

# A Contrastive Rhetoric of Doctoral Dissertation Abstracts written by American writers and Korean writers

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Jeon, Byoung-man & Eun, Ho-yoon. 2007. A Contrastive Rhetoric of Doctoral Dissertation Abstracts written by American writers and Korean writers. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 15(3), 161-188. This study aims to analyze doctoral dissertation abstracts written by American writers and Korean writers from the standpoint of contrastive rhetoric. We selected five doctoral dissertation abstracts by American writers and five doctoral dissertation abstracts by Korean writers, using the authentic internet site. Based on the IMRD structure suggested by Swales (1990), we tried to analyze their macro-structure. The Micro-structure of our material was analyzed, based on the cases of passive voice usages claimed by Greenbaum (1990) and some referential expressions such as 'the, this, etc.' We could not find a meaningful difference of their macro-structure. Abstracts by Korean writers are much longer than those of American writers. The reasons for the use of passive voice are different. American writers use passive voice for cohesion, whereas Korean writers use it for objectivity. Concerning referential expressions, it was interesting that both writers use 'this, these' more than 'that, those'. It seems that writers feel their dissertation psychologically near. In this investigative research, we suggest Korean writers write abstracts more briefly and concisely to attract readers.

**Key Words:** abstract as a genre, IMRD structure, cohesion.

## 1. Introduction

A research article can be defined as a piece of writing described logically after we study a certain phenomena of a field through a scientific research method. Generally, it can be divided into two parts: dissertation (doctoral or master's) and general research article. In this

study, we aim at analyzing a dissertation rather than a research article. More specifically, our exact target is abstracts of doctoral dissertation.

When we consider the aim of writing a dissertation as the delivery of new information through the creative research, the sentence expression of dissertation needs exactness, brevity, suitability, easiness and unity. Considering these things, researchers prepare their dissertations with a well-formed structure. At the beginning of a dissertation, there is an abstract, a concise form of the whole dissertation.

These days, a lot of dissertations have been produced in the world, owing to the subdivision and specialization of studies. Due to the development of computers, it has become possible to get hold of a lot more dissertations than in the past. However, it is not possible for readers to read all the dissertations being poured out each year. Some read only the abstracts, glancing through them roughly and decide whether they will read the whole dissertation or not. Through the internet, abstracts can be easily searched and read very fast all over the world these days.

An abstract is a research tool (Porush, 1995: 76) that serves a "gate-keeping function" in helping readers decide if they want to invest more time in the rest of the paper.

As many scholars have pointed out, dissertation abstracts have become one of the most important genres in academic written discourse (Salager-Mayer 1990, 1992; Staheli 1986; Swales 1990). Abstracts are a briefing or summary about the whole dissertation, giving readers first impression of the parent document and offer an important base to decide whether to continue reading or not. A poor abstract sometimes spoils the achievement of the main research.

Writing good abstracts helps writers practice cognitively to shape up their own writing, to eliminate superfluous expression and to define the essence (Porush 1995). Although abstracts take up the major part of professional and scientific papers, their study or methodology are not sufficient.

Recently, Swales (1990) has proposed the concept of 'genre' which has a strong influence in the ESP (English as a Specific Purpose) field,

under the name of 'genre analysis'. He defines 'genre' as a class of communicative events and claims that the members of discourse community share some set of communicative purposes. It can be recognized by the members of discourse community whether the purpose of communication of a specific genre is accomplished or not. The discourse community sets the contents and location of a specific genre, and the constraints about what to accept generally in view point of the formality.

We will try to analyze this, using two approach methods: a macro-structure analysis and a micro-structure analysis. First, as a method of macro-structure analysis, IMRD (Instruction-Method-Results-Discussion) structure, suggested by Swales (1990), which have attracted a lot of scholars recently was selected and we tried the global frame of abstracts, based on IMRD structure. Next, as a method of micro-analysis, of lexico-grammatical features, we chose the seven cases of passive voice usages. We selected another feature, referential expression, which is one of five methods of cohesion.

Five abstracts of doctoral dissertation written by American writers and five abstracts by Korean writers were selected at random. We wanted to analyze them with respect to contrastive rhetoric and to know their frame and organization. According to Greenbaum (1990), the cases of passive voice usages can be classified into seven cases. Based on these seven cases, we will analyze selected abstracts, in order to understand what both groups use passive voice for.

Through this, we wanted to know what properties of each country's abstracts have so as to appeal to their discourse community. We wanted to answer why an abstract-genre was written in this way and intended to present a model to prepare a better abstract.

To sum up, we tried to analyze dissertation abstracts focusing on these two questions.

