated in this research study were Korean ESL students studying at U.S. colleges or universities. Such limitations of research concerning the participant subjects raises some other research questions like the following for future studies on the contrastive rhetoric research between native speakers of Korean and native speakers of English:

1. What differences or similarities would be identified, compared to those of the present study, if the subjects were Korean EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students studying in Korean colleges or universities?
2. What differences or similarities would be identified, compared to those of the present study, if the subjects were Korean ESL students studying in U.S. secondary schools?

It is believed that the answers to those questions for future research will surely contribute to helping Korean students of English improve their English composition skills and proficiency.

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## **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Survey of Comparative ESL Writing Research (Silva, 1993)**

#### **1.ESL/NES Studies: Native Language of the ESL Subjects**

Atari (1983): Arabic  
enson (1980): Arabic, Farsi, Ga, Japanese, Spanish, Thai  
Benson et al. (1992): Amharic, Arabic, Cambodian, Chinese, Farsi, French, Gola, Gujartic, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Tigringa, Vietnamese  
Burtoff(1983): Arabic, Japanese  
Campbell (1987a; 1987b; 1990): Chinese, Farse, Hebrew, Indonesian, Korean, Lao, Spanish, Vietnamese  
Carlson (1988): Arabic, Chinese, Spanish  
Choi (1988a; 1988b): Korean  
Conor (1984): Japanese, Spanish  
Cummings (1990): Spanish  
Dennett (1985; 1990): Japanese  
Frodesen (1991): Chinese, Korean, Spanish  
Gates (1978): Farsi, Spanish, Thai  
Hafernik (1990): Chinese, Japanese, Norwegian  
Harris (1983): not specified  
Hirokawa (1986): Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian, Thai  
Hu et al. (1982): Chinese  
Intaraprawat (1988): Bengali, Chinese, French, Japanese, Thai  
Kobayashi (1984a; 1984b): Japanese  
Linnarud (1986): Swedish  
Lux (1991): Spanish  
Mahmoud (1983): Arabic  
Mann (1986): Arabic, Chinese, Spanish  
Norment (1982): Arabic, Chinese, Spanish  
Oi (1984): Japanese  
Ouaouicha (1986): Arabic  
Park (1988): Chinese  
Ragan (1989): Chinese  
Reid (1988; 1992): Arabic, Chinese, Spanish  
Scarcella (1984a; 1984b): Japanese, Korean, Romance, Taiwanese  
Silva (1990): Chinese, Spanish  
Stalker & Stalker (1988): not specified  
Webb (1988): Spanish  
Xu (1990): Not specified  
Yau (1989): Chinese  
Ch (1993): Chinese

Appendix A, continued

**2. L1/L2 Studies: Native Languages of the Subjects**

Almeida (1984): Portuguese  
Arndt (1987): Chinese  
Carson et al. (1990): Chinese, Japanese  
Carson & Kuehn (1992): Chinese  
Chelala (1981): Spanish  
Cook (1988): Spanish  
DeJesus (1984): Spanish  
Dunkelblau (1990): Chinese  
Gaskill (1986): Spanish  
Hall (1987; 1990): Chinese, French, Norwegian, Polish  
Hildenbrand (1985): Spanish  
Jones & Tetroe (1987): Spanish  
Kamel (1989): Arabic  
Krapels (1990): Arabic, Chinese, Spanish  
Lin (1989): Chinese  
Moragne e Silva (1989; 1991): Portuguese  
Norment (1986): Chinese  
Santiago (1970): Spanish  
Schiller (1989): Arabic  
Skibniewski (1988): Polish  
Skibniewski & Skibniewska (1986): Polish  
Tagong (1991): Thai  
Terdal (1985): Hmong, Vietnamese  
Whalen (1988): French

**3. ESL/NES and L1/L2 Compositions:  
Native Languages of the L2 Subjects**

Indrasuta (1987; 1988): Thai  
Norment (1984): Chinese, Spanish  
Watabe et al. (1991): Japanese

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Consent Letter**

To whom it may concern:

Hi! My name is Seungbok Lee. Currently, I am a Ph.D. candidacy at the University of Tennessee/Knoxville and am majoring in Foreign Language/ESL Education.

The dissertation committee and the Research Review Committee at the UTK has given approval to conduct this study, "Syntactic, Lexical Differences in English Prose Written by Native Korean Speakers and Native English Speakers."

The Purpose of this study is to examine what differences there are in English prose written by Korean students and American students, and what difficulty and limitations Korean students of English may have in writing academic English prose. It is hoped that the results of this study will indicate some suggestions for helping Korean students of English improve their ability and skills in writing adequate academic prose in English as required in U.S. colleges and universities.

