

The Writing-to-learn Dimension of L2 Writing: Towards Rhetorical Hybridity and Flexibility

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This study investigated how two Korean EFL college students, who were taught the five-paragraph essay in their college writing classes, drew upon rhetorical resources in their writing for learning content (WLC). Using a multiple-case study design, the study examined how the students consciously manipulated all of their rhetorical resources to make meaning and used L2 writing to learn content. It also explored how they differed in their enactment of rhetorical practices and deployment of rhetorical resources in WLC. During their engagement with WLC, they developed rhetorical strategies that reflected the structure of their evolving text rather than the structure of the five-paragraph essay. Their rhetorical choices in WLC have provided invaluable insight into the rhetorical challenges they faced while writing. Overall, they produced texts that better portrayed the multiple nuances inherent in a translingual approach. An implication is that more L2 writing teachers and scholars should pay attention to the rhetorical sensibility promoted by the translingual movement.

Key words: EFL writing, the five-paragraph essay, rhetorical patterns, writing-to-learn content (WLC), translingual approach, hybrid

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1. INTRODUCTION

The assumption that “English is constant” (Cumming, 2011, p. IX) has permeated writing, rhetoric, and composition studies. However, research on writing in English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) challenges this notion, illustrating “how language and cultural variability and change are increasingly the norms around the world” (Cumming, 2011, p. IX). In recent years, a translanguaging approach (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011) has received increasing interest as a way of recognizing and respecting students’ linguistic diversity and thereby emphasizing the language resources they bring to the writing classroom (Atkinson et al., 2015). This translanguaging approach believes that second language (L2) writers successfully communicate using their entire linguistic and cultural repertoires, situating “difference in language not as a barrier to overcome or as a problem to manage, but as a resource for producing meaning in writing” (Horner et al., 2011, p. 303). The translanguaging model emphasizes “what the writers are doing with language and why” (Horner et al., 2011, p. 305) rather than whether or not language use is conventional (Gevers, 2018; Horner, 2020).

In Korean EFL writing instruction, the five-paragraph essay has long been used as a guide or template (Huh, Lee, & Kim, 2020; Yang, 2009). When it comes to stringent structural rules, this formula is the most relevant guideline. The five-paragraph essay structure is presented as the ideal English rhetorical pattern that students should follow in pedagogical practice. Thus, the five-paragraph essay structure is common in the Korean EFL context. However, the five-paragraph essay pedagogy for EFL writing, according to Connor and Ene (2019), “eliminates any local cultural flavor and relevance to specific contexts” (p. 52). Ironically, no one can dispute that organizational patterns and rhetorical conventions linked with a learner’s first language (L1) cannot be totally ruled out in their L2 writing (Brown & Lee, 2015; Kubota, 1998; Li, 2014). In this regard, as Lorés-Sanz (2018) puts it, “rhetorical structure may well be one of [the] aspects open to variation and change” (p. 178), despite being taught and used in a strict and mechanical manner.

Meanwhile, Manchón (2011) adds to our understanding of L2 writing by exploring two dimensions: how L2 learners learn to express themselves in writing (learning-to-write, LW) and how participating in L2 writing activities can help learners learn disciplinary subject matter in content areas (writing-to-learn content, WLC), or engage in writing as a tool for language learning (writing-to-learn language, WLL). These perspectives are generally intertwined and can improve instruction synergistically. “L2 writing instruction plays [the role] in uniquely supporting the synergistic learning of writing, content, and language” (Ortega, 2011, p. 237). From a WLC perspective, writing is both a means of learning and a way of demonstrating what has been learnt (Hirvela, 2011). When participating in the WLC, L2 students may face challenges in the writing/knowledge

interplay. To overcome these challenges and gain an academic advantage, they have to develop strategies for negotiating form and content, as well as patterns of rhetorical organization and subject knowledge (Ortega, 2011).

In this changing time when linguistic identities and language ideologies are academically and socio-politically contested, we are certainly moved by “frameworks that respect the strength inherent in [rhetorical] variation, recognize the importance of context and local knowledge, and accept the mutable nature of norms” (Williams & Condon, 2016, p. 12) rather than adherence to a formulaic rhetorical mode as the native English speaker norms. This situation calls for a better understanding of how L2 students use English discourse in their writing for learning content (WLC). Also, research on L2 students’ rhetorical practices in WLC should be extended to the EFL context (Hirvela, 2011), where the five-paragraph essay structure is a mainstay of LW pedagogy (Ortega, 2011), and LW remains dominated by English-only ideology by emphasizing Anglo-American writing conventions as the gatekeeper.

