

A Pilot Study on EFL Composition Assessment Focusing on Error Gravity and Cohesion among Sentences

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1. Introduction

Over the past two decades there have been some major changes in L2 / FL learning and instruction theories. One of the major changes is the shift from an explicit focus on language form to an emphasis on the comprehension of meaning through language. The shift has been based on the argument that learners can develop their L2 / FL communicative abilities through instruction which has similar characteristics to a natural environment. Consequently, the shift has brought about a greater tolerance of learners' errors in instructors.

A similar trend has been observed in SL / FL writing theory as well. In recent years, the traditional product-oriented approach to SL / FL writing has been replaced by the process approach which is based on the notion that writing is a process through which the final written product is created as a result of a series of composing processes. Because of the focus of the process, the emphasis on grammar and mechanics has been less intense on the part of writing instructors, while the focus on communicative effectiveness in writing has been stronger. Accordingly, there has been a growing concern for developing nonnative writers' self-assessment of their writing so that they can distinguish by themselves critical errors which hinder effective written communication

from those less critical. Under these circumstances, a substantial number of studies have been conducted on SL / FL composition assessment, mostly on how to assess compositions appropriately and accurately.

First, this paper raises some problems related to writing assessment in general. Then, this paper addresses questions relevant to the current research: 1) Which aspects of writings are regarded as more important in their evaluation, smooth flow of ideas expressed with cohesive ties among sentences or grammatical accuracy? 2) Can holistic scoring be equivalent to analytic scoring in evaluating writing? and 3) Are there any specific types of errors which evaluators consider more serious than others in evaluation compositions? 4) Is there any rater's preference of one aspect of writing over the other, e.g. grammatical correctness or cohesiveness of compositions, depending on the evaluators' cognitive styles related to second language acquisition? Furthermore, the paper analyzes the research results statistically in the hope that the answers to the questions above can be found. The answers to these questions will be discussed in the final section of this paper.

Hopefully, the findings will provide more refined research questions as to what aspects of writings the evaluators regard as important in evaluating compositions.

2. Problems in assessing compositions

2.1 Literature Review

In this section the review of research literature on EFL / ESL writing assessment will be conducted first so that the two different standings related to writing assessment will be made clear.

Although a substantial amount of research on ESL/EFL writing assessment has been conducted so far, there still seems to be plenty of

room to add some features inherent in a 'good' composition. This is mainly because linguistic accuracy in compositions, assessed with some distinctive assessment measures, holistic scoring and analytic scoring (See Polio 1996 for the review of recent studies), is likely to be overemphasized in defining 'good' compositions. Furthermore, the issue of EFL/ESL assessment becomes more complicated, taking the variables inherent in raters into consideration; some raters may put more emphasis on grammatical accuracy in writing in evaluating compositions, and others are inclined to emphasize the importance of communicating ideas effectively (Connor-Linton 1995). In other words, the former group of raters regard a composition with less grammatical errors as well-written one, while the latter consider a composition with more sophisticated discourse devices as strong such as effective organization of paragraphs and cohesion (See Halliday and Hassan 1976 for cohesion) among sentences (Witte and Faigley 1981, Markels 1983, Johns 1986, Carell 1982). The degree of emphasis put on one aspect of a composition over another is also different, depending on the individual traits or backgrounds of the raters (Kobayashi 1992, Santos 1988, Brown 1991).

2.1 Research Questions

Based on the arguments above, it is possible to generate the following research questions with subsequent hypotheses.

1) Which of the two aspects of writing do the evaluators think to be important in evaluating compositions, correct grammar or cohesion among sentences?

It is expected that the evaluators will make higher evaluations of the

writings with more cohesion but poor grammar than those with better grammar but less cohesion, because it has been argued that communicating ideas is a crucial factor in deciding an effective writing.

2) Is there any correlation between holistic scoring and analytical scoring?

As research findings suggest, there should be a certain correlation between holistic scoring and analytical, depending on the aspects of writings to be measured. (The JACET Study Group 1989) If this is confirmed, the simpler method, holistic scoring, can be used as an effective measure to predict good writings.

