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Is a Brief Explicit Grammar Explanation Needed in Business English Courses?*

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With a view to seeing whether explicit grammar explanation is necessary for increasing writing accuracy in business English courses, the present study investigated whether incorporating a combination of attention-drawing devices into a business English class may be effective in helping low intermediate-proficiency Korean university learners improve accuracy in their use of sentences with a relative clause structure. The study found that the combination of input enhancement, translation, output practice, and corrective feedback and that of the traditional explanation, input enhancement, translation, output practice, and corrective feedback did not have a significant effect on improved accuracy. However, the combination of the pattern explanation, input enhancement, translation, output practice, and corrective feedback led to significantly improved accuracy. Consequently, it can be said that the pattern explanation, which treats relative clause structures as grammatical patterns based on word order, made a decisive contribution to the significant increase in accuracy. The effectiveness of the pattern explanation may be related to attention. Since the 'Business English 1' course the subjects took involved the integration of content and language instruction, their attention was divided over content and form. Therefore, to help them to achieve accuracy in the use of the target structure, the English restrictive relative clause structure, it was necessary to explicitly direct their attention to the target structure. In conclusion, a brief explicit explanation which explicitly draws students' attention to the knowledge serving for an important factor of the processing of a particular form or structure is needed in business English courses if the form or structure gives many students production problems.

[business English/writing accuracy/explicit grammar explanation/attention]

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I. INTRODUCTION

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is designed to meet specific needs of language learners (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). English for Business Purposes (EBP), which is one area of ESP, attempts to meet the needs of people hoping to communicate effectively in the international business community. EBP, therefore, is centered on business content and language skills. According to Muncie (2002), grammar is just as important an instrument of communication as content (p.183). Furthermore, it has been argued by many researchers that accuracy is needed in order to communicate more effectively in written discourse (Ferris, 1995; Frodesen & Holten, 2003; Leki, 1991; Little, 1994). Beason's (2001) research, which investigated business people's reactions to errors, found that errors in business writing can impede effective communication of meaning and that they can have a negative impact on the image of a writer or organization. The interviews with the subjects indicated that errors suggest a poorly educated person, one who lacks successful writing education. The majority of them assumed the writer as a student failed to acquire the knowledge of grammar and the English language (p. 54). Undoubtedly, the person in business needs to make a good impression and be seen to be professional and well prepared in all their dealings. This can be aided by a good level of accuracy and appropriateness in the language they use. Based on the general agreement that errors can have an impact on a writer's communicability and image, it has been argued that grammar needs to be integrated into business English writing instruction to increase writing accuracy. Therefore, to help students improve the ability to write effectively in business communication situations, not only business-area content but grammar relevant to business writing has been considered essential to the practice of business-purpose writing teaching. Assuming that grammar needs to be incorporated into business English instruction, the question is what instruction in grammar may be effective in helping students improve accuracy in their business writing.

Based on the observation that meaning-focused communicative instruction alone does not lead to high levels of grammatical accuracy (Harley & Swain, 1984; Lightbown & Spada, 1990; Swain, 1985), there have been many researchers to stress the need for focus on form in conjunction with communicative interaction (Doughty & Varela, 1998; Lightbown, 1998; White, 1998). Form-focused instruction keeps communicative intent and tackles grammar by drawing attention to linguistic features. Business English courses should be content-based and error avoidance should have a presence in the courses, so that it is reasonable that form-focused instruction should be implemented into business English instruction. The question is how focus on form can be effectively incorporated into it.

Recent research in cognitive psychology and second language acquisition (SLA) has expressed the view that attention plays a crucial role in learning (Izumi, 2002; Leow, 2001;

Robinson, 1995; Schmidt, 1995, 2001; Tomlin & Villa, 1994). Two attention-drawing devices have occupied attention in recent SLA research. One is visual input enhancement and the other is output. According to Izumi (2002), visual input enhancement is an external attention-drawing technique because it draws learners' attention to target forms in the written input by external means such as highlighting selected forms, whereas output is called an internal attention-drawing technique because attention is internally induced through production processes, in that learners find problematic aspects during production, which may cause them to pay attention to relevant input. In addition to them, explicit explanation and corrective feedback are considered explicit attention-drawing devices. Attention is explicitly directed at the target form by explicit explanation concerning it (De Jong, 2005). Corrective feedback draws learners' attention to the difference between the target input and the non-target-like output (Doughty & Varela, 1998; Long & Robinson, 1998).

If learners' attention needs to be drawn to the target form for learning that form, it should follow that a combination of attention-drawing techniques should result in increased learning of the form. Therefore, Ellis (2006) claimed that both input-based instruction and output-based instruction should be made use of to promote learning. Explicit explanation, which explicitly attracts attention to the target form, is not only a component of traditional instruction but also one of Input Processing Instruction (PI), a version of input-based instruction. However, some studies found that explicit explanation leads to no gains in accuracy in using specific language forms (Ellis, 1998; Macaro & Masterman, 2006), some others showed that explicit explanation component of PI plays a minor role (Benati, 2004; Marsden, 2006; Sanz, 2004; Sanz & Morgan-Short, 2004; VanPatten & Oikkenon, 1996).

