

A Comparative Study of Three Ways of Learning Structures in English Reading and Writing Courses*

Kyunghee Choi

Hanyang Women's University

Choi, Kyunghee. (2013). A comparative study of three ways of learning structures in English reading and writing courses. *Modern English Education*, 14(3), 135-158.

This paper aims to compare the effects of three different ways of learning English structures: chunks of words, interrogative sentences, and five basic sentence patterns. Forty-nine female college students learned English structures by practicing chunking, making interrogative sentences, and finally analyzing sentences with the five basic sentence patterns. The effects of the first two methods were examined in the previous studies, both of which suggest their significant effectiveness. The current study which was conducted for two semesters in 2011 includes one further method that is the concept of five basic patterns in addition to the two previously studied ones. It focuses on finding out which method the students think the most effective. The students were given two different tests along with a questionnaire. Each test and questionnaire was given twice for the pre- and post-tests. The results of the TOEIC tests show that overall English reading comprehension skills of the participants improved at the end of the experiment. However, they did not show meaningful improvement in the post-test of the five-basic-sentence-pattern test. The result of the questionnaire reveals that the students think more strongly at the end of the experiment that they can make English interrogative sentences properly and regard the method of learning English interrogative sentences more helpful and effective than the other two methods.

[chunks of words/interrogative sentences/five basic English sentence patterns/
뭉치말/의문문/5가지 유형의 영어문장구조]

* This paper was supported by a research grant from Hanyang Women's University in the fall semester, 2012.

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to compare the effects of three different methods of learning English sentence structures. The two methods in which learners learn chunking and making interrogative sentences were studied previously and proved to be effective (K. Choi, 2011, 2012). This study adds another method to two methods studied previously to analyze English structures based on suggestion of dividing English structures into five patterns (Onions, 1929). While the students practiced chunking and making interrogative sentences for two semesters in 2011, they also learned the five basic sentence patterns. All three methods were taught throughout the two semesters with an explanation of each in order and then a mixture of two or all of the three methods at the same time when necessary.

The study on chunks of words (K. Choi, 2011) was first conceived when the researcher realized that her students had difficulties in comprehending English reading passages due to the fact that they did not have proper knowledge and understanding of lexical chunks of English words. Students did not know where to pause properly, a skill which can be acquired in case they have basic knowledge of chunks of words that produce significant meaning. Pausing inappropriately caused them to misunderstand the meaning of the sentences and passages they read. The researchers who advocate teaching and learning lexical chunks place importance on teaching lexis rather than grammar (Flowerdew, 2003; Frazier, 2003; Kennedy, 2003; S. Kim, 2007; H. J. Lee & E. J. Lee, 2010; S. Y. Oh, 2007; O’Keeffe & Farr, 2003; Simpson & Mendis, 2003; T. Yu & I. W. H. Yoo, 2010). However, K. Choi (2011) explains that “the chunks that students may recognize easily come in various forms” (p. 6), suggesting that learners have to have basic knowledge of structures in which chunks of words are composed in order to learn chunking and notice pauses properly.

K. Choi (2012) discusses the importance of having knowledge of English structures more clearly when she studies the effects of learning to write English interrogative sentences. Grammar along with other elements such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and pragmatic knowledge plays an important role in achieving a communication goal successfully and enhancing students’ communicative abilities significantly. To draw students’ attention to English interrogative sentence structures, this study on composing interrogative sentences aimed to improve students’ ability to compose proper questions and thus to gain a more confident command of English.

The current study incorporates another way of learning English sentence structures, which is analyzing English sentence structures based on the five basic sentence patterns. This five basic English sentence patterns have been dominant in the fields of English education in Korea for many years as H. S. Han (2008) suggested. According to him the

English grammatical elements treated mostly frequently and importantly have been the five basic sentence patterns since the Independence of Korea in 1945. Even today, when explicit explanation of English grammar is discouraged in school English education, most high school and many middle school students are acquainted with the five sentence patterns.

Even though the five English sentence patterns have been prevalent in grammar books published in Korea and often taught in both regular schooling and private cram school classrooms, not many students understand them properly. Thus, the current study aims to implement this grammar learning of the five sentence patterns along with the previously studied chunks of words and interrogative sentences, to analyze what the students participating in the study think about the three grammar learning methods and which method they prefer to the others, and to suggest which method is the most effective and efficient in certain classroom settings.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Chunks of Words

While Krishnamurthy (2003) argues that English teaching should move its attention from grammar to lexis especially to chunks of words, Nesselhauf (2003) analyzes how learners use verb-noun collocations. Adopting the results of Conklin and Schmitt (2008), Simpson-Vlach and Ellis (2010), and Wray (2010) who study phraseology by focusing on learning formulaic sequences, many Korean researchers have also shown their interests in studying chunks of words. T. Hyun (2007) reports positive results of various ways of teaching collocations to middle school students. The techniques he uses include teaching collocations with focal words, ways of selecting words that constitute collocations, and ways of completing collocations.

N. B. Kim (2007) also tested the effects of adopting collocation-based instruction syllabus. The students who were taught this syllabus outperformed those taught in the traditional wordlist-based instruction method. In another study on chunks of words, N. B. Kim (2008) suggests categories of lexical chunks, and types of collocations and idioms. S. J. Kim (2007) and H. Chu (2010) offer two different opinions as to what level students benefit more from using correctly parsed texts, and the effects on the development of students' L2 parsing skills. S. J. Kim reports that the upper intermediate level outperformed the other groups while H. Chu argues that lower level students whose TOEIC scores ranged from 250 to 450 should be given opportunities to study chunking and parsing correctly. She reports the positive result of her experimental study showing

that the performance of the participants improved significantly better at the end of the experiment.

