

Transitions through Product and Process:

Approaches to teaching writing in
preparation for the Japanese
university entrance examinations

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Abstract

This paper investigates a number of approaches taken to prepare students for the free essay section of Japanese university entrance examinations, essentially by tracking student progress upon exposure to a range of techniques spanning the product/process continuum. Additionally, attention was paid to the influence of L1 on L2 writing in this context, with a focus on whether rhetorical factors hypothesized about L1 could negatively influence the aesthetic value of L2. It concluded that a varied syllabus, combining both product and process techniques, led to positive results under intensive, short-term conditions, as well as lending weight to the argument that previously held views on the influence of L1/L2 rhetorical differences may be of less significance when Japanese students write argumentative prose.

本論文は、高校生が大学入試の自由英作文問題を解くために受ける指導法に関し、プロダクト・プロセスの観点から分析を行った。

また、第二言語で行われた自由英作文に見られる第一言語の影響に着目し、

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第一言語で用いられる修辭的な要素が第二言語に転移するかどうかを調査した。

プロダクト・プロセスの両方を用いた様々な指導法は、日本人の生徒が自分の意見を表した文章を書く際、短期集中で行われるという条件下では効果的であり、これまで考えられてきた第一言語と第二言語の修辭的差異はあまり重要ではないという結論に至った。

Keywords

Intensive writing, process, product, contrastive rhetoric, specification, induction

It is common for Japanese universities, both public and private, to include a free essay section (Jiyu Eisakubun in Japanese, hereafter JE), as part of the English section of their respective entrance examinations (see Rinnert and Kobayashi, 2009). JE questions, particularly those appearing in the exams of the most prestigious institutions, tend to require students to write argumentative prose, or to give opinions based on current socio-cultural topics and trends (examples can be found in appendix 1).

In spite of the existence of free-writing tasks in university entrance examinations, high school students in Japan tend to receive little formal instruction in English writing, mainly due to syllabus related time restrictions (Ezard, 2014). Students wishing to prepare for such free-writing examinations often attend after-school classes. However, there are a growing number of schools that are beginning to offer English writing classes, most often in intensive, short-term elective courses.

The purpose of this study was to analyze which methodological techniques to teaching L2 writing, applied over a short period of contact time, would lead to the highest degree of improvement in tackling free-essay tasks, essentially in order to assist those schools which are able to allot teaching time to intensive writing courses for entrance exam preparation, or indeed preparation for other tests involving short writing tasks (such as TOEFL, IELTS, etc.)

As an accompaniment to the methodological analysis, the study also attempted to examine the influence of L1 on writing argumentative prose in L2, in addition to whether other aspects, outside of the notions of contrastive rhetoric, discussed below, have implications when considering methodology in writing courses.

Literature review

The prevalence of the grammar-translation method, as well as the grammar-based syllabuses in books on writing authorized by the ministry of education, are often given as reasons for the lack of exposure to English writing skills at the high school level in Japan (Koga 1999; Takagi 2001). More recent studies on writing tasks in authorized textbooks revealed that, even in the final year of high school, free-writing tasks made up less than 5% of all writing tasks (Kobayakawa 2011). Hirayanagi (1998) suggests that Japanese students lack the analytical and organizational skills needed for writing in English, and that this is due to the overemphasis of teaching grammar rules in school.

However, studies by Rinnert and Kobayashi (2002) suggest that (in comparison to students in the US) there may actually be a lack of instruction even in L1 writing at the high school level, especially in

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terms of developing critical skills or finding outside sources, and that an awareness of L1 writing experience should influence the teaching of L2 writing. This view is further supported by Yasuda (2006), who advocates scaffolding tasks to assist students with L2 writing at the university level, in order to compensate for limited opportunities to develop logical presentation and evaluation skills at the high school level in both L1 and L2.

The influence of L1 writing experience leads on to issues of contrastive rhetoric, the study of which “...examines the differing expectations (of rhetorical patterns and logical organization of text) and their effects on L2 literacy development”, as defined by Ferris and Hedgecock (2004).

Studies of contrastive rhetoric have come a long way since Kaplan’s (1966) initial studies, suggesting that English follows a linear structure while “oriental” languages follow a circular structure, however, Casanave (2004) begins her review of contrastive rhetoric by stating that “... inherent in the CR project is the assumption of negative transfer from L1 to L2”. While taking care to examine both sides of the CR debate as it has progressed, she nevertheless concludes that, despite advances in this area by many prominent writers, “...teachers ... should exercise caution in uncritically applying principles from it in their classrooms”.

