

A Study on the Effects of Writing Prompts on Korean EFL High School Students' Narrative Writing Performance

Youngsu Kim
(Changpyeong High School)

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This study aims to explore the effects of writing prompts on high school students' writing performance. 124 first-year high school students participated in this study and they were divided into the bare-prompt group and the framed-prompt group. Again the two groups were divided into the sub-groups of higher-level participants and lower-level participants each. The data was analyzed in terms of quantity and quality, and the results are as follows: In quantitative terms, the framed-prompt group did not show significantly better results than the bare-prompt group, and the same can be said for both the higher-level students and the lower-level students of each group even if a writing prompt showed indications that it might be slightly more suitable and beneficial to the lower-level students of the framed-prompt group. In qualitative terms, in contrast, the framed-prompt group showed significantly better results than the bare-prompt group on the whole, but while the higher-level students of the framed-prompt group did not perform significantly better than their counterparts of the bare-prompt group, the lower-level students in the former group showed quite a different result. These results were presented in detail and their pedagogical implications were further discussed in comparison to previous studies.

[writing prompt/writing performance/narrative writing]

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, it is believed that international languages are what gives power to those who want to work world-wide. Among these people, English is considered to be the most powerful international language. The rapid development of information and communication, along with the Internet, SNS (social networking

services), and smart phones, has invited English to become even more vital in nearly every professional field as well as in our daily lives (Yoon & Lee, 2016). Furthermore, the importance of writing English has been clarified through our online interactions and exchanges (Brown, 2007). The main purpose of English education in Korea has focused on communicative competence, enhancing four skills equally and simultaneously – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, for some time now, writing seems to have been regarded as no more than a support tool for learning vocabulary and grammar, or even rather an unimportant skill in itself as Harmer (2011) points out. In fact, in most high schools in Korea, English learners have been taught with an emphasis on reading and listening. Their English education rarely focuses on writing ability, because the Collage Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) does not require this competency (Yoon & Lee, 2014). There is very little awareness of the need to teach writing skills, and as a result, English learners have proportionately fewer opportunities to improve their writing ability, even though writing skills are recognized to be an absolutely necessary skill for communication and for English learners to be successful in their efforts if they have the opportunity to stay persistent (Yoon, 2015).

For EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students, narrative writing is one of the most common writing tasks they receive, because it may be easier for them to develop and follow a given plot. With reference to narrative writing, the ‘prompt’ has been suggested as a way of helping language learners participate in the task at-hand by “establishing the setting, participants, purpose, and other features of the situation” (Douglas, 2000, p. 55). Kroll and Reid (1994) define a writing prompt as a cue given to the writer and classify it into three types, and it has been looked upon as one of the important variables affecting English learners’ overall writing performance (Hamp-Lyons, 1990; Weigle, 2002). Many analyses have been conducted to examine the effectiveness of the three types of prompts classified by Kroll and Reid (1994) – topic familiarity, visual prompts, and prompt choice. However, to this day, few studies have investigated the effect of writing prompts on high school students’ narrative writing performance in a Korean EFL setting. This paper intends to explore the impact of a writing prompt on high school students’ narrative stories by comparing and analyzing the stories written by the bare-prompt group and the framed-prompt group. Moreover, this study aims to confirm if there are any significant differences in terms of quantity and quality of the narratives produced by the two groups. Based on these intentions, the following three research questions were formulated:

- RQ1. What quantitative differences exist between the stories produced through bare-prompt writing and framed-prompt writing?
- RQ2. Which writing method elicits a greater effect on writing quality – bare-prompt writing or framed-prompt writing?