To suggest a more specific and effective method of learning chunks of words, K. Choi (2011) conducted a study on the method of “noticing pauses.” The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effects of learning chunks of words on reading comprehension. She used the method of noticing pauses, focusing on helping students perceive English sentences in properly parsed chunks. The hypotheses of the study are: first teaching the concept of chunks of words and practicing chunking help the students improve in reading comprehension tests, second this teaching method is effective for both high and low levels of students, and finally the participants actually improve in their chunking skills.

The students in the study were given a one-hour lecture on chunks of words and practiced noticing pauses while listening to the passages recorded by native speakers and then reading English texts as they parsed to breathe properly and to perceive messages meaningfully. The results of the experimental study show that the students who were taught in this method of learning to understand English passages outperformed those who were taught to read the passages and translate them into Korean. By learning how to parse properly, their reading comprehension ability improved to a great extent. Thus the first hypothesis is confirmed. The second hypothesis is also positively confirmed as the results of the study indicate that the method is effective for both high- and low-level students. Especially some lower level students who parsed improperly in the beginning of the study improved their parsing skills significantly at the end of the study. Finally the results of the study support the third hypothesis “the participants actually improve in their chunking skills.”

2. Interrogative Sentences

Drawing students’ attention to grammatical features has re-emerged in learning and teaching English in both ESL and EFL situations. One of the grammatical features that some researchers find interesting involves the word order knowledge of English sentence structures. Learning to write interrogative sentences is one way to help students learn basic English structures. By inverting subject and verb, students start to produce simple questions and become aware of sentence structures.

The researchers who are interested in word order focusing on subject and verb include K. R. Lee (2008). He uses a method to raise students’ consciousness and draw their attention to the key sentence elements of subject and verb. Lee reports that the students’ reading comprehension ability improved significantly by drawing their attention to these elements. Based on the processability model, Cook (2001) pinpoints that moving an auxiliary or a question word is important in learning interrogative sentences, indicating improvement in

the development of students' interlanguage. Lightbown and Pienemann (1993) also give support to the form-focused method for learning interrogative sentences.

K. Choi (2012) aims to study the effects of learning interrogative sentence structures in order to suggest the method as a way to help students understand English sentence structures by paying attention to English subjects and verbs. When the researcher realized that many Korean college students have difficulties in producing English interrogative sentences correctly and thus encounter communication breakdown, she conceived a study to facilitate producing more accurate English sentences by learning to invert subjects and verbs given in declarative sentences. Following a lecture on interrogative sentence structures and how to move verbs to the front of sentences, the students were asked to practice composing questions by using the subjects and verbs given in declarative sentences.

The research questions of the study (K. Choi, 2012) are to find out whether the method of inverting subject and verb is effective in acquiring knowledge of English interrogative structures and producing English questions, whether the participants think the method is effective in learning English interrogative sentences, and which level group benefits most from the method. The study reports that the method has a positive effect on learning English interrogative sentences. Most of the students found the method effective for learning English sentence structures and further helpful for them to better understand the English passages they read. The study also suggests that the students gained in both their TOEIC reading comprehension test and the interrogative composition test at the end of the experimental study. Regarding the question "which level group benefits most from the method," the students in the intermediate and low groups improved more significantly in the post-test than the students in the high group did.

3. Five Basic Sentence Patterns

Even though the five basic English sentence patterns which were first suggested by the British scholar Onions (1929) have been prevalent in Korean English classrooms for many years, only few researchers including Y. N. Bae (2003), H. S. Han (2008), and D. K. Jung (2010) have published papers on the five patterns of English sentences with different research interests. The five patterns are criticized by researchers because of its theoretically problematic ambiguity and incompleteness (Y. N. Bae, 2003; H. S. Han, 2008; D. K. Jung, 2010).

Y. N. Bae (2003) argues that the Five Form Theory of Onions (1932) causes some analytic problems and confusion to many English researchers and learners. Thus, he suggests the Transformational Grammar as an alternative theory to study English sentence structures since the Five Form Theory considers only surface structure rather than deep

structure. D. K. Jung (2010) also points out some analytical problems of the five sentence patterns. He argues that the sentence Pattern (5) is especially problematic causing confusion in sentence analysis. D. K. Jung consolidates it into the sentence Pattern (3) by classifying object complement as adverb. Thus, he suggests the four sentence patterns instead of the five sentence patterns.

According to H. S. Han (2008), the current English curricula of Korea discourage teachers in explaining explicit explanation of English grammar since they put emphasis on communication competency rather than knowledge about grammar. However, it has still been taught by English teachers both in and out of school settings. Most of the students who have received English education in Korea have heard of it and been acquainted with it even though they find it difficult to understand. H. S. Han argues that this notion is the primary grammatical issue taught most frequently in Korean English classrooms. On the contrary, the patterns are not dealt with in the grammar books published in the native English speaking countries, which is why most native English speakers are not aware of it.