You will be involved in this study by writing an essay about a topic attached with this letter and sending it back to me. More detailed information about your writing activity is included with the essay question. Your activity should not take more than two hours. In the study, your personal information such as name, marital status, date of birth, address, and telephone numbers will not be necessary at all. Your writing will be kept strictly anonymous.

Your consent for this research study is voluntary. By returning the survey question to me, you will consent to participate in this project. I will really appreciate your response to this letter. If you have any question about it, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Seungbok Lee

## APPENDIX C

### Essay Question and Directions for Writing

Invention such as eyeglasses and sewing machines have had an important effect on our lives. Choose another invention that you think is important. Give specific reasons for your choice.

Before you start to write about the topic above, I would like you to keep in mind the following directions:

1. Write by yourself. Never ask anyone else to proofread or edit. You can use a dictionary.
2. Write as if this were a final version ready to be submitted to your professor.
3. Write more than 250 words (approximately, one double-spaced typed page).
4. Take as much time as necessary. You can revise as often as you wish. However, once again, never consult with any native speaker of English or ask anyone else to help you write.

After you finish writing your essay, please fill out the following blanks by checking a choice or answering them. The information you provide will be used for data comparison.

- 
1. English Use: Native speaker(    ) Non-native speaker\* (    )

\*If you are non-native speaker of English, your length of residence in the U.S.: (    ) year(s) (    ) month(s)

2. Current Educational Level: Undergraduate(    ) Graduate (    )

3. Major: Humanities or Social Sciences (    )  
Natural Sciences (    )

4. Age: 17-19 (    ) 20-29 (    ) 30-39 (    ) 40-49 (    )

5. Gender: Female (    ) Male (    )
-

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Survey to Select a Writing Topic for the Present Study (from College Composition Teachers)**

Hi! My name is Seungbok Lee. I am currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Tennessee. I am doing a research study on a comparative rhetoric in English prose between American students and Korean students.

In developing essay questions for this comparative rhetoric analysis, the following topic selection criteria have been considered:

1. The topic should be accessible to examinees from a variety of linguistic, cultural, and educational background.
2. The task to be performed by examinees should be explicitly stated.
3. The wording of the prompt should be clear and unambiguous.
4. The task should not be biased, inflammatory, or misleading.
5. The task should not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any subgroup because of cultural differences.

The following essay questions can be examples to test students' ability to write an expository prose required at college level. Based on the criteria above, would you select one question which you think is most fitting to the selection criteria?

#### **Essay Question 1 (    )**

Some people say that the best preparation for life is learning to work with others and be cooperative. Others take the opposite view and say that learning to be competitive is the best preparation. Discuss these positions, using concrete examples of both. Tell which one you agree with and explain why.

## Appendix D, continued

### Essay Question 2 (    )

Supporters of technology say that it solves problems and makes life better. Opponents argue that technology create new problems that may threaten or damage the quality of life. Using one or two examples, discuss these two positions. Which view of technology do you support? Why?

### Essay Question 3 (    )

Some people believe that automobiles are useful and necessary. Others believe that automobiles cause problems that affect our health and well-being. Which position do you support? Give specific reasons for your answer.

### Essay Question 4 (    )

Inventions such as eyeglasses and the sewing machine have had an important effect on our lives. Choose another invention that you think is important. Give specific reasons for your choice.

## **APPENDIX E**

### **Writing Samples from Both Language Backgrounds**

#### **Korean/Television**

Among many other beneficial devices for human being as time has passed, I would like to choose the televisions as one which has influenced much on people. Like other devices, or course, the television has effected positively or negatively on daily lives of people. In the beginning of development of this device, most people might not expect these bunches of effects on many people. However, these days that most countries on the world have developed their own cultures, the media including the television network have showed an outstanding role. Even though an interesting cultural events is held at one part of the earth, we, living at the other part of the earth, can have the chance to watch and thereby indirectly participate in the events. Moreover, we can inform our relatives, living at the other part of the world, of our recent news without any delay. Therefore, the human being on the world could be one society which can respond simultaneously to the events. Although every country has its own cultural shape, one culture can touch with other cultures. Thereby one culture can adopt some good aspects from other culture when the total consequences of the adoption is positively recognized. However, some undesirable aspects as well as good aspects have been transferred from one culture to other cultures...(1105) **holistic score: 1**

## **Korean/Cars**

There is not doubt for the fact that time is probable most importantly considered in our live. It is not difficult to see how much people want to save their time if we look around the inventions such sewing machines, clocks, electric lamp, cars, and etc. Among these inventions, this paper first reviews what the effects of cars is on our lives.

When we turn on the electric power, instantaneously all the areas of the darkened room become bright. This well represents the speed of inventiveness that has developed within the past century. We are not largely surprised that the design of the numerous cars is tremendously changed every years. Driving a car is properly thought in modern times.