RQ3. Which group benefits more from utilizing a writing prompt – higher-level students or lower-level students?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Importance of English Writing and Narratives

Although, as stated in the introduction, it is true that English writing education has rarely been implemented in Korea, there must be several reasons as to why writing is an important aspect of a second language (L2) education. Dunn and Lantolf (1998) suggest that in addition to being essential for measuring learners' L2 proficiency, writing functions as an imperative area that not only serves to stimulate L2 learners to more rapidly develop their mentality, but facilitates a space for them to better learn their L2. Writing also provides a space for L2 learners to practice expressing logical thinking, enhance their critical thinking, and foster their knowledge of the cognitive language (Graham & Perin, 2007). Moreover, Williams (2012) claims that various factors in the writing process help L2 learners learn and develop a second language while they are acquiring and processing it. According to Byrnes and Manchón (2014) and Ortega (2012), writing promotes the development of L2 learners' language learning ability because of its problem-solving nature. Manchón (2011) insists that generating and acquiring a linguistic knowledge through practicing could help instill a "problem-solving nature inherent to the act of composing" (p. 73). Therefore, writing ability is becoming more and more important not only in a global community but also in an L2 acquisition. With the advent of new types of written communication, the ability to write has become a crucial skill for English learners to acquire (Weigle, 2002). That is why L2 learners and their teachers should prioritize the need for writing exercises.

In order to help L2 learners enhance their writing abilities, L2 teachers and instructors need to consider providing them with a variety of appropriate methods to do so, such as presenting proper types of task and various writing prompts. In addition, they should present their students with relevant and applicable writing methods, as well as be clear in identifying expectations for the writing (Hedge, 2001; Lee, Hong & Lim, 2014). To help learners do so, Hedge (1998) classifies the broader genre of writing into six genres: personal writing, public writing, creative writing, social writing, study writing, and institutional writing – genres which could be crucially helpful to L2 teachers and instructors as they design their curricula. Yasuda (2011) suggests that appropriate writing instruction and practice is greatly needed in an EFL setting, where language is largely taught independent of a context or situation.

Out of all the types of writing, narrative writing is one of the most frequently taught, usually starting from the beginner level in language classes (Kormos, 2011). According to Huh and Lee (2018), it is one of the most commonly used writing tasks in EFL language course programs at the beginner and intermediate levels. Narrative writing is usually defined as story writing – a piece of writing where main characters in a setting confront a problem or are involved in various activities or experiences. There is a plot – consisting of a beginning, middle, and end – and has a main event, or climax – the largest and most significant part of the story. In regards to narrative writing, Kormos (2011) researches the lexical, syntactic, and cohesive differences between two written narratives, and the results reveal major differences between L1 and L2 writers in terms of lexical variety, sophistication, and range. In this study, participants were asked to complete a story – a kind of story writing based off of twelve pictures.

2. Prompts in Writing and Empirical Research

1) Prompts in Writing

It has been pointed out that a writing prompt – along with length of time, use of paper and pen, writing topic and so on – is one of the essential factors impacting students' writing capabilities, and their ability to determine and shape their writing responses (Hamp-Lyons, 1990; Yoon & Lee, 2014). The presence of a writing prompt encourages L2 learners to engage in their writing tasks by producing context to better understand the circumstances, directions, and purposes of writing (Douglas, 2000). It also stimulates them to think more deeply and elicits something to write about (Yoon, 2015). It is imperative that English teachers or instructors produce prompts that are appropriate for the writing activity at hand (Polio & Glew, 1996).

A writing prompt is a concise passage of text or an image that presents a short quotation, a picture, or text as a starting point for an essay, story, or other form of writing for L2 learners (Kroll & Reid, 1994; Way, Joiner, & Seaman, 2000; Weigle, 2002). Weigle (2002) also insists that a writing prompt is one of the key factors affecting L2 learners' writing performance and can result in vastly different outcomes. She adds that prompts provide the potential for a written text to exist in a more holistic form and direction, and improve students' genuine writing quality. Scott (1996) says that in the context of a writing, a prompt can act as one of the most crucial roles in a successful piece of writing. Kroll and Reid (1994) classify a writing prompt into three types of prompts: a bare or open-structure prompt, a framed prompt, and a task-based or reading-based prompt. A bare prompt states the entire task as simply and directly as possible, a framed prompt is one in which “a situation or set of circumstances is presented and then

a task is presented based on the interpretation of the frame” (p. 233), and a task-based prompt is one in which students are asked to summarize or interpret the various texts given to them.

