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Does Instruction Affect Korean EFL Learners' Argumentative Writing Performance?: An Analysis of their Organizational Patterns and Processes of Writing

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This paper examines the instructional effect of organizational patterns of argumentative writing on Korean EFL university students. In order to investigate what their weakest areas are in organizing text and if the instruction could help them develop those areas, thirty Korean university students enrolled in an English writing course entitled, *Critical Thinking on Current Issues*, were recruited. They were divided into two groups; higher and lower proficiency level groups; and were taught how to write an argumentative essay with good English organizational patterns. By comparing their pre- and post-semester essays, it was found that both the higher and lower level students showed statistically significant improvement in the overall areas of text organization. The instruction thus not only helped them enhance their writing organizational skills but also become much more planned in developing their ideas for writing. In addition, the students generally provided positive comments on the instruction even though they expressed difficulties of writing an argumentative essay. It was thus ascertained that English organizational patterns could be taught so as to bring positive effects on various proficiency levels of Korean university students in developing their organizational skills and planning strategies of writing an argumentative essay.

[argumentative writing/organizational pattern/writing processes/writing instruction]

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I. INTRODUCTION

When writing in second language (L2), learners encounter many obstacles due to not only their limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge but also their lack of understanding of the discourse structures and elements. Although L2 learners have enough knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, many of them have difficulties with producing well-organized writing (Kim, 2008). Kaplan (1966) insisted that cultural differences between native and non-native English speakers largely affect L2 learners to organize text in English differently from their L1 text organization. He reported that especially Asian learners have non-linear and non-straightforward thinking pattern, and this leads them to have indirect and inductive writing style which is not recommended in Western rhetoric. His assertion had become the beginning of Contrastive Rhetoric (CR), and helped many English as a second or foreign language writing teachers and researchers understand how various cultural group learners write in L2 with different rhetorical styles and why they have difficulties in writing despite having quite good grammar and vocabulary knowledge (Kim, 2008; Ryu, 2006). However, the theory of CR has been criticized as it argued that the same cultural group learners would have the same rhetorical conventions; it overgeneralized the cultural differences of writing from only a few examples; and it stressed that L1 would negatively influence on L2 writing. CR did not seriously consider the importance of other factors that would affect learners' differences in L2 writing such as their previous learning experiences, and social and educational backgrounds (Hamp-Lyons, 2003; Kachru, 1995; Kim, 2008; Kubota & Lehner, 2004; Mohan & Lo, 1985; Ryu, 2006).

Many opponents of CR have conducted research and attempted to examine other factors in addition to L2 learners' cultural and language differences that would affect the quality of English writing (i.e. mostly argumentative essay writing). They found that most L2 learners used direct and deductive approach in writing like native speakers of English did. Yet, they argued that even though L2 learners had some knowledge about different L1 and L2 rhetorical styles, they failed to produce good quality English texts due to their lack of previous writing experiences and L2 organizational skills (Cheong, 2012; Cho, 2010; Kim, 2005; Kubota, 1998; Ryu, 2006; Zheng, 2013). Those who were against CR were also successful in discovering the distinctive features of a specific language/cultural group learners' L2 writing, and the important role of instruction on L2 rhetorical styles and its positive effects. Nevertheless, most of their studies drew a conclusion with the limited number of L2 learners' writing samples by simply counting how many writing samples had the thesis statement at the beginning, how many topic sentences were used in one writing sample, and how many learners coherently/logically organized a text. Various scoring guidelines were used to analyze learners' rhetorical and organizational patterns of writing.

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However, most of them were holistic rubrics and did not consider different areas of text organization. In addition, the learners' writing samples were mostly assessed by a single rater. Moreover, different proficiency levels of the learners or their writing processes were not taken into account. Furthermore, what the learners found the most difficult about writing in L2 was rarely given attention. Therefore, in this study, it aims to examine how the instruction on English organizational patterns would affect different proficiency levels of Korean university students' English writing quality and processes as well as their perceptions. Based on these purpose, the following two research questions are brought up:

1. Does the instruction of organizational patterns affect the quality and processes of Korean EFL students' argumentative essay writing, and how does it affect different proficiency levels of the students?
2. How do Korean EFL students perceive of the instruction on organizational patterns of argumentative essay writing? Do they think it is helpful or not and why?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As EFL learners' writing skills do not develop all at once even though they practice a lot for many years, many EFL writing researchers wanted to find out what makes them difficult to write a good quality of essay in English. Kaplan (1966), the pioneer of CR, and other researchers who supported CR (Cai, 1993; Chen, 2007; Eggington, 1987; Hahn, 2004; Hinds, 1990; Matalene, 1985; Shin, 2007) thus attempted to compare various EFL learners' writing samples whose languages and cultural backgrounds were different. They especially grouped Chinese, Thailand, and Korean learners of English and referred them as Oriental group learners. They then drew a conclusion that Oriental group learners are different from Western group learners in that the former use indirect and inductive approach and tend to apply their L1 rhetorical styles to English writing. They believed that these make Oriental group learners difficult to produce a text with clear Western rhetorical pattern. However, other researchers who were oppose of CR (Chien, 2011; Hirose, 2003; Yang & Cahill, 2008) argued that not only EFL learners' language and cultural differences but also other factors like their previous writing experiences would strongly influence on them in writing. Accordingly, much research have been carried out in order to discover what factors rather than language and cultural differences affect EFL learners to write in English better.

Zheng (2013) attempted to compare Korean students' argumentative essays writing with those of American and Chinese students. Regardless of their different nationalities, it was found that all the three groups of the students wrote their essays directly and deductively by locating the thesis at the beginning. Zheng (2013) mentioned that Korean and Chinese

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students were aware that English writing styles should be different as they were trained to write in English differently from their L1 at school. However, he insisted that Asian and American students were different in terms of the contents of rational and affective appeals in their writing. That is, to support a position, he said that Asian students provided examples and explanations which were closely related to their social and cultural backgrounds. He also added that their oriental thinking patterns were reflected on writing. Yet, rather than inspecting all of the students' writing in details, Zheng (2013) only analyzed one Korean and the other Chinese students' writing samples by focusing on how they provided examples and explanations. In addition, even though 84 essays of Korean and Chinese students were collected, respectively, only 10 essays of American students were gathered. Thus, discussing similarities or differences between American and Asian students' writing styles with only 10 samples of American students might not have been appropriate. Also, rather than finding unique features of Korean and Chinese students' organizational patterns in English writing, Zheng (2013), again, grouped those two country students as one and concluded that their English writing styles were similar and not good enough due to their similar cultural and social backgrounds. No other factors such as the students' proficiency levels and learning experience of writing were taken into account.

Instead of comparing Korean students with American students, Cheong (2012) focused only on Korean students and tried to find out whether or not training could change their English writing styles. The experimental group received instruction for several months, whereas the control group did not. The two groups of Korean high school students' argumentative essays written on the pre- and post-tests were compared. The experimental group showed much more improvement from the pre- to the post-test, indicating that the instruction helped them learn Western rhetorical and organizational patterns. However, the students were given the same writing prompt for the pre- and post-tests which might have led them to gain much higher score on the post-test than they deserved. Also, although the pre- and post-tests scores of the two groups were compared, their different organizational patterns in writing were not specifically presented or compared with examples. Providing some of the students' writing samples and explaining about how their writing organizational skills had developed from the pre- to the post-test might have helped readers understand the two groups' differences better. In addition, the students were in an Independent High School for Gifted Education, and thus their English proficiency level might have been much higher than that of the average Korean high school students.

Kim (2005), Ryu (2006), and Cho (2010) further ran research and discovered that Korean university students' quality of English writing was strongly affected by their previous learning experiences or writing skills. Kim (2005) and Cho (2010) compared Korean students' L1 (i.e. Korean) and L2 (i.e. English) argumentative essays. Although the

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students followed Western rhetoric patterns by writing deductively in English, their writing quality was found to be not good enough due to their lack of organizational skills or learning experiences. This implies that the students' English writing styles would get better as they get more instruction on organizational skills and as their proficiency level advances. In addition to Kim (2005) and Cho (2010), Ryu (2006) also asked 27 Korean students to write an essay in English and found deductive approach from their writing. Yet, he noticed that knowing how to use deductive approach did not mean that the students were capable of producing a text with linear and straightforward organizational structures. All students in Ryu's (2006) study had leaning experiences of English composition, but their writing was somewhat incoherent and disorganized. Also, some of their sentences were irrelevant to the theme. Ryu (2006) mentioned that these would be because the students' writing skills were not fully developed. He thus insisted that providing more chance for the students to get instruction would be necessary.

