

# An Exploratory Study on College Freshmen's English Writing

— Focusing on Peer- and Self-Assessment of Compositions —

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## I. INTRODUCTION

A foreign language can be an object to be analyzed grammatically, phonologically, or lexically, but mere analyses of a target language do not ensure its mastery. It has been several decades since the fact was made clear that only instructing rules governing such aspects does not lead to the mastery of a foreign language. Learners must 'acquire' a foreign language so that they can use it in a communicative way. Simply 'learning' about rules does not take learners anywhere. A crucial role of a foreign language instructor is not to explain such rules but to have learners actually experience as many situations as possible where they can develop the ability to use the language in a communicative way. Thus, the role of an instructor is to facilitate their foreign language acquisition, providing 'scaffolding' for learners, as in the sociocultural theory, and the learners need to be trained to be autonomous and motivated enough to put themselves in a situation where successful second/foreign language acquisition takes place. Such learners are expected to put themselves later in literate writing communities in a foreign language where they can further develop their writing competence in authentic writing contexts. Keeping this pedagogical belief in mind, the present researcher has conducted English writing instruction for more than two decades. The following is the analyses of the data obtained from the English composition instruction conducted on the basis of this belief. The researcher hopes that findings from the study can contribute to building fundamental knowledge in deliberating English writing instruction at colleges in Japan.

The present study investigates gains obtained in a college freshmen's English writing class, focusing on their tasks of peer- and self-assessment of compositions. It also examines some features of improvements made in the English composition class observed during a semester, with its focus on developing learners' ability to improve the quality of their compositions, employing repeated tasks of peer- and self-assessments. It also attempts to portray what relationships exist between variables such as English proficiency, learners' backgrounds regarding English composition, and their gains in English writing achieved during a semester. The researcher intends to provide some implications for better English composition instruction toward the end.

## II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Concerning theoretical perspectives on second language writing, Cumming (1998) suggests that there is a threefold distinction in second language writing research orientation: text analytic, composing process, and social constructionist views of writing. He also contends that two other

critical factors should be taken into consideration when writing is viewed from the perspective of second language education; that is, a) a wide variety of biliterate situations such as the differences in individuals' personal histories and proficiency in L1 and L2, and b) SL writing's particular significance shaped in education. He further introduces the following three dissimilar approaches to comprehensive model building in second language writing: 1) adopting existing general theories such as neo-Vygotskian's and Bakhtin's and applying them to second language writing (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Spack, 1997); 2) constructing descriptive frameworks to guide future theoretical speculation, using a diverse research findings (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996); 3) constructing explanatory causal path models of second language writer's composing ability (Sasaki & Hirose, 1996; Cumming & Riazi, 2000). Among these studies, Sasaki & Hirose's (1996) empirical study conducted on Japanese college EFL learners has been successful in providing an explanatory causal path model for elucidating L2 writing ability. The present study follows the framework of this study in investigating the relationships between factors influencing gains observed in the compositions written by the subjects.

Sasaki & Hirose's (1996) pioneering research investigated 70 college EFL students along such dimensions as second language (L2) proficiency, first language (L1) writing ability, writing strategies in L1 and L2, metaknowledge of L2 expository writing, past writing experiences, and instructional background, and generated an explanatory model of EFL writing ability. In their research, learners' L2 proficiency, L1 writing ability, and metaknowledge on L2 expository writing were observed to be all significant in explaining the L2 writing ability variance, with the first variable being the strongest and the last the weakest among the three.

Among variables investigated in their study, of special relevance to the present study are factors such as subjects' L2 proficiency and instructional background. Such studies as Raimis (1985) and Zamel (1982) revealed that skilled L2 writers wrote better regardless of L2 proficiency, depending on their composing competence, while Cumming (1989), Pennington and So (1993), and Sasaki and Hirose (1996) argued that L2 proficiency was a crucial factor distinguishing better writers and poor writers, among several factors investigated.

Instructional background is another important factor investigated in Sasaki and Hirose (1996) which is also of relevance to the present study. Using a questionnaire, they investigated their subjects' background information including the way they were taught in composing, on the assumption that learners' experience with L2 composition instruction could be counted as a factor influencing L2 writing ability if some writing strategies and knowledge of the composing in L2 were teachable. Following these theoretical and methodological framework, the present study also attempts to portray what factors are related to learners' composition gain achieved during a semester of English writing class.