2) Empirical Research

Way, Joiner, and Seaman (2000) used a bare prompt, a vocabulary prompt, and a prose model prompt to deduce the quality, fluency, and syntactic complexity of L2 writing. They concluded that a prose model prompt was the most successful at inspiring the participants to produce better writing in terms of all three traits. They also claimed that a prose model prompt was found to be the most helpful to students and motivate them to write the longest texts with the most syntactically complex sentences. The study on the effects of prompts on 16 Korean EFL learners' writing performance by Yoon (2006) showed that the five high school students presented with a prose model prompt indeed wrote longer texts and had a higher length of T-units than the five other high school students provided with a bare prompt. However, at the university level, the three university students demonstrated the opposite results to their three counterparts, respectively. In Huh and Lee's (2018) study focused on writing prompts and their relationship to task complexity and performance in EFL high school students' narrative writing, thirty-two intermediate-level students participated in a narrative writing task involving a series of sixteen pictures. This study indicated that the students belonging to the framed-prompt group used more sophisticated vocabulary in their narrative writing than the students belonging to the bare-prompt group, implying that task complexity might have an effect on vocabulary sophistication. Yoon (2015) examined the effects of prompts on EFL students' English writing performance, dividing groups based on writing proficiency and writing prompts. In this study, one group was required to write an essay with a bare prompt and the other group was asked to do so with a framed prompt. The results are as follows: firstly, pre-tests and post-tests showed significant differences in successive writing practice; secondly, the prose model prompt group received higher scores than the bare prompt group; finally, the two groups' writing scores differed depending on their writing proficiency.

Several studies have been conducted with regard to the effects of writing prompts on writing performance, focusing on topic familiarity, prompt choice, visual prompts, and prompt formats. He and Shi (2012) investigated the effects of topic familiarity on writing performance and suggested that the students who wrote with familiar topics received higher scores in the areas of organization and content. In addition, Hamp-Lyons and Mathis (1994) found in their study on the effects of topic difficulty that, unlike their expectations, the students who were given more difficult prompts reached higher

achievement levels than those who were given easier ones. In Kim and Kim's (2016) study, they examined the effects of topic choice on writing achievement and indicated that the students who chose their topic wrote better than those who did not. Additionally, amongst a number of studies on the effects that visual prompts have on writing, one study (Brennan, 1990) found that pictures stimulated the students to write a longer and more organized piece of text. Other several studies have also utilized a picture-based prompt. Jung (2013) investigated writing task types based on preferability and found that students selected writing task types depending on their writing purpose. His study also indicated that lower-level students prefer to opt for a picture series prompt.

III. METHOD

1. Participants

In total, there were 124 participants in this study; among these, 63 were assigned to a bare-prompt writing group and 61 to a framed-prompt writing group depending on their instruction class. All participants were first-year high school students who had been studying English for more than eight years at least through a method which focused on reading and listening rather than on writing and speaking because of the CSAT. They studied up to the level of High School English¹ and on the whole were accustomed to reading and writing narrative texts. The English proficiency level between the two groups was not shown to be significantly different indicating *Sig.* = .075 on the basis of their 4-time scores in the English section of the NUAT and *Sig.* = .114 on the basis of their 4-time grades in the English section of the NUAT². When it comes to their scores, the bare-prompt group achieved a mean of 77.115 and the framed-prompt group obtained a mean of 80.407. As for grades, the bare-prompt group received a mean score of 2.714 and the framed-prompt group received a mean score of 2.434, as seen in Table 1.

¹ High school English consists of several levels: English, English I, English II, Advanced English I, Advanced English II, and so on. First-year high school students learn High School English, the first level to high school students.

² NUAT (National United Achievement Test) English grade, composed of nine grades, is based on a criterion-referenced evaluation and is a standardized test. That is, anyone who scores over 90 points out of a possible 100, achieves a Level 1 grade; 80 to 89 points, does a Level 2 grade; 70 to 79 points, does a Level 3 grade; all the way down, he or she who scores under 20 belongs to the lowest grade of Level 9.