1) In respect of IMRD Structure by Swales' (1990), what are the rhetorical similarities and differences of global structure between abstracts of doctoral dissertations written by American writers and those by Korean writers?

2) How are passive voice expressions used in both abstracts by American writers and Korean writers, based on Greenbaum's (1990) theory of passive voice usages? How are referential expressions used between them?

To begin with, we defined some concepts necessary for this analysis. We explained IMRD structure by Swales (1990), seven cases of passive voice usages, referential expression of cohesive devices in brevity. Next, we summarized previous related studies, introduced selected materials, presented the procedures of analysis and results, and concluded at the end of this article.

## **2. Theoretical Frameworks for Analyzing Abstracts**

Before starting to analyze the abstracts, we will describe related theoretical frameworks for a more complete investigation of abstracts: the concept of genre, discourse community, abstracts as a genre, the seven cases of passive voice by Greenbaum (1990) and the IMRD pattern by Swales (1990).

### **2.1. A Concept of Genre**

People usually try three different approaches to genres: New Rhetoric approach, the ESP (English as Specific Purpose) approach, and Systemic Functional Linguistics (Hyland, 2003).

In the New Rhetoric approach, Halliday (1994) develops classroom perspectives on the genre based the theory of systemic functional linguistics. He focuses on social actions rather than form itself, which is a different feature from systemic functional approach. He also argues that genres are resources for getting things done, and people all have a repertoire of appropriate responses. The New Rhetoric school puts less emphasis on the form of discourse and more emphasis on the action which is used to accomplish its purposes, seeking to establish the connections between genres and repeated situations and to identify the

way genre is seen as recurrent rhetorical actions (Hyland, 2002)

The ESP scholars define genre as a class of communicative events such as a university lecture, or an academic essay (Paltridge, 2001). They also add that the events are linked by shared purposes recognized by the members of a particular community and that the purposes are the rationale of the genre. This point of view is based on Swales' work (1990) on the discourse structures and linguistic features of scientific reports.

In Systemic Functional Linguistics, a genre is more often defined as a kind of text with related form, function and context, such as a description, procedure, or exposition (Paltridge, 2001). In the view of Systemic Functional Linguistics, a genre involves the interactions of participants using language in a conventional, step-wise structure (Hyland, 2002).

Thus, there are different views on how to define and identify a genre. Some hold that a genre can be identified by the examination of textual structures alone, and others present the view that genre identification requires a more complex perspective on the notion of genre. The broadest of these views takes the position that several aspects contribute to the identification of a communicative event as an instance of a particular genre and that this cannot necessarily be done with reference to text structure alone (Paltridge, 2001).

## **2.2. Discourse Community**

An important element in the definition of genre is the concept of community. Swales (1990) proposes the six characteristics of a discourse community: a discourse community has a broadly agreed set of common public goals, has mechanisms of intercommunication among members, uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback, utilizes and then possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims, has acquired some specific lexis, and has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discourse expertise.

Johns (1997: 20-37) provides specific kinds of genre knowledge shared by members of a discourse community: a shared name, shared communicative purposes, shared knowledge of roles, shared knowledge of context, shared knowledge of roles, shared register, etc. This shared knowledge contributes to mutual understanding among members of a discourse community. A discourse community of members sharing the knowledge becomes the parent of its product, a genre, in the terms of Swales (1990).

Members of a discourse community don't necessarily keep close physical distance in order to share all these kinds of knowledge. There may be considerable distance between members of a discourse community ethnically, geographically, and linguistically. It is not the same as 'speech community'. In speech community, the communicative needs of the group are socialization or group solidarity. From functional point of view, a discourse community consists of a group of people who link up in order to pursue the objectives prior to those of socialization and solidarity. Moreover, a speech community typically inherits its membership by birth, accident, or adoption, but a discourse community recruits its members by persuasion, training, or relevant qualification.

### **2.3. Abstracts as a genre**

When people publish research articles these days, they usually include abstracts. Even non-native speakers of English have to write an English abstract whether the rest of the paper is written in their native language or not. Although an abstract written in English is a mandatory part, little attention has been paid to abstracts as the subject of research until Swales (1990) began work on research into specific genres, such as academic research articles. He regards abstracts as a kind of text particularly suited for genre investigation. According to his concept of genre, an abstract has communicative purposes that are recognized by members of a discourse community.

Essentially, an abstract is a brief summary of a whole article. Bhatia (1993) defines it as a description or factual summary of the much

longer report, which is supposed to give the reader an exact and concise knowledge of the full article, that is, of what the author did, how the author did it, what the author found, and what the author concluded. The ANSI (American National Standards Institute) defines abstract as "an abbreviated, accurate representation of the contents of a document, preferably prepared by its author(s) for publication with it" (Bhatia, 1993: 78).

