



A Comparison of Discourse Organizational Patterns in English and Korean Thank-you-notes

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ABSTRACT

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Due to different discourse organizational patterns between western and Asian societies, Koreans tend to hold their intention to the end of their discourse while Americans clarify their purpose from the beginning. The different rhetoric structures of language learners' L1 are claimed to have an impact on their written discourses of L2. This study explored how secondary Korean students project their inductive discourse patterns into their informal writings—thank-you-notes—in English and Korean in comparison with American students, who are considered to follow the deductive pattern. Twenty-four American college students wrote a thank-you-note to an imagery person/object, and 30 Korean students wrote a thank-you-note first in English and later in Korean. Out of the collected 84 written samples, 50 samples, 16 from the American students and 34 from the Korean students, were examined for the final analysis. The results showed all the American students except two put their thesis statement at the beginning. On the contrary, almost half of the Korean students expressed their main idea at the end of the English thank-you-notes. This discrepancy might indicate Korean students' tendency of organizing the discourse structure in an inductive way as opposed to American students' strong preference of the deductive style

I. INTRODUCTION

A reasoning sequence of a language—inductive/deductive thought patterns—affects language production. More specifically, a discourse organizational pattern unique to language learners' first language influences their written discourse output in L2 (Kaplan, 1966). The inductive discourse pattern relates to delaying the statement of the main idea until the backgrounds of the topic is sufficiently provided. By contrast, the deductive discourse is associated

with stating the main idea straightforward at the beginning of the discourse. Based on the analysis of the writing samples by ESL learners with diverse cultural backgrounds, Kaplan asserted that people's inductive and deductive reasoning is largely determined by the cultures they belong to. He also remarked the orient peoples including Koreans tend to place their main statements at the end of their language products.

In cross-cultural communication, when the interlocutors with these different discourse principles are involved

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in a conversation, they might end up with a miscommunication because one might expect a response common in his/her discourse pattern at each phase of the discourse sequence. Participants in a conversation who are familiar with the deductive discourse pattern might find the messages by their partners “vague or inscrutable” when the topic is introduced delayed (Scollon & Scollon, 1991, p. 113). On the contrary, people who are accustomed to the inductive discourse pattern might feel the introduction of the main idea at the beginning unexpected and blunt.

Particularly, in written discourse, different “rhetoric choices” by different cultural groups might also result in a miscommunication (M. Y. Park, Tracy Dillon, & Mitchell, 1998, p. 328). After analyzing business letters of complaints in English by Korean and American managers, Park et al. (1998) found that there is a difference in the order of placing the topic sentence in the letter between two groups. American managers tended to state their main idea first and provided explanatory details later whereas Korean counterparts had a tendency to delay their intention to the end. These different organizational styles of the topic sentence might have caused American managers to find Korean business letters “vague, emotional, and accusatory” (p. 328).

A large number of cross-cultural studies on the written discourse from these dichotomous perspectives have been conducted particularly on the formal written genres such as business letters, expository essays, and newspaper editorials. Relatively underexplored are the informal written texts including short notes between family members, friends or colleagues. Some researchers argue the dichotomous inductive/deductive discourse patterns are not inherent in Asian/western cultures (Scollon, Scollon, & Jones, 2012). These patterns can appear in any kinds of discourse events even in the same culture depending on the characteristics of interlocutors’ relationships and situations where a discourse occurs. Scollon et al. (2012) argued if two speakers are equal in power/authority and are engaged in a casual conversation, they do not need to delay their topic; they have freedom to introduce the topic early with no facework, which means “designating the actions taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face” (Goffman, 1955, p. 216). Then, they suggested informal written texts should have the topic sentence at the beginning whether the writer is from the American or Asian society. This study, using thank-you-notes, explored whether the discourse pattern of informal written texts (thank-you-notes) differs by writers’ cultural backgrounds.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The classification of thought patterns according to the culture types is traced back to a renowned researcher, Kaplan (1966). Assuming that “logic is evolved of culture,” (p. 12) he analyzed about 600 compositions by beginning level ESL students. Based on the results, he suggested that Oriental peoples’ thought patterns are likely to be marked

by their indirectness, while Anglo-Europeans expect the communication to develop in a linear sequence. That is, English speakers and writers place topic statements or main ideas at the beginning and support their points with following examples. On the contrary, the people with the backgrounds of Oriental cultures turn around the subject, showing diverse views in the process. In other words, American people put their point at the beginning, while Korean people at the end. His position is concisely embodied in the following diagrams (see Figure 1).