EFL students enrolled in universities face considerable challenges when writing academic prose. Most importantly, they must understand the rhetorical dimension to give strength and credibility to their writing (Flower & Hayes, 1980). Here, it is argued that a translingual perspective is especially useful for gaining a more nuanced understanding of how EFL college students deploy diverse rhetorical patterns in their texts. Accordingly, this study will focus on one specific localized EFL context, Korea, and examine students’ rhetorical construction of texts through a translingual lens. Specifically, it will investigate how two EFL college students, who were taught the five-paragraph essay in their college writing courses, draw on all of their available rhetorical resources and consciously exploit them to make meaning, gain understanding, and develop content area knowledge through their participation in WLC. By doing so, it will provide compelling evidence of how EFL college students leverage translingual opportunities. This will also help us learn more about the potential connection between the developmental aspects of LW and WLC.

2. RHETORICAL PATTERNS IN WLC: TOWARDS “TRANS”

The five-paragraph essay pedagogy has gained popularity in Korea, and it is now widely used as a one-size-fits-all pedagogy in EFL writing classrooms (Huh, Lee, & Kim, 2014). A five-paragraph essay consists of one opening paragraph, three body paragraphs, and one conclusion paragraph at its most basic level. This format is intended to assist students in keeping their writing orderly and structured, as well as to keep their writing centered around their thesis, which is a skill that many EFL students have difficulty mastering. Native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) believe that training students to imitate model

texts and produce those patterns is an appropriate goal for EFL writing classes. As advocates of the five-paragraph essay (cf. Vieregge, 2017), the NESTs may believe that students can write formulaically as being taught in writing classes. However, EFL students in Korea don't always adhere to it.

Lee (2021), for example, provided empirical evidence revealing that Korean EFL college students negotiate the rhetorical patterns of written text in a highly fluid manner. The findings were based on a structural analysis of 30 essays written by English education majors in college. And yet, many students did not adhere to the deterministic and inflexible five-paragraph essay structure. A fairly large percentage of students (43.33%) used inductive or hybrid structures in their argumentative writing. The hybrid structure, “a specific ‘glocal’ variant of standard academic English discourse” (Pérez-Llantada, 2013, p. 252), follows the standard five-paragraph essay structure to construct EFL text while at the same time incorporating some L1 rhetorical patterns into the text. This merging yields a hybrid discourse (Pérez-Llantada, 2013; for example, see Jia, 2004). As a result, the three parts of an essay, the introduction, the body, and the conclusion, developed differently from English (see Eggington, 1987).

Contrastive rhetoric has long investigated the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic difficulties L2 students face when writing in English (Kaplan, 1966). Following research over the last 50 years has revealed that non-native speakers may be at a substantial disadvantage when writing in various academic contexts since their native language's rhetorical structure differs so much from English's (e.g., Connor, 1996; Eggington, 1987; Grabe & Kaplan, 1989; Hinds, 1990; Kubota & Lehner, 2004). Likewise, non-native speakers lack a common understanding of the rhetorical directness inherent in Anglo-American written discourse (Matsuda, 1997, 2001). Korean EFL students would have similar challenges while writing in an academic setting, most likely due to the influence of the indirect argument pattern in their L1 cultural context (Connor, 1996; Kang & Oh, 2011; Kaplan, 1966; Lee, 2021). More importantly, their rhetorical patterns that deviate from standard written English are viewed as errors to be eradicated (Baker, 2013).

However, a translanguaging approach does not perpetuate monolingualism and does not view differences as deficits (Horner, 2017). Rather, according to Lu and Horner (2013), “difference is an inevitable product of all language acts” (p. 585). “All writers face not the dilemma of whether to be different in their writing,” they continue, “but the questions of what kinds of difference to make through their writing, how, and why” (p. 585). This approach claims that L2 students, as active rhetorical agents, can and must negotiate traditional standards based on their own goals in the context of specific writing situations (Hall, 2018; Horner et al., 2011). Consequently, Horner et al. (2011) question “myths of unchanging, universal standards for language” and instead consider “the variety, fluidity, intermingling, and changeability of languages as statistically demonstrable norms around

the globe” (p. 305). From a translanguaging perspective, the rhetorical conventions of L2 writing are not preconditioned (e.g., Flores & Aneja, 2017; Guerra, 2016; Lee & Jenks, 2016; Leonard, 2014). Then, the rhetorical hybridity of the students’ texts in Lee’s (2021) study could “serve as a resource to be drawn selectively” (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 223).

The WLC is a distinctive development of the L2 writing field that was historically influenced by the emergence of the fields of English for Specific Purposes and English for Academic Purposes (Ortega, 2011). WLC does, however, converge nicely with the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) movement (Bazerman & Russell, 1994), which has grown and developed from L1 traditions. In WLC pedagogy, writing can be privileged as the primary source of students’ expanding disciplinary knowledge (Hirvela, 2011). Students in WLC “use writing as an aid to substantially advance their expertise through new content learning and through processes of creating new content” (Ortega, 2011, p. 240). Therefore, students must already be at a certain level of L2 proficiency to participate in WLC. Without the necessary target language proficiency firmly in place, EFL students are not yet prepared to use writing as a tool for learning content (Hirvela, 2011).