The study of contrastive rhetoric, as it relates to Japanese, first came to prominence in a number of studies by Hinds (1980, 1987, 1990). Contained within the first study was the observation, based on linguistic analysis of newspaper articles, that Japanese prose follows a paradigmatic pattern, called *ki-sho-ten-ketsu*, (beginning an argument, developing an argument, digressing to a related sub-theme

and finally reaching a conclusion) (Hinds 1980). The relevance of this in relation to writing in L2 is that the *ten*, or digressive stage, is absent in English, and transfer from L1 to L2 here would lead to possible confusion in written English. The fact that this view is persistent can be shown by Takagi (2001), who states, in relation to *ki-sho-ten-ketsu*, that, “It is necessary for teachers to make Japanese students of English aware of rhetorical differences in their writing classes”.

Later studies suggested that Japanese (as well as a number of other Asian languages) has a “quasi-inductive” style, where there is a “delayed introduction of purpose”. This is stated in relation to English, where a deductive style is more preferable to readers (Hinds 1990).

More recently, Hinds’ assumptions of Japanese writing styles have been challenged by a variety of authors. Kubota (1997) suggested that Hinds’ studies were too narrow in focus and did not reflect the diversity of Japanese as a language. Miura (2007), when interviewing 3rd year high school students in relation to their L1 writing found that, while most of them were aware of the *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* pattern, more than half of them did not follow this pattern when writing Japanese. Furthermore, only 1 out of 34 students showed transfer of this pattern from L1 to L2. She concluded that the *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* pattern, “...does not necessarily control writing behaviors of Japanese people in L1 or L2”.

Finally, Hirose (2003), in a study of Japanese university students’ writing on the same topic, in both L1 and L2, drew a number of conclusions regarding the supposed inductive style of Japanese, including the following three points: “Japanese EFL student-writers used deductive patterns in L2, and to a lesser degree in L1”, “there

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was no significant correlation between L1 and L2 organization” and, “students favored a deductive-type organizational pattern, regardless of the language, for argumentative writing”.

Goal

Based on previous experience of teaching intensive JE preparation classes, student progress was to be tracked in terms of the following two criteria.

- a.) Essay organization: the students’ ability to follow structural conventions for short argumentative essays, such as the use of introductions and topic sentences, body sentences, coherent linking of ideas, and relevant conclusions (steps often outlined in current text books for lower intermediate students such as Kelly & Gargagliano 2001, Blanchard & Root 2003, Martin 2010).
- b.) Essay content: Here defined in terms of whether the reasons and arguments presented by students would be judged to be convincing and/or relevant by a native speaker audience (this assumption of criteria was made in the absence of information relating to grading systems from individual universities, which are not made public).

In order to further examine these aspects of organization and content, the influence of the students’ L1 on their L2 writing, as well as the experience of the students as writers in L1, was considered.

The goal of this study, therefore, was two-fold. Firstly, students were exposed to a wide range of instruction and experience of EFL writing approaches across the product-process continuum over the relatively short time period of eight weeks. This was performed, as

previously stated, in order to assess the most effective methodologies under similar intensive conditions. The second stage of this study, mainly in relation to essay organization, was to examine whether there were signs of either a *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* pattern or an inductive style (or both) in students L2 writing, while also paying attention to the claims that the lack of instruction in L1 writing at the junior and senior high school level leaves students unprepared to tackle argumentative prose in L2, at least to the standard that may be deemed acceptable to native English speaking readers (and the examiners who would be evaluating their work in several months time).

Target group

The target group consisted of the ten students taking an intensive writing class (focusing on the JE section of Japanese university entrance exams) at school A, a private high school in Tokyo. School A was selected (from a group of seven schools currently following similar courses) as the hierarchy in this school had shown interest in actively tracking student progress in English writing as a means of administering real-time feedback. As a result of this, permission from the school was obtained to track and record student progress and to use this information (anonymously) for research purposes. Most of the students from this class were in the advanced English stream, and the level of general English ability of the students was above average for this age group. Despite the higher level of general ability, the students' experience of free writing in English varied from "a little" to "zero". The study was carried out over eight lessons of 90 minutes each.

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Method

Initial research

Students enrolling on the course were first asked to state their target universities, and additionally, to perform a reflective self-analysis task regarding current personal strengths and weaknesses in L2 writing ability. This information (received in L1 to maximize construct reliability) was actively used to tailor methodology and course design to this specific group of students, including which JE question genres to focus on, as well as assisting with decisions regarding lesson time given to specific methodological steps (both product and process) within the allotted course period. Several students indicated that they were aware of individual weaknesses regarding structuring of essays (4 students) and essay content (3 students). The full results of this pre-course enrollment form can be found in appendix 2.

