

【原著】

Process Writing for the Rest of Us: A Writing Foundation Course for CEFR A1-B2 Level Students

Richard Sugg

全学生共通のライティング手順

——CEFR A1-B2 レベルの学生用ライティング基礎コース——

Richard Sugg

Abstract

The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and testing boards such as the Nihon Eigo Kentei Kyokai (Eiken) with its Test of English for Academic Purposes (TEAP), define the basic undergraduate level of English required for language and 'global' style courses as Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) B1 or B2. However, as more and more private universities are being forced to accept students with far lower levels of English, the idea of teaching academic or even creative writing courses to first year students at far lower CEFR levels is becoming impractical. Rather than having lower level learners just translate their own Japanese paragraphs, or regurgitate sentences from books or online translation sites, which are then corrected and effectively rewritten by teachers, I will outline an easy to implement process writing based foundation course. Firstly, this report gives a description of the context in which this course is being used, the level of the students, and the problems they face. This is followed by a brief explanation of the standard idea of process writing, the 'Writing Recipe', a student generated 'Correction Guide' checklist and its implementation in the classroom, and evidence of improvement based on a simple analysis of students' writing. Finally, after discussion and conclusions, it also briefly notes how this 'writing recipe' has become a 'first step' in course integration within the Bunkyo English Communication Centre's (BECC) lessons for the Global Communication Department (GCD).

概 要

日本の文部科学省（MEXT）や TEAP（Test of English for Academic Purposes）を提供している日本英語検定協会（英検）をはじめとする検定委員会は、語学および「グローバル」様式の学科に必要な基礎的学部レベルの英語力を、CEFR（ヨーロッパ言語共通参照枠）の B1 または B2 レベルと定義している。しかし、ますます多くの私立大学がこのレベルに到底及ばない学生を受け入れざるを得ない状況にある中、はるかに低い CEFR レベルの1年生に学術的ライティングはおろか、クリエイティブライティングのコースでさえ、それを教えることは非合理的に

なりつつある。本稿では、このような低い英語レベルの学生たちに、ただ自分の書いた日本語の文章を英訳させたり、本やオンラインの翻訳サイトから丸写しさせた文章を先生が訂正し、適正な文章に書き換えたりする代わりに、実践し易いプロセスライティングを基本とした基礎コースの概要を記したい。

第一に、本稿はこのコースがどのようなコンテキストで使われるかを説明し、学生のレベル、そして彼らが対峙する問題について述べる。その後、プロセスライティングの標準的考え方の簡単な説明、「ライティングレシピ」、学生によって生み出された「修正ガイド」チェックリスト、そして教室での実施や、シンプルな分析による学生のライティングの改善例などを記す。最後に、考察と結論に続いて、この「ライティングレシピ」がいかにしてBunkyo English Communication Center (BECC) が提供するグローバルコミュニケーション学科 (GCD) 対象の授業において、コース連携の「ファーストステップ」となったかについても簡単に触れる。

Introduction and Course Context

The course was originally developed for the Kwassui Senior High School's English Course (活水高等学校英語科) second year エッセイ・ライティング (Essay Writing), and third year クリエイティブ・ライティング (Creative Writing) classes (Kwassui 2017), between 2003 and 2013. These classes aimed to give students the ability to write their own reports, essays, debate notes, and presentations in English, with minimal teacher input. A further goal was to enable students to write their own essay applications, pre-course entry presentations, and to pass shorter writing tests as part of fulfilling university entrance requirements for 上智大学 (Sophia University), 国際基督教大学 (International Christian University) and others (Kwassui, 2017). The students in this English course all aimed to have a TOEIC score of 600 to 700, and / or to have passed at least the EIKEN second grade, or pre-first grade, by graduation.

These already matched later MEXT (2014) stated goals that:

“To measure students’ English proficiency and utilize the results for detailed improvement and enhancement of education and improvement of students’ motivation for learning, we must set English proficiency targets which are suitable for students’ special needs and career choices at the stage of graduation from high school (e.g. Grade 2 or Pre-1 of the Eiken Test, or TOEFL iBT score of 60 or more, etc.)”