3) Is there any ranking in terms of 'error gravity' in the evaluators' assessments? In other words, what types of errors do the evaluators regard as more serious?

As research findings indicate (Tomiyaama 1980, Roberta, et al.1984, Broadkey and Young 1981), there should be a certain ranking or hierarchy in the 'error gravity,' or the relative seriousness of specific error types. In other words, errors in some grammatical items are assumed to cause more serious communication breakdowns than those in others, and the evaluators will be assumed to give lower scores to the compositions with such types of grammatical errors.

4) What types of evaluators, categorized in terms of their backgrounds or cognitive styles in evaluating compositions, will choose the compositions based grammatical accuracy, or what types of evaluators will regard cohesion as more important?

According to evaluators' backgrounds and cognitive styles such as analytical / integrative tendency, field dependence / field independence, and ambiguity tolerance, it is thought that they will put more emphasis on one aspect of writings than on the other. For example, evaluators without ambiguity tolerance might evaluate writings with grammatical accuracy more highly.

3. Research method

3.1 Subjects and materials to be evaluated

In order to test the hypotheses above, the following research procedures were taken. The researcher provided 10 evaluators, undergraduate students at Carnegie Mellon University taking the same course on language learning, with six different compositions written by the same Japanese EFL learner with certain modifications. This was to avoid a variable resulting from the differences in quality of the six compositions. The subjects' background information and the data regarding their cognitive styles related to second language acquisition, measured with several different tests such as Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or Modern Language Aptitude Test, were available. The six compositions written on six different topics were modified in the following manner.

- 1) One with more cohesion but with more grammatical errors in prepositions.
- 2) One with less cohesion because of missing transitions and conjunctions but with better grammar.
- 3) One with more cohesion but with more grammatical errors in definite / indefinite articles and noun plurality.
- 4) One with less cohesion because of missing transitions and conjunctions but with better grammar.

- 5) One with more cohesion but with more grammatical errors in verb forms including tense errors and present / past participles
- 6) One with less cohesion because of missing transitions and conjunctions but with better grammar.

Although grammar in 2), 4) and 6) was much better than the rest, some original errors were left as they were on purpose in order to avoid unnaturalness resulting from perfect grammar in nonnative compositions. The errors in modified parts are those typically and frequently found in Japanese learners' compositions. The six compositions maintained basic organization patterns including introduction, discussion and conclusion, although the degree of cohesion among sentences was different depending on the composition, due to differences in the number of cohesive devices such as transitions and conjunctions deleted intentionally.

The ten evaluators rated the six compositions holistically (with only one evaluation category) and analytically (with 5 evaluation categories including content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics), on the basis of the evaluation criteria from Cohen (1994). The score range was from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) in all the categories.

4. Results and discussions

4.1 Evaluator's emphasis in evaluating compositions

In order to understand which type of compositions (i.e. compositions with correct grammar or those with cohesion among sentences) the subjects evaluated higher, analyses were conducted. Furthermore, the third question concerning what type of grammar errors the evaluators regarded as serious is also deliberated within the limit of the analyses that follow.

4.1.A. Comparison of mean scores

The following tables show the mean scores and standard deviations gained from the six compositions.

Table 1 Mean and SD for holistic evaluation

	C1 ₁	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
Mean	3.3	3.6	3.0	3.3	2.4	3.6
SD	0.67	0.52	0.82	0.94	0.84	0.97

As far as the ranking in terms of the mean scores is concerned, C2 and C6 are ranked highest, C1 and C4 second highest, C3 third, and C5 lowest. Interestingly, both C3 and C5 were the essays with poor grammar.

Table 2 Mean and SD for analytic evaluation calculated on the basis of the average score of five evaluation categories

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
Mean	3.54	3.46	2.96	3.18	2.6	3.34
SD	0.17	0.27	0.45	0.34	0.57	0.27

This tables shows that C1 is ranked highest, C2 second, C6 third, C4 fourth, C3 fifth, and C5 lowest.