On the other hand, according to Yano (2012), the five sentence patterns have long been introduced and taught to first-year high school students in Japan. Recently even an English textbook authorized by the Japanese Ministry of Education introduces the five sentence patterns for third-year junior high school students. Yano conducted a research to find out answers for two questions. The first question involves the relationship between the ability to understand English sentences and their ability to recognize sentence patterns. The second question focuses on whether introducing the five patterns to junior high school students is appropriate. Yano concludes that even though the two abilities of the students are independent, introducing the five sentence patterns to third-year junior high school students is not inappropriate. Yano adds that using five patterns might be effective in learning to write English sentences.

H. S. Han (2008) conducted a study to find out the current status of the five sentence patterns in Korea. 147 college students who took liberal arts courses in the second semester of the year 2007 in two universities located in Seoul participated in his survey. The result of the survey suggests that 96.6% (142 students) of the total of 147 students answered that they had learned the notion. As to the question on when they learned it, 64.8% answered that they learned it in middle schools while 24.6% learned it when they were in elementary schools. 2.8% of the participants answered that they learned it even before their elementary schools. There were only 7.7% who answered that they learned it in high schools.

The questionnaire survey conducted by H. S. Han (2008) includes the question on whether this notion of English sentence patterns helps the students learn English. 56.3% of the students answered 'yes' while 43.7% answered 'no.' When they were asked whether this notion must be learned, 60.5% agreed while 39.4% disagreed. Another question is to find out in what areas of the language the notion helps them learn. The result reveals that

65.5% of the students answered that the notion helped when they studied reading English while 25.3% answered that they found it helpful when they learned to write English sentences.

On the other hand, H. S. Han (2008) argues that the results of the test on the five English sentence patterns were contrary to the results of the questionnaire survey. In the test he asked the students to explain the composites of the patterns and write examples for each sentence pattern. The ratio of the correct answers was relatively lower than expected. The composites of the sentence Pattern (1) are understood by the most number of students (85.2%). However, when they were asked to write examples for Pattern (1), 44.4% of the examples were appropriately composed. The highest percentage of correct sentences they wrote belongs to Pattern (3) but with less than 50% (47.2%). In both questions, the students find the sentence Pattern (5) to be the most difficult one.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

1. Research Questions

This study compares the effects of the three methods of learning English sentence structures. The methods include chunking, writing interrogative sentences, and analyzing sentences with the five basic sentence patterns. Using the methods in an English reading comprehension course for two semesters, this study aims to find out whether the three methods helped the students better understand English passages. The effects of the first two methods were already studied in the previous papers (K. Choi, 2011, 2012). This paper focuses on the effects of learning to analyze English sentence structures based on the five basic sentence patterns. Dividing the students into two groups: an upper level group and a lower level group, it also aims to find out for which level group students this method of using the five sentence patterns is more helpful and effective. Finally, this study analyzes which method the student participants think most helpful and effective in learning English sentence structures and thus for improving their reading skills. The four research questions of the study are as follows:

- 1) Do the students improve their general English reading comprehension skills at the end of the experiment?
- 2) Do the students benefit from learning the five basic sentence patterns?
- 3) Which level of the students, the upper or the lower, benefits more from the method of learning the five basic sentence patterns?

- 4) Which method do the students think is the most effective way to learn English structures?

2. Participants

The 49 female students who participated in this study took the courses “English Reading and Writing (1)” and “English Reading and Writing (2)” during the spring and fall semesters in 2011. They were then sophomore students majoring in tourism at a women’s university located in Seoul. The students took the test of 40 reading comprehension questions excerpted from Practice Test One of Longman New TOEIC (Loughheed, 2006) in the beginning of the experiment. The average number of their correct answers is 22.65 out of the total 40 as Table 1 shows. The average number of the correct answers shown in their pre-five-sentence-patterns test with 25 questions (Appendix A) is 11.63. Based on this mean score, the students were divided into two level groups. Those who got more than 12 correct questions in the pre-patterns test were put into the upper level group and those who got 11 correct questions or below were put into the lower level group. The average score of the upper group is 15.79 out of the total 25 while that of the lower level is 5.81.

TABLE 1
Number of Participants and Average Scores in Pre-tests

	Number	Scores of Pre-TOEIC	Scores of Pre-patterns
Total	49	22.65	11.63
Upper	28	24.25	15.79
Lower	21	20.52	5.81

3. Procedure

This study was conducted in the four major stages, each of which lasted for four weeks: the stages of chunks of words, interrogative sentences, the five basic sentence patterns, and the mixture of all methods. The textbook used for the two courses “English Reading and Writing (1)” and “English Reading and Writing (2)” is *Oxford English for Careers: Tourism (1)* (Walker & Harding, 2006). Each unit of the book includes interesting reading articles and passages on the tourism industry and related areas along with various other exercises and tasks designed to improve the skills of writing, listening, and speaking as well as reading.

In the first stage for the month of March during the first semester, the students were taught the notion of chunks of words and practiced chunking while they were reading the passages. Based on the teaching method studied in K. Choi's paper (2011), the researcher-instructor gave a one-hour lecture on the concept of chunks of words, the major structures, and the ways to chunk. Some major structures include noun-noun phrases, adjective-noun phrases, and adverb-adjective phrases, etc (K. Choi, 2011). By the end of the month, the students were encouraged to perceive and notice meaningful chunks of words while they were listening to the passages recorded by native speakers as well as reading both silently and loudly using their intuitive and implicit knowledge of pausing.