Another research focus is placed on the relationship between the viewpoints attained to compose effectively through their repeated task of evaluating peers' and their own compositions (self-assessment) and the gain in the quality of their compositions. The research design of the present study does not allow the researcher to detect any direct relationship between the two variables, but it could be inferred that this study could provide a slight chance of admitting that such a relationship is existent between the two when the learners have made significant improvements in their L2 compositions during the semester, although such a direct relationship must be confirmed in a more rigid and controlled research condition.

A recent trend of foreign language writing in learner-centered education, which aims at helping learners to be independent learners, has been the implementation of self-assessment as a learning tool in writing class.

For example, Purwati (2015) employed the use of self-assessment in her EFL class in Indonesia, revealing that her students found the process to be helpful in revising their essays at phrase, surface, content, and lexical levels, although their grammatical accuracy did not improve significantly. Heidrarian (2016) also investigated the effect of using self-assessment on Iranian EFL learners' EFL writing. Based on her research results that students in the experimental group who experienced self-assessment outperformed in the post test and that they used more writing processes, she claims that using of self-assessment is an effective instructional technique and an evaluation instrument. In their study on ESL learners' argumentative essay writing, Fung and Hooi (2015) also employed the technique of self-assessment in their class. On the basis of the results gained from their pre- and post-treatment writing tests, semi-structured interview and reflection entries, they revealed that self-assessment has a significant effect on students' writing performance, and that the group work employed enhanced social and cognitive development of the students, claiming that self-assessment in writing class is useful in developing learner autonomy and improving writing ability. Furthermore, focusing on the effect of self-assessment on students' independence and writing competence, Ratminingsih, Marhaenei, and Vagayanti (2018) investigated Indonesian students' independence and writing competence, arguing that self-assessment has an effect on the students' independence and writing competence. Another intriguing result was reported by Baleghizadeh and Hajizadeh (2014). They provided their Iranian EFL students with a detailed evaluation sheet for assessing their work and had them evaluated their own compositions. The results revealed that students' self-assessment scores were highly correlated with teachers' evaluation scores, claiming that the technique is a useful instrument for developing students' writing skills on the ground that they have obtained self-assessment ability comparable to those of their instructors. Finally, Birjandi and Hadidi Tamjid (2012) investigated 157 intermediate EFL learners' peer- and self-assessment behaviors and improvement in writing, having divided them into four different conditions. The results revealed that those in the second and third groups, where the learners employed self-assessment and peer assessment, together with teacher assessment, outperformed those in the other settings.

As claimed in these studies, self-assessment activities employed for the purpose of enhancing learners' sensitivity to features contributing to better compositions seem to bring about promising results. Keeping these results in mind, the present study has established the following research questions:

- 1) Does EFL writing instruction involving peer and self-assessment to enhance learners' sensitivity to features leading to better compositions contribute to learners' higher proficiency in writing?
- 2) What aspects in learners' writing are improved during a semester?
- 3) What are the relationships like between variables related to their EFL compositions?

### III . METHOD

#### 1. Participants

This research involved 26 freshmen as research participants who are majoring economics, international business, and public administration, at a local college, with 13 male and 13 female students. The students were assigned to the researcher's English writing class lasting for one semester as the highest English proficiency level students at the college, on the basis of their English proficiency measured with a placement test entitled the Eiken IBE Test. The scores obtained from the test were utilized as those indicating their English proficiency in this research as well.