Consider for example, how much the car is useful and convenient for our lives. If we have an experience that the car is broken down on the highway or any local street, we notice its usefulness. In this case, we rarely think of going our way on foot even though it is within several walking distance. The reason of this action is because we are accustomed to use a car and we do not want to waste a time on the street. It is hardly imagined that how much our ancestors spent their time on walking the street. They might have worked more than they did if they lived in the time that the cars were invented...(1108)    **holistic score: 2**

## **Korean/Dictionary**

As a member of club where all the members are struggling to survive in this exotic place called the United States of America, I, myself, am also trying to be awarded with the trophy of "hole in one" which we might say the degree of excellence is each individual's academic field. The existence of enormous difficulties of pursuing our academic goal lies on the fact that how we speak, write, and listen in the past has turned out to be useless from the beginning of our studying abroad. Due to the absolute different alphabet used by each country, a person originally from other country cannot read, write or speak to exchange and learn the advanced knowledge we need for expanding our study. Nevertheless, over four hundred international students are here, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, accumulating credits for their degree and through out the all the states in America, the number of students studying away from their home country will definitely be over ten million. What could be the reason for this mysterious phenomenon? We needed a translator back in time but soon realizing the insufficient number of them might have led us inventing a portable translator, a dictionary. The invention of dictionary make it possible for each individual to communicate with others using different alphabet, culture or history. The dictionary may not be considered as an invention since...(1221)                      **holistic score: 3**

## **Korean/Airplane**

We human beings have been inventing uncountable objects from the beginning of the world. I think, among them, it is reasonable to say that an airplane is one of the most invaluable inventions. The airplane is a facility that transports passengers and/or cargos by flying through the air using jet engine. This has made it possible that people overcome at least two limits encountered by existing transport systems such as ground and marine transport. Those problems were associated with time and geometry. First, the airplane system is much more efficient than others in terms of timely matter. This is the fastest transport system at the present time. Our world has become virtually a global village because of this invention. One can travel around the world within twenty four hours. Second, the airplane system does not have geometric problems which the other systems do. In another words, it does not have particular routes that are needed for the other systems. The airplane system, however, has its own weak point, that is, the volume of transportation. Unlike marine transport system, it cannot mediate massive transportation. Nevertheless, it is still true that the airplane has a significant affect on human lives. As time passes, we expect that airplane will bring in another important effect that we have never had in the past. I am very interested in knowing and seeing what kinds of lives we will have...(1212)                      **holistic score: 4**

## **Korean/Computer**

The history of human kind is the tradition of the invention. Many people, famous or anonymous in the history, have tried to make something which make our life easy and comfortable. Every single item reflects its inventor's hard work and is so important that it is hard to image how our ancestors could live without it. It makes us go one step forward to developed and cultivated society. Computer, however, let us leap toward to the new world we never ever dreamed. Computer is the one of the most significant inventions during 20th century. This electrical device has slowly changed our life since it was introduced. This machine, however, was not popular until 80's. Some of us can remember the Apple computer consisting of typewriter-style box and small black hand whit monitor. The first IBM personal computer looked the most powerful machine ever made. These computers slowly changed our life style. The typewriter was first victim to computer. Many students have their own computer in their dorm to make final draft of English paper, to compose a new song for music class, to draw a graph for physics, and to analyze the data for business classes. With the small device called modem, we can connect our computer any database in the world and send and receive electronic mail through all over the world. If we buy a scanner, we can copy several pieces of paper in our room and...(1226)                      **holistic score: 5**

## **American/Computer**

The computer has had many profound effects on our lives, particularly in the late 20th century. It has helped in many ways from helping calculate numbers to standard word processing, in other words a typewriter with the capability to store the information that you have been working on while still having the capability of revising the paper without having to retype the entire paper all over again.

Computers also have played an important role in communications and the development of other electronics. With this teaching aid we as a society can learn more from one another faster with more accuracy. Computers and their teaching uses are what computers all boil down to is that the computer is used in many aspects of our lives, one of the aspects is in telecommunication and/or multimedia which is the use of the computer and how it is used in the communication with not only around the country but, around the world.

By using computers for many jobs such as in the classroom for helping to teach a student more effectively with a computer this in turn will help the students be confident, then in turn help the student do more things at a faster pace. The computer has really been a key fundamental element in helping teaching the students gain more knowledge that they might not have and if they did not have the computer to help them learn and...(2101) **holistic score: 3**

## **American/Telephone**

I think one of the most important inventions ever made was the telephone. Even though it was created such a long time ago, it is still in great use today. This is because it has so many benefits to people and society.

Probably the most important aspect of the telephone is improved communication. Society, just like relationship, is based on communication. Before the telephone it was hard to keep the lines of communication strong, because correspondence took so long. The only way was through letters that might take many weeks to get to the person they were for. The telegram improved the situation somewhat, but not to the extent the telephone made possible. Easier communication also allowed for a greater expansion than had been seen before. People no longer had to worry about being cut off from their families or the rest of society if they decided to move. This especially made life easier for the people of rural communities. Today we have put this improved communication to great uses. Especially with the implementation of such programs such as 911.