In the second stage for the month of April, teaching for the study focused on writing interrogative sentences using declarative sentences given in short dialogues. This stage was conducted based on the results of the teaching method studied in another paper by K. Choi (2012). The short dialogues were composed of a *wh*-question, an answer, a *yes-no* question to confirm the answer of the *wh*-question, and an answer to the *yes-no* question. The first answer in the second line was given in a declarative sentence structure. The students were asked to inverse the subject and the verb already given in the declarative sentence written in the second line of the dialogue. A supplementary course packet included 10 chapters, each of which had 7 such short dialogues. Each of the 10 chapters dealt with basic English structures which include such structures as "Present tense: to be," "There is ~; There are ~," "Present continuous tense: be ~ing," and "Simple present tense: to do," etc.

In the third stage for the month of May, the students were taught to analyze sentences using the five basic sentence patterns. Most of the students the research-instructor taught were familiar with the five patterns to some degree even though they did not fully understand them. The instructor gave a one-hour lecture on the five basic English sentence patterns as illustrated in Table 1 and, for the rest of the month, gave the students opportunities to practice underlining subjects, verbs, subject complements, objects, indirect objects, direct objects, and object complements.

In the fourth stage during the second semester in 2011, the instructor used one or two or all of the three methods if necessary when the students had difficulties in understanding, speaking, and composing English sentences. The students were encouraged to use an appropriate method or appropriate methods in order for them to better understand the texts they read and to better communicate while speaking or writing.

4. Tests and Questionnaire

Table 2 shows what kinds of tests and questionnaires and when they were used for this study. The 40-question TOEIC test was given to measure the students' general English reading ability. The same test was administered twice: one at the beginning of the

experiment and the other at the end to find out how much the students' reading comprehension proficiency improved after learning to read English texts in the three ways. The test of five patterns includes 5 questions for each pattern, totaling 25 questions (APPENDIX A). The same test was used for both the pre- and post-tests. The pre-patterns test was administered in the 2nd week of the first semester while the post-patterns test was conducted in the 14th week of the second semester. The students were asked to indicate elements of the sentence structures. There was no partial point. When the students indicated all the elements correctly, they obtained one point for each question, thus totaling 25 points if they had had all the correct answers.

The students were also given the pre-questionnaire test with 20 questions (APPENDIX B) in the 2nd week of the first semester to find out how well they thought they understood the three methods. The post-questionnaire included three more questions that were designed to find out which method is considered to be most helpful.

TABLE 2
Tests and Questionnaires

When	Tests & questionnaire	Number of questions
1 st week of 1 st semester	Pre-TOEIC reading test	40
2 nd week of 1 st semester	Pre-questionnaire	20
2 nd week of 1 st semester	Pre-patterns test	25
14 th week of 2 nd semester	Post-patterns test	25
14 th week of 2 nd semester	Post-questionnaire	23
15 th week of 2 nd semester	Post-TOEIC reading test	40

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Question 1: Do the students improve their general English reading comprehension skills at the end of the experiment?

The overall reading comprehension skills of the 49 students improved as indicated in Table 3. In the pre-test, they obtained an average score of 22.65 out of the total 40. Their average score increased to 26.33 adding a mean difference of 3.68 at the end of the experiment. There was about a 40 week gap between the pre-TOEIC test and the post one. It is less likely that the students performed better due to memorization of the TOEIC questions. Simple effect of learning for two semesters may have caused positive result.

Incorporating the three methods of learning English sentence structures was also influential, effective and helpful for them to better perform in the reading comprehension tests. Their overall reading comprehension proficiency improved meaningfully after taking the courses with the syllabus that utilized the mixture of the three methods.

TABLE 3
Paired Samples T-test of TOEIC Reading Tests

Mean scores of TOEIC		Mean difference	Standard error of estimate	Sig.(2-tailed)
Pre-test	Post-test			
22.65	26.33	-3.68	.889	.000**

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

2. Question 2: Do the students benefit from learning the five basic sentence patterns?

As Table 4 shows, the result of the third method did not seem to be significantly effective for the students. Their average score was 11.63 out of 25 in the pre-test. It only increased by 1.51 in the post-test, which is not statistically meaningful as the p -value indicates. Contrary to the results of the methods of learning chunking and writing interrogative sentences suggested in the previous studies (K. Choi, 2011, 2012), the students did not improve their analytic skills for understanding sentence structures with the five sentence patterns. The participants who learned chunking and interrogative sentences in the two previous studies improved their analytic skills in the post-tests that were designed to measure how much they understood the nature of the methods, and became able to use them properly. The students in this study did not perform meaningfully better even after they had the one hour lecture on the method, practiced analyzing sentences using the method for the rest of the third stage, and used it along with the other two methods for the rest of the experiment.

TABLE 4
Paired Samples T-test of the Five Basic Patterns Tests

Mean scores of patterns test		Mean difference	Standard error of estimate	Sig.(2-tailed)
Pre-test	Post-test			
11.63	13.14	-1.510	1.180	.204

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

The comparison of the scores of the pre-TOEIC tests in Table 5 indicates that the mean difference of the students of the second study (K. Choi, 2012) and this third study who took the same Practice Test One of Longman New TOEIC (Loughheed, 2006) is 0.42, which is not significantly great. This indicates the fact that there is not a substantial difference in English proficiency between the students of the second study and those of this study. Thus the insignificant result of the current study focusing on the five sentence patterns is not due to English proficiency of the students.

