

# Writing in an integrated skills communicative EFL course for non-English majors

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## Abstract

Writing activities, in an integrated skills, communicative EFL course for non-English majors, offer strong support for the development of overall communicative skill. While writing can seem difficult to teach, suggestions for working with writing in less troublesome ways are realizable by viewing writing differently whereby both process and product are equally valuable in creating artifacts of learning that can be studied and changed.

**Key words** : artifacts, collaboration, feedback, scaffolding, writing

## Introduction

This article focuses on the writing of students in a communicative EFL course for first-year dentistry students at a university in Tokyo. It describes the writing of 24 students in an integrated skills course for non-English majors. The article includes qualitative analysis of the students' essays that is relevant to teachers, offers suggestions for working with writing in similar communicative courses for non-English majors and demonstrating how writing supports the development of overall communication skill.

Two questions are considered :

- 1) What outcomes can be expected from a diverse group of students who are not majoring in English?
- 2) How can writing support the development of communication skills in a communicative EFL course?

## Second Language Writing

In EFL courses, where communicative approaches are used, writing seems to have a lesser presence, even when such courses are described as integrated due in part to how second language writing instruction has evolved. By the late 1970's, and into the 1990's, L2 instruction moved toward an emphasis on the processes of language acquisition, representing a major pedagogical paradigm shift that caused rifts among linguists and disagreements on the merits of contrasting pedagogy.

Current approaches divide language skills strands into separate focus classes or they integrate by combining reading & writing or speaking & listening. Many teachers prefer “speaking & listening” because this combination is perceived as easier than reading & writing since the latter requires specialized knowledge and writing, it is believed, demands a great deal of correction time. These approaches may have contributed to the lessening of the presence of writing in communicative EFL courses.

Yet another approach to integration of language skills represents a realization by some EFL educators that separating the language skills, at least in some learning situations, seems unnatural and less productive. These educators hold an appreciation for the value of including writing in an integrated course. They understand that writing is a skill that is known to raise student awareness of audience considerations (Leki 1993), to help learners develop analytical and critical reading & writing skills (Nystrand & Brandt 1989), and to foster reflective thinking by explaining and defending ideas (Higgins, Flower & Petragla 1992). Writing “is a powerful means of discovery and learning (Wiemelt 2001).

New technology, notably text messaging and email, has brought writing back into daily life and business, thus it deserves a greater presence in communicative EFL language courses as a dimension of communicative competence. Widdowson (1990) in defining “communicative competence” warned that the instructional approach should “avoid treating the different skills and abilities that constitute competence in isolation of each other.”

Perpignan (2009) pointed out the need to create curriculum that recognizes the students’ position as EFL learners as well as their need to make improvements in English that are more realistic than asking them to write perfect native-like English. Turner (1995) suggested that activities that provide optimal challenge cause students to stretch the limits of their capacities, expanding their cognitive understandings and abilities, whereas Dornyei (2001b) writes of the motivational conditions that create a pleasant and supportive atmosphere and a cohesive learner group with appropriate norms and a sense of a goal orientation.

Storch (2005) reiterated the value of “scaffolding” (Vygotsky 1986), where the more able, by providing novice with the appropriate level of assistance to stretch beyond the current level towards potential level of development. Other important notions to consider about writing include the opportunity for co-construction of knowledge in small groups and pairs, which provides learners with more chances to communicate in the L2. In small groups opportunities abound for negotiation of meaning, increased autonomy, self-regulation and more intrinsic motivation (van Lier 2001).

This article describes student writing as the creation of “artifacts” that are important because they are concrete proof of a student’s current status in terms of effort and outcome. They reveal “the insight and transformation of the student’s ideas” Lyons & La Boskey (2002). The various communicative activities that help prepare the students to write also allow for a smooth blending of varied student levels and experience with English.

### The Setting

135 students are enrolled in the first year communication course at a dentistry school located in central Tokyo. Most of the students are 19 years of age and come from all over Japan bringing with them a variety of experiences in English language instruction experience. First year students are divided into four groups, which meet once a week for 100 minutes (actually scheduled as two 50 minute classes), working with two teachers, who exchange classes halfway continuing on the same theme but in a different activity.