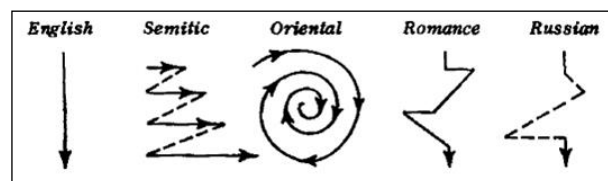


FIGURE 1 Cultural Thought Patterns
(Adapted From Kaplan, 1966, p. 15)

However, grouping different cultures and generalizing the organizational styles of texts into several categories has been criticized by other researchers as too simplistic. For instance, Braddock (1974) clearly stated that professional English writers do not necessarily write in a linear way, in which writers place their thesis at the beginning supporting their main idea with details in the following and drawing a conclusion in the end. He argued there are many variations in the ways of organizing the texts by English writers.

Another researcher, Kubota (1999), has been also critical of the cultural dichotomy of West and East by Kaplan. She argued that classifying the western culture as dynamic and the eastern one as static alludes the superiority of the western writings. She and her colleague asserted the contrastive rhetoric introduced in the 1960s is associated with American neocolonial expansion and suggested Japanese L2 learners of English might regard English as more logical and advanced than their first language (Kubota & Lehner, 2004).

Some researchers argue that the distinctive rhetoric styles by different cultures might be related to the types of the written texts selected for CR analysis. A great deal of CR research analyzed and compared expository writings from each language group in comparison, reaching a conclusion that text organization styles are different by languages. However, studies using argumentative essays instead of expository essays produced somewhat different results from the studies based on Kaplan’s claim. Zheng (2013), after comparing and analyzing 178 essays written by Chinese and Korean EFL learners and native English speakers, concluded that there’s no significant difference between the structures of essays by EFL learners and native speakers. Contrary to Kaplan’s findings, EFL students from both Korea and China all showed the preference of direct deductive expression in their argumentative essays. Mercier (2011) also argued that as far as argumentation goes, there is no great difference in the way Easterners and Westerners deal with argumentation. Then he concluded

that reasoning skills involved in argumentation are universal although these skills are sometimes used differently in different cultural contexts.

Acknowledging the limitations of Kaplan's CR, an attempt to analyze the written texts from another perspective emerged. Hinds (1987) tried to examine the texts in the relative relationships of responsibility between readers and writers. In the previous CR framework, writers assumed a sole responsibility of making readers understand the texts. Hinds attempted to categorize the written texts from various cultures by the degree of responsibility each writer and reader assumes. According to his categorization, Korean and Japanese texts belong to a reader responsible rhetoric, which asks for more efforts from readers than from writers in comprehending the texts. On the other hand, he classifies English as a writer responsible rhetoric, in which writers are responsible to providing cues helpful for readers to follow the written texts.

After the criticisms (Hinds, 1990; Raimes, 1991) that grouping thought patterns by languages is too simplistic and English-centered, Kaplan (1988), conceding the limitations on the previous study (1966), modified his position and suggested that writing styles do not necessarily reflect the writers' thinking patterns. However, regardless of the ways the writings are classified, he continued to argue that the differences of writings still reflect the writing conventions that writers acquired in their own culture.

Even with the criticisms, Kaplan's original study has been foundations for the succeeding studies in the comparative rhetoric between English and many other L1s. Interestingly, many studies are still based on the dichotomous classification: inductive and deductive reasoning. The majority of the previous studies in Oriental writings (e.g., Liu, 2009; Suzuki, 2010) have shown similar results resonating with Kaplan's view on the two distinctive thought patterns.

