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Comparing Perceptions of Evaluative Criteria in EFL Writing Between Learner and Instructor Group

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The quantitative study investigated perceptions of evaluative criteria in L2 writing between two groups – learners (N=212) and instructors (N=52) in Korea. Specifically, the purpose of the study is (1) to examine learners' and instructors' perceptions on evaluative criteria in L2 writing and to provide empirical evidence concerning how they respond to a list of them and (2) to ultimately devise appropriate rating criteria applicable to an EFL context like Korea. Analyses of evaluative criteria were conducted using factor analysis and yielded the following results: learner and instructor groups perceived the evaluative criteria differently and weighted them in a different way. For the learner group, the combined elements of grammar and language in use were identified as Factor 1 and mechanics as Factor 2. The results may infer that learners' response patterns are primarily linked to their instructors' writing practice in class, which may largely focus on grammatical knowledge based on lexical use and mechanical accuracy. Similarly, the instructor group acknowledged grammatical knowledge as Factor 1 and lexical use as Factor 2. The first two factors found in both learner and instructor groups indicate that in an EFL context like Korea, the form-then-content way of teaching and learning is still being considered more effective in L2 writing than any other method. Taking into consideration these perceptive similarities and differences between learners and instructors, the categories of evaluative criteria in writing include *content and organization*, *grammar*, *mechanics*, *language in use*, and *flow of the essay,* respectively.

[EFL writing/evaluative criteria/ L2 writing]

I. INTRODUCTION

As the importance of L2 writing ability has been increasing in an educational, social, or

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business context (Shin, 2010, Yang, 2010), attention has been also paid on how to assess L2 learners' writing ability by using assessment criteria devised by professionals, despite arguments concerning the disparity between developers of assessment criteria and the users of the criteria in reality. As McNamara (2001) claims, language testing as a social practice tends to emphasize the unequal status of native speaker test developers and non-native speaker test-takers in an EFL context. One possible solution about the power inequity is to involve test-takers and teachers in the field in test development, which, consequently, improves test validity and promotes positive washback impact on learners (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Birenbaum, 1996; Yu, 2007; Wolf, Bixby, Glenn, & Gardener. 1991). In this vein, getting learners and teachers as non-testing professionals engaged in the development of scoring criteria may be also one resolution, particularly in a writing performance assessment setting.

There is rich literature on the development of scoring criteria in writing or speaking ability (Allaei & Connor, 1991; Hamp-Lyons, 1991; Rinnert & Kobahyashi, 2001; Yu, 2007), but there are few studies on how EFL learners and instructors in the field, as potential evaluators, perceive assessment criteria developed by testing professionals. Inviting both agents in the educational context to contribute to the refinement of scoring criteria is expected not only to help them better understand L2 writing assessment practice but also to motivate them to actively engage with their production of writing or to become more critical of written products. In return, it is also anticipated to promote positive language test impact with necessary responses to develop valid and reliable scoring criteria. The sensitivity of both learners and instructors to scoring criteria in L2 writing will shed light on an important shift in research and teaching practice on assessment in L2 writing.

The study aims to illustrate how learners and instructors in the field reportedly perceive analytic scoring criteria devised by ESL professionals. Results of the study should be of interest to L2 writing instructors and researchers alike because they pinpoint the areas of immediate concerns to facilitate development of assessment criteria. At the same time, the results are expected to reveal which attributes of evaluative criteria most contribute to the overall quality of writing.

It would appear that L2 writing assessment criteria devised by language testing or teaching professionals may be differently considered by most practitioners in the field and even EFL learners themselves. In this article, thus, it is explored how L2 writing evaluative criteria developed by L2 writing professionals might help English instructors and EFL Korean learners to gain better understanding in assessment criteria in L2 writing and how both learner and instructor groups perceive evaluative criteria. The two major research questions addressed here are as follows:

(1) How do two groups (Korean learners and English instructors) perceive evaluative

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criteria in L2 writing?

(2) In what ways do the two groups (Korean learners and English instructors) differ in their reported perceptions of the evaluative criteria?