The definitions of an abstract above indicate that abstracts function as advance indicators of the context and structure of the following text (Swales, 1990). Through abstracts, writers try to pursue the fundamental purpose of communication. Generally, abstracts are classified into four types: informative, indicative, descriptive and critical.

First, an informative abstract is the most common and gives readers a sense of a major part of the picture without the entire reading of the major article. It contains the introduction, problem, hypothesis, method, result and conclusion (Porush, 1995).

An indicative abstract indicates the subject and the major result of the article, but doesn't explain the process involved (Lores, 2004). This kind of abstract can lead the readers to read the main article with curiosity, but doesn't serve as the primary source of information.

A descriptive abstract shows only the most general view of the subject, scope, and/or conclusions and recommendations (Porush, 1995). It is generally suitable for essays, or technical reports intended for a more general readership, which resembles the summary useful for grant applications and cover letters to editors. However, it isn't easy to differentiate descriptive abstracts from indicative abstracts.

A critical abstract is a condensed critical review, which serves the same purpose as a critical review. It evaluates the quality of the author's work, contrasts it with others' work, points out the weaknesses of the methodology used, or compares the results with those of earlier surveys. A critical abstract is not commonly used nowadays.

## 2.4. IMRD Structure

The IMRD structure is a newly approached method by Swales (1990), under the name of 'Move Analysis'. 'Move' as schematic structure refers to elements of meaning in the rhetorical movement. He claims that abstracts have the patterns of the research article itself, that is, Instruction-Method-Results-Discussion (IMRD) format.

Graetz (1985) suggests that most abstracts consist of four parts: Problem-Method-Results-Conclusion. These two approaches seem similar except for the first part of their patterns-Problem and Introduction. However, their meanings of these two incongruent terms aren't so different. Graetz defines Problem as the author's intention, purposes, hypothesis, goal, etc. It is very similar to the property of the Instruction section conceived by Swales (1990). However, a question arises as to which term would be more applicable to analyzing this research.

We could find two reasons to adopt Swales' term 'Introduction' in this paper in preference to Graetz' term 'Problem'. First, the structure of abstract reflects that of the main research article. The first section of all the articles start with the instruction section, so the term 'Introduction' sounds more natural for the very first part of a discourse. Next, the term 'Introduction' is inclusive enough to involve a wide range of starters in communicative events, such as presenting problems or purposes. So, we would like to follow Swales' IMRD model for this research.

Now, we will look into IMRD model in more detail. For lack of space, we made a table for each part of the IMRD model.



Table 1. IMRD Structure suggested by Swales (1990)

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· the rationale for the paper</li> <li>· movement from general topic to the particular question</li> <li>· causing interest in the topic</li> </ul>
Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· methodology, materials, data source, procedures, statistical analysis, subject</li> </ul>
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· findings</li> <li>· commenting on results</li> </ul>
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· deducting from the research</li> <li>· generalizing the results</li> <li>· recommending for further research</li> </ul>

## 2.5. Seven cases of passive voice usage

Greenbaum (1990, pp. 45 - 46) claimed that people use the passive for the following reasons.

- ① When people don't know the identity of the agent of the action.  
e.g.: The Prime Minister has often been criticized recently.
- ② People want to avoid identifying the agent because they don't want to assign or accept responsibility.  
e.g.: Our questions haven't been answered until now.
- ③ People feel that there is no reason for mention of the agent because the identification is unimportant or obvious from the context.  
e.g.: Jack fought Michael last night, and Jack was beaten.
- ④ In scientific and technical writing, writers often use the passive to avoid the constant repetition of the subject *I* or *we* and to put the emphasis on processes and experimental procedures. This use of the passive helps to give the writing the objective tone that writers wish to convey.  
e.g.: The subject was blindfolded and a pencil was placed in the left hand.
- ⑤ To put emphasis on the agent of the action.  
e.g.: By Tom, she was murdered.
- ⑥ To avoid what would otherwise be a long active subject.  
e.g.: It is usually said that time is money.
- ⑦ To retain the same subject throughout a long sentence.  
e.g.: As a cat moves, it is kept informed of its movement not only by its eyes, but also by messages from its pads and elsewhere

in its skin, its organs of balance, and its sense organs of joints and muscles.

Using these seven cases of passive voice usage, we will analyze the selected abstracts for our research.

## **2.6. Referential expression**

As a method of micro-analysis, we chose demonstrative expression, one of the cohesion devices. Cohesion is generally said to be a set of meaningful relations that is general to all classes of text, and interrelates the substantive meaning of the text each other. It doesn't deal with what a text means, but deals with how the text is constructed as a semantic structure (Halladay & Hasan, 1976, 1989). There are five types of cohesive devices: reference, substitution, ellipsis, lexical cohesion and conjunction. Of them, we chose reference and narrowed it again into two referential expressions: definite article 'the' and demonstratives 'this, that, these and those'.

