

A New Approach to English Writing

—Longum est iter per praecepta, breve et efficax per exempla.—

Mitsugu KOBAYASHI

(Received on 28, November, 2004)

Numerous attempts have been made by many teachers to make students write good English essays. To put it another way, a great deal of efforts have been made on English writing. What seems to be lacking, however, is goal-oriented rational thinking and learner-centered language teaching. Our concern is to consider and show the ways of writing English based on students' motivations, in other words, interests, merits and the senses of achievements. The following are some random examples concerning to that: English essay contest, the summary of graduation research, e-mail exchange, winter vacation writing assignment.

What has to be noticed is that practice makes good English composition and we can express this relationship, "The more we write, the better we can do." It seems reasonable to conclude that English writing makes us eager to communicate other people of the world and gives us another perspective based of English, that is, the logical thinking, which helps us to make international engineers.

1. Introduction

It is regarded that communicative English ability, containing writing one, is the inevitable factors for the cosmopolitan. In addition to that, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology recommends students to acquire wider knowledge and to have the practical and communicative English ability, which JABEE also proposes necessary qualifications for international engineers.

The purpose of this paper is to show a new approach to write English essays with the flexible ideas like goal-oriented rational thinking and learner-centered language teaching.

The English department of Akita National College of Technology has been trying many practices to improve students' English writing abilities and to make them understand world-wide cultural differences. If we can express our culture and understand other ones in English, we can make ourselves understood in English essays. This will be helpful for us to

have good relationship with the people of the world. This is based on the multi-cultural perspective, which assists us in making international engineers.

To approach this goal, we made students hand in the essays concerning to English essay contest, winter vacation writing assignment and the summary of graduation research. In addition to this, they enjoyed exchanging e-mail with American students.

In the first place, we will show you the writing example of English essay contest. In the second place, we will present you the examples of the summary of graduation research and e-mail exchange. Furthermore, we will provide you the practice example of winter vacation writing assignment.

2. Challenge Award in 16th and 17th Asahi Nikke English Essay Contest¹

First, let me tell you the results of 16th Asahi Nikke English Essay Contest. Two essays

written by the students of 1C were conferred Challenge Award in 2002. Secondly, let me show you the writing examples of 17th Asahi Nikke English Essay Contest. Although there are some mistakes in their essays, I leave them unchanged, because I would like to show you what they wrote actually. The next two essays written by the students of 1E received Challenge Award in 2003.

2.1 "What I'm Thinking Most About." written by student A

Did you tease, but how think? I teased, because was dark and thought that I was that in which the teased way an no teased ways remain. However, I feel that a one man's talk was heard and the idea changed a little.

It is said that I hear that the man does not have a father and he was receiving bullying at the time of an elementary school and a junior high school. It is said that a teacher also becomes together and teasing it when the bullying was quite severe and having been spread. It is said that it is occasionally hot and suicide was also considered. However, the man is become a mother was not allowed to never rest when it said why [that has not refused to attend school once] it was.

The man changed to another school at the time of junior high school two years, and, bullying was lost. It is sometimes hard on the man, and he says that it was good. I did not find the idea. When it heard "It is ? why", he found people's painful feeling by the favor which experienced a thing called bullying, and by the favor, he said that he was able to become mental very strong, and told the mother who supported when he was painful that he appreciated very much. I considered that I probably thought such [why]. When it was itself simultaneously, I thought how it would think. If he receives such bullying absolutely and is not regarded as good. I think that the the image of my bullying made it think so. And I thought why an idea would be different like this. The idea was able to regard me as very splendid. I thought that it

was the view which I cannot do throughout life. While thinking so, I have been impressed very much. The man had said now that he was able to enjoy himself in the school after moving, without being teased. The man is a very bright person. They are those who consider anything to plus thinking.

They are those whom it understands for people's together and gets used sadly. Too, since bullying was experienced, I thought that people's mind was known such. I thought that it was that he cannot do imitation at all. I heard this talk and was impressed very much. And it felt that its idea changed. Supposing he does not meet this man, I will think that I did not consider bullying deeply like this, without hearing this talk. Therefore, I can hear this man's talk and think that it was very good. Since I have not received bullying, he cannot understand the man's feeling correctly. The feeling of the person on whom were hard is not known, either. I think that what is necessary is just to be able to understand. I want to know bullying well from now on and to become those who can think of people well like this man.