The use of writing as a means of learning and demonstrating knowledge in the content course creates rhetorical organization issues. Especially for EFL students, WLC is significantly more difficult because they must “learn to write about this content with a rhetorical authority that makes their claim to expertise convincing to readers, something that ultimately makes WLC connect with LW” (Ortega, 2011, p. 240). In a special issue of the *Journal of Second Language Writing*, Manchón and de Haan (2008) point out that there is a rapidly growing interest in EFL writing. Given this growth, Hirvela (2011) predicts that “there will be a shift to studies of foreign language writing within the WLC framework” (p. 38). At this time, we do not yet know whether writing is integrated into certain academic courses in Korean EFL contexts to increase students’ understanding and knowledge of the course content. Worse, we know little about how Korean EFL college students might draw on certain rhetorical patterns to negotiate unfamiliar writing situations.

And at this point, despite emerging criticisms of translanguaging (e.g., Matsuda, 2014), as Gilyard (2016) stated, “[translanguaging’s] rejection of the monolingual paradigm is certainly the way forward” (p. 289). It is thought that it is time to investigate whether Korean EFL college students, whose EFL writing experiences have been enmeshed in the five-paragraph essay pedagogy, develop rhetorical strategies that demonstrate a critical awareness of rhetorical conventions as contingent and emergent rather than standardized and static. Therefore, the primary goal of this study is to provide a detailed, contextualized picture of what rhetorical choices the students made in WLC and how they thought about their choices in WLC. The study now moves on to a case study of two EFL college students, which was guided by the following research questions:

- 1) How do rhetorical structures manifest themselves in the writing for learning content (WLC) produced by EFL college students? If any, in what ways have their L1 backgrounds enabled them to negotiate the rhetorical demands of WLC? Why?
- 2) How do EFL college students experience monolingual writing-practice ideology in WLC?

3. THE STUDY

This study employed a multiple-case study design involving two cases of two EFL college students to analyze how they consciously manipulated all of their rhetorical resources to make meaning and used L2 writing to learn content, situating themselves as language users in WLC. Furthermore, it explored how the students differed in their enactment of rhetorical practices and deployment of rhetorical resources in WLC.

3.1. The Context and Participants

This study was conducted in a content course entitled *Introduction to Teaching EFL: Theory and Practice*, taught by the author during the spring semester of 2019. This course was a third-year English language education course at a large Korean university in Seoul. According to the official curriculum, it was a required core course for getting a degree in teacher certification. Although WLC was not the main focus of this course, the instructor did include a WLC-based activity. One key feature of WLC is that “the ability to engage successfully in WLC while enhancing L2 writing ability is more likely to occur slowly” (Hirvela, 2011, p. 55). Importantly, the gradual but potent effect of WLC evolves over time, as evidenced in Spack’s (1997) seminal article. According to Hirvela (2011), a longitudinal approach to WLC is much more likely to yield meaningful insights into how L2 students develop the ability to connect writing and content area learning.

Therefore, the pedagogical intervention centered on the students’ semester-long “extra-class work” (Brown & Lee, 2015, p. 201) in this class. Students were strongly encouraged to commit to writing a journal or summary of issues from each chapter of the textbook. Although students’ extra-class work was not graded or commented on, it would provide opportunities to foster new content learning by reviewing and consolidating what has been learned as well as reformulating and developing newly discovered concepts. The extra-class work in this class remained the voluntary tool for learning course material and ultimately getting a good grade since the midterm and final tests included essay writing, which accounted for a significant portion of the final grade.

Here, I have chosen two undergraduate EFL students, Woo and Yoon (all names are pseudonyms), who were juniors majoring in English language education. They were in their early twenties. They were chosen because, despite having displayed a similar level of writing proficiency, they displayed different levels of rhetorical engagement. On holistically scored in-class writing exams, both students were at the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001) level C1. The CEFR band scale C (both C1 and C2) is commonly referred to as “proficient.” Woo, a male student, spent a year studying abroad in the United States. Yoon, a female student, was a product of Korea’s national education system and its English language curriculum. They started learning English in elementary school and kept studying it as a subject until high school.

The two students took an EFL writing course in college, whose pedagogical focus was on the five-paragraph essay format. The prescribed structure was explicitly instructed, and they were forced to follow the five-paragraph essay template, with alternative approaches ignored. The linearity and directness of the five-paragraph essay format were maintained by the gate-keeping role in their writing. One philosophy that seems to drive the NEST was the desire to ensure that his students become familiar with standard organizational patterns common to English writing (cf. Matsuda, 2006). The NEST also praised essays that adhered to clear patterns and/or believed that teaching students to recognize and generate those patterns was a reasonable goal for an EFL writing course. Before enrolling in this course, Woo and Yoon did not, in fact, write much outside of their EFL writing classes.