A referential expression can be divided into two parts: a textual reference and a situational reference. A textual reference means what can be identified within texts, whereas a situational reference is what can be inferred in the real world, not depending on texts. Using this classification, we tried to analyze how both the groups would feel about their dissertations psychologically.

## **3. Previous studies**

The study of genre analysis of abstracts has become one of the topics in the ESP field, but there has been little research carried out so far. We will review the relevant previous studies, focusing on the historical development of viewpoint about abstracts.

Some scholars started to study abstracts (Weil, 1970; Collinson, 1971; Borko & Bernier, 1975), however, it wasn't until the 1990s that a number of scholars paid attention to the abstracts, that is, an advent of genre analysis, a kind of discourse analysis. This research can be

classified into three groups according to the viewpoint of research.

First, there were some early studies (Cleveland & Cleveland, 1990; Lancaster, 1991; Hartley, 1994; Porush, 1995; Cremmins, 1996). They studied in the way of traditional studies, such as nature, types, length and properties of abstracts and suggested how to improve abstracts in the linguistic and theoretical perspective.

The next group of scholars were concerned with the text organizational structure as a genre. Some scholars (Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990) suggested that most genres have a four-part structure – introduction, method, result and discussion. Also, Graetz (1985) analyzed 87 abstracts in journal articles, and suggested almost same four-part structure. Salager-Meyer (1990) analyzed 77 abstracts in the medical field, using the concept of move analysis and found that 52 percent of the abstracts had a well-formed structure in the viewpoint of move concept and semantic organization of moves.

Tibbo (1992) analyzed 120 abstracts from the field of chemistry, psychology and historical literature in terms of functional content. Her studies focused on how well abstracts from different fields fit the guidelines of abstract published by the ANSI (American National Standard Institute) and IOS (International Organization for Standardization). Abstracts published by ANSI and IOS present a six-element pattern (i.e., background, purpose/scope, hypotheses, methodology, results, conclusions). She found that abstracts from the historical field didn't follow either (ANSI & IOS) standards and were descriptive, narrated events, presented the author's opinion and had various types of subjective conclusion-like statement. Meanwhile, scientific and technical literature fitted the standards well.

Busch-Lauer (1995) analyzed a corpus of 20 abstracts in German medical journals prepared by German scholars in German and English, and compared the arrangements of moves. His research showed that the move and background information mainly occupied the structure of the German non-native speakers' abstracts written in English, whereas the purpose of study and conclusions were not clearly stated. His conclusion was that abstracts written by German scientists may lose

persuasiveness because of linguistic incompetence, illogical structuring, lexical hedging and vague conclusions.

Santos (1996) chose 94 abstracts from three applied linguistics journals and studied their discourse organization. He found that abstracts have a five-move pattern and suggested that the practice of writing abstracts doesn't coincide with the advice in manuals.

The third group studied abstracts from the viewpoint of both lexico-grammatical features and moves. Tibbo (1992), in the above mentioned study, also investigated linguistic composition (i.e., the number of words and sentences). Salager-Meyer (1990, 1992) explored lexico-grammatical features in medical English abstracts and how they are related to each structure of moves. The findings were that there is a close relationship between rhetorical function of the history type of discourse and the past tense, between conclusion, recommendation, and data synthesis and the present tense, between author's disagreement and the present perfect tense, between modality and review articles.

Most of the work done on abstracts in genre analysis focuses on discovering how many and what moves abstracts have, in what order the moves are arranged, what linguistic features abstracts as a genre have, and what relationship there is between moves and linguistic features, etc.

However, another group attempted to analyze abstracts from quite a different viewpoint: a textual viewpoint. From a text-linguistic analysis, Ventola (1994) compared the global structure and moves, cohesion, theme choice, connector patterns and reference in medical abstracts prepared by German academics in both German and English. He concluded that writing an abstract in English as a foreign language is a high demanding task to German, causing problems. German writers don't have the same range of linguistic items available for realizing cohesive relations in their English texts as they have when they are writing in their native language.

In Korea, Kim (2000) compared 20 abstracts from journals published in America and Korea, and analyzed their components and cohesion. She concluded that there are some differences between American and Korean

abstracts, stating components and using cohesion devices between them. This was because Korean writers used them excessively, that is, hyper-correction. As well, Ryoo (2005) chose 54 abstracts from Korean and American Journals and explored discourse properties from a viewpoint of text-linguistics and IMRD structure.