TABLE 5
Comparison of the Mean Scores of the Pre-TOEIC Tests

Study	Number of participants	Mean scores of pre-TOEIC	Names of TOEIC tests
1st study: Chunking	43	20.07 (50.17%)	Practice Test Two
2 nd study: Interrogatives	117	23.07 (57.68%)	Practice Test One
3 rd study: Five patterns	49	22.65 (56.62%)	Practice Test One

1st study (K. Choi, 2011); 2nd study (K. Choi, 2012)

3. Which level of the students, the upper or the lower, benefits more from the method of learning the five basic sentence patterns?

Table 6 indicates that the lower-level students benefited more from the method of learning the basic sentence patterns. While they improved in their post-test of the five basic patterns, the upper-level students did not show any significant improvement at the end of the experiment. As explained already in the section of the participants, the students were divided into two different level groups according to their scores of the pre-patterns test. It can be assumed that the upper-level students who might have had a certain amount of knowledge of the five sentence patterns were no longer interested in learning them. On the other hand, for the lower-level students who were not familiar with these patterns, the lecture and practices of the patterns might have been helpful to understand some basic English sentence structures.

TABLE 6
Paired Sample T-test of the Five Basic Pattern Tests

Levels	Mean scores of patterns test		Mean difference	Standard error of estimate	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Pre-test	Post-test			
Upper	15.79	16.82	-1.036	.875	.242

Lower	5.81	8.24	-2.429	1.127	.037*
-------	------	------	--------	-------	-------

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

To find out in what patterns the lower-level students particularly improved, the results of the pre- and the post-patterns tests are analyzed as in Table 7. The lower-level students improved significantly in Patterns (3) and (4). The patterns test is composed of 5 questions for each pattern totaling 25 questions. Since 21 students belonged to the lower-level, the total number of pattern questions answered reaches 105. In the pre-test, they got 25 correct answers out of the total 105 in Pattern (3). They improved by 17% showing significant improvement. Their improvement is also meaningful in Pattern (4). On the other hand, the upper-level students show improvement in Patterns (1), (3), (4), and (5), which is not statistically meaningful. The structures of Patterns (3) and (4), which deal with complete transitive verbs and dative verbs, might be easier for the lower-level students to understand and analyze. The elements in these patterns include object, indirect object, and direct object which are less ambiguous than the other elements such as subject complement and object complement. This result coincides with the results of the studies conducted by H. S. Han (2008) and D. K. Jung (2010), both of which pinpoint ambiguity of Pattern (5), thus suggesting incorporation of Pattern (5) into Pattern (3).

TABLE 7
Paired T-test of Each Pattern Question

Patterns	Levels	Mean percentage (score out of the total score) of each pattern		Mean difference	Standard error of estimate	Sig.(2-tailed)
		Pre	Post			
Pattern (1)	Upper	74%(104)	82%(115)	-8%	.049	.112
	Lower	40%(42)	42%(44)	-2%	.068	.780
Pattern (2)	Upper	65%(91)	59%(82)	6%	.058	.270
	Lower	23%(24)	26%(27)	-3%	.059	.631
Pattern (3)	Upper	60%(84)	68%(95)	-8%	.057	.172
	Lower	24%(25)	41%(43)	-17%	.064	.008**
Pattern (4)	Upper	74%(103)	77%(108)	-3%	.052	.490
	Lower	17%(18)	38%(40)	-21%	.060	.001**
Pattern (5)	Upper	47%(66)	59%(82)	-12%	.059	.056
	Lower	11%(12)	18%(19)	-7%	.049	.175

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

4. Which method do the students think is the most effective way to learn English structures?

The current study conducted a questionnaire survey in order to find out which method is considered to be most effective by the students. The questionnaire consists of 20 statements, each of which is evaluated on a five-point Likert scale. The post-questionnaire includes three more statements designed to find out which method the students find most helpful. The reliability coefficient of the pre-questionnaire measured by internal consistency methods is 0.973 (Cronbach's Alpha) and that of the post-questionnaire is 0.962. Both figures indicate that the questionnaires are highly reliable.

The 20 statements were designed to find out how much the students thought they could do in various areas of learning English. Their confidence improved in all of the statements except in Statement (3) "I can understand English sentence patterns," which decreased slightly at the end of the fall semester. This result coincides with the results of the sentence patterns tests, which indicates no significant improvement as shown in Table 4. In the 18 statements, the students' confidence improved but without statistically meaningful results. The comparison between the pre- and the post-questionnaire shows that in Statements (11) and (13), they made some significant changes. In Statement (11) "I can understand a paragraph or a whole passage," their change is statistically meaningful. They also changed positively in answering Statement (13) "I can make an interrogative sentence." This result is supported by the result of Statement (22) "Learning how to make interrogative sentences and answer them is helpful for me to study English." Statement (22) got the best score of 4.06 among the three statements of (21), (22), and (23). Statement (21) asks how much the students agree to the following statement "Learning how to chunk meaningful words is helpful for me to study English." Statement (23) is on learning the five basic English sentence patterns. The results of Statements (13) and (22) suggest that the students think that the method of learning to write interrogative sentences is the most effective way to learn English sentence structures among the three methods.