It is noteworthy that C5 obtained the lowest evaluation and C3 the second lowest here, and that both compositions gained comparatively lower scores in the two types of evaluation above, considering that both C3 and C5 were the ones with poor grammar. It is also interesting that the ranking on the basis of the average score of the five evaluation categories does not necessarily correspond to the one in the holistic evaluation.

The following tables display the mean scores and standard deviations in each evaluation category. The ranking in each evaluation category will provide us with a better understanding of evaluation tendencies in each evaluation category.

Table 3 Mean and SD for content

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
Mean	3.6	3.5	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.7
SD	1.07	0.52	0.92	1.32	1.32	1.34

As far as content is concerned, C6, C1 and C2 were evaluated highly in comparison to C3, C4, and C5, which gained the same score. There is not much difference among the six compositions.

Table 4 Mean and SD for organization

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
Mean	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.5
SD	1.06	0.94	0.99	1.05	1.28	1.18

In terms of organization, C6, C1 and C2 gained higher scores, and C3, C4 and C5 were evaluated as low here as well. The fact should be noted that C6 and C2 are the essays with less cohesion because of the lack of transitions and conjunctions.

Table 5 Mean and SD for vocabulary

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
Mean	3.4	3.4	2.8	2.7	2.7	3.2
SD	0.52	0.71	1.14	1.34	1.11	1.03

With respect to vocabulary, both C1, C2 and C6 achieved higher scores, as opposed to the low scores in C4 and C5. This is interesting, in consideration of the fact that most of the vocabulary were adopted by the identical writer.

Table 6 Mean and SD for grammar

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
Mean	3.2	3.2	2.1	3.4	1.7	3.0
SD	0.78	0.42	0.57	1.07	0.67	1.33

This table shows there were two compositions that gained relatively low evaluations. C5 and C3, which had problems in grammar, obtained much lower scores than the rest, which achieved over 3.0. Interestingly, C1, with grammatical errors in prepositions was not evaluated as low.

Table 7 Mean and SD for mechanics

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
Mean	4.2	3.9	3.1	3.6	2.5	3.3
SD	1.23	0.88	0.88	1.07	0.97	1.06

This evaluation category is concerned with spelling and punctuation errors. All the compositions except for C5 achieved comparatively higher scores than those in other evaluation categories. However, it is interesting that there are some differences even in this category, considering the facts that the punctuation was done by the researcher similarly and that computer spell checking was employed. It may be interpreted that some other factors such as poor grammar or lack of cohesion might have created the evaluators' preconception.

4.1.B. ANOVA

The following are the results of a one-way ANOVA conducted to investigate the differences in the mean scores among the 6 compositions.

Table 8 ANOVA for holistic evaluation

	SS	df	MS	F
A	9.5	5.0	1.9	5.0**
S	18.8	9.0	2.09	5.5
RES	1.7	45.0	0.38	
total	45.3	60-1=59		

**p < 0.025

Table 3 displays the comparison of means scores in holistic evaluation among 6 compositions. As the *F* value of 5.0 shows, there are statistically significant differences among the six compositions in the mean scores gained, at the level of .025. It is necessary to conduct Multiple Comparison in order to specify the place where the differences among the six compositions exist. The following table shows the results of Multiple Comparison.

Table 9 Multiple Comparison for holistic evaluation

	C2	C6	C4	C1	C3	C5
C2	—	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.6	1.2*
C6	0.0	—	0.3	0.3	0.6	1.2*
C4	0.3	0.3	—	0.0	0.3	0.9*
C1	0.3	0.3	0.0	—	0.3	0.9*
C3	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.3	—	0.6
C5	1.2*	1.2*	0.9*	0.9*	0.6	—

The HSD value for holistic scoring is 0.74, and the differences between C2 and C5, C6 and C5, C4 and C5, and C1 and C5 are greater than this HSD value. Therefore, it is possible to say that there are statistically significant differences in the mean scores among those pairs. It may also be possible to deduce that the extremely low score in C5 has created the differences.