3.2. Data Collection¹

The data was collected from three different sources. To begin with, students were given a background questionnaire to obtain details about their background, education, and experience with and attitude toward L1 and L2 writing in order to contextualize the findings. Second, as part of the midterm exam, students were required to write a timed essay in class in which they had to respond to the question of whether “younger is better” in second language learning. The students were given 30 minutes to finish their essays. They understood that this mid-term exam essay had to incorporate not only books but also lectures, lecture notes, and any other relevant external reality from which they were expected to display (and possibly acquire) knowledge in some way.

Third, individual interviews were conducted to gather information regarding the rationale behind the rhetorical choices in their content area writing along with their WLC experience. Each student was given an interview once. The interview was more like guided

¹ I initially collected the writings of four Korean EFL college students for a case study (Huh & Lee, 2019). For this study, I’ll concentrate on the two students’ writings.

conversations rather than structured queries and took only about 50 minutes for each student. Despite being open-ended, in-depth, and unstructured, the interviews obviously followed a consistent line of inquiry (Yin, 2018). During the interview, the two students verbalized in retrospect how they labored over their rhetorical frameworks to demonstrate an understanding of the content. They also talked about how difficult and unpredictable their participation in the WLC might be. The interviews were conducted in Korean, taped, and verbatim transcribed. Following the interview, I created each student's narrative using the interview data.

3.3. Data Analysis

The analysis process involved analyzing the students' writing and narratives. Students' original texts were not changed. In order to describe the students' rhetorical patterns, their writing was analyzed in terms of the five-paragraph essay format. Focusing on an essay format having five paragraphs (one introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs with support and development, and one concluding paragraph), I incorporated the following criteria into an analytic rubric: introduction, body, conclusion, and organization/structure (e.g., Nunes, 2013; Vieregge, 2017). The analysis focused on the organization of each paragraph and the linear progression of paragraph development. For example, in the introduction, it is identified whether the essay highlights the key ideas and provides a thesis statement. Each paragraph in the body should begin with a topic sentence that informs the reader of the paragraph's subject. The rest of the paragraph should be made up of supporting sentences. The essay's main points should be summarized in the final paragraph. And again, students should demonstrate a great deal of structure in a straight line.

Students' narratives were analyzed using thematic analysis procedures (i.e., categorical content analysis) (Murray, 2009). Through thematic analysis, the main forces that led students to create particular rhetorical patterns to shape their content understanding in WLC were investigated. Specifically, the emphasis was on students' explanations of rhetorical considerations in WLC. Thus, narrative data could triangulate data gathered through background questionnaires and written texts, thereby deepening the conclusions that can reasonably be drawn. For the cross-case analysis (Yin, 2018), what two students had in common as well as what characteristics were unique to each student were determined, resulting in a description of their similarities and differences. To ensure the validity of interpretative accounts, it included member-checking.

4. FINDINGS

Based on the findings, I present and discuss how the two students had more control over their text by selecting the most appropriate rhetorical features (e.g., organizational structures) to meet the needs and expectations they thought to be associated with the WLC rhetorical context.

4.1. Rhetorical Decisions toward Translingual Orientation in Woo's WLC

During his freshman year of college, Woo took a mandatory EFL writing course. He intensified his engagement with EFL writing during his sophomore year by taking an advanced-level English composition course. The legendary five-paragraph essay structure, which he had learned to rely on in the two courses, was a major component of the EFL writing he had mastered. Without much sense of rhetorical organization, Woo mechanically exploited the surface features of the five-paragraph essay structure in order to meet the course requirements. "It's quicker to write their way to get a good grade and exit from the writing course," he concluded. The following is how Woo recalled his writing classes:

The introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion of a five-paragraph essay were all taught and thoroughly discussed, along with how to include a strong thesis in each. Seniors who had already taken the course claimed that adhering to the five-paragraph essay format was crucial to getting a good grade. I made an effort to adhere to it precisely in my writing assignments.

As he moved through his content course, he faced challenges deriving from his limited experience in academic writing as well as potentially limited knowledge of content. While undergoing his earlier WLC, he often traced his essay writing experiences back to the five-paragraph essay structure and relied on the formulaic knowledge of rhetorical patterns in order to embrace the full value of content writing. He quickly discovered that the very knowledge of five-paragraph essay structure, while of some mechanical value, was not adequate to meet the writing demands he faced, nor did it allow his preferred way of articulating an understanding of content. He gradually weaned himself off of his dependence on such a formulaic structure in the WLC context.

Overall, Woo's writing mechanically appropriated the five-paragraph essay's surface elements. Woo started with a thesis statement, proceeded to develop the main idea, and then connected it to every other idea in the essay. His opinion was expressed in a succinct thesis statement in the introduction as underlined, which was followed by body paragraphs

that covered a variety of age-related topics and a conclusion that restated his stance. The body of his essay consists of two paragraphs, each limited to one idea that supports his thesis. The first paragraph made a case for an age effect based on neurological factors, and the second paragraph gave an explanation based on a critical period.