II. THE DERIVATION OF EVALUATIVE CRITERIA IN L2 WRITING

Typically, the assessment criteria are derived from theoretical underpinnings of language knowledge and use regardless of any specific context (Douglas, 2001). Though there is no generally accepted definition of writing ability in second language learning context, L2 writing ability has been defined as control over the linguistic elements of L2 and expertise in writing which is believed to transfer from learners' first language to the second language, given at least a certain level of language proficiency (Weigle, 2002). Based on the above theoretical underpinnings, assessment criteria have been developed and refined depending on an assessment context or situation. There are, however, some doubts as to whether instructors and learners have been well served and satisfied by assessment criteria developed by testing professionals particularly in an EFL context like Korea.

Table 1 below presents a framework of language ability in general, though, it also enables us to understand the constructs of writing ability combined with Weigle (2002)'s definition which are later employed as theoretical background of assessment criteria.

TABLE 1

Framework of Communicative Language Ability (adapted from Douglas, 2001)

	Component	Attribute
Language knowledge	Grammatical knowledge	Knowledge of vocabulary Knowledge of morphology and syntax Knowledge of phonology
	Textual knowledge	Knowledge of cohesion Knowledge of rhetorical or conversational organization
	Functional knowledge	Knowledge of ideational functions Knowledge of manipulative functions Knowledge of heuristic functions Knowledge of imaginative functions
	Sociolinguistic knowledge	Knowledge of dialects/varieties Knowledge of registers Knowledge of idiomatic expressions Knowledge of cultural references
Strategic component	Assessment/Goal-setting/Planning/Control of execution	

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TABLE 2

Writing Attributes Identified by Several Scoring Criteria

Sources / Criteria	Jacobs' *et el*'s (1981) scoring profile	TEEP attribute writing scales (Weir, 1990)	Analytic scale for rating composition tasks (Brown & Bailey, 1984)	Breakout scoring guide for MELAB study
Content	· Knowledgeable · Substantive · Thorough development of thesis · Relevant to assigned topic	·Relevant and adequate answer to the task	· Essay addresses the assigned topic ·The ideas are concrete and thoroughly developed · No extraneous material · Essay reflects thought	·Topic fully and richly developed, shows sophistication
Organization	· Fluent expression · Ideas clearly stated/supported · Succinct · Well-organized · Logical sequencing · Cohesive	· Overall shape and internal pattern clear · Organizational skills adequately controlled · Satisfactory use of cohesion resulting in effective communication	· Appropriate title · Effective Introductory paragraph, topic is stated, leads to body · Transitional expressions used · Arrangement of material shows plan · Supporting evidence given for generalization · Conclusion logical and complete · Sequence is logical	· Organization fully appropriate and effective · Full control of connections
Language in use	· Sophisticated range · Effective word/idiom choice and usage · Word form mastery · Appropriate register	· Adequate in vocabulary use for the Task	· Precise vocabulary usage · Use of parallel structures concise · Register good	· Fully fluent vocabulary
Grammar	· Effective complex constructions · Few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions · Errors of fragments, run-ons, deletions	·Grammatical accuracy	· Native-like fluency in English grammar · Correct use of relative clauses · Prepositions, modals, articles, verb forms, and tense · sequencing; no fragments or run-on sentences	· Error free, appropriate use of full range of sentence structures
Mechanics	· Demonstrate mastery of conventions ·Few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing · Poor handwriting	·Adequacy in punctuation & spelling	· Correct use of English writing conventions: left and right margins, all needed capitals, paragraphs indented, punctuation and spelling, very neat	· Spelling and punctuation error-free

Among different types of rating scales, here, a set of analytic scoring criteria are employed to investigate the perception of instructors and learners on evaluative criteria because analytic scoring has been reported to be more reliable than holistic scores though the former is less cost effective (Weir, 1993). Table 2 below shows how each component of analytic scoring criteria was derived based on the framework of communicative language ability. One of the intriguing facts shown from a set of scoring criteria is that most of

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components converged into grammatical knowledge and textual knowledge rather than functional and sociolinguistic knowledge. This can be partly explained by the fact that grammatical and textual knowledge tend to be easy to detect while scoring. On the other hand, functional and sociolinguistic knowledge are elusive and hidden into the content of writing within the writing context so that it is difficult for raters to identify and assess the characteristics of functional and sociolinguistic knowledge particularly in case the raters are non-native English speakers. Consequently, the two knowledge areas seem to be broadly defined as part of content area and rated accordingly.