TABLE 1**Participants**

	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Score	Bare-prompt	63	77.115	10.249	.075
	Framed-prompt	61	80.407	10.194	
Grade	Bare-prompt	63	2.714	.976	.114
	Framed-prompt	61	2.434	.980	

p < .05

In addition, each group was once again divided into a higher level group and a lower level group, based on 4-time scores in the English section of the NUAT administered Korea-wide in 2018, demonstrating significant differences *Sig.* = .000 in terms of scores and grades respectively. To illustrate the scores of the bare-prompt group in detail, the higher level participants achieved a mean score of 85.693 and the lower level participants received a mean score of 68.804, and as for the scores of the framed-prompt group, the higher level participants obtained a mean score of 89.075 and the lower level participants got a mean score of 72.019. In regards to the grades of the bare-prompt group, the higher level students were given a mean grade of 1.911 and the lower level students, a mean grade of 3.492; concerning the grades of the framed-prompt group, the higher level students received a mean grade of 1.642 and the lower level students, a mean grade of 3.202 (See Table 2).

TABLE 2**Participants**

	Group	Proficiency	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Score	Bare-prompt	Higher level	31	85.693	5.438	.000
		Lower level	32	68.804	6.049	
	Framed-prompt	Higher level	30	89.075	5.009	.000
		Lower level	31	72.019	5.978	
Grade	Bare-prompt	Higher level	31	1.911	.502	.000
		Lower level	32	3.492	.627	
	Framed-prompt	Higher level	30	1.642	.477	.000
		Lower level	31	3.202	.684	

p < .05

2. Instruments

The current study was performed using *The Frog Princess*, E. D. Baker's 2002 children's novel. This instrument used was extracted from a website (www.eslprintables.com) and consisted of twelve pictures, each with a blank underneath. It was given to the participants, who were requested to complete the blanks with an appropriate storyline in as many words and in as much logical detail as possible. Each

group of students received a different instrument. One group (the framed-prompt group) was given the instrument with writing prompts in the first picture and in the last picture, and the other group (the bare-prompt group) was not. The writing prompt in the first picture was as follows: *Once upon a time, there was a king. His youngest daughter was very beautiful. The princess liked to sit near a wall in a dark forest and play with her golden ball.* The writing prompt in the last picture was as follows: *Of course, the beautiful princess and the handsome prince got married and lived happily ever after.*

3. Procedures and Data Analysis

After receiving the instrument, each participant was tasked with creating a logical story based on the pictures they saw. They were asked to create detailed logical and appropriate stories on the basis of the twelve pictures within a designated time. Thirty-six minutes were given to the participants of the bare-prompt group, while thirty minutes were given to the participants of the framed-prompt group, because storylines for the first and last pictures were provided as prompts to the framed-prompt group. No participants were allowed to use dictionaries and all the participants made up the stories entirely on their own. All the stories were evaluated by a native speaker of English, who is a Fulbright Grantee from the USA, and by a native speaker of Korean, who is an English teacher of about 25 years with a doctoral degree in English education. Their stories were rated, based on the writing rubric of the National English Ability Test (KICE, 2012): task completion (25%), content (25%), organization (25%), and language use (25%) were scored depending on the achievement of each. The full mark of each component was a hundred and the total perfect score was four hundred. Being divided by four again, the perfect score then resulted in a hundred again. The evaluations by the two scorers were verified by a reliability analysis and displayed a good degree of inter-reliability ($r = .770$) and the analyses for the scores were carried out by an independent samples t-test set with a significance level of .05.

In the evaluation and verification processes, the texts concerning the first and last pictures created by the bare-prompt group participants and the two prompts of the framed-prompt group participants were excluded. As for the quantitative differences between the two groups: lexical variety, average length of sentences, and so on, all the stories collected were analyzed by two programs: Flesh 2.0 for Windows (flesh.sourceforge.net) and Vocab Profilers (www.lexutor.ca/vp). In order to calculate tokens and sentences, average words per sentence, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level (FKGL), and Flesch Reading Ease Level (FREL) of the stories, Flesh 2.0 for Windows was run³,

³ Token is the total number of words in a text and type is all of the tokens belonging to the same

and so as to figure out the numbers of K1 words (1-1000), K2 words (1001-2000), AWL words, and Off-List words of the stories⁴, Vocab Profilers was conducted. All the data derived from operating these programs were analyzed by a MANOVA and an independent samples t-test, with a significance level set at .05, nondirectional.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Quantitative Analyses on Writing Results