In the present study, input-based attention-drawing devices and output-based attention-drawing devices were combined to promote an increase in writing accuracy in the use of the target form. The purpose of the present study is to see whether explicit explanation of the target form, one of attention-drawing devices, is necessary for increasing writing accuracy in business English courses. The purpose born in mind, the study compared the effect of a combination of attention-drawing techniques excluding explicit explanation with that of the combination including it on improved accuracy in the context of Korean university students learning business English. The target form was English restrictive relative clause structures. They were chosen because they are principal structures which are actively used in English writing but the researcher knows that many Korean university students make errors associated with them in writing from her teaching experience.

II. LITERATURE

1. Recent Research on Input-Based Instruction

The case for input-based instruction is based on the general consensus that input plays a crucial role in second language acquisition. This instruction attempts to draw learners' attention to targeted linguistic forms contained in the written input by input flooding or input enhancement. Input flooding contrives to increase exposure through numerous exemplars of the target form in the input. Input enhancement seeks to enhance the saliency of target forms in the input by employing typographical techniques (e.g., bolding, italicization, underlining, capitalizing). Both input flooding and input enhancement attempt to implicitly draw learners' attention to target forms, but input enhancement intentionally does, contrary to input flooding. The theoretical premise underlying input enhancement is that it induces learners to attend to target forms, which can promote the acquisition of the target form. The results of empirical studies on the effects of written input enhancement are mixed. Some studies (Jourdenais, Ota, Stauffer, Boyson, & Doughty, 1995; Shook, 1994; Williams, 1999) yielded positive results for the facilitative role of input enhancement, whereas other studies (Leow, 2001; Overstreet, 1998; Wong, 2003) found no positive effect at all. Several studies (Alanen, 1995; Doughty, 1991; Leeman et al., 1995) showed that input enhancement combined with additional techniques such as explicit rule explanation, feedback, or semantic support can induce positive effects.

Input Processing Instruction (PI), which has been developed by VanPatten (1996, 2003), is a version of input-based instruction. PI provides learners with explicit explanation about the target item and input-processing strategy, and structured input activities which are designed to make form-meaning relationships salient. Many studies have documented learning gains from PI for various structures in L2 (Benati, 2001; Cadierno, 1995; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993; VanPatten & Oikkenon, 1996; VanPatten & Sanz, 1995; VanPatten, 2002, 2004; Wong, 2003). Some studies (Benati, 2003; Farley, 2003, VanPatten & Oikkenon, 1996; Wong, 2003) investigating which component of PI is responsible for learning gains found that structured input activities play a major role, whereas explicit explanation does not play a significant role and argued that not only output practice but also explicit grammar explanation is not necessary if PI is given.

2. Recent Research on Output-Based Instruction

Traditional foreign language instruction focuses on learner output. On the basis of the view that production practice is an important part of acquiring a language, this instruction involves grammatical explanation and output practice of a grammatical structure or form.

In more recent years, Swain's (1985) proposal of Output Hypothesis highlighted the importance of output in acquisition and the interaction of attention with output. Swain (1985) argued that producing output helps acquisition by functioning as "the trigger that forces the learner to pay attention to the means of expression needed in order to successfully convey his or her own intended meaning" (p. 249). Of the four functions of output specified in the Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1993, 1995, 1998), the noticing function of output posits that producing output enables learners to notice the gap between the interlanguage (i.e., what they can say) and the target language (i.e., what they want to say), which then causes them to solve their interlanguage deficiencies. If relevant input is immediately available, recognition of problematicity may prompt learners to process relevant input with more focused attention (Swain & Lapkin, 1995). They may be directed to attend to relevant input to examine how the target language expresses the meaning that they just had difficulty in expressing. Some recent studies have showed that output may benefit acquisition. Toth's (2006) study comparing PI to communicative output tasks showed that the communicative output group used the target structure more frequently on the production task, concluding that communicative output tasks facilitated acquisition. In addition, Izumi's (2002) study found that the learners engaging in output activities outperformed those receiving only enhanced input in learning gains, arguing that this result would be explained by more effective attention to the target form during output.

Corrective feedback often occurs together with production practice. Although controversy has continued regarding whether error feedback is beneficial to improving writing accuracy since Truscott published his 1996 article titled "The Case Against Grammar Correction in L2 Writing Classes," there exist many studies (Chandler, 2000; Doughty & Varela, 1998; Ferris, 1999; Han, 2002; Frantzen, 1995; Lee, 1997) that found a significant effect for the learners who received error feedback, compared with the learners who did not. A feedback stage in output-based instruction is considered to attract learners' attention to the difference between the target input and the non-target-like output.