Table 10 ANOVA for analytic scoring (Content)

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>
<i>A</i>	2.6	5	0.52	1.25
<i>S</i>	36.73	9	4.08	6.27
<i>RES</i>	29.07	45	0.65	
total	68.4	60 - 1 = 59		

Table 11 ANOVA for analytic scoring (Organization)

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>
<i>A</i>	2.48	5	0.50	0.72
<i>S</i>	33.48	9	3.72	5.39
<i>RES</i>	31.01	45	0.69	
total	66.97	60 - 1 = 59		

Table 12 ANOVA for analytic scoring (Vocabulary)

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>
<i>A</i>	5.73	5	1.15	2.7
<i>S</i>	31.6	9	3.51	7.63
<i>RES</i>	20.6	45	0.46	
total	59.7	60 - 1 = 59		

As the results of ANOVA above indicate, there are no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of content, organization, and grammar, among six compositions.

Table 13 ANOVA for analytic scoring (Grammar)

	SS	df	MS	F
A	24.13	5	4.83	2.65*
S	13.06	9	1.45	0.79
RES	81.54	45	1.82	
total	118.73	60 - 1 = 59		

*p < 0.10

The *F* value of 2.65 indicates that there are statistically significant differences among the six compositions in the mean scores regarding grammar, though at the level of .10. The following is the result of Multiple Comparison conducted to determine the place where the difference in the mean scores in terms of grammar among six compositions exists.

Table 14 Multiple Comparison for analytic scoring (Grammar)

	C4	C1	C2	C6	C3	C5
C4	—	0.2	0.2	0.4	1.3	1.7*
C1	0.2	—	0.0	0.2	1.2	1.5
C2	0.2	0.0	—	0.2	1.2	1.5
C6	0.4	0.2	0.2	—	0.9	1.3
C3	1.3	1.2	1.2	0.9	—	0.4
C5	1.7*	1.5	1.5	1.3	0.4	—

The HSD value for analytic scoring concerning grammar is 1.62, and the difference between C4 and C5 is greater than the value. This shows that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores regarding grammar between the two.

Table 15 ANOVA for analytical scoring (Mechanics)

	SS	df	MS	F
A	18.33	5	3.67	5.10**
S	24.06	9	2.67	3.71
RES	32.34	45	0.72	
total	80.67	60-1=59		

*p < 0.025

Table 15 indicates that there are also statistically significant differences in the mean scores related to mechanics among six compositions. Multiple Comparison was utilized to identify the places where the differences are found.

Table 16 Multiple Comparison for analytic scoring (Mechanics)

	C2	C4	C6	C1	C3	C5
C2	—	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	1.4*
C4	0.3	—	0.3	0.4	0.5	1.1*
C6	0.6	0.3	—	0.1	0.2	0.8
C1	0.7	0.4	0.1	—	0.1	0.7
C3	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.1	—	0.6
C5	1.4*	1.1*	0.8	0.7	0.6	—

The HSD value for mechanics is 0.72, and the differences between C2 and C5, and C4 and C5 are greater than this. This means that there are

statistically significant differences in the mean scores with respect to mechanics among the six compositions. Here as well, the low evaluation on C5 may have had some influence on the result, in spite of the fact that all the compositions were treated similarly in terms of mechanics: automatic spell checking and researcher's similar punctuation on all the compositions.

As far as the above results are concerned, it is possible to say that the evaluators gave extremely low scores to Composition 5, which had errors in verb forms including tense and participle errors, and that this caused the statistically significant differences in the mean scores among the pairs including C5. This fact was observed not only in the holistic scoring but also in the grammar category and mechanics category in the analytical scoring. It is possible to say that such compositions as C5 and C3 with grammatical errors are likely to be evaluated as low in spite of the relative cohesion maintained. However, in the case of C3, the degree of seriousness in grammar errors is not so high as to cause a statistical difference in the mean scores.