In order to explore the quantitative effects of writing prompts on the narrative writing, the data collected by using Flesh 2.0 for Windows and Vocab Profilers are analyzed by a MANOVA and an independent samples t-test. As displayed in Tables 3 and 4, there are no significant differences ($p = .320$) between the bare-prompt group and the framed-prompt group in most of the components – average sentences, average words per sentence, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level (FKGL), Flesch Reading Ease Level (FREL), K2 words, AWL words, and Off-List words – except for average tokens ($p = .038$) and K1 words ($p = .030$). The framed-prompt group ($M = 150.098$) used significantly more tokens when making up their stories while referencing the pictures as compared to the bare-prompt group ($M = 134.460$), with a p-value of .038. That is, the former group created a longer text on average than the latter group. As displayed in a previous few studies, where five high school participants given a prose model prompt produced longer texts than the same number of their counterparts presented with bare prompts did (Yoon, 2006) and the participants were able to write longer texts, owing to the fact that they were given a picture-based prompt (Brennan, 1990). Additionally, in terms of K1 words, this indicates that the framed-prompt group ($M = 123.377$) used them more significantly than the bare-prompt group ($M = 109.333$) showing a p-value of .030, implying that

symbol, i.e., the number of words required to understand a text. For example, the following sentence – it takes every function of the brain to be able to crawl this way, and it stimulates new connections – has 19 tokens and 17 types (Kim, 2012). FKGL represents the US school grade level and its formula is $[0.39 \times (\text{total words} \div \text{total sentences})] + [11.8 \times (\text{total syllables} \div \text{total words})] - 15.59$. FREL indicates easiness or difficulty of a text and its formula is $206.835 - [1.105 \times (\text{total words} \div \text{total sentences})] - [84.6 \times (\text{total syllables} \div \text{total words})]$. These two formulas are related to readability, and FREL 0~29 is very difficult for college graduates, 30~49 is difficult for 13th to 16th graders, 50~59 is fairly difficult for 10th to 12th graders, 60~69 is standard for 8th to 9th graders, 70~79 is fairly easy for 7th graders, 80~89 is easy for 8th graders, and 90~100 is very easy for 5th graders. These were originally presented by Flesh (1949), and then revisited by Chall and Dale (1995).

⁴ K1 words are the most frequently used 1000 words, K2 words are the most frequently used 2000 words except for K1 words, AWL words are tertiary level words, and Off-List words are the words except for K1 words, K2 words, and AWL words.

when they create stories, the group who is given prompts might make more effort to use more frequently-used words. It may be possible to interpret that the framed-prompt group could use their imagination to make up longer stories when appropriate, and when valid writing prompts are given as some researchers (Polio & Glew, 1996; Weigle, 2002; Yoon, 2015; Yoon & Lee, 2014) have claimed. A writing prompt also appears to provide a guideline for the framed-prompt group to write, using more frequent words – K1 words and K2 words – to some extent.

TABLE 3
Whole Group Statistics by MANOVA

	Value	<i>F</i>	Hypothesis <i>df</i>	Error <i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	η_p^2
Intercept	.000	130364.923	9	114	.000	1.000
Group	.915	1.172	9	114	.320	.085

$p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 =$ eta squared⁵

TABLE 4
Whole Group Statistics by Independent Samples T-Test

Component	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	η_p^2
AT	Bare-prompt	63	134.460	41.510	122	.038*	.035
	Framed-prompt	61	150.098	41.561			
AS	Bare-prompt	63	14.952	4.495	122	.263	.010
	Framed-prompt	61	15.836	4.251			
AWPS	Bare-prompt	63	9.167	2.308	122	.213	.013
	Framed-prompt	61	9.659	2.053			
FKGL	Bare-prompt	63	2.902	1.175	122	.364	.007
	Framed-prompt	61	3.077	.940			
FREL	Bare-prompt	63	90.231	5.839	122	.980	.000
	Framed-prompt	61	90.207	4.592			
K1 Words	Bare-prompt	63	109.333	35.253	122	.030*	.038
	Framed-prompt	61	123.377	35.963			
K2 Words	Bare-prompt	63	6.270	3.721	122	.442	.005
	Framed-prompt	61	6.738	2.982			
AWL Words	Bare-prompt	63	.825	1.025	122	.538	.003
	Framed-prompt	61	.704	1.145			
OL Words	Bare-prompt	63	17.270	6.785	122	.267	.010
	Framed-prompt	61	18.623	6.726			

$p < .05$

Note. AT: Average Tokens; AS: Average Sentences; AWPS: Average Words per Sentence; FKGL: Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level; FREL: Flesch Reading Ease Level; OL Words: Off-Limit Words

⁵ “The usual interpretation of eta squared is that .01 = small effect, which means that even though the difference between them is significant, its magnitude is ignorable, .06 = moderate effect, and .14 = large effect” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 217).