So far, the research has been focused mainly on abstracts of Research Articles. Few studies have been done on dissertation abstracts. In particular, it is not easy to find the studies of doctoral dissertation abstracts. In Korea, Seong (2003) tried to analyze doctoral dissertation abstracts written by native speakers, focusing on English prepositional phrases. Shim (2001) performed a genre analysis of two dissertation abstracts written by a Korean writer and an American writer, focusing on the IMRD structure and politeness. She found that there are recursive patterns in particular moves, but didn't make the reasons clear.

The above review shows that abstracts have stimulated a number of research with a focus on macro and micro levels. The previous study contributed to better understanding of abstracts and suggested better models. They are great indicators to generate effective texts of abstracts.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Data**

As this study was an exploratory investigation, we randomly selected ten doctoral dissertation abstracts published in American and Korean universities from 1996 to 2007, using an authentic internet site, 'Korea Education & Research Information Service'. Five abstracts were from American universities and five abstracts were from Korean universities. Detailed information about the selected abstracts is given in the Appendix.

### **4.2. Data analysis**

For the first question mentioned in the introduction section, we tried to analyze their macro-structures according to the IMRD structure by Swales (1990). Each abstract was divided into four parts and we compared how much each part occupied the whole abstract, and how similar and different they were from the viewpoint of contrastive rhetoric. But unlike other sections in the article, which were separated by the title of each section and physical space between sections, it wasn't easy to distinguish each move in abstracts since each move of the abstracts consists of several sentences, and surface linguistic expressions are not always good markers of certain underlying meaning.

To answer the second question, their micro-structures were explored, based on the two lexico-grammatical features: the seven cases of passive voice usage classified by Greenbaum (1990), the use of referential expression (the, this, that, these and those) which were classified again depending on a textual reference and a situational reference. To compare them easily, we made tables for each of them in the following section.

## 5. Results

### 5.1. Macro-structure: IMRD structure

Based on the IMRD model, the macro-structure of ten chosen abstracts were analyzed. Most of the abstracts by Korean writers were quite long, whereas the abstracts by American writers were relatively short. Of them, the following two abstracts are the shortest examples of both parts and their macro-structures were analyzed according to the IMRD structure.

(Example 1)<sup>1)</sup>

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1) AD1: Benz, Bradley Paul, 2001, *"ESL Trouble Spots": Composition Handbooks, Ideology, and the Politics of ESL Writing and Global English*, University of Washington.

**Introduction:** This dissertation examines the emergence of separate chapters for English as a Second Language writers in composition handbooks, and then uses these ESL chapters as a springboard to discuss several broader issues. **Method & Result:** The first chapter is a genre analysis of composition handbooks and the argument is made that the ESL chapters in handbooks reflect the uneasy, monologic relationship between mainstream composition and second language composition. At the same time, it is argued that mainstream composition is not solely responsible, as the ESL chapters can also be considered symptomatic of the pragmatic, non-ideological theories of ESL writing which have in part contributed to the static and universalized constructions of ESL students in the ESL chapters in handbooks. The second chapter analyzes the role of ideology in second language writing theory and the debates about contrastive rhetoric. The final chapter studies the spread of English as a global language and the way in which English language teaching has both been a contributor to and a product of global English.

(Example 2)<sup>2)</sup>

**Introduction:** The purpose of this study is to provide a practical and effective direction on how to enhance vocabulary learning strategies for Korean learners of English. **Method:** This study examined the utility of learning strategies in the authentic classroom setting, comparing three vocabulary strategies: keyword method, semantic processing method, and keyword-semantic method. It also scrutinized the problems in Korean EFL students' vocabulary learning traits through a questionnaire administered to university freshmen.

**Result:** The findings of this study are several.

First, the strongest effect was found for the keyword-semantic method.

Second, semantic-processing method produced significantly better results than the keyword method. These findings are especially interesting because they are consistent with the predictions made from depth-of-processing theory ( Craik & Lockhart, 1972). The keyword method in combination with the semantic-processing method produced both stronger memory traces and better retrieval paths than if used alone. Even though the evidence was not found which restricts the keyword method for using abstract target word, unlike Brown & Perry (1991), combining the two strategies provide the learners with more opportunity for using appropriate strategies for their tasks at hand.

Finally, the correlation between students' previous vocabulary learning styles and three learning strategies do not seem to have direct effect on the strategy instructions.

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2) KD4 : Park, Kyongmi, 2002, *A study on the vocabulary learning strategies for Korean EFL learners*. Korea University

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 presents the purpose and necessity of the study. Chapter 2 provides a critical review of the theoretic perspectives on learning strategies and previous studies. It further discusses the relation among learner's traits, task types and learner's strategy use. Chapter 3 presents procedures for experimental research, including data collection and data analysis. Chapter 4 discusses the results, findings of experiment, possible applications of those findings. Chapter 5 includes summary and conclusion.