In response to the first question and the third question raised in the previous section, it is possible to suggest that the evaluators gave lower scores to the compositions with grammar errors rather than those with less cohesion. Within the three compositions with different kinds of errors, the one with errors in verb forms including tense errors and participle errors seems to have been evaluated as low, while the evaluation on the other two compositions was not so low as to create a statistical difference. It is noteworthy that the compositions with errors in prepositions were ranked first or second both in the holistic evaluation and in the mean of five evaluation categories of analytic evaluation. It would be appropriate to deduce that the errors in prepositions were not regarded so crucial as to cause the breakdown in

the flow of ideas. However, one important factor should be considered before reaching the conclusion above; such variables as topics or content need to be considered, although evaluation on content was not widely different depending upon the topics, with a score range from 3.2 to 3.7.

4.2 Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis was implemented to determine whether or not there was any correlation between holistic and analytic evaluation. The correlation between the mean scores in holistic evaluation and the mean scores gained in each evaluation item in analytical evaluation was assessed for this purpose, using Pearson's product moment coefficient of correlation. The following table shows the results.

Table 17 Correlation Analysis between holistic evaluation and analytical one

	C1 Hol	C2 Hol	C3 Hol	C4 Hol	C5 Hol	C6 Hol
Mean Co	0.80***	NS	0.89***	0.84***	0.92***	NS
Mean Or	0.64*	NS	0.82***	0.89***	0.76***	0.73**
Mean Vc	NS	NS	0.72**	NS	0.72**	0.66*
Mean Gr	0.71*	NS	NS	NS	NS	0.90**
Mean Mc	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.02$ *** $p < 0.01$

It is noteworthy that all the combinations between C2 Hol and other items in analytical scoring showed no correlation. This is also true of all the combinations between Mean Mc and other mean scores in holistic evaluation. As far as these results are concerned, the combinations between Mean Or and holistic scores in six compositions produced 5 pairs of correlated items. Then, the combinations between Mean Co

and holistic scores provided 4 pairs of correlated items. Thirdly, the combinations between Mean Vc and holistic scores created 3 pairs of correlated items. Considering the results, it may be possible to say that holistic scoring is effective to some extent in evaluating organization, content and vocabulary, being organization the easiest item to be evaluated with holistic scoring. One important thing to be noticed here is that there is almost no difference between holistic scoring and analytical scoring regarding evaluating mechanics. The similar trend is observed between holistic scoring of grammar and analytical scoring of grammar. In other words, it may be possible to say that the evaluators gave arbitrary scores, even with the evaluation criteria, to the compositions in these items. As for the pairs including C2, it is still difficult to interpret the reason.

Table 18 Mean and SD for evaluation items in analytical scoring

	Content	Organiz	Vocabu	Grammar	Mechanics
Mean	3.4	3.18	3.03	2.77	3.3
SD	0.23	0.22	0.34	0.69	0.48

The table above shows the mean scores and SDs obtained from analytic scoring of six compositions. As far as the result is concerned, the mean scores are close with one another except for the one in grammar. This seems to tell us that the evaluators gave comparatively lower scores to grammar items.

It would be possible to generalize that holistic scoring is correlated with analytical scoring in terms of evaluating organization, content, and vocabulary but they are not so reliable in evaluating grammar and mechanics.

4.3 Variables in Evaluators

Variables in evaluators are worth investigating, although they are extremely complicated and intertwined with one another. In this research, a certain tendency was observed, but it is too early to predict a general tendency inherent in the complex issue. The following table indicates the mean scores and SD scores gained from evaluators' holistic scoring of six compositions, arranged from the highest to the lowest, with evaluators' possible background information including their majors and the scores related to ambiguity tolerance which was assessed with the ambiguity tolerance test²⁾. These may be related to the strict evaluation of grammar or the positive evaluation of effectiveness in communication in situations full of ambiguity.

Table 19 Mean and SD for holistic scoring depending on subjects

	ambiguity	Mean	SD
S1 Crewrite/Japanese	30	3.83	0.98
S2 Crewrite/Spanish	24	3.7	0.82
S3 Crewrite/Russian	23	3.5	0.55
S4 Music/German	24	3.5	0.54
S5 Engl/Spanish	not available	3.5	0.54
S6 Psych/Chinese	26	3.43	0.43
S7 Chemi/French	20	3.0	0.63
S8 Biology/Spanish	16	2.83	0.75
S9 English/French	23	2.5	1.05
S10 Math/German	not available	2.00	0.63

It is interesting that creative writing majors are ranked as the top three, as opposed to those majoring scientific fields ranked relatively lower. One possible interpretation is that the creative writing majors

were evaluating compositions while taking many more factors other than grammatical accuracy into consideration than those majoring subjects in scientific fields.