With respect to the different thought patterns influenced by the different cultures, one interesting study belonging to the majority was conducted by Liu (2009). He claimed that American students tend to explicitly put their thesis statements influenced by individualism and freedom of speech. Yet, the Chinese students prefer to choose an indirect stance in setting their theses under the influence of Confucianism, Collectivism, and Daoism.

Hinkel (1997) also explored how written discourse styles are influenced by writers' cultures. She analyzed a corpus of writing samples by American college students and international students from Korea, Japan, China, and Indonesia to investigate how differently the international students use indirectness strategies and markers from American students. She assumed that written texts from the international students are vague and indirect due to their uses of indirectness devices while Anglo-American writings employ explicit points with direct support. The study found the international students used indirective devices more frequently than American students, and she argued the distinctive indirectness by the international students might have related to the societies they were from:

Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist societies.

As for the Korean written texts, a lot of research has also been conducted to reveal distinctive Korean written discourse patterns after the pioneering work by Eggington (1987). Eggington claimed that the traditional organization of Korean prose, *ki-seung-jun-kyul*, has related to the non-linearity. In *ki-seung-jun-kyul*, *kyul* implies a conclusion; accordingly, a thesis statement usually comes at the last. This indirectness had Hinds (1990) classify the Korean language into the group of "delayed introduction of purpose" with Chinese and Japanese (p. 98).

Another researcher, Norton (1987), who had experience of residing in Korea and deep understanding on the Korean cultures, conducted a study analyzing the relationship-type and the relationship-sequence of Korean expository texts. He also suggested that Korean texts are basically inductively organized while American essays develop from generality to specificity.

K. Kim (1997) conducted another study regarding the comparison of written texts across cultures. In an attempt to investigate the different rhetoric styles of Korea and America, she compared 30 university newspaper editorials written in Korean by Korean students as well as in English by both Korean and American university students. This study found that Korean students tend to put their thesis statements at the end when writing in either Korean or English, which testifies that the Korean college students transferred their L1 writing style into L2 writing in some degree.

In the discussion of the contrastive rhetoric, there is one thing that we should never fail to pass over. Among the studies which contradicted Kaplan's thought patterns are several studies which looked into the impact of globalization on L1. As the countries around the world include English into their school curriculum as a primary foreign language and English is consolidating its status as a *lingua franca*, it has had impacts on L1s in one way or another. One of these studies was conducted by a Chinese researcher, Liu (2012). China has gone through a lot of changes due to globalization, which has played a role in shifting Chinese mindset from collectivism into individualism, and also helped awaken intercultural awareness. Liu's study revealed that owing to this influence of globalization, Chinese students prefer a deductive organizational pattern in English writing. A Korean researcher, H. Y. Cho (2010) also studied the direction of transfer in writing between L1 and L2. She indicated that the characteristics of English writing (L2) was heavily transferred to Korean (L1). Her study also suggested that the writings of American and Korean students did not show significant differences in their rhetoric styles.

So far, a great deal of research has been conducted on the comparative rhetoric of English and the Occidental written texts specified in Kaplan's classification. However, few studies have examined different discourse patterns in informal written texts reflecting different cultural backgrounds. Most of the studies were conducted on formal written texts such as newspaper editorials (e.g., Bolgun &

Mangla, 2017; K. Kim, 1997), business letters (e.g., M. Y. Park, Tracy Dillon, & Mitchell, 1998), cover letters (e.g., Hou, 2013), dissertation abstracts (e.g., B. M. Jeon & H. Y. Eun, 2007), expository essays (e.g., Yang & Cahill, 2008), and persuasive essays (e.g., S. H. Cheong, 2012; Mercier, 2011), which generally fall on the right side on the formality continuum in Figure 2. Scollon et al. (2012) claimed there is no reason for the topic sentence to be delayed in the informal discourse contexts irrespective of interlocutors' cultural backgrounds. According to them, in informal discourse, all the speakers are free to introduce topics and have quick topic exchanges with no need to deal with face-work. Naturally, topics are likely to come early in informal discourse contexts whether they are spoken or written. This study would show whether thank-you-notes, considered to come at the left side of the formality continuum below, would reveal two different discourse patterns in introducing the main idea by two cultural groups: American and Korean participants.