**Discussion:** From the findings of this study, it is strongly recommended that strategy-based-instructions should be matched with learner's learning styles and tasks at hand in order to achieve learners' autonomy in learning process.

As shown above, the abstracts by the American writer were comparatively shorter than the Korean abstracts. We counted the number of the sentences in each abstract, analyzed their IMRD structures and made a table like this:

Table 2. An analysis of IMRD structure & the number of sentences

Dissertation	IMRD structure	No. of sentences
AD1	Introduction, Method & Result	5
AD2	Introduction, Method, Result, Discussion	14
AD3	Introduction, Method, Result, Discussion	14
AD4	Introduction, Method, Result, Discussion	17
AD5	Introduction, Method & Result	10
Sub-total		60
KD1	Introduction, Method & Result	15
KD2	Introduction, Method, Result, Discussion	18
KD3	Introduction, Method, Result, Discussion	35
KD4	Introduction, Method, Result, Discussion	40
KD5	Introduction, Method, Result, Discussion	48
Sub-total		156

AD means 'Dissertation by American writer'. KD means 'Dissertation by Korean writer'. Their list can be seen in Appendix.

According to Swales' IMRD structure, we found that the structures of both groups were not quite different; rather, they had a relatively similar pattern. AD1 & AD5 did not have a Discussion section, but nor



did KD1.

The length of the parent document didn't affect the length of the abstract. For instance, parent document of AD5 had 379 pages but its abstract had only 10 sentences, whereas the number of pages of parent document of KD1 was 147 but its abstract consisted of 15 sentences.

It seems that American writers regard abstracts as indicative, while Korean writers regard them as informative. That is, abstracts by Korean writers seem like a miniature parent document. They faithfully followed the content of their parent document, tried to show the whole structure of the dissertation and helped the readers appreciate the dissertation as accurately as possible. On the other hand, American writers were free from the thought that abstracts should be a miniature parent document. They wrote their main points in a creative way and just seemed to want to stimulate a reader's curiosity to read the parent document. Although both writers roughly followed the IMRD patterns, the American writers didn't describe the details of the dissertation. The Korean writers seemed to have some kind of obsession that they should reflect the entirety of the parent document. Some abstracts were too long, and this risked the danger in losing readers' attention.

One of the reasons that the length of both abstracts was different was that both writers were free from the limit of length, unlike Research Article abstracts. Generally, when people publish articles in specific journals, they need to follow certain requirements. Journals usually set the length of abstracts, so writers do not have the freedom to write lengthy abstracts. However, dissertation abstracts are not the same. They are written without a word limit, and can be lengthy or short. Thus, Korean writers are free to write all that they want, while American writers are free to write only the bare minimum.

## **5.2. Micro-structure**

### **5.2.1. Seven cases of passive voice**

The micro-structure of the chosen abstracts were analyzed, using

some lexico-grammatical features. First of all, we tried to analyze them according to seven cases of passive voice usage claimed by Greenbaum (1990). Before starting the analysis, we expected there might be a big difference regarding the use of passive voice. But contrary to our expectations, a meaningful difference could not be found.

The number of passive voice sentences were counted and then we tried to clarify their usage of the above seven cases. We focused on the usage in the fourth, sixth and seventh cases. Here is the example of the fourth passive voice case to give objectivity in selected abstracts.

(example 3)<sup>3)</sup>

The products were also analyzed to find out which task was most effective for each genre and for each of the higher level (HL) and lower-level (LL) proficiency groups.

We chose a set of sample sentences of the sixth passive voice case to avoid a long active subject.

(example 4)<sup>4)</sup>

At the same time, it is argued that mainstream composition is not solely responsible, as the ESL chapters can also be considered symptomatic of the pragmatic, non-ideological theories of ESL writing which have in part contributed to the static and universalized constructions of ESL students in the ESL chapters in handbooks.

Another sample sentence was selected for the seventh case to retain the same subject throughout a long sentence.

(example 5)<sup>5)</sup>

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3) KD3 : Lee, Kyunglim, 2005, *Effects of Genre-based Tasks on Korean EFL High School Students' Writing in English*, Ewha Women's University.

4) AD1 : Benz, Bradley Paul, 2001, *"ESL Trouble Spots": Composition Handbooks, Ideology, and the Politics of ESL Writing and Global English*, University of Washington.

5) AD5 : Wright, Wayne E, 2004, *Intersection of language and assessment policies for English language learners in Arizona*. Arizona State University.