The correlation between the mean scores and the ambiguity tolerance scores was measured, with the correlation of 0.41 achieved. However, the t test conducted after revealed that the result was not statistically significant. Although no statistically significant correlation was found between the two in the current analysis, it is probable that there is a certain correlation between the two scores if this is done in a more refined condition. Further analysis is necessary to confirm the correlation.

5. Summary and conclusion

A preliminary study on composition evaluation was conducted so that the answers to the following questions could be found; 1) Which of the two aspects of writing do the evaluators regard as more important in evaluating compositions, correct grammar or cohesion among sentences? 2) Is there any correlation between holistic scoring and analytical scoring? 3) Is there any ranking in the seriousness of errors? and 4) Is there any individual variable influencing composition evaluation?

Regarding the question 1), the evaluators gave higher scores to the compositions with better grammar and less cohesion among sentences than to those with poor grammar and more cohesion. Among the compositions with different error types, those with errors in verb forms including tense errors and participle errors were evaluated as lowest, as opposed to those with errors in prepositions ranked comparatively higher. It may be possible to contend that correct grammar plays a more important role in encoding and decoding messages than cohesion among sentences represented only by effective transitions and conjunc-

tions, when minimum organization is maintained at the paragraph level. The fact should be remembered that other factors such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, and lexical cohesion are also supposed to be contributing to creating cohesion among sentences. Ideally speaking, compositions with the same number of errors and written on the same topic should be used to predict the evaluators' preferences clearly. Furthermore, other factors creating cohesion mentioned above need to be considered in modifying compositions.

The answer to question 2) was positive, as was expected. However, the combinations showing correlations were limited; the mean scores in content and organization were correlated with holistic evaluation, while grammar and mechanics were not.

The answer to question 3) was made in conjunction with the arguments for answering question 1) the compositions with grammar errors in verb forms including tense errors and participle errors were evaluated as low, compare to those with errors in prepositions, articles and noun countability.

There seem to be some individual variables affecting composition evaluation, although it was impossible for the researcher to find a correlation between ambiguity tolerance and composition evaluation. It was interesting that creative writing majors gave relatively higher scores to the compositions than those majoring in sciences. This may be related to their tendencies in encoding and decoding messages. That is, they might pay more attention to the smooth flow of ideas than to the correctness of passages, probably due to the training they receive in the course of the instruction in the subject.

Needless to say, further refined research is necessary in confirming the results above.

Notes

1. C1 refers to Composition 1.
2. For ambiguity tolerance, see Chapelle and Roberts (1986) and Norton (1975).
3. I express my gratitude to Dan Dewey for his editing suggestions on this paper.

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Appendix

Composition 1

My Favorite City, Pusan

There are not many places to see at Pusan. However, I like it very much.

The main reason is that you can eat all kinds of foods. At a restaurant, there are many traditional foods. Though it is a little expensive, you will be satisfied to it. Along the street, you see many cheap stands. You can eat Kimchi, chijimi, and Korean rice cakes.

Another reason is its people. The old speak Japanese because the Japanese forced them to speak it in the war. They are kind and they talk with you in Japanese. The young are fashionable and hardworking. It is hard to enter into a college in Korea.

The last reason is its tradition. At Pusan, there are many temples. Almost all the temples are in the mountains and it is very quiet there. There are many trees around them and you can hear birds singing. Korean people have traditional costume called tima-chogori. It is beautiful and colorful. Young and old women wear it at various ceremonies.

By these reasons, I like Pusan very much. You can go there cheaply because you can use ships from Shimonoseki and Hakata. It takes you only a few hours. How about going to Pusan?

Composition 2

M.M.