2.2 "What Impressed Me Most." written by student B

2001 We got a pennant, a glory, pride, and recollections. It was very hot on that day, and was very hot. Probably there is no day which was so hot and hot again any longer. I went into the baseball part at the time of a junior high school student. Baseball was done from the time of a schoolchild. When we became summer, we had a big convention. It was our last year in 2001. Since the victory was won in the convention, practice was done hard. I did not wish for practice to have been very tight, however to resign it. I had many friends and I was supported. I wanted to have carried out somehow, to have said in this convention, and to leave results. We have seen the seniors of last year and the year before last. Mortifying recollections tears were shed wholly. Therefore,

I wanted to shed tears of Joy. Convention that day came on. We advanced the end first game of a fierce fight, and the 2times game. And we recommended the piece to the finals. I forget a beat of the breast of that day and there is no end. We were wrapped in strain, excitement, and expectation.

The captain loosened strain. He said. We can do. Remember practice. It can win, if the thing of a passage is always done. Neither frustration nor regret fits us. What it is waiting for to us is a glory. I will go to a victory. And it gets a pennant again and needs. And I will laugh all together. If this game was won, it was the championship for the first time in 42 years. It was more amusing not to become it tense. However, we were cleared in his words. The time of a game became closely. We were needed for the bench and waited for time. We constructed the circle. We shouted. The children who know completely only what is cried for. And the time of fate came. We ran. It ran absorbedly. A partner's team and their teams were together ready. There is a greeting from a referee and the shout of a game sounded. [REI] And the game started.

The partner took the opening the scoring point. It may have been hopeless when seeing from others. However, such a thing could not be found. The thing of a passage was always managed and it returned one point at a time. and it caught up until to the tie. And that time came. We gave the large counterattack and did the large inversion splendidly. And the last ball was processed in the last round and safety. The result was 3 to 2. We won. We got the pennant for the first time in 42 years.

We laughed. It laughed from there of a belly. We cried. It cried until the tear withered. We embraced each other. Each other was embraced with all its strength. We shouted. It cried until the throat withered. We shared impression. I will not forget this day by any means. Even if other men had forgotten, only I remember and swarmed. The day of those recollections of summer that

were uncanny, were hot, were uncanny and were hot. The memorial day which is not writing to the commercial calendar. A memorial day without the never forgotten thing in our breast. The secret memorial day that nobody knows except us. Probably, we of the future are written to the notebook like this. The day which regained the glory.

3. The summary of graduation research

Thirdly, we will provide you the example of the summary of graduation research. The title is "The experimental research of the influence evaluation to the environment in case of machining process" A certain faculty submitted the following summary written by the student of 5M to me under correction on February 12th, 2004.

3.1 Original summary written by student C

It is in establishing the manufacturing process to make that the purposes of this research are few in the environment load and moreover that the manufacturing costs, too, are little.

Therefore, in this paper, it measured consumption energy in case of turning processing with the clamp meter and it examined relation between the processing condition and the consumption energy.

As a result, it found the following. When not thinking of the cutting quantity to remove, as for the consumption electric power quantity with the cutting process with once, as for the feeding it speed, the processing condition to have made earlier it does, also, as much as the processing condition to have made less the cut of depth decreases. When seeing according to the material, it was the order of stainless steel \geq carbon steel $>$ aluminum $>$ brass.

Also, to find a thing with the big drive energy of the equipment to occupy in the consumption energy and to build the production process which makes an environment load little, it found the thing that to consider the

drive energy of the equipment is important.

3.2 Revised summary under correction

The purpose of this research is to establish the manufacturing process to make the load to the environment and the manufacturing costs less than usual.

Therefore, in this paper, the consumption energy is measured in turning processing with the clamp meter and the relation between the processing condition and the consumption energy is examined.

The result is as follows. Not thinking of the cutting quantity to remove, the consumption electric power quantity with one time cutting process became less in proportion to the feeding speed and in inverse proportion to the depth of cutting.

According to the materials, they formed the order : stainless steel \geq carbon steel > aluminum > brass.

Also, it is evident that the drive energy of the equipment occupied big part of the consumption energy.

It turns out that due consideration about the drive energy of the equipment is important to build the production process, which makes the environment load less.

4. Liberal Arts Seminar

In our class of Liberal Arts Seminar (2nd grade) from 1999 to 2000, we were in correspondence with American students of World Class at Centennial Middle School² by E-mail. The following are examples of it. Taking the privacy into consideration, students' names and the things which specify them are fictitious.