Researchers in Korea have been also raising the issues on the development of valid and reliable rating criteria concerning educational levels and language skills in either writing or speaking areas (i.e. Lee, 2006; Kim, 2006). However, most of the researchers employed holistic scoring criteria in order to examine the effect of raters or the perceptions on rating criteria which were developed and exercised by educational institutions. In this study, analytic scoring criteria have been brought in the center of the research issues and explored with regard to how teachers and learners perceive and respond to analytic scoring criteria. Table 2 summarized a number of evaluative criteria developed by several professionals (Brown & Bailey, 1984; Jacobs' *et el*'s, 1981; Weir, 1993) or an institution (The University of Michigan, English Language Institute).

III. METHOLOLOGY

1. Participants

1) Learners

212 Korean learners who were enrolled in English class at a local university in Korea were invited to participate in the study (Male: 108, Female: 104). Their age ranged from 18 to 27 with diverse majors and their learning experience of English was 10.3 years at average. Most of the learners who participated in this study were 1st year university students so that it was anticipated that their English proficiency didn't seem to reach a high level of general proficiency.

2) Instructors

English instructors were recruited across all educational levels from elementary school to university. Of 52 instructors (Male: 12, Female: 40), 27 were English native speaker instructors and 25 were Korean instructors. Teaching experience of English native speaker

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instructors in Korea was 4.26 years at average while teaching experience of Korean instructors was 6.76 years. All the instructors have been teaching Korean EFL learners at the time of study and the courses that they teach also vary from grammar, listening, writing, vocabulary to conversation.

2. Materials and Procedures

The participants in the study completed the 33-item questionnaire which was written both in English and Korean (see Appendix A). The first 6 questions are intended to identify learners' or teachers' background information and basic perceptions on L2 writing. The 27-item questionnaire, which was devised based on analytic scoring criteria developed by professionals shown in Table 2 was administered to all the respondents in English or in English with Korean translation. The participants were required to use a 5-point Likert scale. The items focused on each component of scoring criteria including content, organization, language in use, grammar, and mechanics. The questionnaire specifically asked the respondents to reflect on how they perceive each component of evaluative criteria regarding content, organization, language in use, grammar, and mechanics when instructors themselves rate written products or learners completed their writing tasks. The respondents could express their agreement or disagreement with statements such as: "It is important to adequately address the assigned topic." and "It is important to appropriately use words in the text." Factor analysis technique was carried out in analyzing data from the questionnaire.

IV. RESULTS

First, descriptive analysis of the item 5, and item 6 in the first session of the questionnaire which asked the respondents how to perceive L2 writing, are presented in Table 3. Specifically, item 5 asked what elements the respondents think most essential while completing an L2 writing task or rating written products of learners and asked them to put each rating category in a rank order. Item 6 asked what element makes them difficult to perform an L2 writing task or to rate written products of learners.

When asked about the importance of writing in order, learners placed mechanics (M=4.21, SD=1.16) a top priority in their writing task performance and grammar (M=2.94, SD=1.33), with content (M=2.70, SD=1.38), organization (M=2.66, SD=1.20), and language in use (M=2.50, SD=1.29) as the least important elements. With respect to the difficulty of writing in item 7, learners answered content (M=3.58, SD=1.34) as the most

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difficult element among the five categories when they perform a writing task whereas they considered grammar (M=1.98, SD=1.35) as the least difficult element.

TABLE 3

Descriptive Analysis of Item 5, and item 6 for Learners and Instructors

	Item 6 (Importance of writing)		Item 7 (Difficulty of writing)	
	KEL[a] (n=212)	EI[b] (n=52)	KEL (n=212)	EI (n=52)
Content	2.70(1.38)	2.25(1.53)	3.58(1.34)	2.65(1.51)
Organization	2.66(1.20)	2.92(1.27)	3.25(1.14)	2.81(1.17)
Language in use	2.50(1.29)	2.65(1.14)	2.71(1.31)	2.67(1.34)
Grammar	2.94(1.33)	3.65(1.15)	1.98(1.27)	3.44(1.46)
Mechanics	4.21(1.16)	3.54(1.46)	3.46(1.35)	3.37(1.44)

a. KEL – Korean English learners
b. EI – English instructors

Meanwhile, the instructor group drew a different series of patterns from the learner group for Item 5 to rate the importance of writing in order. The instructor group responded grammar (M=3.65, SD=1.15) as the most important element in writing followed by mechanics (M=3.54, SD=1.46), organization (M=2.92, SD=1.27), language in use (M=2.65, SD=1.14), and content (M=2.25, SD=1.53), respectively. For Item 6 to rate the difficult element in writing in order when they rate the essay, the instructor group answered grammar (M=3.44, SD=1.46) as the most difficult element in rating, with followed by mechanics (M=3.44, SD=1.46), organization (M=2.81, SD=1.17), language in use (S=2.67, SD=1.34) and content (M=2.65, SD=1.51) as the least difficult element in their rating.