These scores in turn equate to a CEFR level of high B1 or B2 according to published comparison tables (MEXT, 2016). At these levels, students “Can produce simple connected texts on topics which are familiar or of personal interest” (B1, COE, 2017), or “Can produce a clear, well structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices” (B2, COE, 2017).

However, at the time of starting their writing course, the majority of students were at the EIKEN third grade or pre-second grade level, and had either yet to start any TOEIC study, or had scores in the 150 to 250 range. Again, this matched the same requirements that students have “Grade 3 of the Eiken Test or higher by the time of graduation from junior high school” (MEXT, 2014).

Using the above-mentioned comparison tables, the students had a CEFR level of A1 to A2. As such, according to COE (2001), in terms of overall written production, students “Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences” (A1), or “Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like and, but and because” (A2). If we look at overall written interaction, students “Can ask for or pass on personal details in written form” (A1), or “Can write short, simple formulaic notes relating to matters in areas of immediate need” (A2). It should also be noted that at these levels, writing is not mentioned in the Common Reference Levels, and that there are “no descriptors available” (COE, 2001) for reports and essays.

In comparison, over the last 5 years the majority of first year Global Communication students at Bunkyo University have consistently been placed between CEFR A1 and B1 levels by the BECC in-house Bunkyo English Tests (BETs) (Bower et al, 2014). The year of students surveyed for the purposes of this report were also placed at the same levels by the Oxford Online Placement Test (OOPT) (www.oxfordenglishtesting.com), and had TOEIC scores ranging from as low as 190, to a highest score of 495. These results put the majority of first year Bunkyo University Global Communication students at the same CEFR / TOEIC levels as the Kwassui English course first year students. Sadly, this also shows that the majority of high schools from which our students come are not meeting the current MEXT proficiency targets, a point admitted by MEXT (2016):

“Only around 32% of the students at the end of the upper secondary school had a minimum English proficiency of Grade Pre-2 or Grade 2 on the Test in Practical English Proficiency (includes students who passed Grade Pre-2, Grade 2, or higher: 11.1%, and students who had nearly the same English proficiency: 20.8%).”

While the Global Communication course has English as its core language component, and has some of its lessons conducted by native speakers in English, it is perhaps slightly inaccurate to describe these students as ‘English Majors’. During their first two years of instruction, students take General English Communication (GEC) courses at the A1 to B1 levels, Writing Strategies (WS) courses, Reading Strategies (RS) courses, and a grammar based Basic English Communication course (BEC, first year only) in English with native speakers. However, in their third and fourth years, the vast majority of students will take only one or two ‘content based’ classes in English with a native speaker where they will have to write unaided. (From a choice of Academic English (AE), English for Education (EE), Business English (BE), Hospitality English (HE), Tourism English (TE), and English Workshop (EW)). As can be seen in Table 1 below, even these courses do not require anything above a formulaic CEFR B2 level of writing, making a traditional academic style high B2 to C1 level writing course irrelevant for the majority of students.

Table 1: Examples of CEFR Writing Goals in BECC GCD courses

Course	Year	Core / Elective	Writing Goals	CEFR Level
GEC	1	Core	Can write short, comprehensible connected texts on familiar subjects.	B1
BEC	1	Core	Can write a simple description of daily activities using learned grammar structures and phrases.	A2
GEC	2	Core	Can write short, comprehensible connected texts on familiar subjects.	B1
EW	3	Elective	Can write letters and emails describing experiences and feelings.	B1+
EW	4	Elective	Can write clear, detailed descriptions of a favourite city with some recommendations of when and where to visit, and what to do.	B2
EE	3/4	Elective	Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of subjects by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.	B1
AE	3/4	Elective	Can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view.	B2

(#Taken from in-house BECC syllabus documents, 2017)

Writing Traits and Problems at the Lower CEFR Levels

While there is an obvious difference in speaking and reading ability across groups varying from A1 to B1 levels, it is often surprising how similar the writing traits and problems of these students can be. Taking in to account the regimented design of Japanese high school English studies, and how little writing is actually ‘taught’, makes it easier to identify the root causes of these problems. Generally, A1 to B1 level students tend to:

- Want to translate whole sentences or even paragraphs.
- Want to ask the teacher if something is correct / have no ability to self-correct.