Also, the following analysis concerning the third research question can be drawn. Regarding the higher-level students of each group, it is indicated that all the components researched do not show any significant differences ($p = .593$) between the higher-level students of the bare-prompt group and their counterparts of the framed-prompt group, as displayed in Tables 5 and 6. Specifically, the higher-level participants of the bare-prompt group obtained higher means in some components and lower means in other components, as compared to their counterparts of the framed-prompt group. These results seem to imply that writing prompts may not be such an effective teaching method for higher-level students when English teachers and instructors teach them how to use them to write.

TABLE 5
Higher Level Group Statistics by MANOVA

	Value	<i>F</i>	Hypothesis <i>df</i>	Error <i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	η_p^2
Intercept	.000	38969.382	9	51	.000	1.000
Group	.872	.829	9	51	.593	.128

$p < .05$

TABLE 6
Higher Level Group Statistics by Independent Samples T-Test

Component	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	η_p^2
AT	Bare-prompt	31	152.871	43.582	59	.644	.004
	Framed-prompt	30	158.100	44.238			
AS	Bare-prompt	31	15.484	5.360	59	.411	.012
	Framed-prompt	30	16.533	4.478			
AWPS	Bare-prompt	31	10.167	2.280	59	.357	.014
	Framed-prompt	30	9.688	1.704			
FKGL	Bare-prompt	31	3.361	1.089	59	.208	.027
	Framed-prompt	30	3.034	.900			
FREL	Bare-prompt	31	88.627	6.028	59	.164	.033
	Framed-prompt	30	90.561	4.562			
K1 Words	Bare-prompt	31	125.581	36.938	59	.610	.004
	Framed-prompt	30	130.467	37.405			
K2 Words	Bare-prompt	31	6.936	3.558	59	.747	.002
	Framed-prompt	30	7.200	2.747			
AWL Words	Bare-prompt	31	.807	1.108	59	.812	.001
	Framed-prompt	30	.733	1.285			
OL Words	Bare-prompt	31	18.677	7.498	59	.864	.001
	Framed-prompt	30	19.000	7.153			

$p < .05$

Tables 7 and 8 show almost similar results to previous Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 in that the two groups do not reveal significant differences ($p = .086$). However, four out of the nine components explored display significant differences between the two groups – average

tokens ($p = .004$), average words per sentence ($p = .010$), FKGL ($p = .015$), K1 words ($p = .003$). It is clear that the lower-level framed-prompt group ($M = 142.354$) uses more words than their counterparts of the bare-prompt group ($M = 116.625$). In addition, the former group ($M = 9.632$) uses more words per sentence than the latter group ($M = 8.198$). In terms of FKGL, the lower-level students of the framed-prompt group ($M = 3.118$) created stories for a higher academic level than their counterparts of the bare-prompt group ($M = 2.458$). Lastly, the lower-level framed-prompt group ($M = 116.516$) uses K1 words more than the lower-level bare-prompt group ($M = 93.594$), including K2 words ($M = 6.290$, $M = 5.625$ respectively) and Off-Limit words ($M = 18.258$, $M = 15.906$ respectively). These results are important because they show that teaching writing using “prompts” may be slightly more beneficial and effective to the lower-level framed-prompt group, further suggesting that a framed-prompt writing method should be recommended to low level L2 learners to some degree.