The findings in the studies of Kim (2005), Cho (2010), and Ryu (2006) commonly suggested the importance of providing writing instruction to Korean students and helping them produce a good quality of English writing which contains clear Western rhetorical and organizational patterns. However, only a small number of students were recruited, and their different English proficiency levels were not considered. Additionally, their learning environments were not controlled. For example, the students in Kim's (2005) study were in different schools or classes, and some of the students in Cho's (2010) study were in Korea while others were in the U.S. Moreover, the students in the three studies were asked to write in Korean and/or English only once on a given writing prompt, and their writing was either graded based on a holistic rubric or never graded at all. For example, Ryu (2006) only selected several students' writing samples and presented some of the good or bad parts without any scores. In comparison, Kim (2005) graded the students' essays by using a holistic rubric and reported their scores, but did not consider different areas of text organization. In addition, she neither explained about the students' writing processes nor provided their writing samples.

As Korean EFL students' proficiency levels were not considered in the previous research, and as their argumentative essay writing processes were never explored along with their scores, the present study will investigate how different proficiency levels of 30 Korean university students would write an argumentative essay, how they would develop their writing organizational patterns with the help of the instruction, and how they would perceive of the instruction.

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III. METHODOLOGY

1. Participants

Thirty EFL students (19 male and 11 female) who were taking a selective English course at one of the universities in Gyeonggi-do, Korea were recruited for this study. The students had more than one-semester-long experience of learning English composition at their university, but all of them had no experience of studying abroad. Their ages ranged from 21 to 25, and their majors varied including Law, Business and Economics, English Language and Literature, Social Science, Special Education, Engineering, Arts and Design, etc. There were less than five students who had the same major. The students were divided into two groups; higher and lower proficiency level groups; based on their performance on the first writing task provided in the first week of the semester. They were assigned to different levels by considering their ability of organizing an argumentative essay in English rather than that of grammar, vocabulary, or spelling/punctuation. Yet, the students were never told about their proficiency levels. Fourteen students belonged to the higher level group. Most of them achieved above 700 points on the TOEIC and gained a grade of 'A' on English reading and/or writing courses which they had taken in the previous semesters. The rest of 16 students belonged to the lower level group. They generally earned between 400 and 700 points on the TOEIC and received a grade of 'B' or 'C' on English reading and/or writing courses. The students were asked to provide the TOEFL, IELTS, TOEIC, or any other kind of official English test scores they received, but all provided only the TOEIC scores as it was mandatory for them to take the official TOEIC more than once in their freshman year. According to the students' responses to a background questionnaire, the majority of them mentioned that they read and write something on personal blogs or homepages in both Korean and English very often. Additionally, what they reported to read more in both Korean and English were the Internet articles and class materials, whereas what they reported to write more were term papers. Eight students mentioned that they also keep their own diary in Korean, but not in English. In this respect, it is clear that the study participants had some experience of reading and writing in English.

2. Data Collection

1) Background Questionnaire

At the beginning of the semester, a background questionnaire was given which included several questions about the students' personal information such as their names, ages, majors, experience of studying abroad, official English test scores (e.g. TOEIC, TOEFL,

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IELTS, and/or other official English tests scores), English reading/writing course grade, and materials they read and write frequently in Korean and English.

2) Class Instruction and Assignment

The name of the class was '*Critical Thinking on Current Issues*,' and its aims were to help the students (1) understand current issues through reading and discussing articles on various topics, (2) enhance critical thinking skills, and (3) write an argumentative essay with English organizational patterns. The class was supposed to meet once a week for two hours during the 15-week semester. Each week, a controversial topic (e.g. '*Does money bring you happiness?*', '*How should sex offenders be punished?*', '*Can alternative medicine and modern medicine coexist?*', etc.) was given, and the students were supposed to find and bring some of the news articles and/or other materials gotten from reliable sources related to the given topic. In the class, they worked as a group with four to five members. They talked about different stances they held and had a debate based on their personal thoughts and the articles they brought. Then they were asked to take one position on the given topic, make an outline, and write the thesis statement as the beginning stage of developing an argumentative essay. The instructor of the course checked each student's outline and the thesis statement during the class. The students had to complete and submit about a one to one and half page essay by the next class. The instructor pointed out and discussed common mistakes that the students made as a whole class and returned their essays with comments and scores every week.

The main focus of the instruction on organizational patterns of argumentative writing was given to: (1) how to develop the thesis statement, (2) how to develop topic sentences, (3) how to organize body paragraphs with specific examples, anecdotes, facts, explanations, and reasons to justify a position, (4) how to form a concluding paragraph with appropriate concluding words, and (5) how to keep cohesion and coherence in writing. Additionally, the instructor constantly encouraged the students to think and write deductively by following English rhetoric.

All of the students' essays were collected, and their copies were kept. Yet, in order to examine if there had been any progress in their writing from the beginning to the end of the semester, only the very first and last essays were taken into account for this study. The first essay was written without any instruction, and the given topic was '*Should corporal punishment be banned?*' In comparison, the last essay was written in the final week of the semester, and the given topic was '*Should capital punishment be enforced?*' The instructor did not check the students' outlines and the thesis statements for the last essay.

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3) Reflection Questionnaire

At the end of the semester, a reflection questionnaire was given to the students. The students were asked what difficulties they had while writing an argumentative essay in English and how they felt about the writing instruction and practice in developing their organizational skills.

3. Data Analysis

To answer the first research question, the students' first and last argumentative essays were analyzed according to different areas of text organization. Two raters, not including the instructor of the class, graded the students' essays: One was the researcher of this study, and the other was a senior professor in English Education Department at one of the universities in Seoul, Korea. In order to avoid possible bias, the instructor was not involved in grading. A rubric, which was adopted from Kubota's (1998, p. 96) holistic scoring rubric of text organization, was used for grading (See Appendix A.). It had six areas; thesis statement, opening and wrapping up, topic sentence(s), details (supporting ideas), content (sentences and paragraphs), and paragraphing; and each area ranged from '5' ('*Excellent*') to '1' ('*Poor*'). The total highest score that one could get was 30, and the lowest score was 6. First, by using Cohen's kappa through SPSS, inter-rater reliability was measured to examine the agreement between the two raters. Then t-test was applied through SPSS to see if any statistically significant differences would be found between the students' first and last essay scores. The students' scores as well as some of their writing samples were presented. Also, some similarities and differences between the higher and lower level students were described. In addition, what processes the students went through to develop an essay (e.g. how they found the articles related to the given topic, how they wrote an outline, etc.) were illustrated.

To answer the second research question, the students' responses to the reflection questionnaire were analyzed. Some of the responses that were too short (i.e. less than one to two sentences) or superficial were excluded. Then what they commonly reported as difficulties of writing an argumentative essay was presented. In addition, their perceptions of getting the instruction on organizational patterns of argumentative writing and its positive/negative aspects were introduced. Whether or not there were any differences between the two proficiency level groups were also discussed.

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IV. RESULTS AND DISUCSSIONS

1. The Effect of the Instruction on the Students' Use of Organizational Patterns in Argumentative Essay Writing and their Writing Processes

Thirty students wrote their first argumentative essay in the first week of the semester. They were asked find some information about corporal punishment through the Internet and/or other sources. Then they had a discussion about if they would agree or disagree with using corporal punishment. About one-hour discussion was held, but no instruction was provided to the students. The students were first asked to write an outline. Then they started to develop an argumentative essay. All the materials they found on the Internet/other sources, an outline, personal notes, and an essay were collected.

After a semester-long instruction and practice of argumentative essay writing, the students wrote and submitted their last essay in the final week of the semester. The first and last essays were graded by the two raters, and the obtained K (i.e. Kappa) for each of the six evaluation categories of the first essay was .80, .67, .60, .63, .67, .83, respectively. In addition, the obtained K for each category of the last essay was .83, .63, .77, .77, .73, .93, respectively. These indicate that the inter-rater reliability for the two raters was quite satisfactory (If the obtained K is greater than .70, it means that the inter-rater reliability is satisfactory.).

The students' scores for the first and last essays are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Comparisons of the Students' First and Last Essay Scores

Proficiency Level	Area[1]	Mean	N	SD	t	df	p
Higher	Thesis1	3.07	14	.18	-11.30	13	.000**
	Thesis2	4.36	14	.46			
	Open_Wrap1	2.89	14	.29	-12.80	13	.000**
	Open_Wrap2	4.39	14	.29			
	Topic1	3.07	14	.27	-8.05	13	.000**
	Topic2	4.64	14	.60			
	Details1	3.18	14	.37	-10.21	13	.000**
	Details2	4.54	14	.54			
	Content1	3.21	14	.51	-8.05	13	.000**
	Content2	4.61	14	.49			

[1] 'Thesis,' 'Open-Wrap,' 'Topic,' 'Details,' 'Content,' and 'Paragraphing,' indicate the following areas of text organization, respectively: 'Thesis statement,' 'Opening and wrapping up,' 'Topic sentence(s),' 'Details,' 'Content,' 'Paragraphing.' The number '1' written next to each area indicates 'the first essay,' and the number '2' indicates 'the last essay.'