Amongst the B1 students, these traits can be traced back to their ‘product centred’ writing experiences in high school. Many of these students have taken part in speech or recitation contests, have given simple presentations, or tried to apply for English courses at other institutions. As such, their final written product is more important than ‘how they got there’. This product approach “is a traditional approach, in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text”, and has “an emphasis on the end product” (Steele, 2004). In these cases, a student is tasked by their teacher to write a first draft in Japanese, then translate it to English. The Japanese teacher then ‘corrects’ the English draft, or makes additions, and asks the student to re-write it. This cycle can be repeated five or six times before finally asking a native speaker (if available) for a final check. This cycle does have some good points, in that students can ‘learn’ blocks of language and grammar through writing repetition, and can discuss points or misunderstandings with teachers. In reality, this often leads to more work for both parties, and students regurgitating paragraphs

as demanded by their teachers, to which they have no attachment. As such, when given any writing task that they have not performed before, these students struggle to begin writing.

- Want to use whole memorised sentences regardless of pragmatics or context.
- Regard any uncorrected work as being 'perfect' / have no ability to self-correct.
- Have a limited grammatical knowledge and vocabulary.

These traits are more often seen amongst the A1 and A2 level students, who have had no kind of writing instruction, but have memorised individual sentences 'out of context' as answers for exams. Also, they often copied paragraphs from English textbooks, or wrote simplistic journals, which overworked teachers just signed as 'completed'. Almost the opposite of the above, these students have been given no idea of what is 'wrong' with their writing, or how written English is used naturally. These students often have no idea how to begin writing.

- Want to erase every other word.
- Want to look up words in dictionaries / on line mid-sentence.

These final traits can apply to any level of student. As the majority of students have had no instruction in how to plan their writing, they just try to write sentences 'off the cuff'. This leads to obvious spelling mistakes and even incorrect letter formation. Students in Japan are taught to erase anything slightly incorrect in their Japanese from their very first year of elementary school, and have this reinforced when they start memorising cursive script and correct sentences for tests in English in junior high school. At the same time, students will form a sentence in their head, often in Japanese, or based on a memorized simpler English sentence, invariably not know one of the words in English, and will have to stop to look up the word. Both of these traits block any kind of flow in the thought or writing process, and waste a huge amount of time either in class or at home.

Any combination of these traits leads to the same thing; a lack of confidence and a generally negative attitude of 'I can't do it' towards writing. However, students will need to be able to write for both their other classes and for simple aspects of their future careers. This leaves us with the question of how to improve students' writing, while at the same time motivating them to try to write 'by themselves'.