The telephone not only helped individual people, but it made great contributions to the business world. It gave them access to greater markets quicker and easier than before. It gave them a link with their distributors, as well as their customers, so they were able to track merchandise or obtain special items without delays...(2118)      **holistic score: 4**

## **American/Velcro**

One of space travel's most significant contributions to common everyday life is the invention of velcro. This seemingly innocuous piece of fabric has effected many changes in society's manufactured products. Velcro's original purpose, which was to provide space travelers with an easy method of securing objects in the space vehicle's gravity-free environment, which has been expanded to include utility in many common objects. One particularly time saving use of velcro, with which parents of young children will undoubtedly agree, is velcro closures on shoes. Whereas prior to the introduction of velcro parents had to tie and retie their children's shoes countless times each day, parents now merely strap their child's foot into a lace-free velcro shoe. Actually the invention velcro has made the entire "shoe lace tying activity" which has typically delineated a milestone in the development of preschoolers a somewhat passe's "right of passage." The advent of velcro fasteners has also made a marked difference in the retailing of many other common clothing items. Pants, shirt, outerwear, body suits, and many personal female items have succumbed to the convenience of velcro. Velcro has also been instrumental in the development of novel items, such as the "fanny pack." This basically unisex purse which is worn around a person's waist is surely yet another example of velcro's versatility...(2204)      **holistic score: 5**

## **American/Computer**

The invention of the computer will probably be the single, most powerful new piece of technology created by man during my lifetime. The computer has provided tremendous benefits to all aspects of our daily life and really changed the look of our culture. It has led us out of the industrial age and into a total information society. We can now perform millions of calculations instantaneously, store, and retrieve all forms of data, and communicate with others around the world all thanks to the computer. Computers can be found in all disciplines from medicine to transportation to art to music and even to sports. Life is much easier thanks to these electronic brains. Computers are continuing to shrink in size and become much more portable as well. The latest piece of computer technology is interactive multimedia which combines sound, video, and text on a single laser encoded compact disc. An entire set of encyclopedia can now be found on one disc. The computer has also brought with it many disadvantages as well. Many people once employed in factories doing repetitive tasks have been replaced by the computer and others have been forced to return to school to catch up on the new technology. Many user-friendly services in banking and retail have been replaced by the computer and we spend much more time interacting with computers than we did with humans in the past...(2206)                    **holistic score: 6**

## **American/Microscope**

The invention and use of the microscope by Leeuwenhook in the 1670s marked the opening of the door to the world of microorganisms. Although Janasen in the 1590s had discovered the principles of the microscope, it was Leeuwenhook who first used it and began to describe the organisms which had heretofore remained, at least, only speculation and invisible to man. Beginning then, in the 1600s, through today, man has been privileged to view an ever shrinking world view of life as it surrounds him through the use of ever more powerful and precise instruments. As man's ability to scan smaller and smaller particles grew, his knowledge of how organisms interact, disease is spread and how effective particular treatments are has expanded in a tremendous explosion of ideas and objective data that would be and was impossible before. Microscopes allow scientists, physicians, chemists, and biologists to see and explore problems and solutions as never before. Without these instruments our knowledge of medicine, disease, indeed the whole of the world around us would be reduced to mere conjecture with little or no way to advance in fighting disease except as if blind, stumbling in the dark. All areas of science use and benefit from the knowledge gained from the use of these instruments to include the unraveling of the mysteries of atoms. Of all of man's inventions, few have had the far reaching impact of...(2223)      **holistic score: 6**

## VITA

Seungbok Lee was born at Mun-Mark, Won-Ju, South Korea in 1962. He went to Mun-Mark Elementary School, Mun-Mark Middle School, and Won-Ju High School. He received the B.A. in English Education in 1985 and the M.A. in English (Linguistics) in 1990 from Kangwon National University under Dr. Nam-Kook Kim's direction in Korea. In 1992, he received the M.A. degree in English (TESOL) from Indiana University of Pennsylvania under Dr. Jerry G. Gebhard as his advisor. He was awarded the Doctor of Philosophy in Foreign Language/ESL Education in August, 1995 from The University of Tennessee/Knoxville under Dr. Patricia Davis-Wiley as his major advisor.

Before coming to the U.S. for his graduate study, he taught English in Korea at the secondary and four-year university levels. He also had a great deal of experience as a translator in Combined Army (U.S./Korea), instructor in an English Language Institute, and tutor of English for adults in Korea. During his stay at The University of Tennessee/Knoxville, he worked as a graduate assistant to the Language Resource Center of Language, Communication, and Humanities Education Unit.