4.1 E-mail Exchange between an American Student and student D

---Hello again!!! 1999 11/28

Hello!!! How are you doing??? i am fine... yes, so what have you been up to lately??? i have had no school for two weeks!!! what holidays do

you celebrate??? what religion are you??? i am catholic... you are seventeen right?? i am only 13 and i am a girl... o have red hair and green eyes... and i am kinda skinny... what do you look like??? do you have black hair??? do you like living japan??? i like America a lot... i like the freedom... yes so i can't wait to here from you soon!!
Love Always, Mary Ann

--- Hello there!!! 1999 12/01

Sorry! This mail is a poor English only! Hello! (How are you?) I'm fine thank you!!! But I am very busy recently, cause I have many homework. A composition, experiment reports, and we will have examinations soon. You have had no school for two weeks!!! How I envy you!!! We have winter vacation about a month after. Winter vacation go on about a month and pass the new year during the vacation. What will you do in the New Year's Day? I might... I visit my relations. My religion is maybe... I have no religion or maybe buddhism. In Japan religious event have been becoming a customs. (it is traditional event, or it is a rule) So I have no religion after all. I'm surely seventeen years old. Because my birthday is oct 7 in 1982. I'm Libra. I'm a boy. I have black hair and black eyes, and I have any black clothes!!! I like simple color. But I'm not black skin. (I am not sunburnt.) I like here!!! I am pleased with my city. My city is the country. I like calmly. I'd like to read next letter. See you next week.
From Taro.

---Hello!!! 1999 12/11

Hello Again!!! How have you been doing lately???
I hope well!!! How has school been going??? My school is almost out for winter break... We have all of our final exams this week and all of our final projects due. school is getting old... and i am looking forward to high school!!! Are you going ot go to a university??? which one??? what do oyu want to be when oyu grow up??? i want to be a famous singer... ti sounds silly but i love to sing... what hobbies do you enjoy the most??? well i really got to go... but i can't wait for your

letter!!!

Love Always, Mary Ann

---Hello there!! 1999 12/16

Sorry! This mail is a poor English only!

I finished final exams of this year!!! But school go on a little longer. I have to writes a new year's card gradually. So I have a "busy" time now... I have no time to play... My school is like a college. (like a junior college) Therefore I think I'll not go to other university. and I major in electricity. I want to make some electrical appliances in the near future!

By the way, It had snowed recently in My home town. There is not many snows as it lies. But very cold. and the wind blows very hard. If you will come to Japan, you should not do now in season. The weather come to fine soon. I'm looking forward to read your letter!

From Taro.

---Attention!! 1999 12/20

Sorry!... the following is as usual message!

My school is winter vacation now. I have been writing mail in school. But I don't go to school during vacation. So could you send a message to the following address???

The address is : Taro0001@happyserve.or.jp
I'm waiting for letter.

From Taro.

---Re : Attention!!! 1999 12/20

Hello again!!! How have you been lately???

I have been rather good. School is hard right now because of mid terms. I am leaving on a vacation soon!!! I am very excited!!! we are going to the beach for a while! Puerto Rico... Have you heard of this place??? Probably... yes, so anyways... What are you doing for the break??? Ok, well it was nice talking to you!!! Hope to hear from you soon.

Love Always, Mary Ann

---Good day! 1999 12/25

Sorry! This mail is a poor English only! I have ever heard about Puertorico but I don't know much about it. Probably I think it is an island.

please report about it. I have no schedule while vacation. But I have lots of homework. I intend to rest after finised homework. The vacation exist to rest. By the way, in Japan, There is a custom that we (not grown-up children) are given money from adult person in new year. What do you have any customs in new year? See you next letter!

From Taro.

---Hello, and HAPPY NEW YEAR!!! 2000 01/06
Taro-Hi!!! well i had a lot of fun in Puerto Rico, and it is an island... a Spanish speaking country! do you speak any spanish? well anyways... for New year we don't really have any traditions, except partying and staying up till 12:00. were you worried about Y2K? i was not. well it was nice talking to you. please write back soon!

Love Always, Mary

P.S. sorry it took so long for me to write back... i was out of town and had not access to the internet!!! thanks.

5. Practice Example of Winter Vacation Writing Assignment

The 1st grade students of Advanced Engineering Faculty submitted 600 word assignment essays to me when the winter vacation in 2004 has finished. The following is one of the essays about "What's internationalization?"

5.1 "What's internationalization?" written by student E

If I were to be asked what internationalization is, I would answer that the things like people, money, and countries are allowed to form interdependent relations between different countries. Following statements specifies that meaning. Todays world, all realms have been internationalized. For example, industrial and economy can be recognized as internationalized field clearly because their international activity is active. Trading with or investing in foreign

company is natural behavior. Many companies have been moving their factory to East or South-east Asia for more inexpensive labor. Political activities such as summit, talks, giving ODA³, are target all over the world.

Recent governments show more foreign affairs as much as internal affairs. Education and study are internationalized, too. Present-day education agencies have a lot of foreigner teachers or professors. Number of students studying abroad has been increasing, contributing papers to foreign societies and making a speech on international conference have been common conduct. Nowadays many people are studying in other countries. Internationalizations can be seen in our lives. Traveling to overseas have become not extravagant deed, while domestic food have rising their value. English schools attract many young people in several years. Many foreign people can be seen in big city like Tokyo, Osaka. The pipe between Japan and overseas have been expanding its size.