According to the five-paragraph essay format, each body paragraph should start with a topic sentence, which tells what the paragraph is about. However, his organization logically placed the topic sentence at the end of the paragraph. Woo started a paragraph with the evidence or facts that helped support his argument and stated his claim at the end of the paragraph, as shown in the underlined below. The indirect development is fairly evident in Woo's two body paragraphs, each of which concluded with its own claim. In the last paragraph of his essay, Woo reminded the reader of his main point and restated his thesis based on what he had said in the body paragraphs (See the underlined for a summary of the essay in the final paragraph).

(Introduction) Many people believe that early learning, the better. However, it is not true. We called it CPH that there is biologically determined period of life in which we acquire language easily. Usually we say that puberty would be around the critical period.

(Body 1) If we consider neurological aspects, we might say that hemispheric lateralization finished around puberty, and the plasticity of child's brain make it easier to acquire English. Also certain functions are assigned to left hemisphere, but right hemisphere also participated in pragmatic aspects of language. Therefore, neurological consideration cannot give us evidence to "earlier, the better."

(Body 2) Also, if we consider accent, we might think that there is a critical period. In the 20th century, there was emphasis on authentic control of accent of foreign language which gave support to CPH. But many scientific research only applied to "accent." This doesn't imply that children are universally sufficient and efficient in acquiring language. Also accent is not the only criteria, and communicative, functional aspects of language is far more important.

(Conclusion) Therefore, children are not always better than adults in acquiring a second language. And as Cooks said, we should all L2 learners "multi-competence" and we should not be too picky at minor production skills

or trivial grammar points. Adults might also have ability/capacity to learn L2 just as children do.

The five-paragraph essay formula assisted Woo with proper formatting of writing, but the formula sometimes limited his development of complex thinking (e.g., Bernstein & Lowry, 2017; Brannon et al., 2008; Caplan & Johns, 2019; Wesley, 2000). Woo explained that the WLC draws on more sophisticated rhetorical processes while writing. Woo said, “My ideas mattered and were worthy of exploration, not a formula in writing for learning purposes.” Yet, he did not push back against the five-paragraph essay structure. Instead, he spoke of wanting to write in a rhetorically appropriate way for WLC. His rhetorical choices were inextricably linked to his experience in Korean writing, where the rhetorical structure, he thought, is typically indirect. At a macro-level rhetorical pattern, the blending of direct and indirect discourse structures finally produces hybrid texts. As Woo so cogently said:

Although well-educated native speakers have a solid grasp of standard English grammar and vocabulary, this does not imply that their rhetorical patterns are always superior to those of Koreans. Sometimes the five-paragraph essay format feels constricting. Getting straight to the point, in particular, is not always the best strategy for developing and structuring my ideas. So, I blended the direct English and indirect Korean discourse.

While organization of ideas is an important aspect of the writing process, Woo has not arranged ideas in WLC in the prefabricated and hierarchical form of the five-paragraph essay. Instead, he created spaces for himself to leverage his entire rhetorical repertoire, negotiating, adapting, and mediating English and Korean discourse in a fluid way (Baker, 2013). In WLC, Woo needed to make the best use of writing as a means of furthering his grasp of content knowledge. So, he was more concerned with sophisticated levels of engagement with the content knowledge he was developing in a rhetorically fluid way (Lu & Horner, 2013). In this way, Woo was caught between accommodating dominant demands (i.e., adhering to the standard norms of the five-paragraph essay structure) and resistance to such demands (i.e., incorporating L1 rhetorical structure into his L2 text) (Flores & Aneja, 2017). Woo showed that his rhetorical organization is up for negotiation (Harwood & Hadley, 2004; Lee, 2020; Lu & Horner, 2013; Pérez-Llantada, 2013; Summers, 2020).

For Woo, the use of hybrid rhetoric was not only an effective way to engage in deep and complicated thinking but also a during-writing strategy to more cohesively structure his ideas. Through hybrid rhetoric, Woo developed new disciplinary knowledge and “persuaded the readership of the validity of [his] new knowledge” (Mauranen, Pérez-

Llantada, & Swales, 2010, p. 643). In this way, his flexible rhetorical patterns are an asset in WLC, although the five-paragraph essay may penalize his rhetorical forms. In particular, Woo, as an EFL writer, was able to incorporate a translingual perspective into his own WLC (Bawarshi, 2016; Flores & Aneja, 2017).