3. Recent Research on Explicit Explanation

As mentioned above, some studies (Benati, 2003; Farley, 2003; Marsden, 2006; VanPatten & Oikkenon, 1996; Wong, 2003) examined the role that explicit explanation, a component of PI, plays in second language acquisition, finding that it is not explicit explanation but structured input activities that are responsible for L2 development. Meanwhile, some studies (Ellis, 1993; Robinson, 1996, 1997) suggested that explicit explanation can facilitate acquisition on the basis of the results from the grammaticality judgment tests. But it can be argued that grammaticality judgment tests favor learners receiving explicit explanation because they can be answered by using explicit knowledge.

According to Ellis (1998), there is no clear evidence that explicit explanation leads to increased accuracy in using the target form in communicative language use. The results of Macaro and Masterman (2006) showed that explicit explanation leads to no gains in accuracy in either translation or free composition. However, there is a research which suggested a role for explicit explanation in increased accuracy in the use of the target form. Jong's (2005) study compared three training conditions: a group that received receptive training, a group that received receptive and productive training, and a group that received no training of the target structure and was only given an explicit explanation of the target structure. The group receiving the explicit explanation performed better than the receptive group and the receptive + productive group in the production task. Jong suggested that the explicit explanation might have functioned as an even more efficient shortcut to building a knowledge base which was available for production. Moreover, Jong argued that the finding that the group receiving the explicit explanation produced the most correct target forms might be related to attention. It was claimed that the attention of the group receiving the explicit explanation was explicitly directed at the target structure by the explicit explanation of it, whereas the other two groups are likely to have divided attention over the target structure and other aspects, such as word choice and word order.

III. TARGET FORM

English restrictive relative clause structures were selected as the target structure for this study because it has been observed that many Korean learners have difficulty in processing them in their written communicative performance. In fact, the English relative clause structure has received considerable attention in the literature since learners from East Asian countries such as Korea, Japan, and China have difficulty in acquiring it. The difficulty the learners have is due to the structural difference between English and Korean, Japanese, and Chinese (Flynn, 1989). A Korean, Japanese, and Chinese relative clause precedes the head noun it modifies, whereas an English relative clause follows the head noun it modifies. Chan's (2004) study presented confirmatory evidence for syntactic transfer from Chinese to English with regard to relative clauses. Chan claimed that instances of word-for-word translation, such as *She was see me who a man yesterday*, made a strong case for syntactic transfer from Chinese to English. Nakamori (2002) showed that Japanese learners made numerous rightward modification direction errors. Korean learners also frequently make errors of modification direction: they incorrectly place a relative clause before the head noun, as illustrated in (1).

(1) * You saw yesterday man is a famous professor.

Modification direction errors made by Korean, Japanese and Chinese learners are due to the difference in the position of the relative clause between East Asian languages and English.

Relative clause structures are principal structural devices and are actively used in writing. However, the researcher knows that a lot of Korean university students make many errors associated with relative clause structures even though they have been studying English for a number of years. Therefore, the English relative clause structure was chosen as the target structure.

IV. METHODOLOGY

1. Research Questions

The present study aimed to answer the following two research questions:

1) Is the combination of attention-drawing devices – input enhancement, translation, output practice, and corrective feedback – effective in helping Korean low intermediate-proficiency learners improve accuracy in the written production of the English relative clause structure in business English classes, which involve the integration of business –area content and language instruction?
2) Does including an explicit explanation in the above combination lead to a difference in the improvement of accuracy?

2. Subjects

The original pool of participants comprised 42 students enrolled in the 'Business English 1' course at a university in Seoul, Korea. All of them were juniors majoring in business administration. 'Business English 1' was a compulsory subject for these students in their junior year. A pretest was used to exclude any students who scored 70% or better. Four students were eliminated by the pretest. Therefore out of 42 students who attended 'Business English 1'classes, 38 were regarded as the subjects of the present study. The trial TOEIC taken at the end of their sophomore year revealed that their English language proficiency was low intermediate (TOEIC score 305-538). In addition, data from two subjects were eliminated from the analyses because they did not take one of the tests administered in the study. In the end, data from 36 subjects were analyzed.

3. Design

The goal of 'Business English 1' is to prepare students to read and write effectively once they leave college, so the course focuses on developing written communicative competence in English. This course consists of two school hours a week of business English reading and two school hours a week of business English writing. Reading class aims at developing students' comprehension of business texts. In writing class, they engage in writing business letters for various business work. For each writing class, one type of correspondence such as a letter of inquiry is picked. Because one of the main requirements of business writing is grammatical correctness, one of the aims of business writing class is to help them increase accuracy.

The present study was conducted during the regular 'Business English 1' classes over a period of 7 weeks in the first semester of the 2008 academic year. A reading class and a writing class were conducted every Friday, between which there was a lunch break. The cousebook used as the reading text was *English for Business Studies*, which contains core reading texts to explain the key concepts in business. For writing class, a handout providing the students with a letter dealt with in class was distributed to them in every class. For the present study, a letter containing a relative clause structure was selected.