Techniques and evaluation

Students were introduced to a variety of methodological techniques over the period of investigation. While a process approach, including pre-writing tasks and draft revision (Krapels, 1990; Raimes, 1987; Zamel, 1982) was introduced throughout the eight classes, product-focused approaches, such as the introduction of lexical frames (see Willis, 2003), focus on form (Fathman and Whalley, 1990), and analysis of model answers, were simultaneously employed. This “dual approach” can be explained by the fact that, while the growth of long-term L2 writing skills was seen as desirable, the short-term goal of this course was the improvement of the students’ ability to produce a short piece of argumentative prose under timed exam

conditions. Indeed, while Nunan (1991) mentions a “perennial tension” in methodology between process and product, he goes on to conclude that, “there is no principled reason why process writing cannot be integrated with the practice of studying and even imitating written models”. Dyer (1996) also reached similar conclusions relating to the merits of a task specific product/process hybrid, especially in academic environments and in task completion.

Students were exposed to the following techniques over the period of the course:

- Formal introduction of short essay structure (introduction, topic sentence, body, supporting sentences, conclusion).
- Practice of problematic grammatical elements (tenses, conditionals, etc.)
- Discussion/illustration of *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* and inductive versus deductive styles.
- Formal introduction of lexical frames, e.g. “I believe...”, “While it is true that...”, etc.
- Pre-writing tasks such as topic research, group discussion, brainstorming and mind-mapping.
- Peer correction of first draft.
- Teacher written feedback and comments on the first draft and final draft (due to time constraints, re-writing was only carried out once, if at all).
- Self correction based on prompts and margin comments.
- Explicit correction by the teacher when students were unable to self-correct.
- Review and discussion of common errors.
- Review and discussion of model answers.

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- Timed and non-timed writing exercises for homework.
- Timed writing exercises under exam conditions.

Essay assessment

A total of 59 essays (covering seven essay topics, see appendix 1) were assessed independently by three native-English speaking teachers, each with experience teaching EFL composition at the high school level. This gave a longitudinal aspect to the study as the seven essays were written (mainly for homework) between lessons one and seven. The essays were assessed using the ESL Composition Profile, a holistic approach created by Jacobs et al. (1981). Such holistic evaluations have been described as preferred when the primary concern is with evaluating communicative effectiveness (Weir, 1990). A scorer orientation session was held prior to assessment, including an analysis of “model grading” with similar essays at this level, and a broad consensus was reached regarding the range of scores under the categories described below.

The ESL Composition Profile evaluates students writing based on five categories. Each category has a range of possible scores, with a maximum total score of 100 (for the purpose of this analysis, the mean score from the three scorers was taken for each category and each essay).

Table 1. ESL Composition Profile categories and range of scores from Jacobs et al (1981)

Content	Organization	Vocabulary	Language Use	Mechanics	Total
13-30	7-20	7-20	5-25	2-5	34-100

Macro-level rhetorical pattern analysis

In addition to the above analysis, students' organizational patterns were assessed using the macro-level rhetorical pattern analysis employed by Hirose (2005), which was in turn based on Kubota (1992), in order to examine whether students' L2 essays contained elements claimed to be the result of the influence of L1. For each essay, the macro-level rhetorical pattern was judged to be one of the following three: Explanation (the writer's opinion precedes a supporting reason), Specification (the writer's opinion and a preview statement of a supporting reason are followed by the reason), or Induction (a supporting reason precedes the writer's opinion). The three scorers judged each essay independently. In cases where there were different opinions, the pattern was decided on by majority. Hirose (2005) states that the "explanation" and "specification" patterns were considered deductive, whereas "induction" was regarded as an inductive style. This consideration was also applied to the current study.

Questionnaire and interviews

In contrast to the quantitative (or semi-quantitative) assessment described above, a more qualitative investigation was also carried out in the form of a two-part questionnaire. The first section of the questionnaire (assessed on a Likert scale from 1-5) enquired into student attitudes toward key methodological approaches: specifically how much students had enjoyed tackling these approaches, and how beneficial students had felt these approaches to be in terms of examination preparation. The questionnaire was conducted anonymously in L1, with an orientation session held beforehand.

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However, for the purpose of gaining further qualitative insight, and as a mechanism to combat social desirability bias (due to the small size of the group), the second section required students to give short written responses (in L1) to the section one questions, with an option not to complete this section if they felt they had no strong opinion. The results, including a calculation of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha), are summarized in appendix 4.