FIGURE 1

Importance of Writing in Order

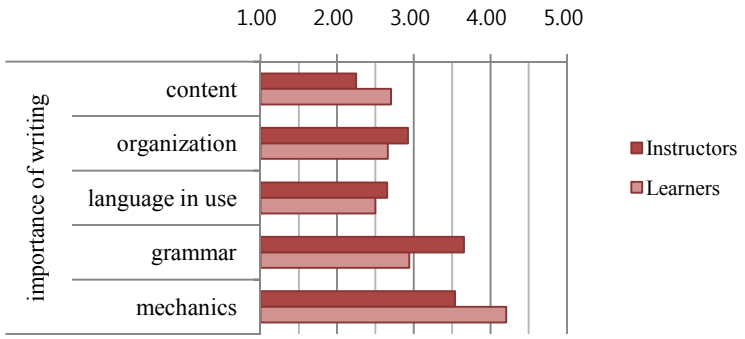

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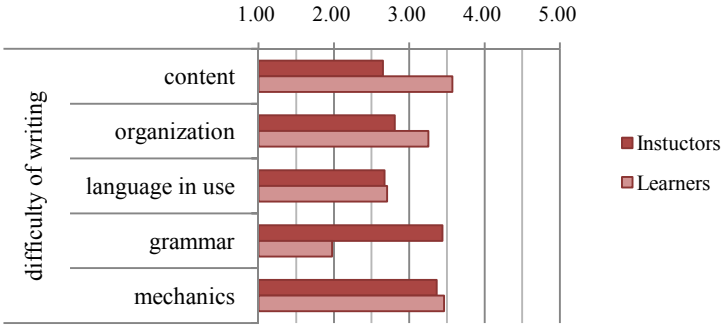
FIGURE 2

Difficulty of Writing in Order



The Figure 1, and Figure 2 below represent the visual results of both groups in terms of importance and difficulty of writing in order. One of the intriguing patterns here is that instructors responded that grammar is the most important and difficult element in rating writing. On the other hand, learners answered mechanics as the most important element and content as the most difficult one.

The descriptive analysis of the questionnaire about evaluative criteria is presented in Table 4 in the original order.

TABLE 4

Descriptive Analysis of the Items

Statement	KEL (n=212) Mean(SD)	EI(n=52) Mean(SD)
1. It is important to adequately address the assigned topic.	3.91 (.87)	4.55 (.63)
2. It is better to write the ideas as concrete and substantive as possible.	4.06 (.84)	4.17 (.85)
3. It is important to show background knowledge of the assigned topic.	3.26 (.87)	3.55 (1.11)
4. It is better to reflect writer's thoughts.	4.02 (.94)	3.81 (1.14)
5. It is important to demonstrate thorough development of the topic.	3.45 (.90)	3.96 (1.00)
6. It is better to have an appropriate title.	3.82 (.92)	3.43 (1.14)
7. It is important to have all necessary introduction, supporting ideas, and conclusion.	3.46 (1.08)	4.72 (.62)
8. It is better for the assay to be cohesive (it demonstrates transitional expression and full control of connection).	3.90 (.83)	4.45 (.72)
9. It is important to clearly state and support the ideas.	4.15 (2.82)	4.70 (.72)
10. It is important to demonstrate wide range of vocabulary use.	3.16 (.97)	3.72 (.91)
11. It is important to appropriately use words in the text.	4.14 (.79)	4.49 (.66)
12. It is important to precisely (concisely) use words in the text.	4.00 (.82)	4.04 (.73)
13. It is important to appropriately use register in the text.	3.35 (.90)	3.91 (.79)
14. It is important to demonstrate word form mastery (e.g. noun, adjective, adverb, verb).	3.55 (.98)	4.04 (.78)
15. It is better to be as grammatically accurate as possible.	2.90 (.96)	4.26 (.78)