#### 2. Contents of the English writing class

The English writing class basically consisted of the following components: 1) using a textbook entitled *Working Up to Paragraph Writing*, which is assumed to be edited based on the 'current traditional approach' in writing, the students usually learn fundamental patterns of composing including 'cause and effect,' 'problem – solution,' and 'comparison and contrast,' while reading a few model paragraphs in each unit, paying attention to typical vocabulary and expressions in each; 2) the students were also required to compose a paragraph based on the patterns and expressions learned in each unit; 3) their written assignments, together with an evaluation sheet (See Appendix 1), were provided for group members sitting nearby, so that they could write comments on or assess their peer learners' compositions; 4) the group members read all the compositions provided, usually five or so each time, wrote free comments on each composition, and evaluated each with respects to eight evaluation points; 5) the instructor provided feedback on organizational, lexical, and grammatical aspects of each composition both in explicit or indirect manners; 6) the students revised their compositions for a more refined or a final versions, with the help of feedback from the instructor and of the comments and evaluations provided by their peers; 7) the final version with further comments from the instructor was sometimes distributed to the student groups again with the evaluation sheet so that they could check whether their compositions were sufficiently revised, as in the suggestions by the instructor or the peers; and 8) error correction training was sometimes conducted, with typical errors taken from their actual compositions provided for the purpose of correcting errors. These steps were usually reiterated each time they composed in a new unit.

The focus of this procedure was placed on enhancing learners' ability to self-assess their own compositions through the repeated task of assessment on their compositions conducted by their peers and by themselves consequently. At the same time, it was expected that the learners would become sensitive to the features leading to better compositions, and that their writing ability would be improved to a substantial degree as a consequence. That is, the learners would obtain solid measuring standards, in other words, more concrete points of composing on which they write their compositions effectively. As had been observed in the researcher's previous experiences as an English composition instructor, it was obvious that learners in freshmen English writing class had no such composition standards, probably resulted from the lack of such focus in English writing education in high school. It is quite reasonable that sufficient time was not devoted to

writing compositions consisting of hundreds of words, with certain topics and genres provided, in high school English class. Thus, the present researcher had realized the importance of having learners gain such solid composing standards for better writing before the current study was undertaken.

### **3. Data collection procedure**

The following data collection procedure was employed in the present study. The students were asked to fill out the questionnaire at the beginning of the semester which asked about their backgrounds related to English and Japanese compositions involving questions asking experiences in writing in their daily lives or items learned in high school (See Appendix 2). This questionnaire was constructed with the questions taken from Sasaki and Hirose (1996) with some revisions. They were also required to write a composition, as a pre-test, at the beginning of the semester, with the title, 'Gambling: Agree or Disagree? Provide Reasons Why You Think So.' Thus, they were expected to defend their positions by making logically sound arguments and providing reasonable supports. At the end of the semester, they also wrote a composition, as a post-test, with the title, 'Children's Use of Cellphones: Agree or Disagree? Provide Reasons Why You Think So.' The title provided at the beginning was not the identical to the one given at the end, although the task required was almost the same. This was to avoid the effect caused by practice and from experience. The data gained through the procedure above was utilized for the data analyses of the present study.

### **4. Data analysis procedure**

#### **4.1 Questionnaire**

The numerical values obtained from the questionnaire were utilized for quantitative analysis. These involved the number of items which the students reported they had learned in high school related to English compositions, and the relative points (with the score range of 1 ~ 5) which they gave to their confidence levels in writing both Japanese and English compositions in class and outside class. These numerical values were adopted in the correlation analysis.

#### **4.2 Composition evaluation**

The composition evaluations were conducted by two experienced raters, both native English speaking instructors whose expertise were applied linguistics. Both had sufficient experience teaching and evaluating English compositions in Japan. The evaluation matrix was employed from the one created by Sasaki and Hirose (1999) with some revisions (See Appendix 3). The evaluators were asked to give a specific point in the score range of 1 ~ 10 on each evaluating feature. The mean scores obtained from the two evaluators were used as the evaluation scores for each evaluating feature of the compositions. These numerical values were used to measure the gains between the pre-test and the post-test in the form of *t* – test scores, and to figure out correlation coefficients between the variables measured.

## **IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The following table shows the descriptive statistics concerning the students' English proficiency measured with the EIKEN IBE test, their confidence levels in writing Japanese in class

and outside class and the English counterparts, the number of items which they reported they learned in high school English composition, and the total points they gained for their pre- and post-compositions.