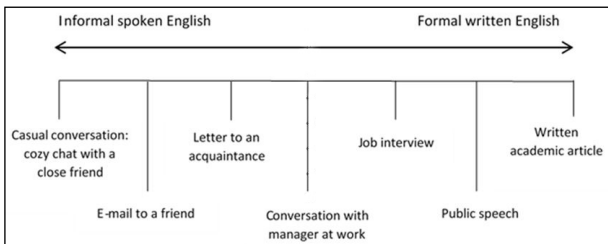


FIGURE 2 Formality Continuum: Spoken and Written Discourse (Adapted From McCarthy, Matthiessen, & Slade, 2010, p. 55)

This study has been founded on the Kaplan's classification of the thought patterns shaped by different cultures: inductive and deductive patterns. Thus, in thank-you-notes, Koreans are expected to put their main points at the end by delaying their points to the last minute, while Americans at the beginning.

In order to fill the gap stated above, following research questions were investigated:

- 1) Would American college students put their thesis statements at the beginning of the thank-you-notes while Korean high school students put them at the end of the English thank-you-notes?
- 2) Would Korean high school students put their thesis statements in the similar positions of the thank-you-notes in both Korean and English?
- 3) Would Korean high school students who had schooling in English-speaking countries put the thesis statements in the thank-you-notes differently from the other Korean students?

III. METHOD

1. Participants and Setting

Data were collected from 24 American undergraduate students and 30 Korean 11th grade high school students for the analysis. All of them were in their late teens or early twenties. The American undergraduate students are attending a university in a southern state of the United States. Most of them use English as their first language and some students, though being from immigrant families, lived and were schooled in America long enough to be integrated into the host country. Hence, they are no less than a native speaker of English. The Korean students are from a boys-only-high school in a metropolitan city at the center of South Korea. Their English proficiency is considered intermediate except for several students who have experience of attending schools in English speaking countries. Aside from the students who got education in America, the rest of the students are regarded to have relatively low competence in English writing and speaking.

Korean students are supposed to acquire four skills of English at schools because the curriculum dictates that schools teach the four skills. However, writing and speaking are rarely taught in the classroom mainly because the English subject of the college entrance exam does not test speaking and writing competence out of the concerns involving cost and objectivity. All the education in every sector in Korea is oriented into this exam. Accordingly, schools do not teach especially writing. This practice seems to be the reason why the Korean subjects are expected to produce English writings exhibiting L1 characteristics rather than L2.

2. Data Collection Procedures

For the American group, a TA of a linguistics class in a university of the southern United States, handing out to each student a piece of paper with a brief instruction on the top, asked the students to bring home the paper and return it next class. As for the Korean group, the researcher collected the data in person using the thank-you-note form (see Appendix 2) and questionnaire (see Appendix 1).

The students of the two groups were asked to write thank-you-notes in English to whomever or whatever, an imaginary receiver. The Korean students were again asked to write them in Korean a week later, which was intended to prevent them from directly translating their previous notes written in English. After two sessions of writing, the questionnaires were administered to the Korean participants in order to check whether they had experience of studying abroad or getting tutoring of English writing (see Appendix 1).

3. Data Analysis

First, after checking the number of sentences of the notes, the ones which had fewer than three sentences excluding greeting were discarded because those were inappropriate for locating the thesis statement. For the final analysis, 50

samples were examined from 16 American students and 17 Korean students: 16 English written samples from the English participants, 17 English written samples and 17 Korean written samples from the Korean participants. The text was divided into three parts and the location of the topic sentence was identified. Any sentence including a word implying gratitude such as “thank,” “grateful,” “appreciate,” and “appreciation” was regarded as a topic sentence. Likewise, in the Korean notes, the sentences containing the Korean words corresponding to the above English words were defined as topic sentences. The researcher, as a rater, himself located the topic sentence in the notes of the both groups. For the sake of raters’ reliability, the rating of the samples by the American group was done three times with an interval of 48 hours. In finding the topic sentences in the Korean samples, another native Korean speaker double-checked the results by the researcher. The first decisions of the rater were not corrected by another rater or the rater’s double check because in most of the samples, the structures of the writings were not complicated, so the topic sentences were evident and easy to find.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the results of questionnaires by the Korean participants. Around 30 percent of the students had an experience of residing in America, which is not a usual case. This might be attributable to the fact that the school is located at a rather affluent neighborhood and some parents might have got their Ph.D. degrees in the United States. Thus, the students might have lived in America while one of their parents studied there.