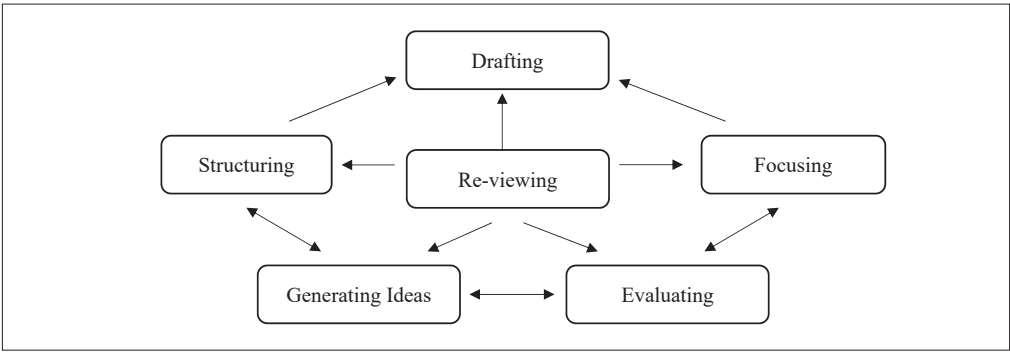
Product versus Process Writing

A more traditional way of teaching writing is the 'Product Approach'. Usually performed in four stages, students start with an example of what they have to write, analyse it, work on specific areas in isolation, spend a long time organising ideas and then write a comparable task. This is an effective way of teaching students how to write very structured, formalised letters or emails, and does have uses for our students in certain work environments. Also, the second stage of controlled practice can be used to 're-teach' certain grammatical points or set language forms. Where this method falls down is that when students are confronted with having to write something with no model in front of them, they are unable to do so. Also, at no point do students try to work out or

find their own mistakes, and are reliant on teacher instruction. Finally, this method is all about teaching the final product, and the grade it gets, rather than helping students learn and develop their overall writing skills. It works very well for motivated students who already have a strong grasp of the ideas and grammar required to complete the task, or for helping lower level students memorise simple, set tasks such as filling out forms, but often turns into just another copying / memorisation task.

'Process Writing' essentially has 3 main stages, as described by Murray (1972), but these are more commonly broken up to have anywhere from five to eight or more stages. An often-cited example of the process is shown below:

Table 2: The writing Process (reproduced from White and Arndt, 1991)



Students go through a process of generating ideas, extending and evaluating those ideas, organising the ideas, writing a first draft, exchanging drafts and giving feedback, 'correcting' and improving drafts based on peer feedback, writing a final draft and again exchanging drafts with peers.

Compared to product writing, process writing is more about the development of language use, and

“shows some similarities with task-based learning, in that students are given considerable freedom within the task. However, process approaches do not repudiate all interest in the product, (i.e. the final draft). The aim is to achieve the best product possible. What differentiates a process-focused approach from a product-centred one is that the outcome of the writing, the product, is not preconceived.” (Steele, 2004).

Process writing is most commonly used when writing creatively, as it allows the writer more freedom to develop ideas. At first, this may seem at odds with what our students need for their courses, but it is a more motivating format, and allows students the chance to actually learn from their 'mistakes' while broadening their language ability. Also, on closer inspection, many of the second, third and fourth year writing goals listed in *Table 1*, and many of the spoken or group presentations students are asked to do, have examples as resources, are collaborative in nature,

and emphasise informing the reader or audience.

Table 3: A Summary Comparison of Process and Product Writing. (Steele, 2004)

Process Writing	Product Writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text as a resource for comparison • ideas as starting point • more than one draft • more global, focus on purpose, theme, text type, i.e., reader is emphasised • collaborative • emphasis on creative process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • imitate model text • organisation of ideas more important than ideas themselves • one draft • features highlighted including controlled practice of those features • individual • emphasis on end product

The Writing Recipe

The 'Writing Recipe' is the central theme to this course, and an attempt to take all the creative and language broadening aspects of the writing process, and marry them with the product writing idea of writing to fulfil specific tasks that students at the A1 to B2 level might be asked to perform. At the same time, it hopes to take into account students' feelings regarding peer feedback, teacher involvement, and time constraints. It is also designed to go alongside the textbook 'Writing from Within', which has been developed for students who "we call '3Ls': low in ability, low in confidence and low in motivation." (Kelly and Gargagliano, 2014). The textbook gives resource texts for comparison, practice activities for pre- and post-lesson reinforcement, tips on editing (which students still need to improve their grammar and to help them move towards autonomous writing), and a final writing task, effectively blending the two types of writing.

The recipe is then followed by students completing the final task, as a way of giving them the skills to be able to write on their own for other classes and the future. In its current form, the recipe has eight main writing stages:

1) Ideas: Brainstorming, free-writing, Extremely Short Stories (ESS), answering questions, and having simple dialogues about a topic or situation. These are all ways in which students can think up ideas and words to use in their writing. These ideas are the 'ingredients' for the recipe.

2) Organizing: Here students put their words / phrases / clauses into groups, and / or the order they want to use them.

