

The Influence of English Proficiency and Text Types on Korean College Students' Paraphrasing for Plagiarism Prevention

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of Korean college students' English proficiency and the English text types on their paraphrases. Korean college students with three groups of English proficiency (high, mid, and low) read two types of English texts, causal texts, and argumentative texts, and paraphrased them in English. Students' paraphrase text was evaluated in terms of content (idea exposition, idea development, and wrap up), organization (coherence and cohesion) and language use (grammatical accuracy), and analyzed by MANOVA. As a result, it was found that there was a significant difference in their paraphrase performance according to the participants' English proficiency levels rather than the types of English texts. The results of this study have educational implications for English paraphrase education to prevent plagiarism for Korean university students.

Keywords: Plagiarism Prevention, Paraphrasing, English Text Types, Expository Text, Argumentative Text

1. INTRODUCTION

As ideas and opinions, which are the intellectual property of writers, are easily accessible due to the rapid development of technology, problems of reckless use of other people's written texts are emerging [1-2]. In particular, the problem of plagiarism using others' works without citing the source is said to be serious from undergraduate students to researchers [3-5]. Also, it is reported that plagiarism is often committed when writing for academic purposes in a foreign language rather than in the mother tongue [6-8]. To prevent this, some universities or CRE (Center for Research Ethics Information) provide undergraduate and graduate students with the awareness that they should not engage in plagiarism. Looking at previous studies, Asian students are more likely to commit plagiarism than students in Western academic societies, and the main reason seems to be their lack of ethical awareness that plagiarism should not be done [6-9]. Furthermore, there are many cases where Asian students do not know how to paraphrase other people's writings or works without plagiarizing them. However, education and research for undergraduate students to prevent plagiarism and summarize or paraphrase other people's writings in Korea are not very sufficient [9-20].

There have been many issues raised that the use of other people's works without proper citation or cited but not appropriately altered can be an ethical problem [16-21]. Accordingly, education and research to prevent such plagiarism are also being conducted in recent years, but the amount of the research is insufficient [21-23]. In previous studies that were conducted, second language learners or English learners studied the aspect of framing in which other people's ideas were converted into their own words. Some

studies have examined whether there is any difference in the use of such a paraphrase pattern or strategy according to the English proficiency level of the English learners [10]. According to the results of previous studies, it is reported that there is a difference in paraphrase performance according to English proficiency. Generally, it is said that students who are not proficient in English tend to copy almost [6-7]. Also, Studies show that there were some differences in the paraphrase of English learners according to the type of text originally given. It is said that there was a difference in how learners summarized or paraphrase the text of the given source material according to the argumentative or expository text [10]. These preceding studies seem to provide very important implications for preventing plagiarism in our society in the future and ethically teaching English writing for academic purposes. However, there are insufficient studies to examine the differences in the paraphrasing performance of English learners according to their English proficiency and the types of original text. Therefore, the research question of this study is as follows.

To what extent do English proficiency and the type of source texts affect the paraphrasing of Korean college students?

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

There are some studies on how English learners summarize or paraphrasing their writings differ depending on the types of original texts or their English proficiency level. First, the domestic research is as follows.

[9] compared and examined the types that Korean English learners paraphrase according to their English proficiency levels. 50 summary texts in English were analyzed using a discourse analysis program called CLAN. Participants tended to use minimal modifications such as deletion, addition, and word replacement with similar words, and the sentence structure was comprehensively modified or integrated. In addition, the higher the proficiency in English, the more strategies were used to correct and integrate the sentence structure, but students tended to make minimal corrections at the vocabulary level rather than syntactic corrections. Through this study, it was argued that students with low proficiency in English need a method of efficiently teaching paraphrasing at the syntactic and vocabulary level.