## 1. Descriptive Statistics

**Table 1.** *Descriptive Statistics for Measured Variables*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Med</i>	<i>Max</i>
English Sc.	552.3	28.82	524	546	634
Conf. in J	2.65	0.98	1	3	4
Conf. out J	3.01	0.80	2	3	5
Conf. in E	2.39	1.10	1	3	4
Conf. out E	2.39	0.90	1	2.5	4
N. Learned	4.77	2.6	0	4	11
Total Pt. Pre.	29.79	7.18	16	29.25	42.5
Total Pt. Post.	36.08	5.39	26.5	36	48.5

*N* = 26

English Sc. = English proficiency score Conf. in J = Confidence in writing Japanese in class Conf. out J = Confidence in writing Japanese outside class Conf. in E = Confidence in writing English in class Conf. out E = Confidence in writing English outside class N. Learned = Number of items learned related to English writing in high school Total Pt. = Total points of pre-composition Total Pt. Post = Total points of post-composition

The English proficiency of the participants is somewhat varied with the highest score 634 and the lowest 524, although they were placed in the same class with these scores. The total scores of the pre- and post-compositions for the highest student in English proficiency are 37.5 and 40.5 respectively, while those for the lowest student were 29.0 and 42.5. The total scores of the gain in their compositions are 12.5 for the lowest proficiency students, and 3.0 for the highest proficiency student, indicating the lowest student made more gain in his composition. The mean gain score for the highest five in terms of English proficiency is 8.0, whereas that of the lowest five is 4.6. As far as these figures are concerned, those with higher English proficiency made more gains in the course of the writing class. However, this fact needs to be examined in a more controlled research with a substantial number of subjects.

As for their confidence level in writing, they have more confidence in writing in Japanese outside class than in class. Writing outside classes involves keeping a diary and corresponding with others in the forms of an e-mail message or letters. This seems quite natural in that formal writing is usually more difficult than informal writing. However, as for the confidence level in writing English, they seem to feel that both writing in class and writing outside class are difficult at the same level, which is also reasonable, because both need to be written in English, a foreign language.

The number of items which the participants reported they learned regarding English compositions in high school is 4.47 out of 13 items, which involve translating Japanese into English at a sentence-level, summarizing an English passage, writing an English paragraph, and finding a topic sentence. This number looks smaller than had anticipated, reflecting that more emphasis was placed on decoding and comprehending messages than encoding and writing ones in high school English education. Furthermore, an item which could influence the present study is

whether or not they were trained in writing at a paragraph level in high school. 16 participants out of 26 responded that they had experienced composing in English at this level, regardless of the intensity, before they joined the researcher's writing class. The number seems to be higher than the researcher had expected. The recent focus on enhancing communicative ability in high school English may have influenced the figure.

One thing to be added to these figures is the number of items related to Japanese compositions which the participants reported they learned in high school, although the data is involved neither in the descriptive statistics above nor in the correlation analysis below. The mean score for the number of learned items regarding Japanese compositions was 4.62 out of 12 items. This is almost equal to the number related to English composition, 4.47. Furthermore, only 11 students out of 26 responded that they had had experience of being taught how to compose a passage in Japanese, even in the form of free writing. This fact is in a sharp contrast with the number of learners who had experienced composing in English. Taking these figures into account, it is inferred that strong emphasis has not been placed on enhancing students' ability in composing in Japanese, which corresponds to researcher's intuition gained in previous learning and teaching experience.

## 2. *t*-tests

The table below shows the results of the *t*-tests conducted with respect to the following six variables that can influence the quality of compositions, including Clarity of the theme, Appeal to the readers, Expression, Organization, Knowledge of language forms, and Social awareness. Furthermore, a statistical difference in the total points between the pre- compositions and post compositions was also calculated in the same manner.

**Table 2.** *t*-test Results of Variables Concerning English Composition

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> - <i>value</i>	<i>p</i> - <i>value</i>
Theme Clarity 1	5.14	1.25		
Theme Clarity 2	6.31	1.08	4.89	0.00
Appl. to Reader 1	4.40	1.26		
Appl. to Reader 2	5.65	1.13	5.27	0.00
Expression 1	4.77	1.31		
Expression 2	6.17	1.06	5.66	0.00
Organization 1	5.15	1.40		
Organization 2	6.04	0.93	3.62	0.001
Language Form 1	4.71	1.23		
Language Form 2	5.54	1.03	3.36	0.003
Social Aware. 1	5.52	1.63		
Social Aware. 2	6.44	1.13	3.40	0.002
Total Pt. 1	29.79	7.18		
Total Pt. 2	36.08	5.39	5.28	0.00

*N* = 26

Theme Clarity = Clarity of the theme Appl. to Reader = Appeal to the readers Language Form = Knowledge of language forms Social Aware. = Social awareness Total Pt. = Total points of compositions

The best scores were provided for compositions satisfying the following evaluation standards;  
 1) Clarity of the theme: Theme is clear. Provides sufficient facts to support the theme. Differentiates facts from opinions.