This is more of a product writing task, but is to help students who are not used to writing more than one or two sentences, or who are used to following a Japanese *danraku* style of writing, produce clear and easily understood paragraphs. (For more information on these differences, see Kimura and Kondo, 2004). As students become more confident, stages 1 and 2 can be combined.

3) Simple sentences: Students write simple (as opposed to compound) sentences using the

organized words from 1 and 2. Students leave a line between each sentence.

At the lower levels, it is much easier for students to think one line at a time, in a 'focused-writing' format. When students come to writing with i-pads or computers, this is a technique they can continue to practice using programs such as Word and Pages and their associated review and spell check functions. Also, simple sentence writing helps reduce the tendency for students to translate while trying to write compound sentences.

4) Editing 1 (check and correct): Students check their own and / or a partner's simple sentences, using their correction guide for help. Later in the course another option is to have students just check for their three most common mistakes. Rather than re-write sentences, students just cross out any mistakes and re-write above in another colour. (red is most 'natural' for the students, but any colour will do as long as it is used consistently) This is another reason for leaving a line between each sentence.

Many teachers and researchers are against error correction at this stage, often citing Truscott (1996), "My thesis is that grammar correction has no place in writing courses and should be abandoned". However, what they often fail to cite is his later clarification, "By grammar correction, I mean correction of grammatical errors for the purpose of improving a student's ability to write accurately". The goal of the checking at this stage is to make students aware of how to check for mistakes, and to make them aware of their own grammatical weaknesses, rather than to improve written accuracy as a whole. Also, at the lower A1 and A2 levels, many writing examples will be incomprehensible if left unchecked at this stage.

5) Combine and Connect: Here students put their edited sentences together to make compound or complex sentences. Again, this is not done by re-writing, but by students simply adding punctuation and conjunctions in another colour (usually blue), and crossing out any superfluous phrases.

6) Write a first draft: All students have to do now is copy their edited and combined / connected sentences out neatly in paragraph form.

7) Editing 2: Students check their own and / or a partner's draft paragraphs, paying particular attention to punctuation and conjunctions. Students then correct any mistakes and reword any phrases as they see fit.

In the first year, or until students are more comfortable with their writing and the idea of peer correction, the first part of this stage is performed by the teacher. However, in line with Ferris's (2004) idea that "teachers should provide indirect feedback that engages students in cognitive problem solving as they attempt to self-edit based upon the feedback that they have received", the teacher just underlines any mistakes and writes the appropriate number from the correction guide above it. Students then help each other make appropriate corrections based on the guide.

8) Rewrite: students rewrite and resubmit their paragraph / presentation / essay / letter / report.

The Correction Guide

All writing teachers have a guide for their corrections, most of which use abbreviations such as 'Sp.' to indicate a spelling mistake, 'Subj / V' indicating a subject / verb agreement mistake, to tell students what the mistake actually is. The correction guide for this course is a list of the 12 most common mistakes learners at these lower levels make. Based on an idea by David Martin in his book 'Write Away Right Away' (EFL Press), the 12 mistakes are numbered, and an example of an actual student writing mistake and its corrected form are given for students to help them 'work out' their mistake. If a student makes a mistake outside of these common twelve, then a teacher can choose to ignore it, correct it for the student, or talk to the student individually about it after the task is completed. (Appendix 1.)

Evaluation, Grading and Reflection

The three main problems with standard writing courses are a focus on evaluation, too much grading, and a lack of reflection. Teachers will state evaluation criteria in course materials, and students will write with their grade in mind, working in a product based style. This leads to students ignoring any wider learning opportunities, and resisting any attempts by the teacher to encourage autonomy. Teachers will also tend to correct every mistake in every paper with a final grade in mind, which is time consuming, and also negates any chance for students to find their own mistakes. Students then receive a paper covered in corrections, and take no more than a cursory glance at their grade. If the grade is considered to be 'good enough', then the student moves on. If it is considered to be 'too low', then the whole process just demotivates students further. Either way, students have no chance to reflect on their work without a bias based on their grade, and have little chance to decide what they do and don't understand, where they have improved, and what they can work on in later classes and assignments.