Qualitative research methodologies were utilized to analyze official and related policy documents, newspaper articles, and data collected from observations of policy events. Policy artifacts (e.g., policy texts, and the symbolic language objects and acts of policy actors and other stakeholders) were identified in the data record and analyzed using the conceptual framework.

The results are listed in the table below:

Table 3. The cases of passive voice usage

dissertation	No. of passive voice sentences	the fourth case	the sixth case	the seventh case
AD1	1 (20%)		1	
AD2	3 (25%)	3		
AD3	2 (15%)	1		1
AD4	5 (35%)	2		3
AD5	3 (33%)	2		1
sub-total	14 (23%)	8(57%)	1(7%)	5(36%)
KD1	1 (7%)			1
KD2	11 (33%)	10	1	
KD3	11 (30%)	10		1
KD4	3 (20%)	2	1	
KD5	9 (20%)	8	1	
sub-total	35 (22%)	30(85%)	3(9%)	2(6%)

American writers used 14 passive voice sentences, occupying 23% of the 60 sentences in total. Korean writers used 35 ones. It is 22% of the 156 sentences. Their slight difference could be neglectable in our opinion. It can be said that both writers used passive voice in the same rate.

However, their case of usage was a bit different. American writers used passive voice in the fourth and seventh cases, while Korean writers used it mainly in the fourth case. The seventh case is generally used when writers want to retain the same subject throughout a long sentence. Of the seven passive voice usages, only the seventh case is used with a tool of cohesion in order to give coherence to the abstract

text. The remaining six cases have nothing to do with cohesion. Considering that the seventh case is used to retain the same subject throughout a long sentence, American writers preferred the seventh case of passive voice usages as a tool of cohesion. Korean writers preferred the fourth case of passive voice usages to give objectivity to the abstracts, which belong to academic dissertation.

### 5.2.2. Referential expression

The selected materials were analyzed again with another tool of some referential expressions; definite article 'the' and demonstratives 'this, that, these & those'. A referential expression is a tool of five cohesion devices. First, their frequency of appearance was checked and then classified into two parts: textual reference vs a situational reference. As we explained before, a textual reference is what can be inferred only depending on the texts, and a situational reference means what can be identified depending on the real world. We selected the samples of situational and textual sentences, respectively.

(Example 6)<sup>6)</sup>

The purpose of **this** study is to analyze the process of scaffolding in English (EFL) writing based on Vygotskian perspectives.

(Example 7)<sup>7)</sup>

**The** circumstances of their foreign language learning and their comments are provided in detail in the text.

(Example 6) is a instance of a situational reference and (Example 7) is a textual reference. The results are as follows:

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6) KD5 : Jeong, Mireh, 2002, *A Study on the Process of Scaffolding in English Writing Based on Vygotskian Perspectives*. Gyeongsang National University.

7) AD 4 : Dirstine, Susan Beneke, 2006, Why Students persist in foreign language learning beyond academic requirements: A qualitative examination of the learner experience. The George Washington University.

Table 4. Comparison of referential expression

dissertation	definite article 'the'	demonstratives			
		this	that	these	those
AD1	15 (textual)	1 (situational)		1 (textual)	
AD2	21 (textual)	1 (situational)			
AD3	21 (textual)	3 (situational)		1 (situational)	
AD4	19 (textual)	2 (situational)		1 (situational)	
AD5	20 (textual)	1 (situational)		2 (textual)	1 (textual)
sub-total	96 (textual)	8 (situational)	nil	2 (textual) 2 (situational)	1 (textual)
KD1	20 (textual)	3 (situational)		1 (situational)	
KD2	34 (textual)	15 (10-textual 5-situational)		2 (situational)	
KD3	43 (textual)		1(textual)		
KD4	22 (textual)	5 (situational)		1 (situational)	1(situational)
KD5	25 (textual)	4 (situational)			
sub-total	144 textual)	22 (situational) 10 (textual)	1(textual)	4 (situational)	1(situational)

The results showed that the use of the definite article 'the' was very similar if we considered the number of sentences of both groups (American: 60, Korean: 156)<sup>8</sup>. We found that American writers used it more frequently. All of them were used in textual reference. The use of demonstratives didn't show any meaningful difference as the use of definite article 'the' did. Both groups used 'this, these' much more than 'that, those'. Most cases were situational references. It can be explained that writers felt their dissertations psychologically near. Their use of some textual cases is related to spatial proximity. Spatial proximity described by 'this, these' can be extended even to abstracts and subjective level of nearness (Quirt, et al., 1985: 374)

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8) Refer to <table 2>.