The activities are organized around meaningful topics arranged in cycles lasting 3 weeks with each cycle divided into 6 activity segments to provide practice opportunities in all of the language skills strands. See Chretien & Mitchell 2009, for an overview of the integrated skills communicative course design.

### Analysis of 24 Case studies

24 students were selected from 135 described in Table 1 in order to construct a manageable representative profile that could portray the writing outcomes of all the students in three general characterizations: “high,” “middle,” and “low.”

The 24 comprise 3 pairs of students from each class ; one male and one female in each pair, representing the characterizations selected because they completed the required essays in the first semester and had good class attendance. Students who fit these criteria were matched with their first semester score, an evaluation that calculates the value of attendance and all written artifacts (notebooks, essays, web-log contributions, visual presentation aid and end-of-semester essay examination). See Appendix 1 for more detail on the 24 cases.

Table 1 : Profile of 135 students

	<i>A-1</i>	<i>A-2</i>	<i>B-1</i>	<i>B-2</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Total students	34	34	33	34	135
Gender : male	24	25	21	19	89
female	10	9	12	15	46
Semester score average	67.5	64.5	64.5	68.5	66.25
Semester high score	83	81	83	83	82.5
Semester low score*	55	57	53	56	55.25

The first semester examination essay was matched with the most recent, or 4th, essay. The two essays differ in the nature of the preparation and the situation (time & location) in which the writing took place. The 4th essay is part of the most recent topic cycle on sports, prepared in class, informed by class discussions, activities and readings from the booklets and the class website, then (expected to be) extended, polished and proofread out of class ready to be shared the following week. In contrast, the essay examination was prepared entirely out-of-class over several weeks in the summer. The students used what they had learned and practiced to construct an original piece during a fixed amount of time (60 minutes) in a test-taking setting.

Two teacher-relevant quantitative analyses were used to compare the writing of the 24 cases :

- 1) Word & sentence counts ; straightforward and offering a good view of the extent of a student's productive vocabulary as well as knowledge of basic sentence structure and layout.
- 2) T-units ; useful in perceiving sophistication in students' writing. A "T-unit," (minimal terminable unit) contains one independent clause and its dependent parts ; the "shortest units into which a piece of discourse can be cut...one main clause plus whatever subordinate clauses happen to be attached to or embedded within it." (Hunt 1996).

I also considered the topic choices in the exam essay since the choice may have influenced the outcome. For example, Sports was the most recent topic discussed while the majority chose Communications presumably because it is close to their lives and was discussed in a pro/con style in many of the activities and readings. Table 2 outlines the topics chosen during the exam essay.

Table 2 : Topic choices in the examination essay, September 2010

<u>Topic</u>	A- 1	A- 2	B- 1	B- 2	<u>Totals</u>
Social change	2	1	5	0	8
Communications	23	26	23	24	96
Entertainment & Media	1	1	0	0	2
Sports	8	6	5	10	29
<u>Totals</u>	34	34	33	34	135

### How can "high writers" extend their writing?

Students described as "high" have higher word counts and sentences that are more sophisticated as measured by the ratio of T-units to # of sentences. They are not necessarily completely fluent speakers of English but presumably have had more experience writing in English in high school. There is a difference between the outcome of the 4th essay and the exam essay in that

the ratio of independent clauses increased in the exam essay. This may indicate that the students placed a premium on the essay test over the topic essays. Table 3 compares topic choices and counts of words, sentences and T-units in the 4th essay and the exam essay of the writers in the high group.