TABLE 8
Paired Samples T-test of the Statements in the Questionnaires

Statements	Mean score of each statement		Mean difference	Standard error of estimate	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Pre-test	Post-test			
1	4.02	4.31	-.286	.184	.123
2	3.35	3.51	-.163	.208	.434
3	3.33	3.20	.122	.205	.551
4	4.12	4.12	.000	.205	1.000
5	3.41	3.43	-.020	.233	.930
6	3.67	3.71	-.041	.221	.854
7	3.12	3.35	-.224	.224	.319
8	3.00	3.16	-.163	.219	.458
9	3.06	3.29	-.224	.188	.235
10	3.39	3.51	-.122	.177	.491
11	3.22	3.61	-.388	.178	.031*
12	3.16	3.45	-.286	.201	.158
13	2.96	3.39	-.429	.197	.032*
14	2.88	3.18	-.306	.203	.134
15	3.24	3.37	-.122	.224	.587
16	2.80	3.10	-.306	.209	.146
17	2.51	2.84	-.327	.183	.078
18	2.80	2.80	.000	.187	1.000
19	2.78	2.96	-.184	.196	.351
20	3.20	3.37	-.163	.206	.429
21		3.59			
22		4.06			
23		3.63			

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

Table 9 shows a comparison between the upper- and lower-levels in their answers for the statements (21), (22), and (23). Two level students most strongly agree to Statement (22), which means that, regardless of their proficiency levels, the students prefer learning interrogative sentences to learning chunks of words and five basic sentence patterns. Learning interrogative sentences is the most preferred method. However, with the statements (21) and (23), the two groups show differences. While the upper-level students prefer learning chunking, the lower-level students show preference for learning sentence patterns. The upper-level students got the mean score of 3.90 in Statement (21) while they got 3.81 in Statement (23), which means that they prefer chunking to the five sentence patterns. On the other hand, the lower-level students got the mean score of 3.19 in Statement (21) and 3.33 in Statement (23), which indicates that they prefer the five sentence patterns to chunking. This result also supports the result of the Research Question 3 as shown in Table 6. While the lower-level students improved significantly in the post-patterns test, the upper-level students did not so.

TABLE 9
Independent T-test between Upper and Lower Levels
in Statements (21), (22), (23)

Statements	Mean score of each statement		Mean difference	Standard deviation	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Upper	Lower			
(21)	3.90	3.19	.71	1.056	.006**
(22)	4.33	3.71	.62	.865	.004**
(23)	3.81	3.33	.48	.873	.021*
Total	3.95	3.41	.54	1.119	.000**

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

Table 10 shows a comparison between how the 49 students performed in the patterns test and what they thought about the five patterns in the questionnaire. In the questionnaire, each statement from (4) to (8) deals with Patterns (1) to (5) respectively. The students think that Pattern (1) is the easiest one so performed most with it. They find Pattern (5) the most difficult one and fell far short of their expectations. There are some discrepancies between their performances and thoughts in Patterns (2), (3), and (4). Table 10 also includes the results studied by H. S. Han (2008). The students in both studies find Pattern (5) the most difficult one to deal with. However, the two studies show discrepancies in the rest of the patterns.

TABLE 10
Comparison between the Students' Performance and Their Thought
Regarding the Five Sentence Patterns

Pattern	The current study				The study by H. S. Han (2008)			
	Post-patterns test	Rank	Post-questionnaire	Rank	Explaining composites properly	Rank	Giving Proper example	Rank
Pattern (1)	65%	1	4.12	1	85.2%	1	44.4%	3
Pattern (2)	44%	4	3.43	3	70.1%	3	45.8%	2
Pattern (3)	56%	3	3.71	2	73.2%	2	47.2%	1
Pattern (4)	60%	2	3.35	4	66.2%	4	36.6%	4
Pattern (5)	41%	5	3.16	5	65.5%	5	23.2%	5

V. CONCLUSION

The results of the two tests and the questionnaire survey show that learning English sentence structures in the three methods of chunking, writing interrogative sentences, and the five sentence patterns helped the students improve their overall reading comprehension skills. The third method that is learning to analyze sentences with the five basic sentence patterns did not turn out to be effective. However, the lower-level students performed significantly better in the post-test of the five sentence patterns. This study shows that the method of learning to analyze sentence structures with the five sentence patterns is effective for the lower-level students. The result of the questionnaire survey shows that the lower-level students also regard it as the second most effective method after the method of composing interrogative sentences and more effective than the method of chunking.

The lower-level students particularly performed meaningfully better in the questions of the patterns (3) and (4) at the end of the experiment. This does not mean that they performed far better than the upper-level students. It only indicates that the improvement on these patterns by the lower-level students was greater than that of the upper-level students. The upper-level students might have had some knowledge about the patterns (3) and (4) at the beginning of the experiment, thus their improvement on these patterns was not significant. On the other hand, the lower-level students might have had very little knowledge about them, thus their improvement on them was greater than that of the upper-level students after learning about the patterns (3) and (4). Among the five patterns, those two patterns which are accompanied with objects may be relatively easier to understand

than the other three patterns which include subject and object complements. However, as Table 10 shows, all the 49 students performed best in Pattern (1) in the post patterns test and regard it as the pattern that they can do better than the others in the post questionnaire survey.

The results of the questionnaire survey show that the students' agreement with the statement (3) "I can understand English sentence patterns" rather decreased at the end of the semester. The method that the students think most effective is the second method of making interrogative sentences. They think they can write English interrogative sentences much better at the end of the study, agreeing significantly more to the statement (13) "I can make an interrogative sentence." Both the upper-level and lower-level students regard the method of learning how to make interrogative sentences and answer to them is helpful for them to study English structures. Two level students prefer learning interrogative sentences to the other methods while the upper-level students prefer chunking and the lower-level the five sentence patterns.