4.2. Rhetorical Agency toward Translingual Ideology in Yoon's WLC

When Yoon first took an EFL writing class as a departmental requirement at college, a native English-speaking teacher focused on the legendary five-paragraph essay structure with the format of introduction-body-conclusion. Only those students who were able to write a five-paragraph essay got good grades. Yoon didn't feel at ease following such a regimented structure. And again, she could not handle it easily. She stated, "I should learn it by heart to get a good grade despite being frustrated." She was thereby put in the position of seeming to follow precisely the five-paragraph essay in order to survive academically. Yoon summed it up as follows:

For the first time, I learned how to write a 5-paragraph essay in a college English composition class. A native-speaker instructor presented the five-paragraph essay format as the model to which we, non-native students, must conform. In that class, we had two options: we were either forced to conform to the format or take the risk of getting a bad grade.

As an English language education major, Yoon did relatively little writing in her major content courses. Although she was actually required to do very little writing in her content courses, in the literature class, she had to write about literature. Writing about literature had some value for her because it improved her understanding and pleasure of it. Yoon further elaborated, "In my literature class, I was more creative in expressing myself." She continued, "I have considered matters of literary decorum, but in a more flexible way. I've changed and adapted my writing style to meet the demands of the moment." Her works have stressed what has been termed "prose decorum" and the development of a unique voice as a writer. She was uncertain, however, as to whether such writing benefited her academic writing skills. Perhaps more noteworthy are her comments implying that the fluidity of rhetorical patterns in her writing is far more important.

In Yoon's WLC, we can notice one crucial feature. Yoon organized her essay quite indirectly, as evidenced in the following paragraphs, addressing a controversial issue (i.e., CPH) in the first section yet omitting to mention her thesis statement anywhere in the introduction. In the next few paragraphs, she explored the topic from different perspectives. She provided research evidence on the advantages and disadvantages of starting L2

learning early. She also chastised the private academy for forcing young kids to memorize isolated and distinct vocabulary and structures. To support her point of view, she claimed that rote learning is unhelpful for people of all ages. Besides, personal feelings and opinions, which might be considered not directly relevant to this topic, serve as essential evidence for her claim. The main point is then either hinted at (leaving the reader to guess) or stated too broadly or ambiguously towards the conclusion (e.g., Jia, 2004).

(Introduction) According to Piaget, each child releases a certain ability when the right time comes. CPH is hugely related to this perspective, which also claims that there is a biologically determined timetable for SLA. Whether age has undeniable relationship between general language acquisition ability is controversial.

(Body 1) A number of research supports that there is a critical period for one to acquire authentic and native-like accent. It is known to be best acquired before puberty. Moreover, there are some evidences that explain second language in general could be best acquired around puberty.

(Body 2) Let's take affective perspectives. Child has a dynamic ego, therefore, it has less inhibitions to learn a new language. They construct hypothesizes, break and solidate it, according to Chomsky. Likewise children can be great language learners.

(Body 3) However, they have weaknesses as well. They tend to do inductive thinking, compared to adults who think deductively. Children would have hard time studying with Grammar Translation Method.

(Body 4) Korean public school curriculum is well-aware of this developmental stage of a child. They initiate English education at age 9 mostly composed of listening and speaking. The grammar education starts at age 13. However, in private institutions, they force children at 6 or 7 to study and memorize vocabulary and grammar. This is inadequate. Children are more capable at meaningful learning, not to mention rote learning doesn't lead to any long-term memory.

In the last paragraph, Yoon went considerably further in her arguments against rigorous grammar instruction for younger children. At the same time, she introduced extraneous ideas into the text, not sticking to the point. Such discussion is labeled as off-topic,

resulting in a lack of internal coherence. Simultaneously, she failed to stay on topic by interjecting something unrelated in the final paragraph. She did not, however, specify how much she agreed with the claim that *younger is better*. Yoon did not offer the basic building block of the five-paragraph essay formula because she composed a text with wildly digressive paragraph movement.

(Conclusion) I would recommend to stop making such young children to study English. Children can better acquire grammar rules when they get old enough. For now, children at young age should be left alone without lists of grammatical rules and vocabulary. They won't remember it, anyway.

The writing Yoon was doing in this class was unlike anything she had ever done before. In an EFL writing class, she concentrated on textual organization. In WLC activities, Yoon's main concerns were to accurately understand the course materials and then to connect them in her own text. She believed that the five-paragraph essay formula was a necessary starting point for WLC. Her prior knowledge of the five-paragraph essay structure, however, did not extend to her WLC. Yoon elaborated, saying, "At first, I tried to use the five-paragraph format. But I could not create knowledgeable, substantive content because the five-paragraph format consists of ideas supported by limited knowledge of the subject and insufficient quantity. However, I attempted to develop the comprehensive elaboration of an argument and fluency."