TABLE 7
Lower Level Group Statistics by MONOVA

	Value	<i>F</i>	Hypothesis <i>df</i>	Error <i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	η_p^2
Intercept	.000	185577.297	9	53	.000	1.000
Group	.764	1.819	9	53	.086	.236

$p < .05$

TABLE 8
Lower Level Group Statistics by Independent Samples T-Test

Component	Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	η_p^2
AT	Bare-prompt	32	116.625	30.671	61	.004*	.126
	Framed-prompt	31	142.354	37.906			
AS	Bare-prompt	32	14.438	3.473	61	.444	.010
	Framed-prompt	31	15.161	3.976			
AWPS	Bare-prompt	32	8.198	1.912	61	.010*	.103
	Framed-prompt	31	9.632	2.372			
FKGL	Bare-prompt	32	2.458	1.095	61	.015*	.093
	Framed-prompt	31	3.118	.991			
FREL	Bare-prompt	32	91.785	5.286	61	.132	.037
	Framed-prompt	31	89.865	4.670			
K1 Words	Bare-prompt	32	93.594	25.406	61	.003*	.133
	Framed-prompt	31	116.516	33.694			
K2 Words	Bare-prompt	32	5.625	3.816	61	.456	.009
	Framed-prompt	31	6.290	3.175			
AWL Words	Bare-prompt	32	.844	.954	61	.505	.007
	Framed-prompt	31	.677	1.023			
OL Words	Bare-prompt	32	15.906	5.811	61	.131	.037
	Framed-prompt	31	18.258	6.382			

$p < .05$

2. Qualitative Analyses on Writing Results

In relation to the second research question, the results of the two groups evaluated by two people, based on four components: task completion, content, organization, and language use, are shown in Tables 9, 10, and 11, including a part of the result analysis of the third research question. As noted above, an inter-reliability of .770 is shown, which can be interpreted as a good reliability, and analyses are carried out on the basis of a full mark of 100. Table 9 indicates a full comparison between the bare-prompt group and the framed-prompt group. It displays that there is a significant difference between the bare-prompt group ($M = 77.143$, $SD = 9.555$) and the framed-prompt group ($M = 80.492$, $SD = 6.183$), showing a p -value = .023 and a medium effect size ($\eta_p^2 = .042$). This finding is similar to some previous research (e.g., Huh & Lee, 2018; Way, Joiner & Seaman, 2000; Yoon, 2006; Yoon, 2015) to some extent, which has found that out of the three types prompts, a prose model prompt has been found to be the most helpful because it encourages students to use more sophisticated words and to write longer and higher quality texts. Furthermore, these results can be confirmed by other researchers (Douglas, 2000; Hamp-Lyons, 1990; Yoon, 2015; Yoon & Lee, 2014), who insist that the group that uses writing prompts ultimately becomes better at writing than the group that does not. They further add that writing prompts can also help L2 learners holistically determine, direct, and shape their writing by more accurately figuring out the directions, purposes, and so on. In addition, they claim that L2 learners may reflect on what to write after checking out the prompts and create quality writing. From these results, it can be concluded that to a large extent, when L2 instructors teach their students, it is proper to adopt a teaching method that presents valid and appropriate 'prompts' to L2, as Polio and Glew (1996) already point out.

TABLE 9
Whole Group Evaluation Statistics by Independent Samples T-Test

Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	η_p^2
Bare-prompt	63	77.143	9.555	122	.023	.042
Framed-prompt	61	80.492	6.183			

$p < .05$

In order to investigate which group a writing prompt is more effective to – the higher-level group or the lower-level group – an independent samples t-test was operated on these two groups and the results are shown in Tables 10 and 11. Table 10 shows the evaluation regarding the participants in the higher-level group of each respective prompt group. According to this table, the two groups consisting of the higher-level students do not reveal a significant difference, displaying a p -value = .756 and an ignorable effect

size ($\eta_p^2 = .002$), even though the framed group ($M = 82.021$, $SD = 5.839$) performed slightly better than the bare-prompt group ($M = 81.431$, $SD = 8.603$). This finding may suggest that a writing prompt is not so effective for the higher-level group, regardless of if they are part of the bare-prompt group or the framed-prompt group.