Results

Data from the ESL composition profile

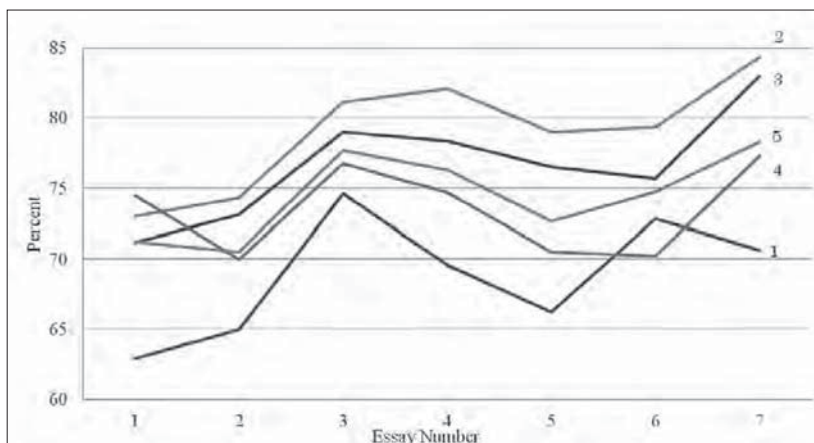
As the focus of this study was on the class as a whole, rather than a comparison of individual students, the mean score for each category of a particular question was taken, yielding the table and graphs found in appendix 3. It was decided among the three scorers that, due to the nature of the essays (short, focused, lack of scope) the results for the mechanics category were not particularly relevant as there had not been enough chance for students to demonstrate their abilities in this area. In order to compare the differences in the

Table Scores for categories marked as a percentage of the possible maximum score.

Question	Content	Org.	Voc.	Lang. Use	Total Score
Q1	62.90	73.00	71.15	74.52	71.23
Q2	65.00	74.35	73.15	70.00	70.53
Q3	74.60	81.15	79.05	76.76	77.71
Q4	69.60	82.10	78.35	74.68	76.29
Q5	66.23	79.00	76.50	70.52	72.67
Q6	72.83	79.40	75.70	70.24	74.74
Q7	70.67	84.35	83.00	77.32	78.30

categories above over time (as different categories are scored over different ranges), the following table and graph were created showing the scores as a percentage of the total possible score for each category.

Graph 1: Scores for categories marked as a percentage of the possible maximum score.



Key to Graph 1

1	2	3	4	5
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Results from the macro-level rhetorical pattern analysis

Table 3 shows the number of essays judged by the scorers to fall into each category. Due to the number of essays received for each question not being constant, percentages are also given for each category. The percentages are further illustrated graphically.

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Table 3: Macro-Level Rhetorical Pattern Analysis.

Question	Explanation		Specification		Invention		Total essays
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
1		0	1	10	0	0	10
2	10	100	0	0	0	0	10
3	5	71.4	2	2	0	0	7
4	5	25	3	37.5	0	0	
5		0	4	40	0	0	10
	2	22.2	7	77	0	0	
7	4	0	1	20	0	0	5

Graph 2 : Macro-Level Rhetorical Pattern Analysis.

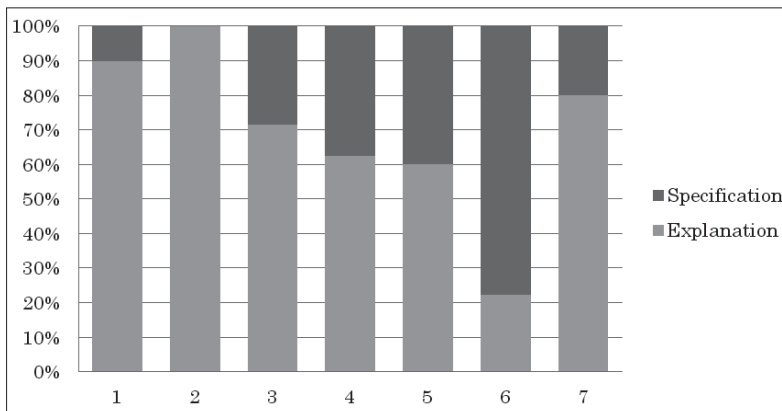


Table 4a and Table 4b show numerical data from the questionnaire administered to the students at the end of the course. Further details, including individual student comments, can be found in appendix 4.