## 6. Conclusion

This study analyzed the abstracts of ten randomly selected doctoral dissertation abstracts written in English by American and Korean writers. The tool of analyzing their global, macro-structure was the IMRD structure suggested by Swales (1990). Essentially, an abstract is a concise form of the parent document. Its structure seems to follow that of parent document, that is, Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion according to Swales' (1990) theory. Not all abstracts selected for this study satisfied the IMRD structure, but most of them followed this structure quite well. Unlike other sections of research articles, abstracts usually consist of very short paragraphs, and was not easy to distinguish each part. In some cases, one section had just one sentence, or two sections were contained in one sentence. Abstracts by Korean writers were much longer than abstracts by American writers. It is because both writers have different ideas about the concept of abstract. Korean writers regard abstracts more as the informative piece of writing and try to miniaturize the content of the whole dissertation. On the other hand, it seems that American writers consider abstracts as an indicative piece of writing. They write creatively and describe them with brevity. They just want to stimulate the reader's curiosity and to read the dissertations. Another reason why Korean abstracts are long is that dissertation abstracts are free from word limit, unlike abstracts of Research Articles.

We also tried to analyze the micro-structure of abstracts with a different method, using two lexico-grammatical features: the seven cases of passive voice usage classified by Greenbaum (1990) and the referential expression. The ratio of passive voice usage by both groups were almost the same and it could be neglected. Although Greenbaum explained the seven cases of passive voice usages, both writers used just three cases - the fourth, sixth and seventh. Of them, American writers preferred the seventh case. Only the seventh case belongs to

cohesion. We can say American writers preferred the passive voice as a tool of cohesion, whereas Korean writers used the passive voice for the fourth reason, that is, in order to give objectivity to the sentences. Like this, though the superficial rate of the passive voice usages of both groups seemed almost the same, both groups use the passive voice differently.

Last, we used another tool of referential expression to investigate their micro-structure: 'the, this, that, these and those'. Frequency of the use of the definite article 'the' is high in both groups. The use of demonstratives is much alike. Both groups used 'this and these' much more than 'that, those'. It can be because both of them felt their dissertation psychologically near. For another reason - spatial proximity in abstracts, they used 'this, these' more frequently than 'that, those'.

With these results of contrastive analysis about both abstracts by Korean and American writers, we would like to propose a few things for a better writing of abstracts.

It has been said that passive voice sentences are used mainly for the purpose of objectivity when people write some academic articles. However, Korean writers used passive voice for objectivity more often than American writers. American writers preferred passive voice for the purpose of cohesion of text.

Abstracts by Korean writers seem to be too lengthy. This risks the danger of losing readers' interest. We propose that the length of abstracts by Korean writers be shortened.

Based on the preference of discourse community, well-formed abstracts are decided. If most of the discourse community feel the specific structure is natural and comfortable, it can be said that it is a well-formed structure. If abstracts by Korean writers are shorter in length, they may stimulate the readers' attention more. According to Conner (1999), a genre is a dynamic rhetorical form developed as responses to recurrent situations, which change over time in response to users' needs.

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## Appendix

### *Source of Data*

#### **Doctoral Dissertation in American Universities (AD)**

AD1 : Benz, Bradley Paul, 2001, *"ESL Trouble Spots": Composition Handbooks, Ideology, and the Politics of ESL Writing and Global English*, University of Washington.

AD2 : Clary, William M., Jr., 2004, *American Sign Language as a high school language elective: Factors influencing its adoption*, University of Southern California.

AD3 : Shildkraut, Debora Jill, 2000, *The English language and American identity: Understanding the language policy preferences of American citizens*. Princeton University.

AD4 : Dirstine, Susan Beneke, 2006, *Why Students persist in foreign language learning beyond academic requirements: A qualitative examination of the learner experience*. The George Washington University.

AD5 : Wright, Wayne E, 2004, *Intersection of language and assessment policies for English language learners in Arizona*. Arizona State University.

#### **Doctoral Dissertation in Korean Universities (KD)**

KD1 : Kim, Doyeon, 2007, *Effects of Input Processing and Output-enriched Consciousness-raising Instruction on Learning English Grammar*. Hanyang University.

KD2 : Kim, Sangok, 1996, *A Contrastive Study of the English and Korean Passive Voice - With Special Reference to the Semantic and Pragmatic Differences*. Konkuk University

KD3 : Lee, Kyunglim, 2005, *Effects of Genre-based Tasks on Korean EFL High School Students' Writing in English*, Ewha Women's University.

KD4 : Park, Kyongmi, 2002, *A study on the vocabulary learning strategies for Korean EFL learners*. Korea University

KD5 : Jeong, Mireh, 2002, *A Study on the Process of Scaffolding in*

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Received: 22 Jun, 2007

Revised: 30 Aug, 2007

Accepted: 9 Sept, 2007