All the five basic English sentence patterns include subject and verb. For lower-level students, in particular, teaching Pattern (1) which consists of subject and verb must be a priority and then Pattern (3) and Pattern (4). They performed best in Pattern (1) as Table 7 shows and find it easiest as indicated in Table 10. The lower-level students find Pattern (5) most difficult. Thus, the current study suggests that, based on the complexity of each pattern, Pattern (1) which consists of subject and verb has to be taught firstly. Pattern (3) which is accompanied with object is to be taught secondly, followed by Pattern (4) thirdly, which includes two objects: indirect and direct objects. Fourthly Pattern (2), which is composed of subject, verb, and complement, can be taught, and finally Pattern (5) can be introduced.

Chunking, writing interrogative sentences, and analyzing sentences with the five sentence patterns involve the most essential structural elements, subject and verb. Among the three methods, the current study used the method of chunking firstly because its effectiveness was studied firstly in 2011. It then used the method of writing interrogative sentences as it was experimented secondly in 2012. Since the relationship between the two was not studied, the current study did not focus on which method has to be used firstly and which one has to be used secondly at the beginning of the study. The effectiveness of the third method of using the five sentence patterns was not even studied prior to this study. The results of the current study suggest that, to draw students' attention to subject and verb, teaching how to compose interrogative sentences has to be conducted firstly, followed by the five basic sentence patterns, and finally by chunking. When students have some knowledge and understanding of subjects, verbs, objects, and complements, then it may be appropriate to move onto the stage of learning chunking.

REFERENCES

- Bae, Young-Nam. (2003). The five forms theory and English grammar education. *The Journal of Linguistic Science*, 24, 83-110.
- Choi, Kyunghee. (2011). Effects of learning chunks of words on reading comprehension. *Modern English Education*, 12(2), 1-21.
- Choi, Kyunghee. (2012). A study on learning to write English interrogative sentences. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, 18(2), 21-44.
- Chu, Hera. (2010). Effects of chunking on reading comprehension of EFL learners: Silent vs. oral reading. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, 16(3), 19-34.
- Conklin, K., & Schmitt, N. (2008). Formulaic sequences: Are they processed more quickly than nonformulaic language by native and nonnative speakers? *Applied Linguistics*, 29(1), 72-89.
- Cook, V. (2001). *Second language learning and language teaching* (3rd ed.), London: Arnold.
- Flowerdew, L. (2003). A combined corpus and systemic-functional analysis of the problem-solution pattern in a student and professional corpus of technical writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(3), 489-511.
- Frazier, S. (2003). A corpus analysis of *would*-clauses without adjacent *if*-clauses. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(3), 443-466.
- Han, Hak-Sung. (2008). A study on the origin and adequacy of the notion of the five forms of the sentence in English grammar. *Journal of British and American Studies*, 19, 153-181.
- Hyun, Taeduck. (2007). The effects of learning collocations on improving English proficiency. *Modern English Education*, 8(1), 191-209.
- Jung, Duk-Kyo. (2010). A study on English sentence patterns and its application: English 5 verb patterns revisited. *Korean Journal of General Education*, 4(2), 177-204.
- Kennedy, G. (2003). Amplifier collocations in the British National Corpus: Implications for English language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(3), 467-487.
- Kim, Nahk-Bohk. (2007). Effects of collocation-based vocabulary instruction on improving English reading ability for high school learners. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, 13(3), 157-176.
- Kim, Nahk-Bohk. (2008). Teaching in chunks: Facilitating English proficiency. *Modern English Education*, 9(1), 30-51.
- Kim, Seong-shik, (2007). Corpus and English education. *English Teaching*, 62(2), 281-307.
- Kim, Seung-Jung. (2007). The importance of L2 parsing skills for L2 reading fluency. *English Teaching*, 62(2), 31-46.

- Krishnamurthy, R. (2003). Language as chunks, not words. *JALT 2002 Conference Proceedings, Shizuoka, Japan*, 288-294.
- Lee, Hyun Jin, & Lee, Eun-Joo. (2010). The effects of corpus-based vocabulary tasks on high school students' English vocabulary learning and attitude. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, 16(4), 239-265.
- Lee, Kyoung-Rang. (2008). Raising grammatical consciousness by color-coding to improve English reading performance. *English Teaching*, 63, 159-178.
- Lightbown, P., & Pienemann, M. (1993). Comments on Stephen D. Krashen's "Teaching issues: Formal grammar instruction." *TESOL Quarterly*, 27, 717-722.
- Loughheed, L. (2006). *Longman new TOEIC: Introductory course*. New York: Longman.
- Nesselhauf, N. (2003). The use of collocations by advanced learners of English and some implications for teaching. *Applied Linguistics*, 24(2), 223-242.
- Oh, Sun-Young. (2007). A corpus-based study of epistemic modality in Korean college students' writings in English. *English Teaching*, 62(2), 147-175.
- O'Keeffe, A., & Farr, F. (2003). Using language corpora in initial teacher education: Pedagogic issues and practical applications. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(3), 389-418.
- Onions, C. T. (1929). *An advanced English syntax, based on the principles and requirements of the grammatical society* (5th ed.). London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co.
- Onions, C. T. (1932). *An advanced English syntax*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co.
- Simpson-Vlach, R., & Ellis, N. C. (2010). An academic formulas list: New methods in phraseology research. *Applied Linguistics*, 31(4), 487-512.
- Simpson, R., & Mendis, D. (2003). A corpus-based study of idioms in academic speech. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(3), 419-441.
- Walker, R., & Harding, K. (2006). *Oxford English for careers: Tourism (1)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wray, A. (2010). Formulaic language: Pushing the boundaries. *Applied Linguistics*, 31(1), 163-166.
- Yano, Jun. (2012). Is introducing the five sentence patterns of English sentences appropriate for junior high school students? *Bulletin of Faculty of Education, Shizuoka University, Kyoka Kyoiku Serices*, 43, 41-53.
- Yu, Taeha, & Yoo, Isaiah WonHo. (2010). Korean university students' use of prepositional verbs: A corpus-based study. *English Teaching*, 65(4), 403-424.