Table 4a : Numerical data from student questionnaire. Likert scale from 1-5 (low to high).

roac	o en o a le as t is a roac	How beneficial did you find t is a roac
	4.6	4.7
	4.5	5.0
	4.6	4.9
	4.5	4.5
	3.9	3.9
	3.8	5.0
	3.9	4.9

*Internal consistency coefficient (Chronbach's alpha) = 0.85

Table 4b: Simple response data from student questionnaire.

uestion	es	o
written) beneficial?	10	0
Did you write second/ final drafts for any of the essays?	5	5
homework?	0	4

Discussion

The ESL composition profile analysis

The data illustrated in table 2, as well as graph 1, indicates a clearly visible upward trend over time for all categories, including total score. Moreover, category scores tend to follow a similar

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pattern, which is most evident in the upward spike over all categories for question three. While this trend of improvement over time seems to represent a positive result in terms of the methodological aspect of the course, one of the most interesting points to note is the disparity between different categories. It is clear that the score for content almost always lags behind the other categories, which tend to be more compact. While scores in this category showed a similar general trend of improvement, they both began and ended several percentage points lower than those in other categories.

If it may be possible to view these lower scores for content in the context of students' inexperience in writing, in L1 as well as L2, a point mentioned earlier when quoting Kobayashi and Rinnert (2002) and Yasuda (2006). This will be taken up further in the discussion of the student questionnaires and interviews.

In contrast to the content category, students scored particularly highly on the essay organization category, which, apart from question one, recorded the highest scores throughout. This seems to contradict some of the ideas of earlier contrastive rhetoric studies relating to Japanese, in that students do not seem to be having a great deal of difficulty in following organizational (rhetorical) patterns in L2, especially after instruction.

One point, which mustn't be overlooked, is the possible effect of topic familiarity or question difficulty when recording similar trends between students. Indeed, it is a possibility that the patterns may say more about the choice of questions than student ability or improvement over time, and further investigation into writing strategies for particular question genres may certainly be warranted (although as a side-note, the opinion of the three scorers was that

question three, around which the spike centered, did not stand out as being an “easy” question).

Macro-level rhetorical pattern analysis

Data from table 3 provides evidence that the “quasi-inductive” nature of written Japanese proposed by Hinds (1990) may not have such strong implications for Japanese students writing in L2, at least at this level or under these circumstances. Certainly, no essay investigated here was judged to be of an inductive nature, which gives further weight to Hirose’s (2003) claim that Japanese students prefer a deductive style when writing argumentative prose (although this study did not investigate whether students would use a deductive or inductive style in L1).

Upon further analysis of the data, it can be seen that the macro-level rhetorical pattern shows a tendency towards specification over time, as illustrated in graph 2. As mentioned above, this tendency may be due to the influence of students taking different approaches to different question genres. However, the scorers felt that this trend could more than likely have been due to improvement in writing style after instruction. All three scorers were in agreement that, in general, the employment of specification led to an increase in the overall aesthetic quality of the essays analyzed here. Question seven seems to significantly buck the trend; however, the fact that only five essays were received here may make this result less significant than it appears on the graph. The observed progression from explanation to specification is certainly worthy of further investigation, possibly by analyzing native speaker writing from similar genres.

Questionnaire and student interviews

The numerical data from tables 4a (with a high internal consistency

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coefficient of 0.85) and 4b illustrates a number of points which, when investigated along with the written comments (found in appendix 4) and student interviews, yielded the following information.

Regarding the prescriptive introduction and review of grammatical and structural (organizational) elements, students were generally positive. All students confirmed they had studied the *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* rhetorical pattern in elementary school but, as already observed by Miura (2007), did not think about this pattern when approaching essays in L2. The majority of students had not studied patterns such as introduction/body/conclusion in relation to L2 and there was a feeling that this had been one of the most useful elements of the course so far.

Many students took a positive view towards error correction and reviewing common mistakes (which received a “5” from all students in relation to how beneficial they felt this to be). In addition, there was a strong call for more model answers to be made available so that students could see how they “should” have written the essay.

Writing under exam conditions was rated as both the least enjoyable and the most beneficial approach during class time. Many students requested that more essays under timed conditions be given, although students were keen to be able to increase their background knowledge first. The majority of students requested ways to increase their topic knowledge through more availability of relevant newspaper and magazine articles (in English and Japanese), direction to websites and chances for in-class discussion. This may be linked to the earlier observation regarding lower scores in the lesson content analysis of the ESL composition profile. Several students responded in the interviews that they did not have experience of researching

socio-political topics or applying everyday knowledge to the written tasks, which further supports some of the comments made by Kobayashi and Rinnert (2002). Most students were aware that the content of their essays was a weak point, with several commenting that they felt their essays were “shallow”.

Students’ attitude to homework was positive in that they felt having the chance to write on a number of topics and to practice a variety of different questions, especially those of the students’ target universities, was beneficial. However, many students complained about the volume of homework which, although mainly optional, created conflict with their schedules and other priorities. The predominant message here was that the majority of students would only be able to do one piece of homework per week (re-writing or writing a final draft was seen as extra homework).