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	Paragraphing1	5.00	14	.00		13	
	Paragraphing2	5.00	14	.00			
	Total1	20.42	14	1.09	-12.53	13	.000**
	Total2	27.54	14	1.94			
Lower	Thesis1	1.31	16	.40	-17.36	15	.000**
	Thesis2	3.72	16	.71			
	Open_Wrap1	1.47	16	.59	-11.34	15	.000**
	Open_Wrap2	3.53	16	.56			
	Topic1	1.53	16	.46	-9.00	15	.000**
	Topic2	3.56	16	.79			
	Details1	1.50	16	.48	-15.34	15	.000**
	Details2	3.88	16	.56			
	Content1	1.59	16	.55	-13.36	15	.000**
	Content2	3.78	16	.48			
	Paragraphing1	3.94	16	.85	-4.96	15	.000**
	Paragraphing2	4.75	16	.41			
	Total1	11.34	16	2.54	-15.43	15	.000**
	Total2	23.22	16	2.70			
Total	Thesis1	2.13	30	.95	-13.74	29	.000**
	Thesis2	4.02	30	.68			
	Open_Wrap1	2.13	30	.86	-14.84	29	.000**
	Open_Wrap2	3.93	30	.63			
	Topic1	2.25	30	.87	-11.77	29	.000**
	Topic2	4.07	30	.89			
	Details1	2.28	30	.95	-13.71	29	.000**
	Details2	4.18	30	.64			
	Content1	2.35	30	.98	-13.10	29	.000**
	Content2	4.17	30	.63			
	Paragraphing1	4.43	30	.82	-3.79	29	.001**
	Paragraphing2	4.87	30	.32			
	Total1	15.58	30	5.01	-14.79	29	.000**
	Total2	25.23	30	3.20			

* p<.05, ** p<.01

Overall, the 30 students in the higher and lower proficiency levels gained 15.58 points out of 30 on the first essay, but their scores statistically had increased significantly (t=-14.79, p<.01) to 25.23 on the last essay. In all the six areas of the text organization, the students' scores had statistically increased a lot, indicating that the instruction helped the overall students improve their organizational skills. They particularly received the highest score, 4.43 out of 5, in the 'Paragraphing' area, and the lowest score, 2.13, in both the 'Thesis'

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and 'Open_Wrap' areas on the first essay. However, when comparing their first essay to the last one, they showed the greatest improvement in the 'Thesis' and 'Details' areas (+1.89 and +1.9 points, respectively), and the least improvement in the 'Paragraphing' area (+.26 points). From the beginning of the semester, the students had been mostly good at dividing paragraphs effectively. As they already had gained high scores in the 'Paragraphing' area on the first essay, they might have little room to get a much higher scores on the last essay. In addition, most students seemed to know that they should state the thesis in the introductory paragraph. Thus, among 30 students, 28 located the thesis at the end of the introductory paragraph on the first essay. This was an opposite finding from what Kaplan (1996) and the proponents of CR had argued in their research. Nevertheless, their thesis statements were not effective or logical enough (e.g. 'Corporal punishment can help teachers in several ways' and 'We can say that corporal punishment is not solution from now on.'). Accordingly, they received very low scores in the 'Thesis' area on the first essay, but later showed much improvement on their last essay as they received the instruction.

When comparing the higher and lower proficiency level students, some of the similarities and differences were found. Among the six areas of text organization, both groups gained the highest scores in the 'Paragraphing' area on the first essay (i.e. 5 points for the higher level and 3.94 points for the lower level). They might have felt that breaking paragraphs appropriately was relatively easier than writing the thesis, topic sentences, and supporting details clearly. Accordingly, their scores might have not increased much in the 'Paragraphing' area from the first to the last essays. However, the higher level students obtained the lowest score, 2.89, in the 'Open-Wrap' area, whereas the lower level students obtained the lowest score, 1.31, in the 'Thesis' area on the first essay. The former showed the greatest improvement in the 'Open-Wrap' and 'Topic' areas (+1.5 and +1.59, respectively) during the semester, and the latter in the 'Thesis' and 'Details' areas (+2.41 and +2.38, respectively). For more specific comparisons between the two proficiency level groups, some of the students' writing samples will be presented, and how the instruction influenced on them will be explained.

1) The Higher Proficiency Level Students' Changes in their Organizational Patterns and Processes of Writing

The higher proficiency level students showed improvement in all areas of text organization except in the 'Paragraphing' area. They generally showed much more improvement in the 'Open-Wrap' and 'Topic' areas than in other areas. Yae-jin, for example, gained 19 points on her first essay. She had divided her writing into five paragraphs: One introductory, three body, and one concluding paragraphs. She thus got 5

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points, the highest score, in the 'Paragraphing' area. What she stated as the thesis was '*But I think I would choose a physical punishment among many alternatives. There are three reasons.*' Even though she located the thesis at the end of the introductory paragraph, she did not explicitly mention what '*many alternatives*' were. She was thus given 3 points in the 'Thesis' area. She then wrote the three reasons as follows: '*First of all, adolescent identity and judgment is still insufficient,*' '*Secondly, it occurs because of cultural differences,*' and '*Finally, there are institutional problems*.' The way of stating these reasons was, however, not consistent. Also, for the second reason, it was not clear what she meant by '*it*.' The score she received in the 'Topic' area was thus 2.5. After getting the instruction throughout the semester, she showed much improvement especially in the 'Topic' area. On her last essay, the total score had increased to 28.5, and the score she obtained in the 'Topic' area had increased to 4.5. The thesis she wrote was '*I believe that capital punishment has to be executed to those who are guilty because of three reasons,*' and the reasons she stated were as follows: '*First, the cost of capital punishment is lower than the cost of life imprisonment,*' '*Second, capital punishment is the most powerful and harsh punishment,*' and '*Finally, capital punishment can possibly prevent producing victims.*' They were written with the consistent format, and each topic sentence contained only one subject. As the higher level students including Yae-jin were constantly told and trained by the instructor to (1) write topic sentences with the consistent format and (2) include a controlling idea in each topic sentence that supports their main argument in the thesis, they might have greatly improved the ability of writing topic sentences effectively.

Another higher level student, Jin Hee, obtained 21 points on the first essay. She especially showed the greatest improvement in the 'Open_Wrap' area by gaining 3 points on the first essay and 4.5 points on the last essay. Yet, like Yae-jin, she showed no improvement at all in the 'Paragraphing' area as she already had gained the highest score, 5, on the first essay. She was in favor of physical punishment and wrote the introductory paragraph as follows (Grammatical mistakes were not corrected.):

People who disagree corporal punishment think that it is a force so it should be prohibited. But I think corporal punishment is a way of education. Particularly, teenagers is not stable. So they need to be taught by teachers, mothers, etc. When verbal communication doesn't work to teenagers, teachers need to use corporal punishment. There are several reasons why I think corporal punishment should be approved.

The opening statement seemed to be written quite well enough to arouse the readers' interest and curiosity into reading her essay. She included a counter-argument and a refutation in order to make her essay more persuasive. However, when wrapping up her writing in the concluding paragraph, she abruptly added new ideas as follows:

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...corporal punishment should be used until students become mature or schools find reasonable alternatives to make them follow the school rules. . . So schools have to do their best to collect students' complaints and offer them what they want educationally. For example, opening a class that students can learn sports, arts, etc. would be good because…

She discussed possible alternatives which could replace corporal punishment. Yet, this seemed to be contradictory to her position which was originally stated in the introductory paragraph. On her last essay written at the end of the semester, she, however, maintained the same position throughout her writing. In the introductory paragraph, she stated the thesis as follows: '…*There are some reasons why I think the death should be abolished*.' Later, in the concluding paragraph, she wrote as follows:

The death penalty should not be allowed to execute criminals for these reasons. Although seven out of ten citizens agreed to retain the death penalty according to the recent poll in Korea, it is important to come up with the practical ways to punish and rehabilitate criminals as the sanctity of life needs to be respected.