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16. It is better to be as grammatically fluent (native-like) as possible.	3.10 (.88)	3.98 (.88)
17. It is important to effectively use sentence structures without any sign of fragment, run-ons or deletion.	3.70 (.87)	4.02 (.78)
18. It is better to be free of verb errors including subject-verb agreement errors.	3.54 (.85)	4.30 (.68)
19. It is better to be free of noun ending errors including plural or possessive ending incorrect, omitted, or unnecessary.	3.43 (.88)	4.17 (.76)
20. It is better to be free of article errors including article or other determiner incorrect, omitted, or unnecessary.	3.53 (.82)	4.11 (.79)
21. It is better to be free of lexical errors in word choice or word form, including preposition and pronoun errors.	3.09 (.92)	4.17 (.75)
22. It is important to demonstrate mastery of conventions in writing.	3.58 (.90)	3.83 (.70)
23. It is important to be free of misspellings.	3.56 (.91)	4.04 (.96)
24. It is important to use appropriate punctuations.	3.33 (.95)	4.23 (.83)
25. It is important to use appropriate indentions.	3.53 (.99)	3.77 (.89)
26. It is important to use appropriate capitalization.	3.53 (.99)	4.45 (.74)
27. It is important to demonstrate intelligible handwriting skills.	3.74 (1.04)	4.25 (1.10)

For learner group, Item 9 (M=4.15, SD=2.82) showed the highest average score and Item 15 (M=2.90, SD=.96) the lowest while for instructor group, Item (M=4.72, SD=.68) has the highest with Item 6 (M=3.43, SD=1.14)) the lowest. Overall, instructor group showed higher average scores for each item in comparison with the scores of learner group.

1. For Learner Group

Using Varimax rotation, five factors shown in Table 5 were identified, which accounts for 53.01% of the variability among the 27 items. The 53.01% figure means that a slightly higher than 50% of the variability was explained by the five factors, so other influences also make a difference in Korean learners' writing tasks. The five a priori categories (content, organization, language in use, grammar, and mechanics) and the five a posteriori factors resulting from factor analysis (grammar and language in use, mechanics, demonstrating writing ability, content and organization, topic development) were not identical, though they seem to be mutually supportive.

TABLE 5

List of Factors

Factor	Description	% of Variance
1	Grammar and language in use (Item 12, 13, 15,18,19,20,21)	27.71
2	Mechanics (Item, 23,24,25,26,27)	8.44
3	Demonstrating writing ability (Item 16, 10, 14, 22)	6.80
4	Content and organization (Item 1,2,4,6,7,8,9,11)	5.22
5	Topic development (Item 3,5,11)	4.83
	TOTAL	53.01

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As shown in Table 6, Factor 1 with the five variables represented combined elements of grammar and language use. It is claimed that vocabulary knowledge is closely intertwined with grammatical knowledge (Nation, 2001; Sinclair, 1991), so the result of Factor 1 seems plausible in some sense. Factor 2 mainly focused on mechanics which is exactly identical with a priori category of mechanics. Factor 3 indicated learners' demonstration skills to use vocabulary, grammar, and writing conventions. Learners' perceptions on which ability they need to demonstrate in their writing cluster tightly, constituting a logical component to learners only when their writing is being evaluated. The learners appear to believe that demonstrating writing ability is one of the essential aspects when they write in English. Factor 4 describes a combined set of content and organization areas. Factor 5 emphasized topic development which is considered as part of organization. The result of factor analysis yields somewhat distinguishing factors from the five a priori categories, with different orderings of factors and differential weighting regarding explanatory importance.