Students’ views of approaches that could be labeled as “process” approaches were mixed, but mainly positive. While students were too constrained by their schedules to re-write their essays and produce drafts, the majority of students demonstrated a positive attitude towards this approach if there had been more time. Attitudes to peer checking activities (checking or evaluating other students’ work) tended to be negative. This seemed to depend mainly on group dynamics. Students from several homeroom classes were present in the writing class, with students who knew each other working well together, and students without strong relationships finding these activities difficult. Several students expressed a strong dislike of such activities.

Finally, attitudes to pre-writing tasks were particularly positive. As above, many students had requested more access to background

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reading so that they could research unfamiliar topics. Students also showed a willingness to use this background reading as the basis for class discussion and brainstorming prior to writing. Brainstorming and listing activities (pros and cons, for vs. against, etc.) received a positive response, with several students also showing a positive attitude towards mind-mapping activities, especially as students who had experienced mind-mapping in the past had previously held a negative attitude to such tasks.

Conclusion

From a methodological perspective, this study has shown that a combination of both product and process approaches to teaching writing in a short term course at this level can yield positive results. While the perceived rhetorical issues of *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* and the “quasi-inductive” nature of Japanese seem to have little implication with this group of students, a product based approach, in which students at first learn from models, seems to have a positive impact on the structure and organization of students’ essays. This can be seen not only in the graphical, but also in the anecdotal evidence gained from questionnaires and interviews, in which explicit error correction and the availability of model answers were highly rated. This evidence seems to suggest that Japanese students are most comfortable with a more PPP (presentation-practice-production) based approach to instruction. Indeed, Sato (2009) suggests that CLT approaches (which certain aspects of the process approach to writing fall into), “...do not take sufficient account of the unique learning environment in Japan (as they are) not yet as practical in application as the PPP approach”.

However, contrary to this view, there is evidence from this study that students do react positively to a process approach to writing. While the overall negative view of peer-checking may be due to cultural aspects concerning student-student relationships, the positive view held of pre-writing tasks and the desire to have more access to background reading and research, as well as discussion before writing, indicates that students are eager to work with a combination of product and process based approaches to writing. Indeed, the key to improvement over time in similar goal-focused, intensive situations, may be one of a gradual shift from product to process based methodology over the period of the course.

The small size of the group analyzed in this study, combined with the homogeneous nature of the students (same school, same class, same teacher) is, however, a limitation to whether this pattern can be interpreted more generally. Further research in this area with more varied groups and a variety of student backgrounds (especially with students from different societies and cultures) would be a welcome addition to the large body of work surrounding the perennial product/process debate.

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Appendix 1

Titles of the essays assessed in this study

- 1 At present, non-Japanese citizens who are permanently resident in Japan do not have the right to vote in either local or national elections.
Do you agree with the present state of the law? Or do you think such people should be allowed to vote in local elections only? Or do you think they should be allowed to vote in both local and national elections?

(Waseda University)
 - 2 Is it better to marry late rather than early?

(Hitotsubashi University)
 - 3 Young people should be able to vote from 18. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

(Tokyo University)
 - 4 Write an essay in which you discuss the topic of bullying and violence in schools. Include the following:
 1. A general introduction
 2. A discussion of the reasons for the problems
 3. Your ideas about what can be done to solve the problem

(Juntendo University)
 - 5 Ordinary people should no longer own cars today. Write an argument for or against this statement.

(Hitotsubashi University)
 - 6 A time machine has been invented. You are able to use this time machine in any way you wish. What would you like to do with this time machine? Please state your reasons for this.

(Hitotsubashi University)
 - 7 What can you do to help protect the environment?

(Yamagata University)
-

Appendix 2

Comments received from self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses (translated from the Japanese)	
Strengths	Keeping a consistent theme. Good understanding of grammar. I like writing in English. My vocabulary I try hard to link my ideas together.
Weaknesses	I can't write deep answers. The content of my writing is shallow. My sentences are too short and basic. I never understand which prepositions to use. I find it hard to link my ideas coherently. I can't put my ideas together well. My writing seems childish; I want to write with more persuasiveness. I need more vocabulary. I make careless mistakes all the time. I find it hard to write an "introduction" and a "conclusion". I make too many grammar mistakes. I don't understand how to structure the essay. I freeze – I just can't write in English.
Students' target universities at the beginning of the course (NB: these changed over time)	
University	Number of Students
Hitotsubashi University	3
Keio University	1
Kyoritsu University	1
Osaka University	1
Shuto University Tokyo	1
Sophia University	1
Tokyo University of Foreign Studies	3
Waseda University	5