When Yoon understood that WLC involves more than just fulfilling the five-paragraph essay format, she stopped conforming to a rhetorically fixed format and instead focused on being knowledgeable (e.g., Punyaratabandhu, Rush, Kleindl, & Wadden, 2017). However, her strategies would sometimes be unsuccessful. The paragraph under discussion was off-topic, or she ended up going more deeply into a seemingly irrelevant idea or moving on to a new, expanded idea. Nevertheless, Yoon's rhetorical agency could mobilize her lived resources to promote the expansion of her subject matter expertise in WLC. When asked about the essay's thesis statement, which wasn't in the introduction, she explained her end-weighted development of rhetorical structures:

In Korean discourse, direct discussion and persuasion are uncommon. After finishing a book, a reader should be able to locate something meaningful in the text. You can only fully comprehend the true meaning of a book or film after you have finished reading it or seeing it. I hope my readers like my writing in the same way. It is good writing if you have a strong message with the purpose of causing the reader to consider a topic without a thesis.

Yoon seemed to know what she was doing rhetorically. This end-weighted development is a strategy employed by Yoon to position herself as an agentive language user who is not simply following the five-paragraph essay structure but who is instead constructing her L2 text in her own ways. Yoon further confirms this by saying, “I am not conditioned to write only in one particular way.” For this very reason, Yoon’s rhetorical choice in WLC was about alternating between L1 and L2 and moving beyond identified languages (such as Korean and English) (García & Kleyn, 2016) “with a personal engagement to discover the appropriate mix” (Canagarajah, 2016, pp. 269–270). Yoon’s WLC practice seemed to be moving away from a monolingual ideology and toward a translingual ideology, with a focus on exploring alternatives “to open up to them and accommodate them in [her] communicative and ideological repertoire” (Tupas, 2021, p. 222).

4.3. Two Students’ Translingual Practices and Orientations in WLC

By and large, both students’ writing shows a good grasp of the content issue under discussion, and its formal accuracy is high. They cultivated the rhetorical ability to re-create how L2 writing could enhance content learning. In WLC, Woo and Yoon didn’t simply write whatever they wanted in a free-for-all way. Instead, they emphasized the fluid nature of rhetoric and exhibited greater control over the text they were constructing by choosing, consciously or unconsciously, the most suitable structures from their repertoire, thereby being capable of handling the WLC rhetorical situation. Consequently, they purposefully incorporated flexible rhetorical structures into their WLC. Such rhetorical patterns in WLC could be the “products of language users’ multiple repertoires” (Kubota, 2016, p. 476) rather than rhetorical deviations that should be avoided. They also adopted a translingual orientation towards differences and plurality in the way people use language (Flores & Aneja, 2017; Horner, NeCamp, & Donahue, 2011; Lee & Jenks, 2016).

Woo, in particular, used hybrid rhetorical structures, which are the result of the interaction and contact between English and Korean discourse, thereby engaging successfully in WLC. He was relatively well-positioned to experiment with indirectness devices as a persuasive strategy to deal with the challenges of WLC. The indirectness devices (Hinkel, 1997) in his writing can be traced to Korean discourse (Choi, 1988; Hinds, 1990; Hinkel, 1997; Jwa, 2020; Ryu, 2006). Certainly, Woo experienced his L1 discourse as a resource rather than a barrier when honing his English rhetorical strategy. Woo learned about the topic and understood different points of view on the topic as he “experimented with the ways to adopt translinguality” (Canagarajah, 2016, p. 267; see also Lee & Canagarajah, 2019) in his WLC.

Yoon, on the other hand, had a difficult time in WLC. It is difficult to say whether her difficulties with WLC were more closely related to WLC itself, but her case serves as a

reminder of the challenges involved in connecting writing and disciplinary learning. Despite the obvious challenges, she noted WLC's particular benefit in terms of "pushed output" (Swain, 1985), not only for getting ideas down on paper but also for broadening discipline knowledge. And again, Yoon appears to subordinate her text's rhetorical structure to her rhetorical purposes (e.g., Canagarajah, 2011, 2013). Thus, Yoon's rhetorical choice was quite agentive in that she engaged in the ongoing battle against the monolingual bias, or, more precisely, in resisting the five-paragraph essay. And she also stressed that NESTs should avoid tackling the textual organization of students' texts (e.g., Reid, 2001; see also Huh et al., 2014).

The experiences of the two students with L2 writing, in particular, have been limited to the prevailing tradition of the five-paragraph essay. Thus, they have recognized the power that a five-paragraph essay can have on their writing practices. However, in WLC, they viewed the five-paragraph essay structure as one of a range of possible approaches to producing their texts. Thus, they felt compelled to come up with a rhetorical formula for structuring their arguments, and so they explored adaptations and alternatives by creatively altering the five-paragraph essay format into new rhetorical structures. The two students' new rhetorical structures are precisely a "balance between accommodation and resistance that lies at the core of translanguaging that we believe to be a productive starting point for empowering nonnative English-speaking [students]" (Flores & Aneja, 2017, p. 445). More importantly, although WLC is more directly related to content learning, it plays a role in uniquely supporting the synergistic learning of writing and content (Manchón, 2011; Ortega, 2011), allowing WLC to support LW.