- 2) Appeal to the readers: Provide concrete and convincing reasons and facts. Very appealing to the reader.
- 3) Expression: All sentences are consistently structured and adequately connected.
- 4) Organization: All paragraphs are logically connected, and easy to follow.
- 5) Knowledge of language forms: Follows appropriate notation (spelling, punctuation, correct use of English spelling, etc. Demonstrate mastery of correct word usage and grammar.
- 6) Social awareness: Demonstrate full awareness of oneself, social phenomena, and the relationship between oneself and society.

As the results show, statistically significant differences were observed in all the variables investigated between the pre-compositions and the post-compositions, which is noteworthy. These results show that the quality of the English compositions written by the participants in the writing class was improved to a substantial degree even during one semester. Especially, *t*-values in Clarity of the Theme, Appeal to the Readers, and Expression are larger than those in the other variables. Using the descriptions about the evaluation standard above, it could be interpreted that the participants became more skillful in structuring a paragraph consistently by connecting sentences in a cohesive manner, in providing concrete, convincing reasons and facts, and, thus, in making the theme appealing.

One thing to be noted is that the researcher paid special attention to enhancing learners' sensitivity to features contributing to better quality of compositions through having them experience repeated peer and self-assessments, using an evaluation sheet with such points. However, the direct effect of the peer- and self-assessments must be examined in more controlled further studies.

### 3. Inter-correlations between Variables

The table below shows the results of the inter-correlation analysis on the variables related to their English compositions.

**Table 3.** *Inter-correlations between Variables*

	EPR	JCI	JCO	ECI	ECO	NLIJ	NLIE	TTLG	TG	APG	EXG	ORG	LFG
JCT	0.10												
	0.63												
JCO	0.04	0.50											
	0.84	0.01											
ECI	-0.02	0.46	0.38										
	0.93	0.02	0.06										
ECO	0.13	0.2	0.41	0.62									
	0.52	0.32	0.04	0.01									
NLIJ	0.01	-0.11	-0.03	-0.12	0.06								
	0.97	0.59	0.89	0.55	0.78								
NLIE	-0.01	0.05	0.06	0.2	0.16	0.61							
	0.96	0.80	0.78	0.32	0.42	0.01							
TTLG	-0.08	-0.1	-0.1	-0.12	-0.25	0.21	-0.15						
	0.69	0.61	0.61	0.56	0.21	0.30	0.47						
TG	-0.21	-1.5	-0.06	0.02	-0.20	0.03	-0.21	0.80					
	0.30	0.48	0.78	0.93	0.32	0.87	0.31	0.00					



APG	-0.15	-0.04	0.04	0.09	-0.05	0.32	-0.03	0.88	0.64				
	0.46	0.84	0.85	0.67	0.79	0.12	0.87	0.00	0.00				
EXG	-0.07	0.04	0.14	-0.01	-0.12	0.08	-0.13	0.83	0.63	0.79			
	0.75	0.83	0.51	0.98	0.57	0.70	0.52	0.00	0.00	0.00			
ORG	-0.11	-0.17	0.15	-0.15	-0.04	0.02	-0.14	0.63	0.66	0.44	0.52		
	0.61	0.40	0.46	0.46	0.87	0.94	0.51	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.01		
LFG	-0.07	-0.12	-0.13	-0.23	-0.28	0.25	-0.07	0.75	0.48	0.66	0.52	0.40	
	0.73	0.57	0.54	0.27	0.17	0.23	0.73	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.05	
SKG	0.04	-0.06	-0.21	-0.11	-0.26	0.42	0.02	0.75	0.52	0.72	0.68	0.25	0.50
	0.86	0.79	0.31	0.61	0.20	0.03	0.93	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.23	0.01