TABLE 1

The Results of a Survey on the Korean Students

1. Experience of residing in English speaking countries: Yes (4) No (13) 1-1. Countries: the United states (4) 1-2. Experience of going to school: 4 years (1), 1 year (1), 3 years (1)
2. Experience of attending an international school abroad: Yes (1), No (0) 2-1. Period of attending an international school abroad: 1 month (1)
3. Experience of taking English writing class in Korean schools: Yes (2), No (15)
4. Experience of getting tutoring for English writing: Yes (6), No (11)

Note. The total number of the respondents = 17

As expected, the majority of the students responded that they did not learn English writing in their schools. As mentioned earlier, this is largely because English writing is not included in the college entrance exam in Korea. About a third of the respondents said that they got tutoring for English writing. In a brief description, they noted that the classes were intended for the iBT TOEFL writing test. In the later analysis, their way of presenting their topic sentences would be presented, compared to the ones who

did not have private lessons.

The basic information on the American participants in Table 2 was gathered in the icebreaking session of the first class by the TA of an applied linguistics class. The responses to the last item were collected with an oral survey during the class. Most of the students took the course because it was required by the program and others took it for an elective. One thing to note compared to the Korean participants is that all of the American participants expressed they took English composition classes while attending elementary or secondary schools. They also said writing skills are regarded essential in their academic success because most of the courses all through the grade levels require much of writing.

TABLE 2

The Basic Information on the American Students

1. Average age: 19.2
2. Major: World languages and cultures (10), English (3), Chemistry (1), Marketing (1), Psychology (1)
3. Gender: Male (7), Female (9)
4. Experience of taking English composition class (16)

Note. The total number of the respondents = 16

Table 3 is showing the different locations of topic sentences by the different groups. In the American group, all the respondents except for the two expressed their gratitude at the beginning. This result shows that American students have a tendency to get across their messages deductively by putting their main ideas at the beginning. Interestingly, more Korean students put forward their main ideas in the initial stage of the Korean and English thank-you-notes than the students who did otherwise. Nonetheless, as opposed to the American students, a considerable number of the Korean students expressed their intention at the end of the writing. This result is in stark contrast with the fact that only one American student said his/her gratitude at the end of a thank-you-note.

TABLE 3

The Locations of Topic Sentences by the Groups

Locations of topic sentences	American	English thank-you-notes from Korean students	Korean thank you-notes from Korean students
At the beginning	14(88%)	9(53%)	9(47%)
In the middle			3(16%)
At the end	1(6%)	8(47%)	6(32%)
Nowhere	1(6%)		1(5%)
Total	16	17	19

Note. In the Korean thank-you-notes by the Korean students, two students indicated their appreciation twice in different places.

Particularly three out of the four students who once lived in the United States placed their topic sentences at the beginning (see Table 4). Thus, when these students are

taken into account, more Korean students still seem to prefer to place their points at the end, compared to the American counterparts absolutely favoring the beginning. The analysis of the Korean texts showed that thirteen students placed their thesis statements at the same location in both Korean and English texts, which in turn indicates that their thought patterns did not vary according to L1 and L2. This might bespeak that L2, rather than being influenced by L1, affects L1 thinking patterns adversely, which is suggested by H. Y. Cho (2012). In addition, the fact that almost half of the Korean participants placed the topic sentence at the beginning of their Korean texts is in line with the result of the survey of the Korean college students by Walker (2010), in which around half of the Korean respondents replied they preferred a linear pattern of rhetoric in L1 writing.