In this course, students are first given a grade after their first draft submission based on whether or not they have correctly completed the first six stages of the recipe. However, when the draft is returned, no grade is written on the paper. At first this is difficult for students to accept, because again starting in elementary school, Japanese education has a 'culture' of grading everything, and a score of under 100% (with the majority of work based on memorising correct answers) considered to be 'disappointing'. However, as there are no perfect answers at this stage, no grade means there is nothing to distract students from the next stage of trying to correct and improve their writing by themselves. This also means that students are not embarrassed to help each other correct and improve their work, as they have no scores to compare.

After the final draft is submitted, the work is again graded, but by using a CEFR based rubric that is given to students in both English and Japanese in advance. Only any consistently missed corrections are highlighted for discussion with the student. The students grade is given as a number, but with an emphasis on where this puts them in CEFR ability (Based on COE, 2001), rather than as a percentage score. (Appendix 2)

After students receive their feedback, they are then given the opportunity to reflect on their work via a questionnaire. Each questionnaire varies depending on the assignment set, but all start with guided questions to help the students determine whether or not they fully understood the task, or were able to find and correct their own mistakes. Questions then become more 'open', giving students the opportunity to think about what they find difficult, where they have improved, and what they still need to work on. Finally, there is a 'free comment' section where students can make any comments they like, or ask for further discussion with the teacher. Due to the level of the students, these final questions can be answered in Japanese. After reflection has been completed, students now share their final drafts and invite comments and questions from their peers. This is an important part of the process to help "students develop an awareness of the fact that a writer is producing something to be read by someone else" (Steele, 2004).

In an attempt to engage students in more active learning, the 'flipped learning' approach is introduced, so that the majority of discussion, writing, peer review and feedback is done in the classroom. Shorter textbook exercises and vocabulary studies are completed at home, or in the BECC's Self Access Learning Center (SALC), to help introduce new materials or to give modelled practice. (For more on Flipped Classrooms, see The University of Queensland, Australia website)

Measuring Improvement

As writing tasks throughout a semester vary in length and complexity, it is very difficult to measure student progress. However, as the main goal of this course is to help students learn to write by themselves for other courses, a simple study was designed for the 2016 academic year to look for, and measure improvement in, students' writing amounts, error identification, and error correction in their first year Reading Strategies Course book report summaries.

Procedure

As part of the Reading Strategies course, which runs parallel to the writing course, students were required to write four 'book reports' per semester, based on self-chosen in-course graded readers. The reports included a summary of the book they had read. For the results that follow, 16 first year Global Communication students voluntarily participated in having their eight book report summaries analysed for the following details: The number of mistakes in their first draft, the number of mistakes in their final draft, and the final draft word count. For seven of their eight book reports, students followed the 'writing recipe', with the only teacher assistance being editing of their first drafts after students themselves had checked them. As outlined earlier, any mistakes were highlighted with the relevant number from the correction guide. Students were then responsible for making any changes, and submitting final drafts to their reading teacher. Only after they had been seen by the reading class teacher did I then look over them again to check word and mistake counts. The idea of this was to give the students the idea that they were not writing 'for the writing course', but for a practical application.

In the graphs that follow, the students were divided up by their CEFR grade level (A1, A2, B1), as given by the OOPT, and the level average TOEIC (255, 355, 428) scores. Also, there were three distinct stages over which the book reports were written. In the first stage, the first book report was written by students before the 'writing recipe' had been introduced. At this stage, students generally wrote a summary in Japanese and translated it, and had it fully corrected by their reading class teacher. The second stage covers book reports two, three and four, which were written while the students were learning and practicing the 'writing recipe' in their writing class. The third stage covers the second semester, and reports five to eight. At this stage students are fully familiar with the eight-stage process.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1: Opinion First Draft Average Mistakes Totals 2016