EPR = English Proficiency JCI = Confidence in Japanese writing in class JCO = Confidence in Japanese writing outside class ECI = Confidence in English writing in class ECO = Confidence in English writing outside class NLIJ = Number of learned items in Japanese composition NLIE = Number of learned items in English composition TG = Gain in Clarity of the theme APG = Gain in Appeal to the Readers EXG = Gain in Expression ORG = Gain in Organization LFG = Gain in knowledge of language forms SKG = Gain in Social Awareness

Upper: Correlation coefficient

Lower: *p* value

First, moderate correlations were detected between variables concerning confidence in writing, as in confidence in writing Japanese in class and outside class, confidence in writing Japanese in class and confidence in writing English in class, and writing English in class and writing English outside class, although these are quite reasonable. Another moderate correlation was detected between the number of items learned concerning Japanese composition in high school and the English counterpart. Depending on the intensity of high school education on encoding messages which each participant had experienced, there could be a wide discrepancy. Those educated in a stronger intensity in writing English may have educated in a similar way in writing Japanese as well. Or, rather, those with greater memories of the contents simply responded that they learned more both in English and Japanese writing, while those with fewer memories responded in an opposite way. Furthermore, high or moderate correlations were observed between the gains in the components of the evaluation standard and the gain in the total gain, which is also quite reasonable. It simply means that the gains in each component contributed to the gains in the total score.

One thing to be noted is that such factors as English proficiency, confidence in writing English and Japanese in class and outside class, and the numbers of items the participants had reported they learned in high school in relation to English and Japanese writing, were not correlated with the gains in most components of the evaluation standard or the total gain, except for one combination, a low correlation between the gain in social awareness and the number of items learned in relation to Japanese writing, at  $r = 0.42$  with,  $p = 0.032$ .

Another point to be noted is that there was not any correlation between learners' English proficiency and the gains in compositions, although results in previous studies on the relationships between the two have been mixed, as mentioned in the previous section. This could be suggesting that the participants were fairly homogenous in terms of their English proficiency, considering the fact that they were placed in the same class on the basis of their English proficiency scores.

In summary, it can be interpreted that the learners had improved their English composition abilities, regardless of their English proficiency, confidence in writing, and learning experience regarding writing in high school.

## VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARK

The present study investigated the gains achieved by the students in a freshmen English writing class during a semester, where tasks requiring learners' peer- and self-assessment of their own compositions were involved, so that clues to more effective writing instruction could be obtained. Through repeated composition evaluations, using an evaluation sheet with explicit evaluation standards which requires them to evaluate their own compositions, the learners were expected to be sensitive to these evaluation points, and, thus, to enhance the ability to write better English compositions.

The *t*-test results gained from the study showed that there were statistically significant differences between the pre-test composition and the post-test composition in all the seven points investigated, namely, clarity of the theme, appeal to the readers, expression, organization, knowledge of language forms, social awareness, and the total points of compositions. These results seem to indicate that the learners were able to improve the quality of their compositions in these aspects, having attained English writing skills at a significant level. However, the direct effects of the peer- and self- composition assessments on the gains in compositions cannot be detected because of the limitations of its research design. This needs to be further investigated in more controlled and rigid quasi-experimental conditions. For example, in a research design where two groups, the experimental group with the treatment of peer- and self-assessments, and the control group without such treatment, are involved, more meaningful and direct effects could be observed, when two groups with similar English proficiency and writing backgrounds were available.

Another point revealed in the present study was that there were no meaningful correlations between variables related to English writing, such as learners' English proficiency, confidence in writing English and Japanese in and outside class, the number of items they reported they learned in high school, and the gains in compositions achieved during the semester, although there were high or moderate correlations between the gains in the features of compositions measured. The scores of variables except for English proficiency were rather subjective and dependent upon learners' vague memories, and these should be supplemented with detailed interviews or more open-ended descriptions by the learners. For example, the things which the learners reportedly learned in high school could have been identified in more detailed interviews. Furthermore, the gains in the present study were denoted with the subjective evaluation scores by the evaluators on each evaluating point, but more elaborate and detailed tracing of composing process could be possible, if such techniques as thinking-aloud were employed. Thus, it would be possible to portray how the writers are becoming skillful in paying attention to the features leading to better compositions.