TABLE 6

Varimax Factor Matrix: results of learner group

Variables (short description)		Factor Weight	Communality
Factor 1 (27.71% of variance)	*Grammar and language in use*		
Item12	to precisely use words	.719	.649
Item13	to appropriately use register	.624	.643
Item15	to be grammatically accurate	.549	.616
Item18	to be free of verb errors and agreement error	.626	.619
Item19	to be free of noun errors	.624	.667
Item20	to be free of article errors	.567	.674
Item21	to be free of lexical errors in word choice or word form	.536	.644
Factor 2 (8.44% of variance)	*Mechanics*		
Item23	to be free of misspellings	.608	.536
Item24	to use appropriate punctuations	.777	.655
Item25	to use appropriate indentions	.790	.728
Item26	to use appropriate capitalization	.804	.700
Item27	to demonstrate intelligible handwriting skills	.610	.535
Factor 3(6.8% of variance)	*Demonstrating writing ability*		
Item10	to demonstrate wide range of vocabulary	.702	.642
Item14	to demonstrate word form mastery	.657	.554
Item16	to be grammatically fluent	.705	.562
Item22	to demonstrate mastery of writing conventions	.630	.617
Factor 4 (5.22% of variance)	*Content and organization*		
Item1	to adequately address the topic	.716	.585
Item2	to write the ideas as concrete and substantive	.722	.591
Item4	to reflect writer's thought	.417	.571
Item6	to have an appropriate title	.633	.510
Item7	to have introduction, supporting ideas, and conclusion	.473	.639
Item8	to be cohesive	.507	.531
Item9	to clearly state and support the ideas	.295	.103
Item11	to appropriately use words	.429	.476

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Factor 5 (4.83% of variance)	*Topic development*		
Item3	to show background knowledge about the topic	.774	.649
Item5	to demonstrate thorough development of the topic	.501	.477
Item17	to effectively use sentence structure	.499	.387

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

2. For Instructor Group

Similar to the learner group, based on the Varimax rotation, five factors shown in Table 7 account for 58.90% of the total variance, where total variance consists of all sources of variance taken together. Again, the five a priori categories (content, organization, language in use, grammar, and mechanics) and the five a posteriori factors resulting from the factor analysis (grammar, language in use, content and organization, flow of the essay) were not exactly matched but seem to be compromising each other.

TABLE 7

List of Factors

Factor	Description	% of Variance
1	Grammar (Item 15, 16, 18, 19, 20)	23.55
2	Language in use (Item, 3, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14)	13.97
3	Content and organization (Item 1, 2, 7, 9)	8.09
4	Mechanics (Item 23, 24, 25, 26, 27)	7.37
5	Flow of the essay (Item 4, 5, 8, 17, 22)	5.93
	TOTAL	58.90

In Table 8, the sets of variables of Factor 1 and Factor 2 suggest a highly systematic clustering along the two rating categories of concern to the instructor group. The variables of Factor 1 focus on grammar areas linked to accurate and fluent use of grammatical knowledge. The mixed group of nonnative and native English instructors shows that they tend to focus mostly keen on grammatical elements when they evaluate the written products. Next, the variables contributing most significantly to Factor 2 include how to rate lexical use in learners' writing samples. Factor 3 includes concern for content and organization, which specifically includes proper topic development and good organization in writing samples. Factor 4 components all involve mechanical aspects of writing including misspelling, punctuation, indentation, capitalization, and clear handwriting skills. Factor 4 in the instructor group is the only factor that is perfectly matched with Factor 2 in the learner group. Factor 5 poses interesting interpretation problems, because two variables (item 17 and item 22) are negatively associated with the rating process. That is, these two variables are inversely related to the importance of element in the rating process. Factor 5

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components involve the cohesiveness and complete development of the topic. Factor 5 is overlapped with Factor 3 to some extent, which led us not to clearly distinguish two factors from one another. As noted in the title in Factor 5, however, the variables in Factor 5, as an overarching component, are more concerned with the flow of the essay overall rather than simply focusing on content and organization elements.