EFL college students in Korea perceive English rhetorical conventions as inflexible rather than negotiable with a rhetorical situation. This is largely due to exposure to the five-paragraph essay (Johns, 2015). Woo and Yoon also tried to extend the organization of a five-paragraph essay as a solid point of reference for WLC. The WLC practices, however, emphasize content more than certain preferred forms, whereas the emphasis is reversed in EFL writing classes. To maximize the effects and benefits of WLC, Woo and Yoon should produce content-responsible writing (cf. Leki & Carson, 1997) based on information mostly from their academic course. Therefore, Woo and Yoon needed to negotiate their rhetorical repertoires strategically to demonstrate their understanding of the academic content and advance their content learning. In this regard, Yoon and Woo's WLC is not simply an add-on to their writing practice. For them, WLC provided more rhetorical space for their texts in order to achieve content-learning goals and learning outcomes. They ultimately learned more about L2 writing when employing it for WLC. Their understandings of rhetorical structures as emergent and fluid were clearly at work in WLC.

5. CONCLUSION

This study investigated how the two college students, as non-native speakers of English, interpret the WLC task and draw upon rhetorical resources in their attempts to write successfully in a discipline-specific course. By tracing how rhetorical resources were taken up, traversed, and negotiated throughout WLC, a deeper understanding of students' WLC experiences was obtained. The two students' rhetorical choices in WLC have provided invaluable insight into the challenges they encountered as they navigated their way through writing. In carrying out WLC, the two students chose to deploy their rhetorical resources to position themselves as they would in their WLC, rather than just following the five-paragraph essay structure (e.g., Donahue, 2016). And relatedly, a language ideology of monolingualism is certainly there. Both students challenged monolingual biases, developing rhetorical strategies that reflect "the structure of their evolving text rather than the structure of an outside text" (Leki, 1991, p. 135). In this sense, they produced texts that better reflected and advanced a translingual ideology, which offers an alternative view of rhetorical convention (cf. Kilfoil, 2015).

In particular, the five-paragraph essay structure was not necessarily the most effective choice for Woo and Yoon in structuring WLC. Thus, their writing in the content area has clashed with the five-paragraph essay format, leaving them struggling to balance prescriptive rules with their own rhetorical choices. Their context-specific rhetorical strategies appeared not to be effective, perhaps because their text's rhetorical construction could be frequently regarded as nonstandard, deviant, or in-process (cf. Leonard, 2014). Or, their rhetorical choices may be related to a lack of L2 writing proficiency, as suggested by previous studies (e.g., Kang & Oh, 2011; Wei, Zhang, & Zhang, 2020). However, the two students' concerns were not so much about writing like the five-paragraph essay as they were about making rhetorical choices through learning and writing in WLC. They were then open to a translingual orientation that values "writerly agency" (Lu & Horner, 2013) over the flawless forms of the five-paragraph essay.

A translingual perspective provides a useful lens for understanding the rhetorical patterns that Woo and Yoon "create rather than lack" (Leonard, 2014, p. 230) in WLC. If we had remained deeply attached to the five-paragraph essay format as the dominant tradition in Korean EFL settings, we would have missed the students' ways of building content knowledge from their rhetorical repertoires, such as Yoon's strategic textual organization and Woo's use of the L1 pattern to think rhetorically. Again, in a translingual approach, rhetorical "deviations in writing can be considered not always failure . . . but instead a norm of language-in-practice, one of its meaning-making functions" (Leonard & Nowacek, 2016, p. 261). What's more, "that individual rhetorical choice is at the heart of translingual rhetorical agency" (p. 31), as Jordan (2021) argues. And once again, it better

reflects the characteristics of a translingual approach, which is more concerned with being rhetorically productive than rhetorically correct (Jordan, 2021).

This study is based on only two cases (two students), so it is difficult to draw any generalizable conclusions. Nevertheless, I would argue that the findings of this study are to “expand and generalize theories” (Yin, 2018, p. 21). That is to say, toward rhetorical differences, “translingualism can help us redefine L2 writing” (Horner, 2021, p. 63). So, we, as teachers, should try to move toward the orientation that “when students are considered lacking organization . . . writing in an arbitrary formula merely sustains the deficit perception” (Brannon et al., 2008, p. 18). Otherwise, we marginalize EFL students’ broader range of rhetorical options that they bring to EFL academic writing. I hope more L2 writing teachers and scholars will take heed of the rhetorical sensibility promoted by the translingual movement. As an afterword, the WLC dimension of L2 writing remains on the periphery of L2 writing research, as Hirvela (2011) laments. I urge more L2 writing researchers to add this important area of research to their research agendas (Manchón & de Haan, 2008).

Applicable level: Tertiary

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