

## Strategies for academic English

Please look at and critique the writing samples exercise (p. 3). Also, it may be helpful to bring a sample academic article (a published article from an academic journal) from your field of study to the seminar, e.g., one that you are currently reading. Academic papers often consist of the following.

### 1. Differences between academic and general English

What differences exist between academic and non-academic styles of writing? E.g.:

- Overall structure of essays, articles, theses, etc.
- Genre
- Sentence structure
- Introductions
- Topic sentences
- Vocabulary style and usage
- Sentence subjects, noun and pronoun usage
- Verb choice
- Grammar
- Tone

### 2. Korean vs. English style

#### 2.1. Argumentation

- What do 'argumentation' and 'rhetoric' mean? To what degree does writing in your field use these?
- What problems do inexperienced writers have with rhetorical style in academic writing?
- What problems do Korean / Asian writers have with English rhetorical style in academic writing?

English papers follow a different and more rigid type of structure:

- An intro section with a specific lead-in to the topic; familiar or general information is de-emphasized or omitted.
- A specific thesis statement of the main purpose of the writing, clearly stated in the intro.
- An overview or plan of development, e.g., the main arguments or points supporting or developing the thesis, are often delineated right after the thesis in the intro.
- Specific topic sentences in the body of the writing, which convey the main ideas supporting the thesis; each paragraph develops a main idea.

- Specific arguments or evidence for these main ideas.
- A satisfying, though probably brief, conclusion, that ties things together and conveys the main points, implications, and/or relevance of the research.

## 2.2. Introductions

See the next section of sample intro paragraphs. Do you see some problems, and if so, why might these writers exhibit these difficulties?

## 2.3. Topic sentences

A more informal or less skilled topic sentence is the “self-announcing” topic sentences.

- [1] I want to argue that this policy will not only fail to bring about any positive results, but in fact I think it will ultimately compromise the quality of classroom teaching.

Also, some writers may write in a less fluid style like this.

- [2] Korean texts have been analyzed by applied linguist Eggington. He shows that Korean texts are characterized by indirectness and nonlinear development. A four-part pattern, *ki-sung-chon-kyul*, typical of Korean prose, contributes to the nonlinearity (Conner, 1996:45).

This could be better worded like this.

- [3] Eggington’s analyses of Korean texts (Eggington, 1983; 1989) show that Korean texts are characterized by indirectness and nonlinear development. A four-part pattern, *ki-sung-chon-kyul*, typical of Korean prose, contributes to this nonlinearity.

## 3. Planning and strategies

Consider how you go about doing a writing assignment (e.g., a research paper, a thesis, a research article), or a presentation (e.g., a class or conference presentation). Discuss the following.

1. How do you go about planning [1] a presentation or [2] a major writing assignment? How do you structure it? What are your greatest challenges?
2. How do you get started? How do you get ideas? How do you organize your ideas into a paper or presentation?
3. How much do you revise your essay?
4. How much do you revise and rehearse your presentation?
5. What kinds of blocks do you have? Why do you think you have them? How do you deal with them?
6. Do you procrastinate? If so, why do you think you do so?
7. How is the process of writing, or creating a presentation, different in English than in your native language?

Now consider the English aspect of your studies.

1. What makes writing or presenting in English as a second language (ESL) more difficult for you?
2. How do you feel about having to do work in English? Would you say that your feelings toward English are positive, negative, neutral, or mixed?
3. What kind of motivation do you have about learning English?

## Writing samples: Introductions

Examine and compare the following writing samples, which are introduction sections from university essays (first-year graduate students) by Korean writers at an American university. Evaluate the quality of these essay introductions, and point out stylistic problems that you see. For example, are these sufficiently clear, specific and focused? In what ways do some of the Korean samples differ from standard English academic writing?

### 1. [no title]

The conflict between the tradition and the progress is continuing from the past to today and will be continued in the future. There is also no exception for the architecture. Modern technology and science are developed in a fright speed and these achievements of the western civilization make a traditional society and an ethic system change much. Many people in various fields of such society are trying to define their characters anew and architecture is also trying to find their role and is oscillating in the many trends. Progressive architects believe in the techno-scientific future that could make us do what we cannot do now. Conservative architects believe that a return to the past can bring us back the lost value and the third group concentrates on the internal order of architecture independent of outside world. We cannot ignore both tradition and progress. There are many examples that show us the conflict between tradition and progress.

### 2. Integration of Game Attributes into Travel Decision-Aid Systems

The emergence of technology such as the Internet has changed not only the way of communication and information searching procedure, but also the nature of the tourism marketplace. Recent research on travel information search process has emphasized hedonic needs, in addition to functional needs, as a driving force of travel information search (Vogt and Fesenmaier, 1998; Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982; Bloch et al, 1986). In this sense, how to make the information search process fun while providing demanded information is a challenge for researchers and system developers. Computer games have long been one of the most significant beneficiary fields of the ever-developing computer technology. Computer games, like play and other types of games, are known to be a response to the needs for entertainment, compensation, and/or escape from reality and are more oriented toward hedonic needs than functional needs (Brougere, 1999). This study is motivated by the expectation that game attributes, which enables the user to deeply involve in the process, would provide valuable guidelines for developing a more effective Travel Decision-aid System (TDAS). The concept of 'flow' which was originally introduced by

Csikszemihalyi (1975) is used to incorporate gaming processes and information search processes into Travel Decision-aid Systems. The following discusses the characteristics of travel information search process and game attributes, an integrated model will be proposed and three propositions are suggested to highlight the importance of game attributes and flow experience for designing Travel Decision-aid Systems. Guidelines for design will be suggested in the last section.

### 3. Low pressure synthesis of diamond on graphite, Si and Fe substrate: Approached by Charged Cluster Model

The effect of substrate on low-pressure synthesis of diamond was investigated. Diamond was deposited on graphite, Si and Fe substrates by hot filament CVD. We could find etching of graphite with simultaneous deposition of diamond on graphite substrate, deposition of diamond on Si substrate, and rapid deposition of graphite on Fe substrate. Growth mechanism by atomic unit or atomic hydrogen hypothesis could not explain the rapid growth and powder like shape of graphite deposition on Fe substrate, and diamond deposition with simultaneous etching of graphite on graphite substrate. But, based on the charged cluster model of which the growth unit is cluster, we could successfully explain it without the thermodynamic paradox.

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## Appendix: Korean cf. English style & structure

Asian writers, especially in some fields, may be influenced by the traditional East Asian writing styles that came from Confucian academic culture. A common classical Chinese style is the *bāgǔwén* [八股文, 팔고문]: eight-legged essay, from traditional civil service exam writing – rhetorically parallel paragraphs along four central parts of the essay – *qǐgǔ*, *xiǎogǔ*, *zhōnggǔ*, *hòugǔ*

- opening & amplification: broaching the topic, then elaborating on and clarifying the theme
- parallel development of arguments

Similarly, the Chinese *qǐ chéng zhuan hé* [起承轉合] style, and its equivalents – the Korean 기승전결 [起承轉結] style and the Japanese *keishōtenketsu* [起承轉結] style consist of ‘beginning’, ‘development’, ‘turn’ (subtopic, view from different perspective, or digression) and ‘conclusion’ – from Chinese poetry of four lines or idea units.

- Thus, a common Chinese style consisting of: [1] opening; [2] loose development of argument; [3] main point of argument; [4] content or concepts indirectly related to argument; and [5] conclusion of main theme.
- Or similarly in Korean writing: [1] Opening & main topic; [2] Discussing “around” the topic – illustration / description from tangential views; [3] Restating topic in next paragraph.