TABLE 8

Varimax Factor Matrix: results of instructor group

Variables (short description)		Factor Weight	Communality
Factor 1 (23.55 of variance) Grammar			
Item15	to be grammatically accurate	.600	.533
Item16	to be grammatically fluent	.482	.677
Item18	to be free of verb errors and agreement error	.700	.664
Item19	to be free of noun errors	.794	.708
Item20	to be free of article errors	.876	.795
Item21	to be free of lexical errors in word choice or word form	.690	.558
Factor 2 (13.97% of variance) Language in use			
Item3	to show background knowledge about the topic	.645	.743
Item6	to have an appropriate title	.536	.527
Item10	to demonstrate wide range of vocabulary	.750	.630
Item11	to appropriately use words	.518	.474
Item12	to precisely use words	.629	.491
Item13	to appropriately use register	.457	.379
Item14	to demonstrate word form mastery	.393	.387
Factor 3(8.09% of variance) Content and organization			
Item1	to adequately address the topic	.766	.666
Item2	to write the ideas as concrete and substantive	.485	.560
Item7	to have introduction, supporting ideas, and conclusion	.778	.688
Item9	to clearly state and support the ideas	.826	.798
Factor 4 (7.37% of variance) Mechanics			
Item23	to be free of misspellings	.516	.384
Item24	to use appropriate punctuations	.651	.660
Item25	to use appropriate indentions	.693	.678
Item26	to use appropriate capitalization	.588	.682
Item27	to demonstrate intelligible handwriting skills	.687	.595.
Factor 5 (5.93% of variance) flow of the essay			
Item4	to reflect writer's thought	.444	.402
Item5	to demonstrate thorough development of the topic	.341	.236
Item8	to be cohesive	.721	.728
Item17	to effectively use sentence structure	-.776	.725
Item22	to demonstrate mastery of writing conventions	-.480	.536

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

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V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study is (1) to examine learners and instructors' perception on rating criteria in L2 writing and provide empirical evidence concerning how they respond to a list of evaluative criteria and then (2) to ultimately devise appropriate rating criteria applicable to an EFL context like Korea. The evaluative criteria that have been devised by ESL professionals have not been fully reflected in an EFL context. Teaching cannot be properly practiced without considering learning contexts, and neither can assessment. In this vein, it is reasonable to refine rating criteria which fit a certain EFL context based on the results of the study.

With respect to research question (1), it was found that learners and instructors perceived evaluative criteria differently and weighted them in a different way. The results of factor analysis underscore the claim that learner and instructor groups represent different levels of perceptions on evaluative criteria. For learner group, the combined elements of grammar and lexical use loaded as Factor 1 and mechanics loaded as Factor 2 could reflect that learners' response patterns are mainly associated with their instructors' writing practice in class, which may largely focus on grammatical knowledge based on lexical use and mechanical accuracy. Similarly, instructor group also identified grammatical knowledge as Factor 1 and lexical knowledge as Factor 2. The first two factors common to both learners and instructors show that in an EFL context like Korea, the form-then-content way of teaching and learning is still being considered more effective in L2 writing than any other method. This helps to understand the finding that the combined element of content and organization is loaded as Factor 4 in learner group and Factor 3 in instructor group.

It can be advised to take into consideration these perceptive similarities and differences between learners and instructors when devising rating criteria in writing. The following recommendations reflect what learner and instructor groups reported as primary factors of rating criteria. Based on the results from factor analysis, content and organization, and mechanics can be part of the primary rating criteria as listed below. The rest of other factors seem to be unclear in order to be classified as independent variables but the result of the instructor group is also reflected here.

1. *Content and organization*: some of previous research using analytic criteria (i.e. Cohen, 1994; Shin, Jung, & Kim, 2010) has separate categories with content as one area and organization as another. The results from the factor analysis show some possibility to combine content and organization as one .
2. *Mechanics:* The category brought the least argument between learner and instructors except mechanics are differently weighted between learner and instructor groups.
4. *Grammar* : There is no doubt that grammatical and lexical knowledge are closely

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linked with each other. Still, it is possible that grammar can be categorized as one independent variable.

3. *Language in use* : The elements in this category include a wide range of vocabulary in use, lexical accuracy and adequacy in writing.
4. *Flow of the essay*: Unlike other categories, this variable cannot be easy to evaluate due to the nature of the factor itself. It mainly emphasizes a content (idea)-oriented process rather than sentence-level writing process as an overarching element in writing evaluation.

Caution, though, is required in drawing pedagogical implications from these findings, because learners and instructors' perceptions on evaluative criteria vary considerably according to the educational context, learners' levels of literacy or instructors' teaching experience in writing (Hedgecock & Lefkowitz, 1996). Thus, the results suggest directions for further empirical research that attempts to devise writing tasks with more reliable and valid rating criteria in EFL educational contexts. Nevertheless, the results of the study reveal how learners and instructors perceive evaluative criteria in writing and how they prioritize these criteria as influential components in performing a writing task or in rating written samples.