Almost all people think that M.M. is a serious and grim person when they meet her for the first time. She doesn't talk a lot. She is a friendly and nice person. I will tell you about her.

Twice a week, she works part-time at a sushi shop. She has worked there for two years. She can make sushi very well. She enjoys not only working but also talking with her fellow workers and customers. When she was working as a cashier, an old man who came to the shop frequently said, "You

smile a happy smile. You are the draw at this store.” She has been interested in working in a company which provides customer service. She saves up money for the travel to England. It is very difficult for her to save up money. She spends a lot of money on books, clothes, and karaokè, etc. She is hard working.

I will tell you about her school life. When she was a schoolchild, one contest was held in her class. It was called “A Big Voice Contest.” A person who had the biggest voice could get the first prize. She got the first prize! She got the first prize at “A Suntan Contest.” She has had many nicknames. In her junior high school days, her friend named her “Hiroschi” She looked like ‘Sekiguchi Hiroshi.’ When she was a high school student, she was give a new nickname, “MORI-MORI.” She does not like these names. These are a little strange. When her friends called her MORIMORI at a hall way, other students spoke in a low voice, “She is MORIMORI.”

I think she is not an unfriendly person. You could know what she is like. She is only a little shy. When you meet her on campus, talk to her friendly. She will answer with a smile. Please remember one thing: do not call her nickname loudly.

Composition 3

To be Japanese

I am Japanese. When foreigners admire Japan or Japanese, I am glad that I am Japanese. However, I was ashamed of it this summer. How do the foreigners think about Japan and Japanese? I will talk about what I learned in experience in this essay.

In this summer, I went to China with sister. We had a lot of plans. When we were in the museum, I found some pictures of world war II. Watching these pictures, I was greatly shocked. In pictures Japanese soldiers killed Chinese people with gun. In Japan, I cannot watch such pictures because they are too realistic. When I stood there vacantly, the old man came and said, “Are you Japanese?” He was probably Chinese. (He spoke Chinese.) I was very scared since I thought he experienced war and hated Japanese. In high school, I studied the Chinese history and learned many Chinese hate Japanese because Japanese killed Chinese. . Therefore, I told him lie, “I am Korean.” It is very difficult to translate his word into Japanese, but I think there are two possible interpretations of his word, “Are you Japanese?”:

“Anatawa nihonjin desuka? (in a formal way)” and “Omaewa nihonjin ka? (in a derogatory way)” At that time I thought he said this in latter.

Next day, we went shopping. The guidebook said, “It is dangerous that you wear a fancy clothes in the crowded shopping place.” Therefore, we wore old shirt. However, I felt like many people stared at me and said “Nihonjin.” (It is very difficult for me to understand spoken Chinese but I could understand the word “Nihonjin.” I also felt that the Chinese who worked in the shop may have thought that Japanese were rich.

Chinese teacher said, “Japanese students can get higher score in the test. However, they cannot express their opinion and they are lazy at their class.” Maybe not all the students are lazy at the classes, but his or her careless action makes Chinese think that Japanese is lazy.

Today, many people go abroad. I think it is one of good ways to go abroad for shopping because it is enjoyable. However, it is important for us to study about culture before going to a country. By doing this, you can have true experience.

Composition 4

Which Woman Do You Want to Be?

What kind of woman do you want to be in the future? A career woman or a kind-hearted mother who does housework? You can make the best use of your ability and character whatever you do. Certain types of women who are proud of their jobs have some special atmosphere and I think women can be divided into two types; those who have fine atmosphere and those with bad atmosphere.

I will discuss two of the differences between the two types. Those who have fine atmosphere have advantages because other people tend to make a good personal judgment by first impression. People who have fine atmosphere look full of energy.

If you are a boss, what kind of person do you choose for your assistants? You probably choose pleasant people. People tend to judge others by first impression. They cannot understand what they are. Those who have bad atmosphere make bad impressions on other people unconsciously. I hesitate to talk to such people. I sometimes get depressed, before and after examinations and when I am given a lot of homework. My friends hesitate to talk to me. They know how depressed I am. Just imagine two types of people.