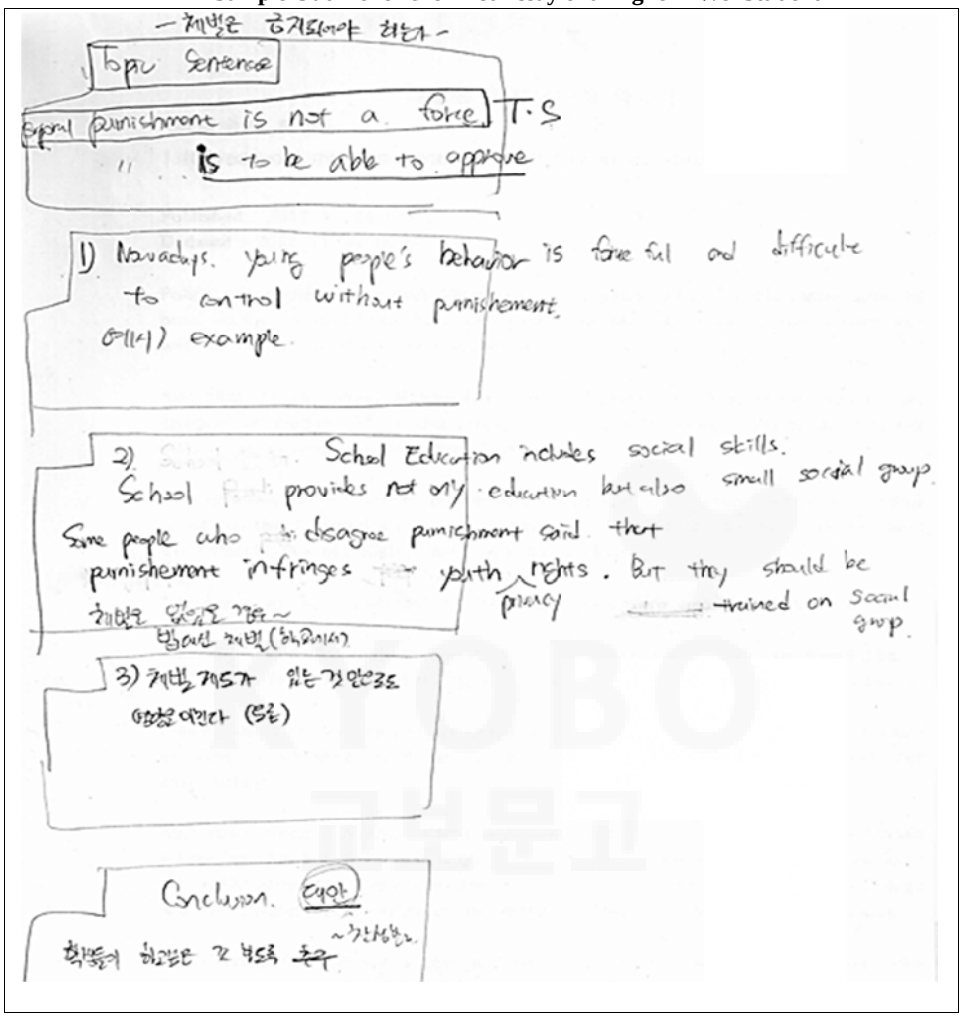
Jin Hee's final remarks were clear and logical, and consistent with what she had stated in the introduction. As the higher level students' weakest area was the 'Open-Wrap,' and as they were constantly guided to (1) restate their opinion by using different and more persuasive language and (2) provide a warning, a prediction, or a comment that reinforces their point of view at the end of the essay, they might have showed the greatest improvement in the 'Open_Wrap' area.

When considering what processes the higher level students went through to develop their writing, some of the unique characteristics were found. First, when writing the first essay, they searched for and gathered more than one text on the Internet related to the given topic. Most of the texts they found were articles from the U.S. or England newspapers (e.g. The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Telegraph, The Times, etc.), and each text was longer than two pages. Second, the students underlined or circled important words/sentences on the texts while reading them. Third, they wrote an outline before writing the first essay, and it was mostly written in Korean. They often wrote some of the technical terms and/or their ideas in English. However, except one student (He wrote all words/sentences in English.), all wrote more than 50% of words/sentences in Korean. An example of an outline is shown below in Figure 1.

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FIGURE 1

A Sample Outline for the First Essay of a Higher Level Student



The students wrote down what he would like to talk about in each body paragraph, but he did not clearly noted down a topic sentence. In addition, he wrote down the Korean word, '*대안*' which meant '*alternatives*' in English. He might have focused more on listing some alternatives which could replace physical punishment in the concluding paragraph rather than summarizing important points and restating the thesis.

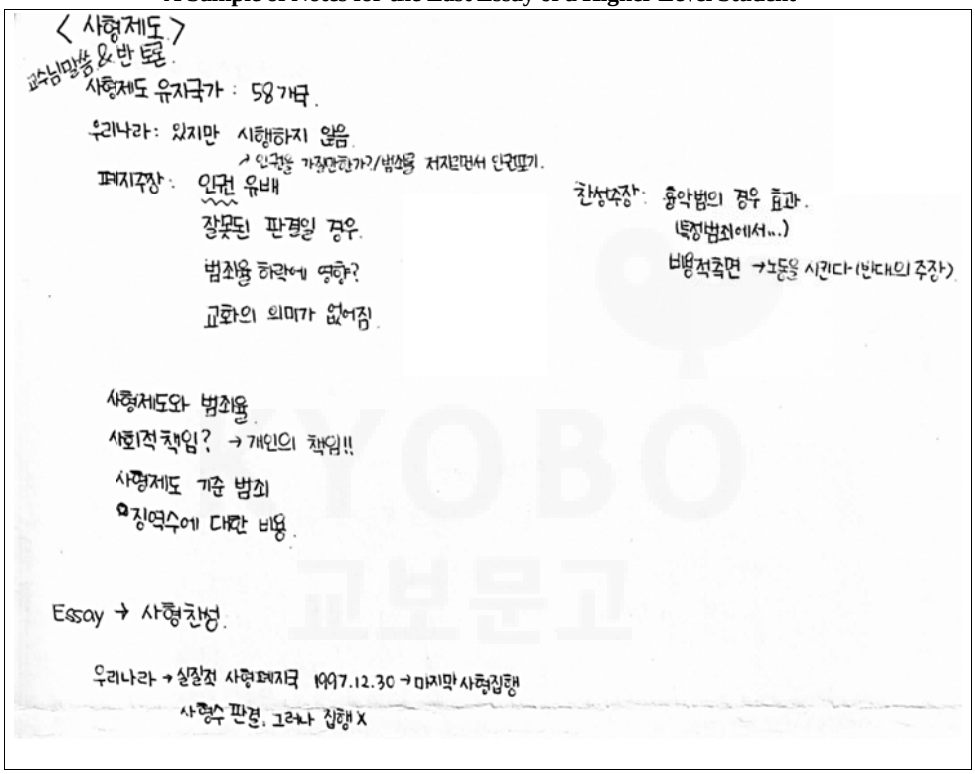
In comparison, when writing the last essay, the overall students' writing processes had somewhat changed. First, they looked for not only news articles but also academic journals, statistical data, criminal law, and judicial precedents. Interestingly, some students collected several articles and/or the Internet chat room texts that supported and opposed the death

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penalty and read about the two opposite points of views. They then determined what position they would take. Second, when making an outline, the students still tended to use more of Korean than English, but became more specific and planned. For example, some students briefly wrote down pros and cons found in the articles or discussed in the class. An example is shown below in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2

A Sample of Notes for the Last Essay of a Higher Level Student

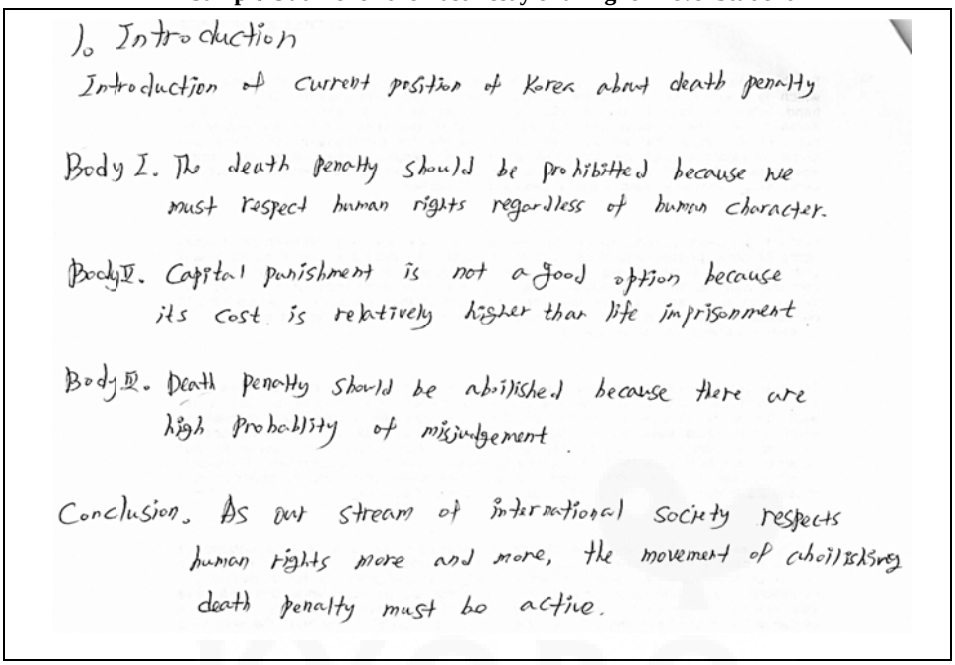


The student considered different sides of the death penalty, and this seemed to help her finally choose one side and come up with several topic sentences. Many students who wrote down this type of short notes then added an outline. The following is a sample outline of a student's last essay.

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FIGURE 3

A Sample Outline for the Last Essay of a Higher Level Student


1. Introduction

Introduction of current position of Korea about death penalty

Body I. The death penalty should be prohibited because we must respect human rights regardless of human character.

Body II. Capital punishment is not a good option because its cost is relatively higher than life imprisonment

Body III. Death penalty should be abolished because there are high probability of misjudgement

Conclusion. As our stream of international society respects human rights more and more, the movement of abolishing death penalty must be active.