Table 3 : Comparison of 4th essay and exam essay of high group

S/G*	4th Essay counts :			Exam essay counts :			Topic choices in exam essay
	Word	sentences	T-units	word	sentences	T-units	
1 -F	140	10	16	220	18	24	Communication
2 -F	192	17	18	287	21	27	Communication
3 -M	211	20	25	281	23	29	Communication
4 -M	151	12	19	280	28	31	Communication
5 -M	121	11	13	206	17	23	Entertainment
6 -F	154	13	20	228	20	26	Sports
7 -M	171	22	27	318	30	32	Communication
15-F	153	11	17	289	31	34	Communication

The quotations below offer a view of writing from the high writers during the first semester examination looking at the types of openers, the basic structure and a few illustrative sentences. They are left as they are written.

### Openers

*/My topic is "New Communication tools". I choose this topic because today human can't live well without communication tools./*

*Recently I play with friend of "mixi" community on everyweekend. I am taking part in "TRENTTEUN Club."/*

*/Today, communication tools has been developing. PC, cell phone and so on are indeispensable for daily life./*

*/Sporting events have good and bad points. I'm talking about those./*

*/Today, there are many communication tools around us ; for example, mobile phones, SNS, and so on./*

*/My topic is "New communication tools". I chose this topic because I was interested in a new communication tools developing rapidly and what kind of social network these makes/*

*/Today, a lot of people use social network, like Twitter, FAcbook or mixi./*

*/The information of entertainment and media gives so big influence on us./*

### Structure

Many use order signified by "first... second..." and transitions such as "in the end, moreover, for example, in fact, but even so, as I mentioned, It is said, in brief and in other words." The words flow smoothly through the sentences of the 4 or 5 paragraphs which are well

defined. 6 out of 8 wrote about Communication, 1 each for Sports and Entertainment & Media.

### Illustrative sentences

*/Information tools make many social network and get away country lines./*

*/It is said that “Social Networking Service is very dangerous.” But if you know moderation and manners one by one, so it is one of the most happy communication tools./*

*/So, too much information makes our confusion. We shouldn’t swallow all information, and we must not be confused by information overload./*

*/Second, sporting events raise nationalism of people. People hope that their countries’ players win. This is good, but if people have too strong nationalism, they sometimes become danger./*

*/All people in SNS don’t show you their real information./*

*/First, we can use these tools to contact other people in real time. Even if I was where. Especially, mobile phone can use talking and sending e-mail./*

*/In fact I can use mixi. I enjoy communicating my friends, getting a lot of information about my favorite artists./*

*/Mass media always makes use of celebrity to convey the information. When the information is good to us, the celebrity can get fame from viewer. But same time they have a risky side what we feel sad such as Mr. Manabu Oshio who is arrested./*

To encourage the high writers to extend, expose them to more authentic writing such as the articles that appear in the topic booklets and on the website, but also direct them to find their own models. Insist always on original writing and teach them how to document sources. Ask them to fine-tune their proofreading skills, keeping track of mistakes (things they knew but did not do correctly) and errors (things they do not yet know) in the notebook. Make it easier for them to read widely, with a collection of graded readers for example, in order to expand vocabulary and idioms

Most importantly ask them to teach others, for example pair up “high” writers with “lower middle” writers and asked the pairs to share comments and ideas about their writing. By teaching others the high writers will not only render an important service to the class community but also increase their awareness of the structures that work for them. Teaching others also alleviates the tendency of high writers to be competitive, replacing unconstructive competition with collaboration and creating a more conducive atmosphere for developing communication skill.

### How can “middle writers” be supported to grow and change?

Students in the “middle” are found in the average range of the semester score. Although they attend class regularly they tend to perform inconsistently, especially with regard to out-of

-class assignments. Their behavior can be described on a continuum that ranges from amusing to reticent. They also tend to be active people but can seem fragmented as a result which shows in their writing where they do not devote enough time to detail nor proofreading even though they possess solid basic writing skills.

The 4th essay writing of the “middles” did not differ much from the exam essay. In the exam essay they chose topics that are easier and clearer to them. For example Communication is close to them and was discussed in a pro/con debate. The scores of the 4 essays do not show a steady increase but rather they dip and rise, much like the roller coasters they resemble in attitude and behavior.

Table 4 compares topic choices and counts of words, sentences and T-units in the 4th essay and the exam essay of the writers in the middle group.