The students read an article from *English for Business Studies* and learned business letter form, letter styles, and letter parts during the first week of class. In addition, in order to eliminate the students who have the ability to write sentences with a relative clause structure correctly prior to form-focused instruction, a sentence translation test was administered to all the students. The purpose of the translation test was testing accuracy in the students' productive use of English relative clause structures in relatively controlled output. The test consisted of 10 items. The students were instructed to translate sentences with a relative clause structure written in Korean into English. When taking the test, they were permitted to ask for any vocabulary they needed.

Form-focused instruction which intends to draw learners' attention to the target form began from the second week of class. From the second to the third week, the first experiment had been undertaken to determine whether the combination of attention-drawing techniques – input enhancement, translation, output practice, and corrective feedback – contributes to improving accuracy in the use of the relative clause structure. Based on the claim made in PI that interpreting the meaning of target forms is essential for learning, translation of some sentences was asked of the students. When a sentence with a relative clause structure appeared in the text while reading, they were asked to translate the sentence into Korean. The translation aimed to encourage them to attend to the form-meaning mapping of the relative clause structure during comprehension of the sentence. Before the translation, they were asked to underline key form elements such as the head

noun and the relative pronoun or adverb, which was designed to induce them to attend to the form of the relative clause structure (Appendix A). In writing class, they read and analyzed a sample letter with the researcher to know content, organization, letter form and vocabulary. Mention of language form was brief. There was a relative clause structure in a sample letter, but the form of the relative clause structure was not explicitly made mention of. Once again, they had to translate the sentence with the relative clause structure after underlining key form elements. Following it, they were asked to write a letter like the sample letter. The researcher gave them information about the letter such as a purpose of writing, an intended reader, and a writer's identity. The contents which have to be contained in the body of the letter were briefly described. In addition, the researcher attached the condition that a relative clause structure must be used twice in the body of the letter (Appendix B). When writing the letter, they were instructed to ask for any vocabulary they needed. The letter was submitted to the researcher, who gave them direct corrective feedback not only on the incorrect forms of the relative clause structure but also on other form errors. That is, full, explicit written feedback was provided. They received their marked letter back three days after it was submitted. It was expected that recognition of problematicity during production and the corrective feedback given to them might have stimulated them to process relevant input with more focused attention. Therefore, in the third week, reading class and writing class were conducted in the same way as the second week of class described above. After a letter was submitted, a test was administered. It was a translation test like the pretest. They had to translate 10 Korean sentences with a relative clause structure into English. It was possible to translate the sentences by using the relative clause types they had been exposed to during the second and third week of class. The example sentences for the relative clause types dealt with during the second and third week of class are as follows.

(2) a. They introduced to us some importers who are interested in this line of business.
b. This is the best offer that we can make.
c. There are management skills that have to be learnt.
d. Companies of which the objectives include high market share generally have long product lines.

From the fourth to the fifth week, the second experiment had been conducted to see whether including the traditional explicit explanation of the relative clause structure in the combination of attention-drawing techniques stated in the first experiment led to a better result than excluding the traditional explicit explanation. For the second and third experiments, the subjects were randomly divided into two groups: +EX group that received

explicit explanation and –EX group that didn't receive it. A regular reading class was from 10 a.m. to 11:50 a.m. But a reading class was conducted twice for the second and third experiments: one from 9:00 to 10:30, the other from 10:40 to 12:10. The subjects in –EX group had to take the first class and those in +EX group the second class. In the fourth week, the subjects in +EX group received the traditional explanation of the relative clause structure before reading an article. The relative clause types to which the subjects would be exposed in a reading article and a sample letter were explained by using simple example sentences. The explanation was brief and concise. Sentences with a relative clause structure were explained by means of two-sentence connections. For example, two sentences *I have a friend*, and *She lives in New York* are connected into one sentence *I have a friend who lives in New York* by using the relative pronoun *who*. A writing class was conducted in the same way as the second week of writing class described above. A letter was submitted and the subjects received their marked letter back three days later. In the fifth week, the same procedure as the fourth week was repeated, and then a translation test was administrated. Ten sentences containing the relative clause types which were explained during the fourth and fifth week of class were tested. The example sentences for the relative clause types explained are as follows.

(3) a. We are seeking a person who can sell and is willing to travel.
b. They are famous for their multi-brand strategy which allows them to compete in various market segments.
c. The technical work turned brilliant ideas into products people would buy.
d. Their quality is inferior to the samples for which we placed the order.
e. Small companies are vulnerable in a recession when customers prefer to buy from big, well-known suppliers.

From the sixth to the seventh week, the third experiment had been made to see the effect of including the explicit explanation of the English relative clause structure based on word order in the combination of attention-drawing techniques stated in the first experiment on increase in accuracy. The subjects in –EX group took the first reading class and those in the +EX group taking the second reading class received the pattern explanation of the English relative clause structure based on word order which was proposed by Kim (2007).