[10] examined the differences in paraphrasing patterns and strategies according to their proficiency in English and the genre of writing (narrative articles, expository, and argumentative articles) targeting Korean university students who are learning English as a second language. She had students in a group of 24 beginners in English and a group of 20 wrote summaries of three different genres and analyzed their paraphrasing types and strategies based on [11]'s paraphrasing type coding. It is said that the beginner group used 'exact copying' and 'near copying' very often, and the group with higher proficiency levels used 'with some corrections' often. In addition, according to the genre of the original texts, there were differences in the paraphrasing type and strategy used in paraphrasing texts.

International studies on the types of paraphrasing and the use of strategies are as follows. In a recent study on plagiarism, [11] examined the difference in the use of strategies and the reasons why English learners copy the original materials when summarizing in their native and English, fearing that second-language English learners were viewed negatively as acceptable for plagiarism due to their cultural influence. The reasons for copying the data and the differences in the use of strategies were investigated. As a result, study participants extract a large portion of the original material in both their mother tongue and second language summaries, especially when writing in English, the second language. It was also said that novice English learners, like existing studies, tend to extract the original materials more frequently.

[13] examined and statistically analyzed strategies in paraphrasing the original materials for graduate students in Taiwan. More than half of the study participants perceived paraphrasing, i.e., patchwriting, as an acceptable use of strategies at the surface level, and reported a high correlation between the degree of difficulty in paraphrasing, the importance of proper raw material use, and the degree of overcoming the temptation of plagiarism. As a follow-up study, [14] examined how the lack of knowledge of plagiarism, lack of knowledge of changing, difficulty in understanding writing, and topic familiarity affect students' paraphrasing skills and use of strategies to avoid plagiarism. First, they said that easy-to-read articles were

good at paraphrasing, and that they showed a more frequent tendency to copy and plagiarize without citation in difficult, low-readable articles. [15] qualitatively analyzed the understanding of plagiarism and writing strategies when two new students from Hong Kong University wrote in English based on the original data. Although both students had a good understanding of the university's plagiarism policy, their writings were said to have had a lot of patchwriting and inappropriate citations. Whether to regard what appears to be plagiarism in learners' writings as cheating or poorly citing the original material is a challenge for professors and researchers.

[16] investigated aspects of paraphrasing strategies and self-plagiarism in 71 academic papers on language and education. It was searched using both Turn-It-In and experts, a plagiarism search program, and as a result, there were 30 different paraphrasing strategies, of which it was the most frequent to copy and replace vocabulary. Several authors also used a fusion of several paraphrasing strategies within a single sentence, with more than two-thirds of authors reusing and recycling the contents of their previous works. Through this study, it was suggested that the authors need to be taught that they can unintentionally write with their previous writing chunk or their writing style and become self-plagiarism.

[1] looked at how a copy-and-paste-enabled educational environment affects digital plagiarism in learners. Overall, about 79.5% of writers were involved in digital plagiarism, with more learners exposed to plagiarism in educational settings with copy and paste capabilities. In other words, the purpose of learners learning to write and how easily accessible the copy and paste functions have a lot of influence on digital plagiarism. It is said that students tend to copy and paste when they write rather than their initial beliefs. The previous studies reviewed above suggest that Korean English learners need to have plagiarism-preventing English writing programs, especially paraphrasing education programs. Furthermore, it would be better to observe learners from a quantitative and qualitative comprehensive perspective depending on their English proficiency levels and the types of text given.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Participants & Data Collection

For this study, 26 Korean college students participated. They learned about two different genres of English writing in the academic English writing course. One of the two genres was a text of cause and effect among explanatory texts, and the other was an argumentation text. The topic of the causal text was related to the effect of hormones on the human body. The argumentative text was whether AI will replace human teachers in the future. Each student was asked to read two types of English texts and paraphrase each one within 30 minutes. Participants were asked not to copy more than four consecutive words from the source texts. In total, 52 paraphrased texts were collected.