TABLE 4

The Locations of Topic Sentences for the Students With Experience of Living in America and With Private Tutoring

Locations of topic sentences	Students with experience of living abroad		Students tutored for English writing	
	English samples	Korean samples	English samples	Korean samples
At the beginning	3	3	3	2
In the middle				1
At the end	1	1	3	2
Nowhere				1
Total	4	4	6	6

Table 4 shows the data of the students with experience of living in America and the students who had private tutoring for English writing. As mentioned earlier, the students who had experience of residing or attending schools in American obviously preferred to put their thesis statements at the beginning of the texts. As in the entire Korean group, they maintained the preference in the Korean texts as well. The students who had private education for English writing, contrary to the general expectation, did not show a distinguishable preference for the beginning, which indicates that tutoring they received was not effective enough to leave cognitive printing on the students' minds regarding the structures of English writing. The results of this group are almost parallel to the findings of the entire Korean group, showing that their writing structures are almost identical in both L1 and L2 writings.

Following are the two excerpts from the Korean group that show a typical pattern of Korean writing:

Excerpt 1
(An English thank-you-note from a Korean student)

To my big brother.

Hello brother, it's me Gyeong-ho. You must be studying hard in Seoul University. You always teach me and give advice to me when you come here. And when my grades were low, you encouraged me and it was very helpful to

me. Finally you always help me to not lose my dream. I am very thankful for all of these, and I will study hard to go my dream university like you.

Excerpt 2
(An English thank-you-note from a Korean student)

To smart phone

With you I can read news. Also I can play interesting games like fifa. I can communicate with my friends even though I am not face-to-face with them. Whenever I wonder their life I can keep in touch with them thanks to you. Without you, I can't do web surfing. These of reasons, I completely thank to you.

In both of the samples, the topic sentences are located at the end of the texts. Before expressing their gratitude to receivers, they run through the list of the reasons why they finally came to convey their thanks to the receivers. On the other hand, in the following excerpts (Excerpts 3 & 4), the American students stated their gratitude in the first sentence; then they provide their reasons for their thankfulness in the following sentences. These are the examples obviously showing the contrasting difference of the typical discourse styles between the two cultures. In American texts, the topic sentence at the beginning tells everything the writer intends to convey; the following sentences are just supporting the topic sentence and there is usually no great shift in the intention. However, in the Korean texts, the readers should not loosen their attention up until the end because the writer's intention is hardly known until the writer's ship docks at the port.

Excerpt 3
(A thank-you-note from an American student)

Dear Best Friend,

Thank you so, so much for being the greatest friend I know! I'm so thankful for everything you do and the fact that you're always there to support me. I don't know what I would do without you. My college experience would have been totally different. I can barely imagine it any other way! Don't forget I'm always here for you.

Thank you for everything.

Love,

Me!!

Excerpt 4
(A thank-you-note from an American student)

Hey XXX,

I just wanted to thank you for the talk we had the other day. I was really in a bad place after failing that Chem exam and it really helped to have someone to air it out to. I'm definitely more motivated to finish out this semester.

Thanks,

Your nephew.

Yet, it would be a little hasty to conclude that these Korean samples are typical of the Korean written texts because over half of the notes by the Korean students show the other way as in Excerpt 5. This sample shows quite a similar structure to the one of samples by the American students. He clearly states his appreciation for his friend, backed by the specific reasons in the following. The Korean student of this sample is still peculiar in that he had never taken private education, nor did he live abroad. Still more interesting is the fact that he put his thesis statement at the end in his Korean note, being the only one who did like this.

Excerpt 5

(A thank-you-note from a Korean student)

To. XXX

Hi XXX. I'm your friend XXX. I'm very thanks to your behavior. You are my mento. You always study in class time, free time, lunch time....etc. I see your behavior and I think I have to study like you. And my grade enhances because of you. Also, I learn English from you. I have many questions about English to you. You may nug me. But you always kind me. I think you are the best friend in my life. Let's be best friend forever.

V. CONCLUSION

This study, using thank-you-notes, was designed to disclose whether informal written texts display different discourse organizational patterns (deductive/inductive patterns) by writers' different cultural backgrounds. According to Scollon et al. (2012), participants in informal discourses, irrespective of whether they are from Asian or Western cultures, are unlikely to delay their main idea to the end of their texts because there is no need to deal with facework. Writers and potential readers involved in this written genre such as notes, and cards are possibly friends, colleagues, and family members; they will not need time for breaking ice when initiating a communication. Moreover, participants in this type of discourse are not expected to deal with a heavy topic such as requesting a favor from the reader.