Appendix 3

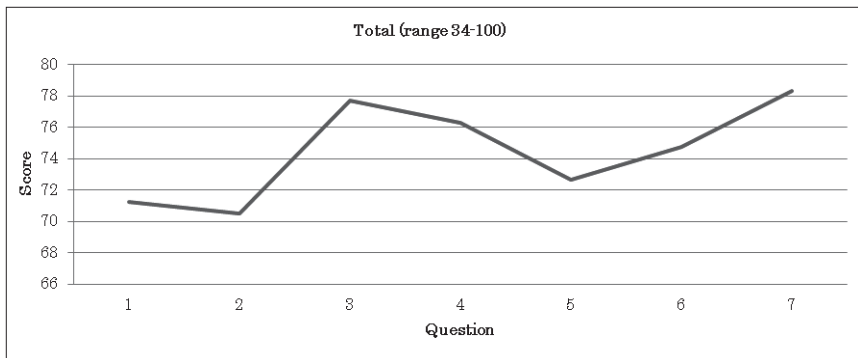
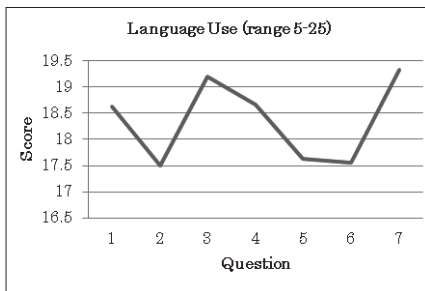
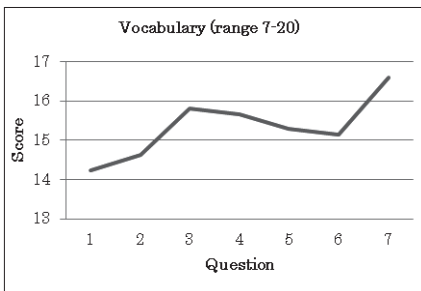
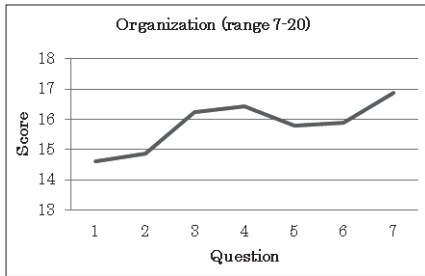
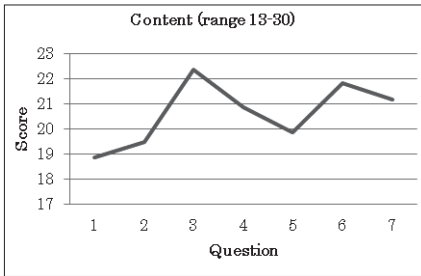
Results from the ESL Composition Profile and resulting graphical analysis, broken down into categories. (NB: These show change in time over the actual range of scores, rather than as a percentage of the total score).

Means and standard deviations of students essay scores for each question using the categories of the ESL Composition Profile.

Question (number of samples)		Content	Org.	Voc.	Lang. Use	Mech.	Total
Q1 (10 samples)	Mean	18.87	14.60	14.23	18.63	4.13	71.23
	SD	2.47	2.00	1.71	1.98	0.42	6.69
Q2 (10 samples)	Mean	19.50	14.87	14.63	17.50	4.00	70.53
	SD	2.17	1.67	1.16	1.71	0.22	6.42
Q3 (7 samples)	Mean	22.38	16.23	15.81	19.19	4.24	77.71
	SD	1.85	1.21	1.26	1.30	0.32	4.95
Q4 (8 samples)	Mean	20.88	16.42	15.67	18.67	4.33	76.29
	SD	2.22	1.04	0.94	1.89	0.40	5.05
Q5 (10 samples)	Mean	19.87	15.80	15.30	17.63	4.10	72.67
	SD	1.43	1.81	1.07	1.24	0.42	5.47
Q6 (9 samples)	Mean	21.85	15.88	15.14	17.56	4.22	74.74
	SD	2.15	1.42	0.69	1.44	0.29	5.46
Q7 (5 samples)	Mean	21.20	16.87	16.60	19.33	4.26	78.30
	SD	2.87	1.22	1.01	1.33	0.28	5.42

(28)

Information shown in graphical form



Appendix 4

Questionnaire section 1: Calculation of Chronbach's alpha	
k	1
um of variances	5.38
Total variance	25.122
Alpha	.846