3.2. Data Analysis

For analysis, participants' paraphrased texts in English were assessed based on content, organization, language use, and originality (similarity). Based on this, an objective and reliable quantitative analysis was conducted by recruiting Korean English education experts with a doctorate in English education. Multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests were performed to quantitatively examine the differences. The MANOVA test was selected because it prevents the inflation of Type 1 error due to multiple t-tests. The independent variables were the language proficiency (high, mid and low) and the types of the text, and the sub criteria including exposition, idea development, idea wrap-up, cohesion, grammatical accuracy, were the dependent variables.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Effects of Language Proficiency and Text Types on the Participants' Paraphrasing

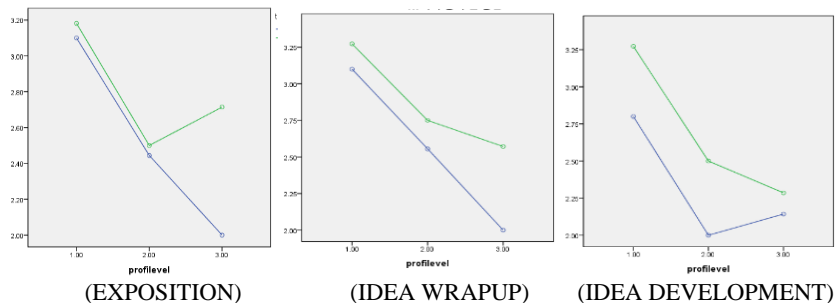
Depending on the English proficiency of English learners and the type of text, the paraphrasing results of

learners are shown in the following Table 1. Depending on the type of English text, there were some differences in content, coherence and grammatical accuracy. Furthermore, there was a difference in the scores of the text the participants paraphrased.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Paraphrasing based on English Proficiency and Text Types (N=52)

	Text Type Proficiency	Argumentation			Cause & Effect		
		Mean	S.D	N	Mean	S.D	N
Exposition	High	3.10	.99	10	3.18	.87	11
	Mid	2.44	.53	9	2.50	1.07	8
	Low	2.00	.82	7	2.71	.49	7
	total	2.58	.90	26	2.85	.88	26
Idea development	High	2.80	.79	10	3.27	.90	11
	Mid	2.00	.50	9	2.50	.93	8
	Low	2.14	.38	7	2.29	.95	7
	total	2.35	.69	26	2.77	.99	26
Idea wrap-up	High	3.10	.74	10	3.27	1.01	11
	Mid	2.56	.88	9	2.75	.71	8
	Low	2.00	.82	7	2.57	.98	7
	total	2.62	.90	26	2.92	.93	26
Coherence/ Cohesion	High	2.90	.88	10	3.00	.89	11
	Mid	2.11	.60	9	2.13	.83	8
	Low	2.00	.58	7	2.29	.76	7
	total	2.38	.80	26	2.54	.90	26
Grammar	High	3.10	.88	10	3.45	.93	11
	Mid	2.44	.73	9	2.63	.52	8
	Low	2.43	.53	7	2.71	.49	7
	total	2.69	.79	26	3.00	.80	26
Sum	High	18.30	3.83	10	22.73	5.98	11
	Mid	13.89	2.85	9	18.00	4.63	8
	Low	12.57	2.44	7	17.57	3.99	7
	total	15.23	3.96	26	19.88	5.51	26

Figure 1 shows how differently the participants paraphrased according to the participants' proficiency levels (high, mid, and low) and text types (argumentative and causal texts). In general, the scores of participants' paraphrase in cause/effect type was higher than those of the argumentative text.