Deviating from the claim by Scollon et al. (2012), the results of this study showed that even informal written texts featured somewhat different preferences of the discourse organizational pattern by the societies which the participants are from: the deductive discourse pattern for American participants and the inductive discourse pattern for Korean ones. The American students, as expected, showed a distinctive preference of stating their gratitude at the beginnings of the thank-you-notes. On the other hand, the Korean participants presented a mixed result: while half of the Korean students still like placing their topic sentences at the end, the other half showed a similar

pattern to that of the American counterparts. However, considering that the students who had experience of living abroad are included in that other half, we may assume that many of the Korean students still preserve a typical Korean writing pattern. Nevertheless, caution is needed in interpreting this result because the number of the students with overseas experience is small with three.

The results of this study, stating the thesis at different places by different cultural groups, square with those of the previous cross-cultural contrastive rhetoric studies on other formal written texts such as newspaper editorials (K. Kim, 1997) and business letters (M. Y. Park, Tracy Dillon, & Mitchell, 1998). Therefore, as long as written contexts are concerned, this study cautiously suggests the discourse organizational patterns of a society the writer belongs to play a role in organizing the structures of writing: where to put the main idea in the texts.

Additionally, the fact that almost half of the Korean students place the thesis at the beginning, as Liu (2012) asserts, might be associated with the influences by the influxes of the western culture and Globalization. Unlike the expectation that the Korean students would place their main ideas in Korean and English thank-you-notes differently, the places of the main ideas were identical in both the Korean and English texts. It indicates that the Korean students' cognitive systems did not still diverge according to the different languages.

This study offers some insight on cross-cultural communication, particularly teaching English composition to Korean learners of English. Korean learners of English are expected to delay their topic to the end of the text whether the text is informal or formal. This is in contrast with the style of Americans who are inclined to state their idea straightforward at the beginning. This divergence of the discourse patterns might result in misunderstandings by American readers of the English texts from Koreans; they might feel the English writing by a Korean vague and confusing. In that regard, a need seems to rise that Korean teachers of English need to incorporate this result in English composition classes. The teachers should inform Korean students that there is a difference in organizing the sequence of the texts between English and Korean and explicitly tell the learners to put their topic sentence at the beginning of their English writings.

This study still has some limitations. It lost so many samples that the final analysis had to be done with much fewer responses than expected, which could lead to undermining the validity of the study. The data collection should have been designed with all the variables like the data loss in mind. Because of this small sample size, all the claims made above are suggested to be reserved until the replication of this study with a sufficient size of samples draws a similar conclusion. Additionally, in the future, the study on the speech act such as appreciation using e-mails by L1 and L2 speakers who have a variety of cultures would make meaningful turnouts. In a similar vein, it seems worthwhile to investigate how the speech act of requesting in informal writing would affect the sequence of the text

structures by writers with different cultural backgrounds.

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APPENDIX 1

() Class () Number Name _____

*After reading the following statements, circle or check the relevant items. (O or √)

1. Have you had an experience of living in the countries where English is spoken as a first language?

Ⓐ Yes _____ Ⓑ No _____

1-1. In case of Yes

1-1.1 Name of country _____

1-1.2 Did you go to school while living in those countries?.

Yes _____ No _____

1-1.3 Period: () year () month

2. Did you go to an international school in other countries?

Ⓐ Yes _____ Ⓑ No _____

2-1. In case of Yes, Period: () year () month

3. Have you taken English writing classes in Korean schools?

Ⓐ Yes _____ Ⓑ No _____

3-1. In case of Yes, briefly describe the class.

(_____

_____)

4. Have you ever taken private education for English writing?

Ⓐ Yes _____ Ⓑ No _____

4-1. In case of Yes, briefly describe it

Ex). I have gone to a private institute 3 times a week for a year for TOEFL writing.

(_____

_____)

Thank you!!!

APPENDIX 2

Please, write down a brief thank-you letter or note.

**Any type of a thank-you letter is O.K. It might be to your close friend, to your family member, or to whomever for whatever occasion.*