These fundamental information is indispensable for the learners to be trained to become effective in composing in a foreign language. Such information must be obtained at a time when they enter a new language program, and continually in the course of the program, and at the end of the program, so that more effective training can be offered not only in an English composition class but also in other classes teaching different aspects of college English.

As discussed in the section above, the educational focus in developing learners' communicative

abilities has not always been placed on enhancing their writing ability even in Japanese. Rather, it can be assumed that, in Japan, more focus has been placed on developing an ability to decode or comprehend messages, sometimes even insinuated meanings in the messages, than to encode and write messages effectively. This may be corresponding to the relative difference in the importance of roles in communication played by people in Western cultures and in those in Eastern cultures, as Hinds (1987) pointed out. This fact must be examined in further studies with feasible research designs and techniques, but must be kept in mind as well in deliberating educational goals and contents to produce effective writers. Furthermore, fundamental data concerning learners' backgrounds and other factors related to writing need to be accumulated to provide better and more articulated English writing instruction. Although the correlations between English proficiency and the gains in English compositions were not observed in the present study, the former must be continually improved with sufficient and appropriate feedback provided from instructors, so that more effective and proficient writers can be produced.

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**Appendix 1 Composition evaluation sheet**

英作文評価表

Evaluation of ( )' s composition

Evaluators ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
 ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

1. 文章の内容を具現化した適切なタイトルがついていますか。
2. しっかりしたトピックセンテンスがついていますか。
3. しっかりした結論がついていますか。
4. 論を支持するポイントが明確になっていますか。
5. それぞれの支持ポイントは具体的な内容のある文で補足されていますか。
6. 内容はよく理解でき、おもしろいですか。
7. 文法はしっかりしていますか。
8. コンマ、ピリオド、クエスチョンマーク、スペースの開け方、行間などの体裁に関する面は問題ありませんか。

氏名	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

**Appendix 2 Questionnaire on students' writing background**

英作文学習者の背景に関するアンケート

このアンケートは、これまでの皆さんの日本語及び英語で書いた経験について尋ねるものです。みなさんの英作文能力の向上に繋げるための研究データとして使用させていただければ幸いです。他の目的で使用することはありませんし、個人の名前、属性などが特定されるようなやり方で使用することはありません。また、研究目的で使用した後は責任をもって廃棄します。

学籍番号:            名前:            年齢:            性別:

1、 海外滞在体験について

(1) 今までに、英語圏の国の学校に留学したことがありますか。

はい            いいえ

(2) 「はい」と答えた人は何才のとき、どこへ、どのくらいの期間

(3) その時、作文の指導を受けましたか。

はい            いいえ

(4) 「はい」と答えた人はどのような内容でしたか。

2、 英語力について

これまでに取得した英検の級 ( ) 級

これまでに取得した TOEIC のスコア ( ) 点

これまでに取得した TOEFL のスコア ( ) 点

3、 日本語で書くことについて

(1) あなたにとって、提出する作文やレポートを日本語で書くことは、以下のうちのどれにあてはまりますか。あてはまる数字を○で囲んでください。

非常に困難 困難 どちらともいえない 容易 非常に容易

(2) あなたにとって、個人的な目的(例:手紙、日記など)で、日本語で作文することは、以下のうちのどれにあてはまりますか。あてはまる数字を○で囲んでください。

非常に困難 困難 どちらともいえない 容易 非常に容易

(3) これまでに受けた高校の「国語」の授業で、次のうちのどれを学びましたか。あてはまる記号全てを○で囲んでください。さらに大学のアカデミック・リテラシーで学んだものは△で囲んでください。**重複しても構いません。**

ア、読んだ文章の要約のしかた。

イ、1段落以上の文章の具体的な展開のしかた。

ウ、文章の中で、主題となっている文をさがす。

エ、与えられた課題について思いつくままに書く。

オ、作文を書く前に、どういう読み手を対象として書くのか考える。

カ、作文を書く前に、アウトライン(全体の構成)を考える。

キ、作文を書く前に、どうすれば言いたいことがうまく伝えられるか考える。

ク、作文を書いている時、文章全体の構成を意識しながら書く。

ケ、作文を書いている時、読み手にわかりやすいように書く。

コ、書いた文章を読み返して、修正を加える。(例えばどのような修正?)