Final Questionnaire: questions and written responses (translated from Japanese)	
Question	Comments
How did you feel about reviewing problematic grammatical structures?	<p>There were many patterns that I knew but also some new phrases that I wasn't aware of.</p> <p>I would have preferred more challenging questions.</p> <p>It's easier to understand this grammar with a native speaker of English.</p> <p>Learning that the same word can have different nuances in different situations was very beneficial.</p> <p>There is more value in learning this grammar from a native English speaker rather than a Japanese teacher.</p> <p>It was fun to learn practical example sentences.</p> <p>I was glad to learn about words I hadn't cared much about in the past.</p>
How did you feel about reviewing common mistakes from previous homework?	<p>I learned lots of things I hadn't known before, such as not starting sentences with "and", so this was very beneficial.</p> <p>I was happy to learn about the importance of idiom and wording.</p> <p>I really felt "Ah, now I see".</p> <p>I was able to see in what areas my weak points were. I learned that just a translation from a Japanese-to-English dictionary was not very useful.</p> <p>This was really helpful.</p>
How did you feel about the introduction and practice of essay structure?	<p>I thought, "I get it" when I saw how a native English speaker would approach these sentences.</p> <p>The teacher explained until we all understood so it was easy to follow.</p>
How did you feel about the pre-writing tasks?	<p>I learned to like brainstorming. I'd like to try this again in the future.</p> <p>We can collect and shape our opinions. I quite like this.</p> <p>I learned things I wouldn't have thought of by myself.</p> <p>All students, including myself, were passive.</p>

How did you feel about the peer checking exercises?

It's really fun to share ideas and think together with my friend.

Working together with other Japanese students is not really helpful.

I wasn't able to say anything to my partner and I feel bad about this.

It was fun to do pair-work and I learned from my partner's writing.

I don't know most people in this class so it was hard to make suggestions without reservation.

I didn't like this. I don't know the other students.

How did you feel about writing under exam conditions?

I can never finish in time so I want to learn to write faster.

It is great to be able to apply things I have just learned but there is never enough time.

I can never finish in time but I think its good training.

I can get the feeling that I'm writing for a real test.

There was never enough time to compose sentences in my head and then write them.

This was difficult. However now I know I need to organize my ideas faster.

How did you feel about the volume of homework (essays)?

Too much (lol)! However I just quit my after school club so it should be okay now.

I was motivated by such difficult topics.

It takes too much time just to do one of these so I have less time to work on my other studies.

It is corrected so it is very helpful.

The topics are outside what I would normally think about so it took a long time.

I was able to work at home to think a lot before I wrote so it was enjoyable.

I felt there was too much because I'm busy with my after-school club.

If there is quite a lot of homework I find this motivating and it helps me to remember what I studied.

One piece of homework a week is the max. (Sorry, it's because of my after-school club).

I feel overall it's just right. But as the homework is always corrected it's a shame that sometimes there is a little too much and I can't do it all. I think that when there is a lot of homework we should have a chance to do some in class time, or else it is better to re-think the system.

It was just right but I felt it got a little too much towards the end of term.

I prioritized preparation for other classes so I wasn't able to do it all. Sorry.

It takes me a long time to finish one item of homework so when two items were given I was only able to complete one of them.

<p>Was the advice feedback and correction from the teacher suitable</p>	<p>I feel the direct honest comments are good. I'd just like you to write slightly more understandable comments. I was able to learn not to make the same mistakes in the next essays I wrote. I feel the level of strictness is just right. I feel the harsh comments are especially useful. I realized that my thoughts were not really deep enough.</p>
<p>If you didn't often write second or final drafts, what was the reason for this</p>	<p>I didn't have time. I didn't have time because of my after school club. I didn't know and anyway I didn't have time. However I'd like to do this in the future. I forgot. Because I didn't have time. I didn't know that I was able to re write. I didn't have time because it was just before a test. The biggest factor was that I didn't have time. Because I didn't have time.</p>
<p>Do you have any suggestions for improving this course</p>	<p>If you can provide us with English newspapers I'd be really interested in reading these. Providing sample answers. I'd like more articles from newspapers on the topics we are to research. I'd like you to give one copy to each student. I feel each week is new and interesting. This was really useful. I'm never really sure how what really I should write so if you are able to teach us really how to get my opinions across I'd be really happy. This has been really useful. I'd like to get more examples of different sentence patterns I could use in my essays. For example, "This may be true in most cases ..." etc. I'd like to get more articles from newspapers and magazines to help me find ideas. This has been really useful but I'd be happy to get hold of more social and political information. When I didn't know quite what to write it was really useful when the teacher gave some examples. This helped me to broaden my opinions.</p>