Nakamori (2002) claimed that the traditional instruction in relative clauses, which illustrates relative clause structures as two-sentence connections, lacked a psychological basis, because nobody in the real world connects two separate sentences with relative pronouns (p. 32). This instruction cannot provide learners with the explicit information about English relative clauses that the function of a relative clause is to modify the head noun and an English relative clause follows the head noun it modifies. Meanwhile, there

have been many researches to argue that word order is an important determining factor of the acquisition and processing of relative clauses (de Villiers, Tager-Flusberg, Hakuta, & Cohen, 1979; Diessel, 2007; Diessel & Tomasello, 2005; Hakuta, 1981). The rightward modification direction errors Korean learners often made are due to the fact that English and Korean differ in their head and relative clause order. In particular, English is a language with fixed word order and the grammatical function is determined by word order in English. Therefore, Kim (2007) gave an explanation of relative clause structures based on word order.

The relative clause types to which the learners would be exposed in a reading article and a sample letter during the sixth week of class were explained by using the simple example sentences in (4).

(4) a. Microsoft is a good example of **a company which is structured along product lines.**
b. **Investors who buy stock** can trade their shares as long as the company is in business.
c. During a boom, an economy expands to **the point where it is working at full capacity.**

The sentences in (4) were not explained as the connection of the two sentences. The relative clause structures in boldface were treated as grammatical patterns. That is, this treatment aimed at making the learners recognize the grammatical patterns such as the following.

(5) a. noun+**which** +**verb**...
b. noun+**who**+**verb**...
c. noun+**where**+**subject**+**verb**...

A relative clause following the head noun has modifying meaning. An appropriate relative clause is selected on the basis of a combination of the head noun and modifying meaning. As a result, a noun is followed by the words in boldface in the fixed order as in (5), which is regarded as a grammatical pattern. This type of explanation gives learners the explicit information that an English relative clause follows the head noun it modifies.

Concentrating on making the learners recognize the relative clause structures as the grammatical patterns, the researcher gave a brief and concise explanation based on word order. Except that before reading an article, the subjects in +EX group received the explanation based on word order, which will be called the pattern explanation henceforth, a reading class and a writing class were conducted in the same way as the second week of

class described above. In the seventh week, the same procedure as the sixth week was repeated. The example sentences in (6) for the relative clause types dealt with during the seventh week of class were also explained as the grammatical patterns in (7).

(6) a. A limited company is only liable for the amount of **capital that has been invested in it**
b. **Workers whose performance is unsatisfactory** can be dismissed.
c. Workers talk enthusiastically about **the products they make**.

(7) a. noun+**that**+**verb**...
b. noun+**whose**+**noun**+**verb**...
c. noun+**subject**+**verb**...

After a letter was submitted, a translation test was administrated to test ten sentences containing the relative clause types which were dealt with during the sixth and seventh week of class.

4. Scoring

The pretest and the tests administered in the three experiments consisted of 10 items. Two points were given to each correctly translated relative clause structure, so the max score of each test was twenty. Errors related to articles, tense, and spelling and incorrect vocabulary were admissible. Five error types illustrated in (8) were included in the incorrect items: the rightward modification direction, no deletion of a relativized noun, omission of a subject relative pronoun, choice of a wrong relative pronoun or adverb, and nonadjacency (Gass, 1982; Nakamori, 2002).

(8) a. * The company launched last year product was successful.
b. * This is the project which we are working on it these days.
c. * The business sought too much profit helped its competitors.
d. * The man whom established this company is alive.
e. * The man is a professor whom you met at the party.

Brown (2000) divided errors into global and local errors. Global errors influence the overall organization of a sentence such as sentence structure, word order, or sentence connector errors, whereas local errors affect single elements in a sentence. The rightward modification direction, omission of the subject relative pronoun, and nonadjacency as in (8a), (8c), and (8e) are global errors because they affect overall sentence structure;

however no deletion of the relativized noun and choice of the wrong relative pronoun as in (8b) and (8d) are local errors. Zero point was given to global errors, whereas one point was given to local errors because they usually do not hinder communication.

V. RESULTS

To test for a statistically significant difference between the pretest score and the score of the test administered in the first experiment (T1), a paired *t*-test was conducted. The results are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Results of *t*-test for Pretest and T1

Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	P-value
Pretest	36	4.53	4.02	-1.607	0.117
T1	36	4.94	3.63		

It was revealed that the mean improved slightly on T1, but there was no statistically significant difference between the means (The significance level was set at $p<.01$.). In fact, the mean on T1 remained almost the same as that on the pretest.

After the subjects were divided into +EX group and –EX group, a one-way ANOVA was conducted on the T1 scores to determine whether the two groups showed no significant difference before the second experiment. The descriptive statistics for the T1 scores appear in Table 2. The statistical analyses showed no statistical difference between the groups on the mean scores.