The student clearly wrote down three topic sentences and one concluding sentence according to his viewpoint. Like this student, the overall higher level students jotted down the thesis, topic sentences, and closing remarks before writing the last essay. This seemed to help them stick to one side of the argument and wrap up the essay with a brief summary of the main ideas. It can be thus inferred that a semester-long instruction on organizational patterns of argumentative writing helped the higher level students not only show great improvement particularly in the 'Open-Warp' and 'Topic' areas, but also go through more planned, precise, and logical writing processes.

2) The Lower Proficiency Level Students' Changes in their Organizational Patterns and Processes of Writing

The lower proficiency level students showed statistically significant improvement in all six areas of text organization. Similar to those at the higher level, they showed the least improvement in the 'Paragraphing' area. However, differing from the higher level students, the lower level students particularly showed the greatest improvement in the 'Thesis' and 'Details' areas. On the first essay, they took one side on the given topic (i.e. corporal punishment), but they did not explicitly state the thesis in their own words. Rather, some

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mentioned about what other people stated or thought about corporal punishment. Other students used interrogative sentences to arouse the readers' attention. They seemed to know that they should state their position, but they were a little reluctant to express their opinions directly. For example, Tae Woon wrote down the main idea of the first essay as follows: '*Many people say to resolve this problem, corporal punishment must be needed. Is their opinion really true?*' He stated what others believed about corporal punishment. The score he obtained in the 'Thesis' area was thus 1 point. Another student, Min-ji, was also given 1 point in this area. She listed many questions without stating the thesis as follows: *…Does corporal punishment changes our society? Should we accept corporal punishment at home or school? Corporal punishment is effective in our lives? There are several reasons why corporal punishment is considered not effective.*

She was opposed of corporal punishment, but she did not clearly state her position. The other student, Jun Woo, received 10.5 on the first essay, but received only 1.5 in the 'Thesis' area. Rather than saying '*Corporal punishment has to be abolished*.' by using '*Corporal punishment*' as a subject of the sentence, he indirectly stated the thesis by starting the sentence with '*it*' as follows: '(*And now, our educational situation needs to be changed.) So, it is time to disappear corporal punishment.*' However, on the last essay, he showed much improvement. He clearly stated the thesis in his own words as follows: '*I would say that the capital punishment should be abolished for the following reasons*.' He obtained 4.5 in the 'Thesis' area, and the total score had increased to 22.5.

Whereas most of the higher level students at least attempted to state the main argument in their own words (though it was not always clear and effective) when writing the first essay, the lower level students generally did not express their point of view directly in the introductory paragraph. However, as they were constantly trained to (1) identify the thesis of various articles they found online, (2) create one or two more thesis statements of their own for those articles, and (3) practice writing the first sentence of the introduction with a general topic, narrowing the topic down in the second sentence, restating the specific question in the third sentence, and presenting the thesis in the last sentence, they might have developed their ability to clearly state the thesis with more persuasive words.

In addition to the 'Thesis' area, the lower level students showed much progress in 'Details' area. On the first essay, they all included relevant details to support their main argument in the body paragraph, but many of them failed to present facts, experiences, explanations, and/or examples effectively. For example, Yoon Young gained 17 points on her first essay. She was against corporal punishment and listed the following three topic sentences: '*Fist, corporal punishment is violence,*' '*Secondly, we don't have to use corporal punishment in these days,*' and '*Finally, corporal punishment causes lots of side effects*.' To support each topic sentence, she added some explanations or reasons. Yet, they

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were not convincing enough because they were written based on her guess, but not based on reliable sources. After stating the second topic sentence, Yoon Young added some supporting details as follows:

In old days we had more than 50 people in one class. In this situation we needed corporal punishment to control all of them. But we've been changed. We only have half or less of them in one class. We can totally control students without physical punishment…

She described what she believed to be true about the class size in the past and present without providing any evidence (e.g. numbers and statistics). Also, she frequently used the collective pronoun '*we*' which referred to as '*Koreans*,' by assuming and ensuring that all Koreans would think the same as she did. She thus gained 2 points in the 'Details' area. However, on the last essay, she never used such words as '*we*,' '*our*,' or '*us*,' and became much more specific about organizing details in the body paragraphs. The total score she obtained was 23.5, and the score she gained in the 'Details' area was 4. She disagreed with implementing the death sentence, and provided the following three topic sentences: '*First of all, death penalty doesn't reduce the rate of crime*,' '*Secondly, death penalty can murder innocent people*,' and '*Finally, the judgment of the death penalty is often not fair*.' In order to support the last topic sentence, she cited some research and wrote as follows:

For example, one of the research says that when people commit the same crime, black people get more judgment of death penalty than white people. And in another research, it has a record that some dictators in the past used the death penalty for social minorities with unfairness to maintain their power by ignoring the rules. Death penalty can be unfairly used. So it should not be used for punishment.

Even though Yoon Young did not provide the source of the information, her supporting ideas seemed to become much more convincing (The instructions for citation and references were not provided to the students since the focus of the class was only given to teaching text organizational patterns.).

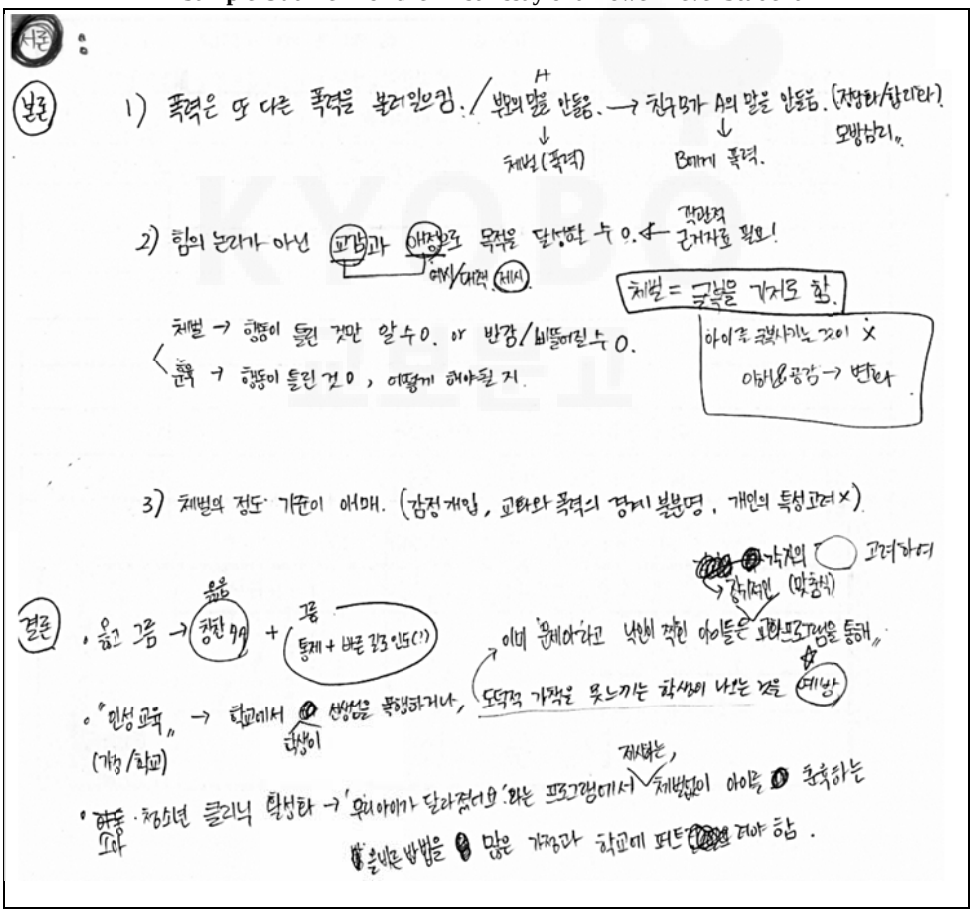
Whereas the higher level students seemed to be quite used to selecting and reading some research or news articles that were challenging from the beginning of the semester, the lower level students tended to choose short and simple articles written mostly in Korean. Accordingly, the higher level students tried to talk about specific evidence in addition to providing reasons and examples on the first essay, but the lower level students seemed to have no idea of how to include facts, personal experiences, or examples into the body paragraphs. However, as they had been continuously trained to (1) sort out relevant from irrelevant details stated in the body paragraphs of various articles and (2) state reasons, facts, explanations, and experiences logically and effectively to make their argument stronger, they might have possibly developed the ability to write supporting details better.

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When considering the writing processes of the lower level students, several distinctive characteristics were found. First, when writing the first essay, they collected one or two short articles related to the given topic. About half of them were written in Korean. The other half were written in English and were mostly from the Korea Herald (It is one of Korea's largest English newspapers which provides information on what is happening in Korea.). Second, when reading English articles, many students not only underlined or circled important words/sentences but also wrote short notes on the margin. In addition, they often wrote down the meanings of difficult words and expressions in Korean. It seemed that they spent much more time than the higher level students to read and understand the articles they found. Third, they wrote an outline like the higher level students did, but none of them wrote it in English. A sample outline is shown in Figure 4.