APPENDIX 1

A Test on Five Basic English Sentence Patterns

Direction: Analyze the following 25 sentences based on the five basic patterns as the example sentence is analyzed.

Pattern (1): Subject (S) + Verb (V)

Pattern (2): Subject (S) + Verb (V) + Subject Complement (SC)

Pattern (3): Subject (S) + Verb (V) + Object (O)

Pattern (4): Subject (S) + Verb (V) + Indirect Object (IO) + Direct Object (DO)

Pattern (5): Subject (S) + Verb (V) + Object (O) + Object Complement (OC)

Example:

The show features award-winning actress Bernadette Summers.

S V O

1. Transportation is a significant part of their experience.
2. We will send you the final itinerary by e-mail.
3. This is also the perfect opportunity to renew your commitment to your alma mater.
4. We should give them the utmost respect and our best service.
5. The finance department is completing a budget proposal for next year.
6. People can motivate themselves to be happy by engaging in sports.
7. Employees working overtime have forgotten to lock their offices.
8. I remain interested in the speaker system.
9. Sales of luxury vehicles fell sharply during the recent economic slowdown.
10. He agreed to deliver the keynote address at the awards show.
11. I have been a Zoon member for the past two years.
12. The doctor says that he must be hospitalized.
13. Interested applicants may apply by clicking the button below.
14. We help our valued members stay fit and healthy.
15. We made your decision making easier.
16. The driver kept his meter running by taking long routes.
17. Your staff charged our company the full amount of Package A.
18. You told me that the upgrade was complimentary for regular clients.
19. Your train to Kiev will arrive at its destination an hour early on August 17.
20. You informed me that the shipment was scheduled for today.
21. LISTO comes in four different flavors to suit everyone's taste buds.
22. There are many Korean actors and singers famous around the world.

23. I look forward to having you in our pool of valued clients.
 24. He went blind in his old age.
 25. She felt her face touched by someone.

APPENDIX 2

Questionnaire

Direction: This questionnaire aims to find out what thoughts you have on the three different methods of learning English structures. Circle the number that best corresponds with you.

- (1) I cannot do at all.
 (2) I can do with some difficulties.
 (3) I can do without any difficulties.
 (4) I can do fairly well.
 (5) I can do excellently.

1. I can find out the meaning of a word in a dictionary when I encounter a difficult word which I do not know its meaning while reading.
 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
2. I can study the new words in relation with other words as meaningful chunks of words when I encounter new words.
 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
3. I can understand English sentence patterns.
 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
4. I can analyze Pattern (1) Subject + Verb.
 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
5. I can analyze Pattern (2) Subject + Verb + Subject Complement.
 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
6. I can analyze Pattern (3) Subject + Verb + Object.
 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
7. I can analyze Pattern (4) Subject + Verb + Indirect Object (IO) + Direct Object (DO).
 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
8. I can analyze Pattern (5) Subject + Verb + Object + Object Complement.
 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
9. I can understand the meaning of a sentence as I read forward without going back and forth.
 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
10. I can understand the entire meaning of a sentence.

- (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
11. I can understand a paragraph or a whole passage.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
12. I can answer a question.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
13. I can make an interrogative sentence.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
14. I can understand English sentence structures as I can answer and make a question.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
15. I can read and understand English sentences based on the five English sentence patterns.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
16. I can write English sentences based on the five English sentence patterns.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
17. I can speak English based on the five English sentence patterns.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
18. I can listen to and understand English based on the five English sentence patterns.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
19. I can communicate in English, using the knowledge about chunks of words, interrogatives, and the five basic English sentence patterns that I learned in the course "English Reading and Writing."
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
20. I can use the knowledge about chunks of words, interrogatives, and the five basic English sentence patterns that I learned in the course "English Reading and Writing" when I study English by myself.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
-
21. Learning how to chunk meaningful words is helpful for me to study English.
(1) I strongly disagree (2) I disagree (3) average (4) I agree (5) I strongly agree
22. Learning how to make interrogative sentences and answer them is helpful for me to study English.
(1) I strongly disagree (2) I disagree (3) average (4) I agree (5) I strongly agree
23. Learning how to analyze English sentences based on the concept of the five basic English sentence patterns is helpful for me to study English.
(1) I strongly disagree (2) I disagree (3) average (4) I agree (5) I strongly agree

Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: Tertiary

Kyunghee Choi
Department of International Tourism
Hanyang Women's University
200 Salgojigil, Sungdong-gu
Seoul, 133-793, Korea
Tel: (02) 2290-2260 / H.P.: 010-9280-8914
Email: khchoi@hywoman.ac.kr

Received 15 June 2013
Revised 2 August 2013
Accepted 23 August 2013