TABLE 2
Results of ANOVA for T1

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P-value
-EX	18	5.06	3.62	0.000	0.991
+EX	18	4.83	3.75		

In order to see if there is a statistically significant difference between the T1 score and the score of the test administered in the second experiment (T2), paired *t*-tests were conducted. Tables 3 and 4 show the results.

TABLE 3
Results of *t*-test for T1 and T2 in –EX Group

Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	P-value
T1	18	5.06	3.62	0.809	0.430
T2	18	4.94	3.72		

TABLE 4
Results of *t*-test for T1 and T2 in +EX Group

Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	P-value
T1	18	4.83	3.75	-0.718	0.483
T2	18	5.00	3.53		

-EX group showed small decrease in the mean score from T1 to T2, while +EX group improved slightly on T2. However, both groups showed no significant difference between T1 and T2; namely, the decrease shown by –EX group and the increase shown by +EX group were not statistically significant. In addition, a one-way ANOVA on the T2 scores revealed no significant difference between the groups (Table 5).

TABLE 5
Results of ANOVA for T2

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P-value
-EX	18	4.94	3.72	0.338	0.565
+EX	18	5.00	3.53		

Tables 6 and 7 show the results of paired *t*-tests conducted to test for a statistically significant difference between the T2 score and the score of the test administered in the third experiment (T3).

TABLE 6
Results of *t*-test for T2 and T3 in –EX Group

Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	P-value
T2	18	4.94	3.72	-1.230	0.236
T3	18	5.22	3.26		

TABLE 7
Results of *t*-test for T2 and T3 in +EX Group

Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	P-value
T2	18	5.00	3.53	-10.250	0.000
T3	18	9.56	1.89		

-EX group's mean improved slightly on T3 but, in fact, the mean remained almost the same as that on T2. +EX group markedly improved from T2 to T3, showing significant difference between the two tests. A one-way ANOVA conducted on the T3 scores revealed that there was a significant difference between the groups (Table 8).

TABLE 8
Results of ANOVA for T3

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P-value
-EX	18	5.22	3.26	12.649	0.001
+EX	18	9.56	1.89		

VI. DISCUSSION

Tables 1, 3 and 6 show that the subjects did not show significant improvement in accuracy in the use of relative clause structures. This finding indicates that the combination of attention-drawing techniques – input enhancement, translation, output practice, and corrective feedback – did not have substantially beneficial effects on accuracy in the use of relative clause structures. That is, any attention-drawing technique included in the combination did not play a major role in improving accuracy. A possible explanation for this result will be presented here.

In reading class, the key elements of the target form, the relative clause structure were underlined in order that the learners might be directed to attend to the relative clause structure. And then they were forced to translate sentences with a relative clause structure into Korean. This translation aimed at drawing their attention to form-meaning mappings. But it seems that both input enhancement and translation did not positively affect the written production of the relative clause structure. A possible explanation for ineffectiveness might be related to attentional and processing resources. According to Barcroft's (2000) *type of processing-resource allocation* (TOPRA) model for semantic and structural processing, it is difficult for learners to attend to and process form and meaning at the same time because attentional and processing resources available to a learner are limited. As learners attend to meaning, i.e., they process input more for its semantic properties, semantic learning such as comprehension can increase, whereas formal learning decreases (Barcroft, 2004). Because the main purpose of reading is comprehension of content, learners tend to attend to meaning while reading. Therefore, when the learners translated sentences with a relative clause structure while reading, they may have paid more attention to meaning, which increased semantic processing. As a result, form processing and form learning such as the processing and learning of relative clause structures decreased, so that both input enhancement and translation did not have substantially beneficial effects on accuracy.

In writing class, the learners had to write a letter in which a relative clause structure must be used twice, which aimed to force them to practice producing relative clause structures. But they were not able to concentrate their attention on the production of relative clause structures. Because the contents which have to be contained in the body of a letter were described, they did not have to concentrate on generating their own ideas. But because the task was writing a business letter, they had to give attention to content, letter form, letter style, letter parts, content-specific vocabulary, the phrases that are usually used in any standard business letter, and grammatical matters including relative clause structures. Consequently, their attention was divided over the relative clause structure and the other

aspects stated above. In addition, it is likely that they were not able to use explicit knowledge which is available for production because they were not given an explicit explanation of the relative clause structure. As a result, writing a letter seems not to have had a significant effect on increased accuracy in their written production of the relative clause structure.

The ineffectiveness of corrective feedback in this study might be due to the fact that corrective feedback was not focused on relative clause-related errors. Han (2002) identified consistent focus as one of conditions for effective functioning of corrective feedback. But the researcher gave corrective feedback not only on relative clause-related errors but also on other errors, so the subjects' attention may not have been concentrated on the corrective feedback on their production of relative clause structures. As a result, corrective feedback did not positively affect the written production of the relative clause structure. Moreover, they might have found difficulty in understanding the corrective feedback on relative clause structures given to them because they did not have explicit knowledge of the relative clause structure.