FIGURE 4

A Sample Outline 1 for the First Essay of a Lower Level Student



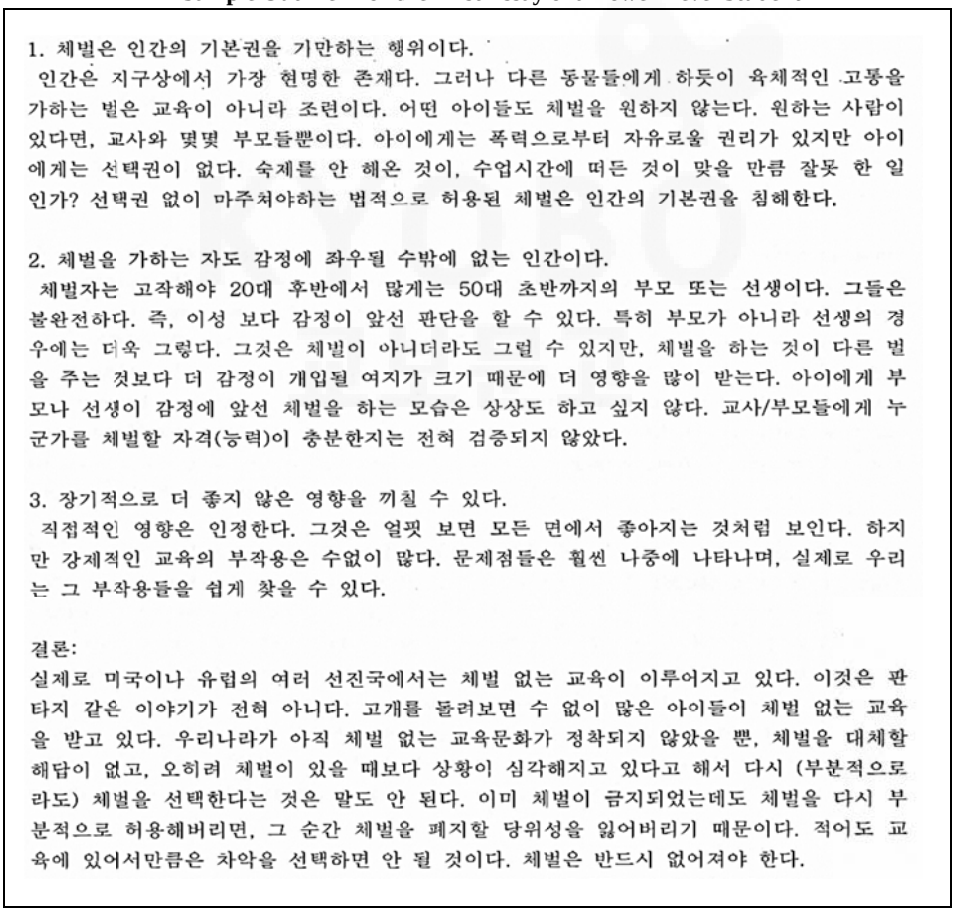
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The student wrote down what reasons and explanations he would like to include in the body paragraphs and how to make a conclusion. However, he wrote nothing for the introductory paragraph. It seemed that most of the lower level students made up their mind whether they would agree or disagree with corporal punishment, but they did not think much about how they would start the introductory paragraph and state the thesis.

One other interesting feature found by a couple of the lower level students was that they wrote the whole essay in Korean (rather than writing an outline), and then translated it into English. The problem, however, was that their translation was not very successful. Since they frequently used a Korean-English dictionary, their use of words/expressions and sentence structures were quite awkward and unnatural. A sample of a Korean essay is presented below in Figure 5.

FIGURE 5

A Sample Outline 2 for the First Essay of a Lower Level Student



1. 체벌은 인간의 기본권을 기만하는 행위이다.
인간은 지구상에서 가장 현명한 존재다. 그러나 다른 동물들에게 하듯이 육체적인 고통을 가하는 벌은 교육이 아니라 조련이다. 어떤 아이들도 체벌을 원하지 않는다. 원하는 사람이 있다면, 교사와 몇몇 부모들뿐이다. 아이에게는 폭력으로부터 자유로울 권리가 있지만 아이에게는 선택권이 없다. 숙제를 안 해온 것이, 수업시간에 떠든 것이 맞을 만큼 잘못 한 일인가? 선택권 없이 마주쳐야하는 법적으로 허용된 체벌은 인간의 기본권을 침해한다.

2. 체벌을 가하는 자도 감정에 좌우될 수밖에 없는 인간이다.
체벌자는 고작해야 20대 후반에서 많게는 50대 초반까지의 부모 또는 선생이다. 그들은 불완전하다. 즉, 이성 보다 감정이 앞선 판단을 할 수 있다. 특히 부모가 아니라 선생의 경우에는 더욱 그렇다. 그것은 체벌이 아니더라도 그럴 수 있지만, 체벌을 하는 것이 다른 벌을 주는 것보다 더 감정이 개입될 여지가 크기 때문에 더 영향을 많이 받는다. 아이에게 부모나 선생이 감정에 앞선 체벌을 하는 모습은 상상도 하고 싶지 않다. 교사/부모들에게 누군가를 체벌할 자격(능력)이 충분한지는 전혀 검증되지 않았다.

3. 장기적으로 더 좋지 않은 영향을 끼칠 수 있다.
직접적인 영향은 인정한다. 그것은 얼핏 보면 모든 면에서 좋아지는 것처럼 보인다. 하지만 강제적인 교육의 부작용은 수없이 많다. 문제점들은 훨씬 나중에 나타나며, 실제로 우리는 그 부작용들을 쉽게 찾을 수 있다.

결론:
실제로 미국이나 유럽의 여러 선진국에서는 체벌 없는 교육이 이루어지고 있다. 이것은 판타지 같은 이야기가 전혀 아니다. 고개를 들려보면 수 없이 많은 아이들이 체벌 없는 교육을 받고 있다. 우리나라가 아직 체벌 없는 교육문화가 정착되지 않았을 뿐, 체벌을 대체할 해답이 없고, 오히려 체벌이 있을 때보다 상황이 심각해지고 있다고 해서 다시 (부분적으로라도) 체벌을 선택한다는 것은 말도 안 된다. 이미 체벌이 금지되었는데도 체벌을 다시 부분적으로 허용해버리면, 그 순간 체벌을 폐지할 당위성을 잃어버리기 때문이다. 적어도 교육에 있어서만큼은 차악을 선택하면 안 될 것이다. 체벌은 반드시 없어져야 한다.

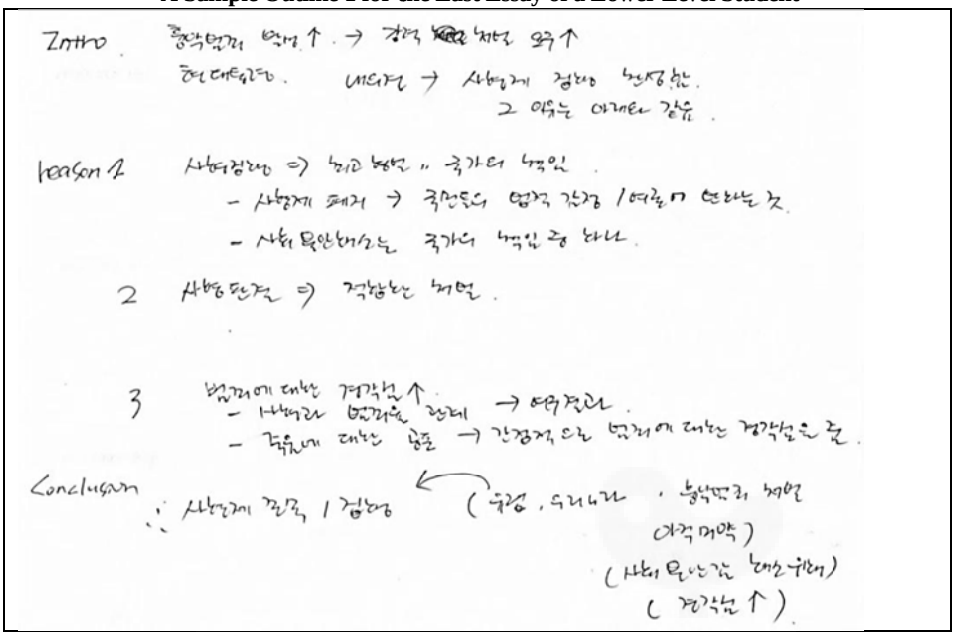
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The student focused on how he would organize the body and concluding paragraphs. Yet, as other lower level students did, he also did not pay much attention to the introductory paragraph. In addition, the length of each body paragraph was very different (The second body paragraph was particularly much longer than the third one.). The tendency of focusing too much on the body and conclusion sections and giving only minimal attention on the introduction section might have been the reasons why the lower level students generally did not do well in the 'Thesis' and 'Details' areas.