One type are those who listen to others seriously, and the other type are those who do not show much interest. Which type of people do you get a good impression from?

People who have fine atmosphere are shining. I think that Ms.O, the chairperson of our R committee, makes good impressions on us. She is always smiling, polite, and helps us. How about people who have bad atmosphere? Do they look full of energy?

These two types of people are easily distinguishable. Either of them have special atmosphere. The atmosphere is a reflection of our hearts. It is very important for us to try to express everything in a better way.

Composition 5

Spectacular and Interesting Sport, Tennis

Did you ever played or watched tennis? If you did, you thought it is not a powerful sport. The rules is a little difficult, it takes a couple of hours for one game, and spectators watch the game quietly in the game. Though tennis is not so powerful as football, rugby and sumo, it is a very spectacular and interesting sport. In this essay, I will show you how interesting and popular tennis is.

When you will attend big games, such as the Wimbledon tournament or the French open, you can enjoy exciting games. There are many professional players all over the world. It has been their dream to play in the Center Court (the biggest court). However, they had to win some games to play there. Of course, the player can get the prize money if he/she won the game. Besides, he/she appear on TV and commercials. Therefore, they do their best in the big games. Also, we can watch the games holding in the Center Court on TV. The No.1 players, Steffi Graf, do not disappoint her fans. Today, Japanese tennis players such as Kimiko Date and Naoko Sawamatsu does good jobs. Many Japanese goes to attend such games and watches it on TV. Also, it is very difficult to get the ticket for big games. Many people will form a line to buy such tickets all night long.

You will enjoy not only watching the games but also visiting sightseeing places relating to tennis. In Wimbledon, there are eighteen tennis courts, large and small, picnic areas, and some shops and restaurants. Many families will eat lunch and some bathe in the sun. You see famous players and some members of the Royal family who attend games. Japanese travel

agencies had group tours to go to watch tennis games. Some Japanese utilized these tours and visited Wimbledon. There are some people who reserve the tickets a year in advance.

These facts tell you how spectacular and interesting tennis is. It has been said that tennis is a sport for ladies and gentlemen, although it is a very easy sport to play. It is very important for visitors and spectators to observe rules. If you can do so, you are crazy for playing it.

Composition 6

Soseki Natsume

Today many people go abroad to study. It is easy for us to go abroad because there are many guidebooks and people who experienced studies in other countries. Soseki Natsume, who is one of the famous and good writers in Meiji era, had a hard and lonely experience in England. Although his stay in London was not good, he left many things which attract us because of his stay. I believe that Soseki is a great and patient writer.

I will discuss three facts that show he was a great writer. He wrote good essays which the beauty and culture of England. He endured his hard and lonely life in England. His museum was built in London in honor of his achievement.

He wrote some good essays such as "London-tou" and "Carlyle hakubutsukan" in England. He went to the Tower of London four days after his arrival. Probably its magnificent and fearful appearance attracted him and he wrote the impression clearly; the silent stream of the River Thames, an oppressive atmosphere of the tower, and the gloomy weather. Before he wrote "Carlyle hakubutukan, he went to Carlyle's house. He was the first person to visit there and he wrote about an English life style. His works make us imagine what England used to be.

He endured his hard and lonely life in England. He could not speak English at all. He could not communicate with people in English. He had no friends during his stay and bought a lot of books. He shut himself up in his room and studied English literature. He changed his apartment five times. The first room and the second one were too expensive for him to live in, and he could not pay the rent. Because of the disease spread those days, he was driven out of the third one. The fourth room was uncomfortable. It was very cold in the room. He started suffering from neurosis. He experi-

enced a hard life, and he left great works such as “Bungakuron.” Some scholars say, “Without his study in England, he could not write such great works.”

His museum was built in London in honor of his achievement. This is the first Japanese museum which was built in a foreign country. You can relax because there are the Asahi newspaper, Japanese books and Soseki’s books in this museum.

These episodes cheer us up when we try to study in a foreign country. We will probably have trouble and feel down. If we do not give up and do your best, we can work it out and achieve something as Soseki did. I believe that he was a great writer.