Table 4 : Comparison of 4th essay and exam essay of middle group

S/G*	4th Essay counts :			Exam essay counts :			Topic choices in exam essay
	Word	sentences	T-units	word	sentences	T-units	
8 -F	230	31	36	279	23	31	Communication
10-F	105	10	13	287	25	29	Communication
11-M	83	9	12	232	17	22	Communication
14-M	197	21	27	183	22	25	Sports
16-M	116	10	12	197	17	21	Communication
17-M	76	13	15	250	15	22	Sports
18-F	71	8	11	173	19	23	Sports
20-F	104	10	17	192	14	21	Communication

The quotations below offer a view of writing from the middle during the first semester examination looking at the types of openers, the basic structure and a few illustrative sentences. The sentences appear as written.

### Openers

*/Recently, our communication tools are changing./*

*/Recently, World Cup 2010 was held on South Africa./*

*/My topic is the good and bad points about new communication tools. I chose this topic because It's increasing many kind of communication tools, so I'm interested in new communication tools./*

*/Recently communication tools have been transformed day by day./*

*/Today, most of sports are related with commercial organization and social communities such as nations./*

*/I think Japanes begins lose nationalism. We had very strong nationalism in wartime. But now I envy Korean nationalism./*

*/Today, as a E-mal of course, Twitter, FaceBook and so on of communication tools are changing rapidly as possible./*

*/Today, there are may methods of communication./*

### Structure

A few choose to put the topic question at the top of the page as if the essay is meant to answer it instead of expound on it. Middles can write clear paragraphs although it is not always evident since in the rush to write they often omit spacing thus the 3 or 4 paragraphs are tightly packed on the page. Many use “*firstly*...”, “*secondly*...” to organize the ideas. The middles use transitions that resemble speaking such as “*by the way, and so on, so, for example, on the other hand, and, but.*” 4 of the 8 wrote on to a second page. 3 began with “*recently,*” 3 with “*today,*” while the other 2 used “*I think*” and “*My topic is..*”

### Illustrative sentences

*/These things that we are able to do now weren't expected by people who couldn't know informations in another place./*

*/It is bad for ethical, but these problems will not disappread. The reason why they have a sponsor in their back. They want to think control the result./*

*/In this point, new communication tools frustrated. So It is very hard for us that we protects ours information ourself./*

*/And people who use the Internet may don't go out because the Internet can order many kinds of things which we must live the life so it is not essential people who use the Internet to go out./*

*/But sometimes World Cup games cause tensions between the nations. After the 1970 World Cup, Honduras and El Salador thought for 3 months./*

*/If we can know which side will win, we don't fell tension and the game is not interesting in the least/*

*/One is that we mustn't believe information with ease. The other is that my personal information is always seen by someone, so it is important to protect my personal information./*

*/After thinking two sides, I thought new communication tools are cuts both ways./*

To support growth & change in “middle” writers requires impressing on them the usefulness of keeping a consistent and full notebook and asking them frequently about what they are doing in the notebooks. Teach them awareness of some useful writing conventions and about “T-units.” Explore ways with them to acquire and extend vocabulary and idioms using amusing methods such as music lyrics. Demand originality, steady countable growth & change in every essay. Ask them to teach others.



## How can “low” writers gain confidence and skill?

Students deemed to be “low” resemble the “middles” in behavior and attitude and can be described along a similar continuum of characteristics. Two kinds of “low” writers exist in this class: one lacks attendance, the other participates but lacks experience writing in any language. Each requires a different instructional approach but it is the latter kind that is the more interesting sub group for the teacher. The essays of low writers are short and plain with no paragraphing, made up of strings of stochastic phrases that resemble spoken language.

Table 5 compares topic choices and counts of words, sentences and T-units in the 4th essay and the exam essay of the writers in the low group.