Table 4 shows that the traditional explanation of the relative clause structure did not play a major role in increasing accuracy in the written production of the relative clause structure, whereas Table 7 shows that the pattern explanation had substantially beneficial effects on accuracy. Production errors were reduced after the subjects received the pattern explanation, so it can be said that the pattern explanation contributed to more accurate written production of the relative clause structure. Both the traditional explanation and the pattern explanation aim to explicitly draw attention to the relative clause structure. The difference between the two explanations lies in the explicit knowledge of the relative clause structure to which learners' attention is explicitly directed by each explicit explanation. The traditional explanation illustrates relative clause structures as two-sentence connections, but the pattern explanation provides learners with the word order knowledge of the relative clause structure. It is possible that the learners' writing gains in accuracy proved in the third experiment were due to the explicit knowledge of the relative clause structure, the word order knowledge the subjects in +EX group gained through the pattern explanation. Word order is crucially important information in English. According to MacWhinney and Bates (1989), English is a language in which word order is high in cue validity: constituent order is rigidly preserved across sentence types, and correlates highly with semantic roles. In other words, word order is the most valid (i.e., frequent and reliable) source of information in English. Moreover, the word order knowledge the subjects in +EX group were forced to pay attention to is the surface-structure knowledge of the relative clause structure. Therefore it is likely that giving attention to the word order of the relative clause structure, they translated sentences with a relative clause structures whose key form elements were highlighted. As a result, the pattern explanation made it possible for them to

attend not only to content but to the forms of sentences with a relative clause structure while reading for comprehension of content. In writing class also, the pattern explanation made it possible for them to give attention to the word order of a relative clause structure appearing in a sample letter. More importantly, the word order knowledge may be available for production. Therefore it seems that even though their attention was divided over the relative clause structure and other aspects while writing a letter, they were able to produce relative clause structures by concentrating their attention on word order which is an important factor of the processing of relative clause structures. After the explicit knowledge of the relative clause structure was given through the pattern explanation, the corrective feedback on relative clause structures may have drawn their attention to the differences between target forms and non-target-like forms.

VII. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

The present study investigated whether incorporating a combination of attention-drawing devices into business English classes may be effective in helping low intermediate-proficiency Korean university learners improve accuracy in their use of sentences with a relative clause structure. The study found that the combination of input enhancement, translation, output practice, and corrective feedback and that of the traditional explanation, input enhancement, translation, output practice, and corrective feedback did not have a significant effect on improved accuracy. However, the combination of the pattern explanation, input enhancement, translation, output practice, and corrective feedback led to significantly improved accuracy. Because the combinations of attention-drawing techniques excluding the pattern explanation did not lead to significant improvement in accuracy, it can be concluded that the pattern explanation made a decisive contribution to the significant increase in accuracy.

The result that the traditional explanation did not play a significant role in improving accuracy is in agreement with those of some explicit explanation studies (Ellis, 1998; Macaro & Masterman, 2006), which suggested that explicit explanation does not have a significant effect on increased accuracy in written production. On the other hand, the result that the pattern explanation led to statistically significant gains in accuracy is compatible with the claim made in Jong (2005), which showed that explicit explanation is significantly beneficial to improving writing accuracy. Contrary to the other attention-drawing devices, the explicit explanations were designed to explicitly draw the learners' attention to the relative clause structure by providing them with the explicit knowledge of the relative clause structure. Contrary to the traditional explanation, the pattern explanation explicitly attracted the learners' attention to the word order knowledge, which is the surface-structure

indication of the relative clause structure. This made it possible that the learners noticed relative clause structures on the basis of word order while reading. In addition, they were able to practice producing relative clause structures while writing a letter by concentrating their attention on the word order knowledge which is available for production.

The goal of 'Business English 1' the subjects took was to assist them in developing language skills through business relevant content. This course consisted of reading class designed to extend learners' comprehension of business texts written in English and writing class designed to cover letters dealing with a variety of business situations and to improve their linguistic accuracy. The present study focused on improving accuracy in the use of the English relative clause structure in a business English course involving the integration of content and language instruction. Therefore, some focus on form using attention-drawing devices was integrated into business English reading and writing instruction. The experimental study showed that the explicit pattern explanation was significantly beneficial to increase in accuracy. As discussed above, this result seems to be related to attention. Since the course involved the integration of content and language instruction, the subjects' attention was divided over content and form. Therefore, to help them to achieve accuracy in the use of the relative clause structure, it was necessary to explicitly direct their attention to the relative clause structure by an explicit explanation of it. However, the explicit explanation must be not the traditional explanation but the pattern explanation. The pattern explanation is the explanation which explicitly draws learners' attention to the explicit knowledge that can enhance recognition of relative clause structures while reading and is available for production.

Business English courses are for those who wish to specially improve their English for their business purposes. Therefore they are designed to help to improve communication skills through business content, so they integrate business content into language instruction. Because attention is divided over content and form in business English courses, explicit knowledge of grammatical forms or structures has to be viewed as very useful resources if one of instruction goals is improving writing accuracy. In conclusion, a brief explicit explanation which explicitly draws students' attention to the knowledge serving for an important factor of the processing of a particular form or structure is needed in business English courses if the form or structure gives many students production problems.