VI. LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The number of respondents particularly in the instructor group was not adequate to yield more reliable results. Besides, the instructor groups included both Korean as well as native speaker instructors across all educational levels, which might mislead us to interpret the results to some extent. Further research is needed to examine the perceptive differences not only between learner and instructor groups but also between non-native English instructors and native English instructors.

A second limitation is related to the fact that the research was mainly based on inferences from data collected from a list of questionnaire items about evaluative criteria. To determine whether the inferences are valid and/or reliable, more research is needed in how rating criteria can actually be applied to the rating process of written samples of Korean learners.

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APPENDIX A

Second Language Writing Assessment Criteria Inventory (For instructors)

The purpose of the survey is to understand how English teachers (or instructors) perceive writing assessment criteria. It would be very much appreciated if you could just spend few minutes to answer the simple questions below by selecting your preference accordingly.

I. General Questions

1	Gender (please circle)	M F
2	What is your native language?	
3	How many years have you been teaching English?	
4	In what educational level have you been teaching English?	Elementary school ☐ Middle school ☐ High school ☐ University level ☐
	Please be specific about what kind of courses you have taught and what was the main focus of the courses?	
5	What elements do you think most essential while you evaluate a writing task in English? Rank each one from 1(the least essential) to 5 (the most essential). (영작문 과제를 평가할 때 어떤 요소가 가장 중요하다고 생각하나요? 1 부터 5 까지 순서를 정해 보세요.)	Content ☐ Organization ☐ Language in use ☐ Grammar ☐ Mechanics ☐
6	What element makes you most trouble while you evaluate a writing task in English? Rank each one from 1 (the least trouble) to 5 (the most trouble).	Content ☐ Organization ☐ Language in use ☐ Grammar ☐ Mechanics ☐

II. **English writing assessment criteria**

In this part, you will read statements about which elements of writing you focus on while evaluating a writing task in English. Please read each statement and circle the number indicating 1-5-point scale, where '1' corresponded to 'strongly disagree' and '5' to 'strongly agree'.

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When I assess an essay in English…

	Statement	Rating				
		1 Strongly disagree	2 disagree	3 neutral	4 Agree	5 strongly agree
1	It is important to adequately address the assigned topic.	1	2	3	4	5
2	It is better to write the ideas as concrete and substantive as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
3	It is important to show background knowledge of the assigned topic.	1	2	3	4	5
4	It is better to reflect writer's thoughts.	1	2	3	4	5
5	It is important to demonstrate thorough development of the topic.	1	2	3	4	5
6	It is better to have an appropriate title.	1	2	3	4	5
7	It is important to have all necessary introduction, supporting ideas, and conclusion.	1	2	3	4	5
8	It is better for the assay to be cohesive (it demonstrates transitional expression and full control of connection).	1	2	3	4	5
9	It is important to clearly state and support the ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
10	It is important to demonstrate wide range of vocabulary use.	1	2	3	4	5
11	It is important to appropriately use words in the text.	1	2	3	4	5
12	It is important to precisely (concisely) use words in the text	1	2	3	4	5
13	It is important to appropriately use register in the text.	1	2	3	4	5
14	It is important to demonstrate word form mastery (e.g. noun, adjective, adverb, verb).	1	2	3	4	5
15	It is better to be as grammatically accurate as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
16	It is better to be as grammatically fluent (native-like) as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
17	It is important to effectively use sentence structures without any sign of fragment, run-ons or deletion.	1	2	3	4	5
18	It is better to be free of verb errors including subject-verb agreement errors.	1	2	3	4	5
19	It is better to be free of noun ending errors including plural or possessive ending incorrect, omitted, or unnecessary.	1	2	3	4	5
20	It is better to be free of article errors including article or other determiner incorrect, omitted, or unnecessary.	1	2	3	4	5
21	It is better to be free of lexical errors in word choice or word form, including preposition and pronoun errors.	1	2	3	4	5
22	It is important to demonstrate mastery of conventions in writing.	1	2	3	4	5
23	It is important to be free of misspellings.	1	2	3	4	5
24	It is important to use appropriate punctuations.	1	2	3	4	5
25	It is important to use appropriate indentions.	1	2	3	4	5
26	It is important to use appropriate capitalization.	1	2	3	4	5
27	It is important to demonstrate intelligible handwriting skills.	1	2	3	4	5

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

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