However, Japan is not fully internationalized society. Because almost Japanese people only have poor concept about foreign countries and today's internationalized world. For example, half children are bullied in their color of eyes or curly hairs. People can communicate in English are less than other countries in Asia even though we learned English in schools ten years or more. Almost restaurants prepares menu written in only Japanese. In short, Japanese has a temper reject foreign people as differences. This Japanese people's concept hinders that Japan grows as an internationalized country i.e, Japan cannot make interdependent relations between other countries. That means Japan is not a real international country

The world's internationalization is already stated on paragraph one. Skills to communicate foreigners will be required of all Japanese in near future. Therefore, we must start first action, which is as to accept foreign courtiers cultures. This action will lead us to the interdependent relations to obtain international synergy and bring profitable relationships

between Japan and other countries. And we will be able to realize that Internationalization is achieved when these approaches carried out.

NGO⁴ is one of the most important organization which gives mutual cooperation for abroad positively. Examples of NGO's internationalized supports are built and the management of Japanese school in Asia counseling foreigners in Japan, performing personal trainings for industrialization in developing countries, and so on. These supports have been achieving by NGO members all over the world weigh that humans overcome their difference of races and countries and ODA regards a support as sending money while are connected by a trust. However, NGO thinks human resources will bring a great success in international support. These NGO's humanity support is more important for internationalization because it is no wonder that human exchanges make interdependent relations and can achieve internationalization better than only a support by money. Japanese government has helped developing companies by only money.

Consequently, it is reported that Japan's support has less realization than other advanced countries in the people of developing countries, even though the country has a most payment for ODA is Japan. This Japan's excess money support is called as 'hided face support'. Japanese government should weigh a support by human resources more. I hope Japanese's motivation for internationalization will be raised up more in future and I should lead myself to an internationalized person.

6. English treatise clinic

One 2nd grade student of Advanced Engineering Faculty came to my study room and sought my advice to express the title of Graduation Thesis Research in English on May 7th, 2004. We conferred together and settled it as follows: "Partial boil heat transfer characteristic at the time of covering the electric heat pipe with interference one."

Moreover, a certain faculty made an

appointment with me to make me inspect his e-mail on October 28th and 29th, 2004 for paying a visit to the laboratory of a famous foreign University.

Many teachers and students come to my study room to compose compact and clear English sentences with my help. This is my pleasure to consult English theses and other writings as an English teacher.

7. Conclusion

On these grounds, which have been said above, I have come to the conclusion that there is no royal road to 'writing'. Therefore, practices are inevitably necessary for students to improve their English composition. The following are efficient to make students motivate English writing: English essay contest, the summary of graduation research, e-mail exchange, winter vacation writing assignment. These practices on the basis of goal-oriented rational thinking and learner-centered language teaching give them another perspective based of English, that is, the logical thinking, which helps us to make international engineers, who can work together with other people of the world in English.

Notes

One part of title is the Latin proverb -Longum est iter per praecepta, breve et efficax per exempla.- This means, "Practice makes perfect" substantially left by Lucius Annaeus Seneca, Philosopher of Rome.

¹Asahi Nikke English Essay Contest is put into practice by The Asahishimbun Company under

the auspices of Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and so on. In addition to these, it is held with the cooperation of Nipponkeori Kaisha, LTD.

²This school is located at Boulder, Colorado, USA.

³official development assistance

⁴non-governmental organization

References

William Grabe and Robert B. Kaplan, 1996, *Theory and Practice of Writing, An Applied Linguistic Perspective*, Addison Wesley Longman Limited, Harlow, Essex, United Kingdom.

Arthur Brookes & Peter Grundy, 1998, *Beginning to Write, Writing activities for elementary and intermediate learners*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

Sharon Sorenson, 1997, *Webster's New World, Student Writing Handbook*, New York, USA.

Anthony Papalia, 1976, *Learner-Centered Language Teaching: Methods and Materials*, Newbury House Publishers, Inc., Rowley, Massachusetts, USA.

Ronald Mackay and Joe Darwin Palmer, 1981, *LANGUAGES FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES, PROGRAM DESIGN AND EVALUATION*, Newbury House Publishers, Inc., Rowley, Massachusetts, USA.

Diane Larsen-Freeman, 1986, *TECHNIQUES AND PRINCIPLES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING*, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, INC., New York, USA.

Wilga M. Rivers, 1983, *Communicating Naturally in a Second Language, Theory and practice in language teaching*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

F.L.BILLOWS, 1961, *The Techniques of Language Teaching*, Longman Group Limited, London, United Kingdom.