Table 5 : Comparison of 4th essay and exam essay of low group

S/G*	4th Essay counts :			Exam essay counts :			Topic choices in exam essay
	Word/sentences/T-units	word/sentences/T-units	word/sentences/T-units	word/sentences/T-units	word/sentences/T-units	word/sentences/T-units	
9-F	121	14	16	150	11	15	Communication
12-F	70	8	10	121	14	18	Social Change
13-M	168	11	18	85	7	9	Communication
19-F	73	6	9	109	9	13	Communication
21-M	63	7	11	74	9	12	Communication
22-M	64	7	9	176	14	21	Sports
23-F	90	11	13	106	13	15	Communication
24-M	19	3	3	96	10	12	Communication

The quotations below offer a view of writing considered to be low in experience looking at the types of openers, the basic structure and a few illustrative sentences, which appear here unedited.

### Openers

*/After 1990, the development of social networkl has transformed the speed of getting the information (the entire paragraph)/*

*/We can reveal information that we want to know but there is information overload./*

*/Recently, communication tools reveals to change./*

*/These days, sporting events are often held and professional games broadcast on TV./*

*/When the social network transformed, we can used slow communication tools./*

*/The communication means that we use develops rapidly now./*

*/Recently, the new communication tools diversifies variously./*

*/Yang Japanese man is different from stereotype of Japanese masculinity./*

### Structure

In the essay examination low writers used paragraphing because it was pointed out and

required. Other essays do not have paragraphing. There are no real openers and transitions used are the basic ones “*however, for example, so, now and finally*” For the most part the structure is guided by the choice of key words. About 3 paragraphs in length the writing sometimes is wobbly and uses space on the page awkwardly.

### Illustrative sentences

*/It became to be able to reveal that have happened to people on the earth in real times./*

*/It is convinients that we know transform information in real time but our information can't sefty./*

*/So, we have to improve in the present conditions. We have to rid frustrated in our life./*

*/Also, watching the professional games gives us thrill or tensions and stimulates our eagerness for sports and contributes to enrich the QOL./*

*/But new communication tool is cuts both ways./*

*/So, I want to use commuication tools safty and don't forget good points and bad points./*

*/Second, there are photographs and various things are seen in real time and we need not to be frustrated./*

*/I think that agree man's feminization. Because There are employ womens.*

*Today womans very strong and cool./*

What the less experienced writer most need is time and patient scaffolding, especially in the planning stage. It may be more beneficial for them to work with the teacher in this stage rather than with peers helping them keep pace, speed up the process of selecting manageable bits of information which to write. Demand they keep a word count and create a sentence goal in each essay writing. Subsequent essays should contain more key words, more sentences, more examples. Eventually teach them how to combine short sentences into single, more sophisticated sentences and to question themselves about their writing progress. Low writers need not spend time on re-writes. It's preferably they just move on from topic to topic and try to increase the length and breadth of their writing. In the proofreading stage it is good for them to work with a solid “middle” person who can teach them the ropes as he knows them. They may find writing from a visual helpful. They should never be compared to either “high” nor “middle” writers but be rewarded each time for their effort steady growth and awareness of change in their work. Encourage the building of a glossary containing new vocabulary and idioms that they can use build upon and attempt to use.

### In what ways can writing support the development of communicative skill?

Characteristics specific to writing ; its recursive nature, a strong connection to reading, the creation of artifacts that can be studied and its ability to motivate change, distinguish it as a skill that supports the development of communication skill. Raimes (1991) described writing as

something “that you visit several times ; it remains even as you change and can be revised as you change. It is designed to be shared, to launch new thoughts and to be discussed.”

### Creating Artifacts

In specified segments of each topic cycle “writing clinics” are times where planning and editing take place as part of the writing process. Students work in pairs, brainstorming ideas, constructing mind maps, doing free-writing and seeking advice from “knowers,” who are teachers and peers alike (Richards & Rogers 2001). Pairing students during the planning stage is a collaboration that helps to get the writing process started more easily and enjoyably. It is especially helpful in focusing middle writers, while low writers, and others less sure of themselves, can join the teacher at a table to be assisted through the planning process. Building on the outcome of collaborative planning and using key words from the topic articles, students are encouraged to write originally, with clear order and a sense of personal style thereby helping to enlarge “schemata” or mental structures that store knowledge (Nunan 1990).