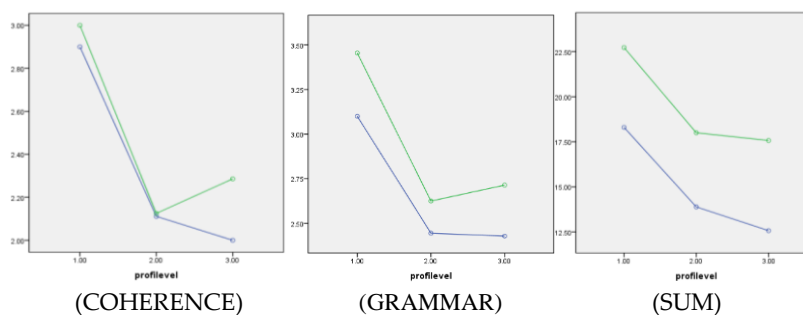


FIGURE 1. Paraphrasing Scores by Learners' Proficiency levels and Text types

MANOVA was conducted to closely examine the participants' paraphrasing in terms of content, organization, and language use, depending on the learner's English proficiency and type of text, and the results are in the following Table 2.

Table 2. MANOVA Results for the Effects of Language Proficiency and Text Types on Korean EFL Learners' Paraphrasing

Source	Dependent variables	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	sig
text type	EXPO	1.018	1	1.018	1.454	.234
	ID	1.746	1	1.746	2.862	.097
	IW	1.236	1	1.236	1.647	.206
	COH	.224	1	.224	.367	.548
	GRAMMAR	.945	1	.945	1.749	.193
	SUM	257.161	1	257.161	14.140	.000
proficiency level	EXPO	6.591	2	3.296	4.710	.014
	ID	8.056	2	4.028	6.601	.003
	IW	7.148	2	3.574	4.763	.013
	COH	8.420	2	4.210	6.893	.002
	GRAMMAR	6.594	2	3.297	6.099	.004
	SUM	313.705	2	156.852	8.624	.001
text type * proficiency level	EXPO	1.062	2	.531	.759	.474
	ID	.301	2	.150	.246	.783
	IW	.388	2	.194	.258	.773
	COH	.146	2	.073	.119	.888
	GRAMMAR	.071	2	.036	.066	.936
	SUM	1.537	2	.769	.042	.959

Statistical analysis of the participants' paraphrasing according to the type of source texts showed no statistically significant differences in content, coherence(organization), or grammatical aspects. However, there were statistically significant differences in the English proficiency of study participants in terms of the content, coherence(organization), and grammatical accuracy of paraphrasing (Table 2).

Summarizing the above results, the aspects of the paraphrased text of the participants appeared differently depending on the English proficiency in the study. These results are similar to the finding of the preceding studies. In [9]'s study, learners with low English proficiency were more likely to copy text from the source as it was. [12]'s study was also that there was a big difference in the aspect of changing the sentence of the original data according to the levels of English proficiency in English. Students with very low proficiency or somewhat low proficiency were more inclined to take the original material's sentences without changing or

modifying them, and reported that this tendency was worse in foreign languages as well as in their native language. Therefore, the results of this study show similar results to those of existing prior studies.

In this study, there was no statistically significant difference in the aspect of paraphrase according to the type of text. These results are somewhat different from previous research results. This difference appears to be due to the somewhat inadequate number of study participants. In addition, in previous studies, corpus software programs such as Coh-metrix were used to analyze in detail vocabulary level, sentence level, and discourse level. However, it does not seem to be possible to find a detailed difference in this study which did not use a corpus software program.

5. CONCLUSION AND FURTHER STUDY

This study looked at how Korean college students paraphrased the original texts in English without plagiarizing. As a result, the pattern of paraphrasing differed depending on the type of text and English proficiency. Particularly, it has been shown that there are statistically significant differences in the content, organization, and grammatical aspects of paraphrasing, depending on learners' proficiency levels in English. This study is expected that it would ultimately contribute to promoting society-wide ethics by reducing plagiarism insensitivity prevalent in our society and raising awareness of how to write English academic writing ethically.

However, this work has been limited in that it has not collected enough data and has only looked at the content, organizational and grammatical aspects, which are the yardstick for evaluating the general writing of learners' paraphrasing results. Further studies would be better to collect more data from more diverse learners and look at the differences in more detail in terms of discourse, syntactic and lexical aspects.

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