TABLE 10**Higher Level Group Evaluation Statistics by Independent Samples T-Test**

Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	η_p^2
Bare-prompt	31	81.431	8.603	59	.756	.002
Framed-prompt	30	82.021	5.839			

$p < .05$

However, on the contrary, the lower-level participants of each group exhibit quite a different result, as shown in Table 11. That is, there is a significant difference ($p = .002$) between the bare-prompt group ($M = 72.988$, $SD = 8.847$) and the framed-prompt group ($M = 79.012$, $SD = 6.237$) in terms of writing quality, revealing a large effect size ($\eta_p^2 = .149$), indicating that the effects of framed-prompt writing on lower-level students are substantially large, specifically regarding rather superficial writing components such as AT, AWPS, FKGL, and K1 words. These findings suggest that this writing teaching method is effective for and should be recommended to rather lower-level students in an EFL setting. As a result, we can reach the conclusion that a framed-prompt writing method is highly important, especially when L2 teachers and instructors teach how to write in a foreign language to somewhat lower-level students. This has been proven in some previous research, where it has been shown that pictures motivate students to write a better-constructed and longer length text (Brennan, 1990). Additionally, a prose model prompt has been found to induce to create a higher quality text of more fluency and more complex vocabulary, as compared to other prompts (Way, Joiner, & Seaman, 2000). The prose model prompt group tends to obtain better scores than the bare prompt group (Yoon, 2015); and lower-level students prefer to use a picture series prompt (Jung, 2013).

TABLE 11**Lower Level Group Evaluation Statistics by Independent Samples T-Test**

Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	η_p^2
Bare-prompt	32	72.988	8.647	61	.002	.149
Framed-prompt	31	79.012	6.237			

$p < .05$

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The current study intends to research the effects of writing prompts on high school students' narrative writing in a Korean EFL environment. The framed-prompt writing group and the bare-prompt writing group selected for the study created unique stories based on 12 well-organized pictures adapted from the short story, *The Frog Princess* extracted from a website. The stories were then analyzed in quantitative and qualitative terms, and the results are summarized in the following two paragraphs.

In terms of quantity, significant differences ($p = .320$) are not shown between the framed-prompt group and the bare-prompt group – they only displayed significantly better results concerning the usage of AT and K1 words out of nine components. The former group showed higher means in all the components as compared to the latter group, except for usage of AWL words, which are tertiary level words. In addition, the higher-level students of the framed-prompt group displayed varying means in each of the components as compared to their counterparts, but there are no universally significant differences ($p = .593$) between the two groups. The lower-level students of the framed-prompt group revealed higher means in all but two components (FERL and AWL words) than their counterparts of the bare-prompt group, but the two groups did not exhibit significant differences ($p = .086$). However, although the conclusion may be drawn that the framed-prompt group is slightly better at writing using 'prompts' than the bare-prompt group, it cannot be stated that, in terms of quality, a writing prompt is significantly more effective and beneficial to the lower-level students of the framed-prompt group.

In qualitative terms, on the other hand, the framed-prompt group displayed significantly better results ($p = .023$) than the bare-prompt group, producing a medium effect size ($\eta_p^2 = .042$). In particular, the lower-level students of the former group showed a significantly better writing performance ($p = .002$) with a large effect size ($\eta_p^2 = .149$) than their counterparts in the latter group. However, the higher-level students revealed a quite different result ($p = .756$), presenting an ignorable effect size ($\eta_p^2 = .002$). These findings, unlike in quantitative terms, indicate that writing prompts can significantly help the students – especially lower-level students – create longer, sophisticated, and well-organized stories with a deep thought owing to a writing prompt, as some previous studies have shown.

To be brief, it can be mentioned that writing prompts can play a highly significant role in helping the students create higher quality stories in terms of task completion, content, sophistication, and grammar – even if this is not in quantitative terms – lexical variety and sentence length. This implies that now is the necessary time for teachers and instructors of English to pay much more attention to assisting students in learning how to

write well using 'prompts' as Ur (2012) and Polio and Glew (1996) suggest. However, a few more tests should have been conducted in the current research at more regular intervals even though the number of participants was sufficient and the analysis of quantitative and qualitative aspects of writing were enough. In follow-up research, it is recommended that some researchers should perform their studies after addressing this shortcoming.

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Examples in: English**Applicable Language: English****Applicable Levels: Elementary & Secondary**

김영수
창평고등학교(교사)
전남 담양군 창평면 창평로 582
57389
kimys606@hanmail.net

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