Notebooks in the form of B-5 sized loose leaf binders help students to collect information and to respond to class proceedings through home assignments. The class website (see Mitchell 2010) provides reading material on each topic and an opportunity for written communication. Both serve as examples of artifact creation that is recursive and collaborative.

The notebooks, weblog commentary and essay writing are valuable for exchanging feedback and extending communication as well as providing occasion to evaluate growth and change in the development of overall communication skill. The evaluation of writing “includes more than linguistic features” wrote Cassanave (1994) ; “development in writing needs to capture a fuller sense of increased fluency and increased confidence. It needs to be observable and discussable in a way that characterizes students’ linguistic development concretely, encompassing different perspectives on writing and dimensions of growth and change in writing.”

### Assessment & Feedback

Growth & change, in this article, indicates two directions of movement in student writing. Growth occurs in a relatively short period of time ; it is small but noticeable and can be observed in frequent periodical writing. Change takes longer ; it is noticeable when essays written at different times are compared. Change can be documented and shared with students.

With 135 students it is not the intention of the teachers, nor would it be a wise use of time, to correct the essays for accuracy in grammar. Instead it is better to set criteria for evaluating growth that, while subjective, is individualized: Does it look good? Is it complete? Is it meaningful? Does it represent growth? Is it longer, broader than the previous essay? Does it flow

and have a sense of order Is it original?

Awarding evaluative scores on the essays is a negotiation. The writer first rates himself then asks a partner to rate him using a scale from 1 to 4 and adds a comment and some advice. The ratings are descriptive and change with each topic For example a “4” which always indicates excellence may be expressed as “Wow!!! Or a “3” might say “I can understand you very well” or “How did you do this?” While a “2” might simply say “Hmmmmmmm…”, “Oh my!” or “Try again next time.” Only then collect the essays rating them using the same scale adding a short comment that picks up on a point in the essay proving to the writer that the essay was indeed read and appreciated. When the essays are returned there are cries of “Wow!, “Oh my god!, with slaps on the back and smiles when the essay was rated higher by the teacher.

The students are only asked to make their writing grow in length and breadth from the previous essay. Greater sophistication, as measured by T units, the presence of dependent and independent clauses, vocabulary, idioms, examples, transitions, summaries, clever openings and endings would represent change.

In the examination essay the criteria for success includes: a sense of order, appropriate imbedding of 5 key words or phrases and “meaningfulness.” Meaningfulness is difficult to calibrate but refers to Casanave’s (1994) definition of improvement and to Zamel (1982) notion that competency in composing does not necessarily correspond to linguistic competence but is an explorative and generative process. Many of the exam essays are a reformulation of previous essay work, a reminder of the recursive nature of writing. All “grew” in their writing; their essays that were longer, better organized and displayed a layer of attention and awareness that they may not have shown before. Cumulatively the progression of essay writing represents “change” as “knowledge telling and knowledge transformation” (Bereiter & Scardamalia 1987).

### **Obstacles, benefits & actions**

Some obstacles and benefits of writing in a communicative EFL Course are listed below followed by brief suggestions for actions to increase the presence of writing.

<i>Obstacles</i>	<i>Benefits</i>	<i>Actions</i>
Lack of instructional time	Artifacts for feedback	Collaboration at all stages
Inexperience of students	Recursive activity	Flexible notebooks
Correcting & rating	Raises awareness	Emphasis on “growth & change”

### *Suggestions*

Redesign communicative EFL to be fully integrative of all skill strands. Change the point of view concerning outcomes to be more flexible, tolerant, but firm. Use all aspects of the

exploration of a topic to generate information that can be used in creating a written text.

Interviewing the students would reveal useful information about their current lives, the challenges of being a first year university student in a strenuous program of study, about their English language learning background, and about their interests, goals, levels of confidence and comfort working in a second language.