In contrast, when the lower level students were writing the last essay at the end of the semester, their writing processes had somewhat changed. First, the articles they found were mostly written in English which were found not only from Korea Herald but also from the U.S. or England newspapers. Second, the students underlined or circled important words and sentences on the articles as they did at the beginning of the semester. They also wrote down the meanings of new words/expressions, but they tried to use an English-English dictionary or Wikipedia and wrote down the meanings in English. For example, one of the students highlighted the word '*execution*' in the article he found, and wrote down its meaning found from Wikipedia as follows: '*Capital punishment/death penalty = a legal process whereby a person is put to death by the state as a punishment for a crime, The judicial decree that someone be punished in this manner is a death sentence, while the actual enforcement is an* ***execution***.' Third, the students still wrote an outline only in Korean as same as they did for writing their first essay outline, but they put much more attention to the thesis and details. Although not many of them think about putting some evidence or facts into the body paragraphs by citing various materials as the higher level students did, they seemed to spend much time with thinking about putting more specific explanations, reasons, and opinions. Finally, out of 16, 5 students still tried to write a Korean essay first and then translate it into English. Yet, they also wrote an outline in Korean (before writing a Korean essay) which included the thesis, topic sentences, supporting details, and concluding sentences. A sample of a student's outline for the last essay is shown in Figure 6.

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FIGURE 6
A Sample Outline 1 for the Last Essay of a Lower Level Student



The student wrote down what his position was in the introduction section and what reasons and explanations he would provide in each body paragraph. He then wrote a Korean essay as follows:

FIGURE 7
A Sample Outline 2 for the Last Essay of a Lower Level Student

서론

최근 흉악범죄의 발생이 증가하면서 강력한 처벌에 대한 요구가 제기되고 있다. 게다가 박 대통령이 사형제도 유지에 대해 찬성하는 입장을 표명하면서, 오래 전부터 문제시되던 이 이슈가 다시 수면 위로 올라왔다. 사실상 우리나라는 1997년 이래로 사형을 집행한 적이 없어, 사형폐지국가에 가깝다. 현재 전 세계 140개국이 법적 또는 사실상 사형폐지국가가 됐으며, 단 58개국만이 사형제도를 존치하고 있다. 그러나, 이런 세계적 동향에도 불구하고 국내 대학생의 약 80%는 사형제도 집행에 찬성하고 있다. 사형제도가 집행되어야 하는 이유는 다음과 같다.

본론1

사형 집행은 법률상 최고 형벌로써 개인적 차원의 살인이 아닌 국가의 책임을 다하는 것이다.

-사형제도가 폐지되는 것은 형벌의 최고 수준이 줄어든다는 의미이다. 이는 현재 국민들의 법적 감정과 여론에 반하는 입장이다.

-국가의 여러 책임 중 하나는 사회적 불안을 해소하고, 국민의 안정을 꾀하는 것이다. 흉악범죄에 대한 미약한 처벌은 잠정적 피해자인 국민들을 방관하는 것과 마찬가지이다.

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본론2
사형 판결은 기본적인 사회질서를 파괴한 특정 범죄에 적용되는 적합한 처벌이다.
-오판에 대한 가능성을 최대한 낮추기 위해 여러 번 심판하고 기회를 열어둠.
-흉악범은 자유 의지에 의한 행위이기 때문에 다른 요소의 책임이 거의 없음.
-그리고 개인은 태어나는 순간부터 사회에 속하게 되는데, 이들은 인간으로서 지켜야 하는 최소한의 약속을 자발적으로 어겼다. 스스로 인간이기를 포기한 이들이 인간에게 부여된 권리를 주장하는 것은 자신의 선택에 대한 책임은 다하지 않고 무조건적인 이익만을 요구하는 것과 같다.

본론3
사형은 '죽음'이라는 인간의 선천적인 두려움을 통해 범죄에 대한 경각심을 심어준다.
-사형과 범죄율 간의 관계는 여러 연구에 따라 다른 결과를 보이고 있으며, 보편적으로 큰 효과를 가져오지는 않는다는 결과가 받아들여지고 있다.
-그러나 인간이 가지고 있는 죽음에 대한 공포는 선천적 공포의 대표적인 예이다. 이와 같은 두려움이 범죄에 대한 직접적인 영향을 미치지는 않아도, 간접적으로 범죄에 대한 경각심을 줄 가능성이 높다. 따라서 사형제도가 유지되어야 하며, 실제로 집행되어야 이 경각심이 더 강해질 것이다.

결론
유럽이나 국제적인 분위기는 사형을 폐지하는 것을 지지한다. 그러나 우리나라 국민들은 사형이 집행되어야 한다는 목소리가 더 많다. 뿐만 아니라, 성폭행과 같은 흉악범죄에 대한 처벌이 미약하다는 국민의 여론이 점점 더 거세지고 있다. 이런 상황에서 사형제도를 폐지하는 것은 국민의 목소리를 무시하는 것이며, 사회의 불안감을 증폭시키는 것이다. 타국의 눈치를 살피기 전에 자국의 국민들을 살피는 것이 우선시 되어야 한다. 따라서 사형제도는 존속되어야 하며, 더 나아가 실제적으로 집행되어야 한다.

The student stated his position and topic sentences quite effectively. Also, he provided logical details in the body paragraphs. Even though he did not get rid of the habit of translating a Korean essay into English, he seemed to become much better in developing ideas for writing.

In short, it was found that the instruction definitely helped both the higher and lower level students improve different areas of English organizational patterns in argumentative writing. The instructor constantly pointed out each of the students' problematic areas and guided them to focus more on those areas during the semester. This led them to become aware of their weaknesses and consequently led the higher level students to show the greatest improvement particularly in the 'Open-Wrap' and 'Topic' areas, and the lower level students to show the highest improvement in the 'Thesis' and 'Details' areas. This study would be significant in that it has found the weakest areas of the different proficiency level students in writing and the specific activities/guidelines that could help those at different levels. It would be also important to note that this study, unlike other previous research, attempted to observe the students' writing processes and consequently discovered

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how their patterns of finding and collecting articles and how their processes of developing ideas had changed throughout the semester. Moreover, the higher and lower level students' different writing processes in this study explained why they respectively had developed different areas of text organization more. Guiding the students how to gather information related to a given writing prompt, how to write an outline, and how to produce an essay with good English organizational patterns would be thus very important to help them improve their text organizational skills.

2. The Students' Perceptions of the Instruction on Organizational Patterns of Argumentative Essay Writing

The students were given a survey questionnaire at the end of the semester, and their responses were collected. Some of their positive and negative comments on the class instruction of organizational patterns were presented in Table 2 (Positive statements are underlined, and negative statements are double underlined with bold font.). Their comments were translated into English by the researcher and then peer-checked by the professor who evaluated the students' essays.

TABLE 2

The Students' Comments on the Instruction of Organizational Patterns of Writing

Proficiency Level	Students' Responses
Higher Level	1. Student A: "*First of all, through reading a lot of articles in this class, I could expand my knowledge on social, political, and economical issues. Before learning how to write an argumentative essay in English, I tended to read the title of an article and then skim through it to get a general idea. However, through this class, I realized that I had to understand different sides on a controversial topic, choose my position, and state why I supported that position in order to write an argumentative essay. So, I carefully read the article to get an in-depth understanding of its contents.*" 2. Student B: "*At the beginning of the semester, I was very much worried about how to start an essay. I thus spent a lot of time thinking about what things to write about and how to state the thesis in the introduction section. But as the professor explained and taught me how to summarize what I had discussed in the body paragraphs and how to re-state the thesis at the end of an essay, I could focus on not only the introduction but also the conclusion section. I tried not to make the ending off the point.*" 3. Student C: "*I always had difficulties understanding new words, contents, and various sentence structures of articles. But, reading a lot of articles and having a discussion every week in the class greatly helped me become interested in reading current issues and writing about my opinions on those issues.*"

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4. Student D:
"***Thinking about different reasons why I support the position that I had chosen has always been a lot of stress for me during this semester***. *It was quite difficult for me to come up with more than one or two reasons to support my position. Also, I actually had never thought about the importance of keeping the consistency of the form for each topic sentence before. I thus wrote down all the topic sentences with different formats. But, as I constantly practiced a lot, I could get better with writing a topic sentence for each body paragraph with the consistent format*."

Lower Level

1. Student E:
"***The most difficult thing about writing an argumentative essay was to think about the correct use of grammar and appropriate use of words and expressions. It was thus hard for me to pay attention to the thesis, topic sentences, and supporting details*** *even though the professor always emphasized their importance. But, through a lot of practice, I could at least become confident about stating the thesis clearly. I still cannot get rid of my worries of making grammatically correct sentences, though…*"

2. Student F:
"*First of all, I felt good about learning and understanding current issues in the world through this class. I also got much faster with reading and understanding the key points of news articles.* ***But, I had a hard time understanding the difference between the thesis and topic sentences. Also, it was so difficult for me to distinguish a good thesis from a bad one***. *Through finding the thesis statements in the articles that I found, deciding if those statements were clearly stated or not, and revising bad thesis statements into better ones, I think I could develop my ability to write the thesis clearly when writing an essay*."