This study has some limitations. First, the study showed that an explicit grammar explanation benefits an increase in writing accuracy of low intermediate-proficiency learners, but the learners whose English proficiency is higher than that of the subjects might not need an explicit explanation. Second, further research would need to be conducted to see whether the finding of the study is also true for other grammatical structures than the relative clause structure. Third, the number of the subjects in +EX group and in –EX group was small.

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APPENDIX A

Sample of Sentences with a Relative Clause Structure Whose Key Form Elements are Underlined

• Marketers are always looking for market opportunities – profitable possibilities of filling unsatisfied needs or creating new ones in area in which the company is likely to enjoy a differential advantage, due to its distinctive competencies.

APPENDIX B

Sample of Business Letter Writing Tasks

• letterhead가 있는 편지지를 사용하여 modified-block 스타일로 서신을 작성하고자 합니다. 아래에 주어진 정보를 이용하고 서신 본문에 반드시 영어 관계절의 사용을 두 번 넣어 영어 비즈니스 서신을 작성하십시오.

- 수신인: 뉴욕상업회의소
- 수신인 주소: 미국 뉴욕 Church Street 99번지 (우편번호 10007)
- 발신인: ABC 무역주식회사 수출부장 홍민기
- 발신일: 2008년 3월 5일
- 내용: 35년 동안 다양한 청바지 수출에 종사해온 ABC 무역 주식회사는 한국의 선도적인 청바지 제조업체들 중의 하나이다. 이 회사가 청바지 수입에 관심 있는 믿을만한 수입상을 뉴욕상업회의소에 소개해달라고 부탁하는 서신이다. 이 회사의 신용상태에 대해서는 서울에 있는 하나은행 강남지점이 필요한 정보를 줄 수 있음을 알려주어야 한다.

APPENDIX C

Translation Tests

•다음의 우리말 문장들을 영어 문장들로 번역하십시오. 반드시 영어의 관계절을 사용해야 합니다.

T1
1. 우리는 혁신에 대해 책임이 있는 사람들을 만나야 한다.
2. 이것이 우리가 지난 주 귀하에게 보냈던 샘플이다.
3. 시장점유율이 아주 높은 그 회사가 다른 회사들을 리드하고 있다.
4. 시장 조건에 쉽게 반응할 수 있는 회사들은 소규모 회사들이다.
5. 우리가 2주일 전 이메일로 주문했던 제품이 오늘 도착했다.
6. 그들은 우리들에게 수정되어져야 하는 목표에 대해 이야기했다.
7. 일부 회사들이 사용하는 비교동등법은 광고전쟁을 막는다.
8. 표적 고객이 30대 여성인 그 여성복 제조업체는 시장점유율을 늘리고 있다.
9. 어디에 광고할지를 결정하는 사람들은 미디어 계획자들이다.
10. 그들은 반드시 추진되어져야 하는 마케팅 전략을 제시했다.

T2
1. 필요성을 충족시켜주는 좋은 제품도 광고되어져야 한다.
2. 그 제품에 대해 불평하는 사람들이 많이 있습니다.
3. 그들이 승진에 대해 내린 결정은 타당했다.
4. 그 회사가 많은 노력을 들이고 있는 분야는 광고업이다.
5. 지금이 우리가 시장을 확장해야 할 때이다.
6. 여러 다른 경쟁 제품들을 구입하는 소비자들은 상표전환자들이다.
7. 그들이 사용한 판매 전략은 소비자 반응을 촉진시켰다.
8. 소규모 공급업자들은 그들이 함께 일하는 큰 회사 근처에 위치한다.
9. 해외 시장에서 성공하기 원하는 회사들은 지역적 특성을 알아야 한다.
10. 3월은 일년 중 매상이 가장 높은 달이다.

T3
1. 틈새 시장을 확립하지 않은 시장 추적자는 취약한 위치에 있다.
2. 이 곳이 과잉생산으로 인한 낭비가 없는 공장이다.
3. 높은 이자로 융자를 받은 몇몇 사람들은 집을 잃을지도 모른다.
4. 대부분 제조업체들이 생산하는 많은 제품들은 제품라인으로 나누어진다.
5. 우리는 그 분야에서 명성이 아주 높은 최고경영자를 만나게 될 것이다.
6. 투자를 줄일 계획을 하고 있는 그 회사는 직원들을 해고하기 시작했다.
7. 김과장은 우리 회사가 도입할 새로운 기술에 대해 설명했다.
8. 시장점유율이 늘고 있는 그 회사는 제품라인을 확장했다.
9. 시장에서 위협을 주고 있는 경쟁자들은 항상 확인되고 감시되어져야 한다.
10. 중국에서 공장이 세워지고 있는 지역은 해안 근처이다.

Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: College

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