Collaborate at all stages of the writing process. Increase time for proofreading and sharing, where beneficial teach about T-units and other notions of increased sophistication. Include a variety of activities to allow for a smooth blending of various student levels of experience in English, create artifacts that become the determinant for a final grade producing concrete evidence of a student's commitment, effort, motivation, participation, growth and change, in not only the class activities but in the overall process of developing communication skill.

### *Review class*

An unexpected opportunity presented itself, following the essay exam that well illustrates how the activity of writing supports communication skill building, when 13 students, who did not garner enough points during the semester, were “invited” to a review class. Because of a lack of attendance, topic essays and pages in notebooks, it could be presumed that they are the very image of the lazy and unmotivated student. That summation, however, would belie the fact that they are indeed enrolled in a strenuous dentistry program at a prestigious university. Actually, with few exceptions, they resemble “middle writers” in being unfocused and “all over the place” in their lives.

At the review class they asked many questions about their missing points and what they ought to do to recover. Unsure of themselves in writing as well as in English conversation, they need the encouragement of instant feedback, assurances that they are on a correct path and permission to continue to the next step. So, in the review class, that is how we proceeded, with students running back and forth after each stage for checking. Some sketched their ideas on the chalkboard, stronger students in the group willingly helped the weaker and all felt compelled to ask about planning, grammar, spelling and vocabulary. One young man who ordinarily acts aloof asked if he could change the tense of a key word. Several replied “*naruhodo*” (I see, of course!) when paragraphing or combing two short thoughts into one sentence was pointed out.

By the end of the hour all 13 had successfully, in their own way, completed the task of writing an essay. All understood the need to try harder to work together, to ask questions and to communicate their needs. It was clear that the interaction surrounding the making of a piece of writing supported all forms of communication.

## Conclusion

Writing is a powerful tool that assists students in becoming aware of their own language learning and extends the learning experience for both students and teachers. Learning to express oneself accurately and appropriately in writing does not require extensive instruction nor does it need consume excessive time in a corrective mode. What is needed is for the teacher to pursue the ever-shifting L2 teaching paradigm shift a bit further, in order to appreciate both process and product as valuable assets in developing communicative skill and to be mindful that both process and product are equal as learning tools. The product is to be considered, not a finished product but an artifact to be studied along with the process that created it.

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Appendix 1 : 24 case studies arranged by first semester score

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
S/G	Group	Att.	SemS	NB	Exam	Essays	4Ess.
1-F	B-2	14	83	3	20	14	4
2-F	A-1	14	83	3	20	14	4
3-M	B-1	14	83	5	19	11	4
4-M	B-2	14	81	4	19	13	3
5-M	A-1	14	80	3	20	13	3
6-F	B-1	14	75	5	19	11	4
7-M	A-2	13	72	5	18	13	4
8-F	A-2	14	71	5	19	10	4
9-F	A-2	14	71	5	19	10	4
10-F	B-1	14	69	4	19	10	3
11-M	A-1	14	68	3	19	8	2
12-F	B-1	13	68	3	18	6	2
13-M	B-2	14	68	3	17	11	4
14-M	A-2	14	67	3	17	7	2
15-F	A-2	14	65	4	17	11	3
16-M	B-1	13	65	2	20	8	3
17-M	B-2	14	65	2	19	8	3
18-F	A-1	14	65	5	18	6	2
19-F	B-2	14	64	3	18	7	2
20-F	B-2	14	61	2	19	9	3
21-M	A-2	13	61	3	17	9	3
22-M	A-1	14	60	2	19	6	3
23-F	A-1	14	60	2	17	8	3
24-M	B-1	14	60	3	17	6	2

S/G (col. 1)=student # & gender

Group (col. 2)=group designation (A-1, B-1, A-2, B-2)

Att. (col. 3)=attendance (full attendance is 14)

SemS (col. 4)=semester score (on 100%)

NB (col. 5)=notebook (1 (low) to 5 (high))

Exam (col. 6)=essay examination (20 is highest score)

Essays (col. 7)=4 essays (combined score 16)

4Ess (col. 8)=most recent essay ; rating 1 (low) to 4 (high)