サ、小論文の書き方。(例えばどのようなこと?)

シ、ア-サのどれも学んだことがない。

4、 英語で書くことについて

(1) あなたにとって、提出する作文やレポートを英語で書くことは、以下のうちのどれにあてはまりますか。あてはまる数字を○で囲んでください。

非常に困難 困難 どちらともいえない 容易 非常に容易

(2) あなたにとって、個人的な目的(例:手紙、日記など)で、英語で作文することは、以下のうちのどれにあてはまりますか。あてはまる数字を○で囲んでください。

非常に困難 困難 どちらともいえない 容易 非常に容易

(3) これまでに受けた高校の「英語」の授業で、次のうちのどれを学びましたか。あてはまる記号全てを○で囲んでください。さらに大学の英作文の授業で学んだものは△で囲んでください。**重複しても構いません。**

ア、和文を英訳する。

イ、構文の書き換え。

- ウ、 1段落以上の文章の具体的な展開のしかた。
- エ、 読んだ英文を、英文で要約する。
- オ、 与えられた課題について、思いつくままに書く。
- カ、 文章の中で、主題となっている文をさがす。
- キ、 作文を書く前に、どういう読み手を対象として書くのか考える。
- ク、 作文を書く前に、アウトライン(全体の構成)を考える。
- ケ、 作文を書く前に、どうすれば言いたいことがうまく伝えられるか考える
- コ、 書いた文章を読み返して、修正を加える。
- サ、 知っている言い回しを使って、言いたいことをなんとか表現しようとする。
- シ、 1段落以上の自由英作文を書く。
- ス、 ア-シのどれも学んだことがない。

### Appendix 3 Evaluation sheet for English composition

Name:

Date:

SCORE	CRITERIA
Clarity of	10-9 very good ▪Theme is clear. ▪Provides sufficient facts to support the Theme the theme. ▪Differentiates facts from opinions.
	8-6 good ▪Theme is somewhat clear. ▪Provides some facts and reasons to support the theme.
	5-3 fair ▪Theme is not so clear. ▪Provides few facts and reasons to support the theme.
	2-1 poor ▪Theme is not clear at all.
Appeal to the	10-9 very good ▪Provides concrete and convincing reasons and facts. ▪Very appealing to the reader.
	8-6 good ▪Provide somewhat concrete and convincing reasons and facts. ▪Appealing to the reader.
	5-3 fair ▪Provides a few concrete and convincing reasons and facts. ▪Not so appealing to the reader.
	2-1 poor ▪Provides few concrete and convincing reasons and facts ▪Not appealing to the reader.
Expression	10-9 very good ▪All sentences are consistently structured and adequately connected.
	8-6 good ▪All sentences are consistently structured, but some sentences are inadequately connected.
	5-3 fair ▪Not all sentences are consistently structured, and many sentences are inadequately connected.
	2-1 poor ▪Sentences are inconsistently structured and are inadequately connected.
Organization	10-9 very good ▪All paragraphs are logically connected, and easy to follow.
	8-6 good ▪All paragraphs are somewhat logically connected, and not difficult to follow.
	5-3 fair ▪Paragraphs are not logically connected, and difficult to follow.
	2-1 poor ▪All paragraphs are not logically connected at all, and impossible to follow.
Knowledge of language forms	10-9 Very good ▪Follows appropriate notation (spelling and punctuation). ▪Demonstrates mastery of correct word usage and grammar

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8-6 good	▪ Sometimes makes errors in notation, word usage, and grammar.
5-3 fair	▪ Often makes mistakes in notation, word usage, and grammar.
2-1 poor	▪ Demonstrates no mastery of notation, word usage, and grammar.
Social awareness	
10-9 very good	▪ Demonstrates full awareness of oneself, social phenomena, and the relationship between oneself and society.
8-6 good	▪ Demonstrates some awareness of oneself, social phenomena, and the relationship between oneself and society
5-3 fair	▪ Demonstrates little awareness of oneself, social phenomena, and the relationship between oneself and society
2-1 poor	▪ Demonstrates no awareness of oneself, social phenomena, and the relationship between oneself and society
Total score	/ 60 points