3. Student G:
"*What I liked about this class was that I could read various kinds of articles about different issues every week. I would have never read them if I had not taken this class. As I practiced writing the thesis and topic sentences of an essay once a week, I could get better with thinking about at least three specific topic sentences (I could only think of one or two topic sentences before.)*."

4. Student H:
"***I felt much difficulty about adding specific details in a body paragraph related to its topic sentence***. *I first thought writing a topic sentence and adding simple explanations with one or two sentences would be enough. But, I realized that I should provide more explanations, examples, and evidence.* ***The professor taught us how to report statistics and research results to support each topic sentence, but it was still hard for me to understand complicated statistics and other information in the articles and report them in my own words***. *As the professor constantly encouraged me, I tried to add more specific explanations, reasons, and facts after writing each topic sentence. I think this greatly helped me get much better with writing supporting details*."

The students in the higher and lower level groups commonly mentioned that their overall English reading and writing ability had improved with the help of the instruction. They

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also pointed out that they could understand current issues through reading various articles, having discussions, and writing an argumentative essay on different topics. They talked about different kinds of difficulties they had while writing an essay (e.g. using appropriate words/expressions, writing grammatically correct sentences, understanding the difference of the thesis and topic sentences, writing supporting details, etc.), but they did not express negative opinions about the writing instruction and practice.

Although the higher and lower level groups showed some similarities, they had somewhat different opinions about the instruction. The higher level students generally mentioned that the instruction helped them state one position clearly and provide several reasons for supporting it (Student A), restate the thesis and summarize the key points at the end of the essay (Student B), and write a topic sentence of each body paragraph with the consistent format (Student D). Yet, they seemed to have difficulties particularly with the 'Open-Wrap' and 'Topic' areas. They said that they got much stress about how to wrap up an essay and how to write clear and effective topic sentences. However, as they were aware of what their weakest areas were, they paid more attention to the 'Open-Wrap' and 'Topic' areas. This seemed to lead them to show much improvement in those areas throughout the semester.

In contrast, the lower level students generally mentioned that the instruction was helpful in that it made them write the thesis clearly (Student E and Student F), come up with topic sentences (Student G), and put more specific details into the body paragraphs (Student H). Interestingly, they stated in details what their difficulties were and what kinds of activities and guidance provided in the class helped them develop their writing organizational skills. For example, Student E mentioned that he could turn his attention to the thesis, topic sentences, and supporting details rather than the correct use of grammar and vocabulary as the instructor constantly asked him to do so. In addition, Student F talked about the difficulties of distinguishing the thesis from the topic sentences as well as distinguishing the good thesis from the bad one. She said that the practice of finding the thesis in an article and refining and polishing it helped her state the thesis clearly in her own writing. Student G also mentioned that repetitive practice of writing the thesis and topic sentences helped him write a better organized essay. Finally, Student H said that he had difficulty discussing the controlling idea of a body paragraph by using facts, examples, arguments, analysis, explanations, or other information. He, however, thought that the instructor's encouragement made him add more specific details into each body paragraph even though he thought he still needed more improvement. It can be thus concluded that the instruction definitely helped the lower level students recognize their weaknesses and consequently lead them to show more improvement in the 'Thesis' and 'Details' areas.

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V. LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Several limitations of the study are found, and suggestions are made. First, there was no control group. Because only one class section was provided in the semester, it was impossible to compare the instruction group with non-instruction group. Having a control in the future would allow researchers to discover the significance of the instruction for the improvement of EFL learners' text organizational skills. Second, there were only a small number of students who participated in this study. Recruiting more participants for the higher and lower proficiency level groups may have made it possible to obtain more reliable results. Finally, this study focused on the instructional effect on only Korean EFL university students. It would be thus worthwhile to investigate how the instruction would influence on other Asian country students and compare them with Korean students. Additionally, comparing Korean students with Western students in terms of their text organizational patterns and writing processes may help researchers understand the students' similarities and differences of planning their writing and developing their organizational skills.

Meanwhile, some implications can be drawn from the findings of this study. First, as the higher level students' weakest areas were the 'Open-Wrap' and 'Topic,' it might be important for teachers to encourage especially high proficiency level learners to give more attention to those areas. More specifically, helping them practice (1) creating at least two to three topic sentences for a given writing prompt, (2) keeping the same format for those topic sentences, and (3) restating the thesis and important information in different words than those that appeared in the introductory paragraph would be useful. Second, as the lower level students in this study felt the greatest difficulties in the 'Thesis' and 'Details' areas, teachers would need to encourage low proficiency level learners to focus more on those areas. More specifically, the practice of (1) distinguishing a good thesis statement from a bad one through various texts, (2) correcting the bad thesis into a good one, (3) identifying less effective supporting details that are stated in body paragraphs, and (4) adding specific reasons, facts, explanations, and examples to support a topic sentence in a body paragraph would help them improve their weakest areas and consequently produce a well-organized argumentative essay.

VI. CONCLUSION

The present study investigated how the instruction on English organizational patterns of argumentative writing affected different proficiency levels of Korean EFL university students, and how they perceived of the instruction they received during the semester.

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First of all, in order to examine the effect of the instruction, the students' organizational patterns of their pre- and post-semester argumentative essays were compared. One significant finding of this study was that both the higher and lower level students knew how to divide a paragraph and where to locate the thesis. Differing from the results of the previous studies conducted by the opponents of the CR, the current study's participants located the thesis at the end of the introductory paragraph on their first essay. They had been aware of the different writing styles between Korean and English. However, their thesis statements were not clear and effective enough since they had never been taught about English organizational patterns of argumentative writing. As continuous instruction and training were provided during the semester, the students showed statistically significant improvement in the overall areas of organizational patterns.

Second, in addition to comparing the scores and samples of the students' first and last essays, their processes of developing those two essays were also compared. It was found that the instruction helped the students not only become better in developing their organizational skills but also become much more planned in organizing their thoughts for writing an argumentative essay. In addition, the higher and lower level students' writing processes showed why they were good or bad at certain areas of text organization and how they tried to improve their weaknesses throughout the semester. This was one of the other critical finding of this study which had never been investigated in the previous research.

Finally, the students' perceptions of the instruction were examined. The higher and lower level students described similar and different kinds of difficulties they had when writing an argumentative essay. However, they thought that the instruction greatly helped them overcome many of those difficulties and develop their text organizational skills. As they were constantly told about their problematic areas and taught how to improve those areas in the class by the instructor, they mentioned that they became much better with using good English organizational patterns.

In sum, the results of this study confirmed that the instruction of text organization can positively affect both the higher and lower level Korean EFL university students to write an argumentative essay more logically and effectively.

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APPENDIX A

Rubric of Text Organization (Adapted from Kubota, 1998, p. 96)

Score / Area	5 (Excellent)	4 (Very good)	3 (Average)	2 (Not very good)	1 (Poor)	Total
Thesis statement [Main idea(s)]	Main idea(s) is stated clearly and effectively.	Main idea(s) is stated, but less effectively than 5.	Main idea(s) is stated, but not as effectively or logically as 4.	Main idea(s) is not stated clearly or effectively.	Main idea(s) is not stated.	
Opening and Wrapping up	There is a clear sense of beginning and ending and they work very effectively.	Beginning and ending are effective.	There is a sense of beginning and ending, but they aren't as effective as 4.	Beginning and ending are awkward and not very effective.	The writer creates little sense of beginning and ending.	
Topic sentence(s)	Reader orientation (e.g., announcing the topic) is provided.	Some reader orientation is provided.	Some reader orientation is provided, but not as effectively as 4.	Reader orientation is not provided very much; even if it is, it is not very effective.	Writer assumes the reader shares his context provides no orientation.	
Details [Supporting idea(s)]	Details are organized according to a clearly discernable plan.	Details are organized according to a discernable plan.	There is an organizational plan, but it does not appear as clearly as 4.	Writer's plan is not very clear; the writer rambles on.	There is no discernable organizational plan; the writer either lists or follows an associative order.	

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Content (Sentences and paragraphs)	Sentences and paragraphs are logically and effectively linked together. There is no digression.	Sentences and paragraphs are linked together well. There is little digression.	Sentences and paragraphs are linked together, but a little awkwardly. There is a flow, but some digression is seen.	The links between sentences and paragraphs are awkward and not very logical. Digression is seen often.	There is no logical link between sentences and paragraphs. There is frequent digression.	
Paragraphing	Paragraphing is logical and effective.	Paragraphing is good.	There are paragraph breaks but they are a little awkward.	Paragraph breaks are awkward and not very logical.	There is no paragraph break, or no logic in the breaks.	

Examples in: English
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