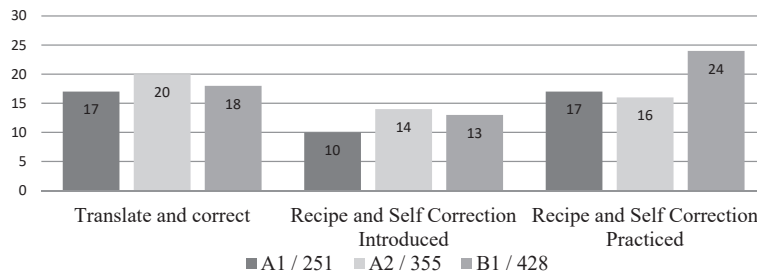


Figure 2: Opinion Final Draft Average Mistakes Totals 2016

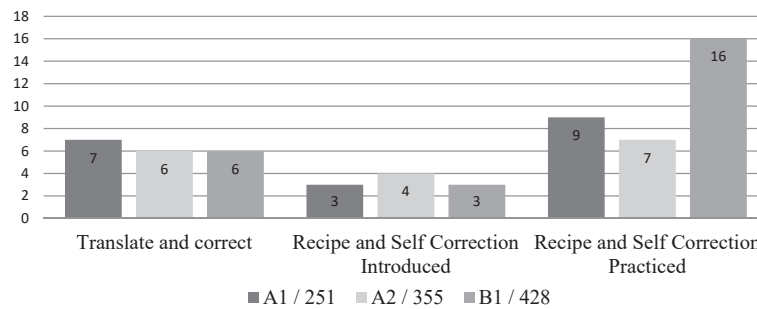


Figure 3: Opinion Final Draft Average Word Count 2016

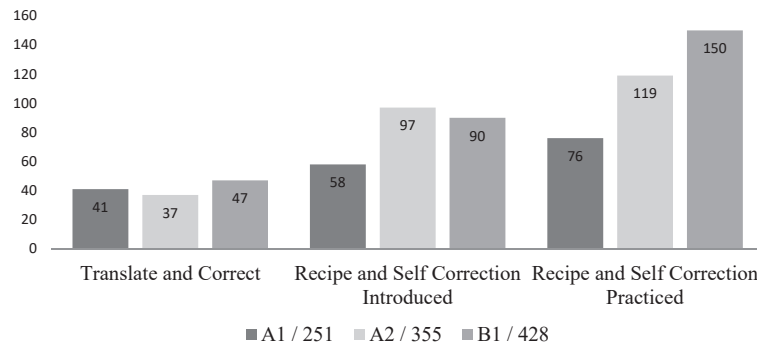


Figure 1 and *Figure 3* confirm that having students at this level translate from Japanese results in the fewest amount of words, with the highest number of mistakes. *Figure 2* also shows that at this stage, students still ‘copy over’ some of their teacher corrected mistakes into their final drafts. This indicates that students who just receive a corrected piece of translated work back feel very little motivation to improve, and quite possibly do not understand some of the corrections, resulting in a final draft not much better than the original. This mirrors the high school experience, where the draft is corrected again and again until satisfactory in the eyes of the teacher, rather than the student.

All three tables confirm that the introduction of the writing recipe and self correction immediately improve word count and basic error correction. This is to be expected as the first stage of the recipe gives students time to come up with more ideas, vocabulary and short phrases before they start writing. Also, any checking of work and self correction before submitting to a teacher will lead to fewer mistakes than when students do no editing whatsoever.

What at first seems surprising is that in the third stage, when the recipe and self correction are fully implemented, the number of first draft mistakes in the A1 and A2 groups jumps back to almost the same amount as when students just translated. Also, the number of mistakes made by B1 students actually increases to its highest level. However, when we also look at the final word count, we can see that the A1 students are writing almost twice as many words as when they translated, and A2 and B1 students are now writing almost three times as many words. The number of mistakes does not increase by the same amount, and even if it did, I would not be too concerned. To me, this shows that students have become motivated to write more, and are also trying to write more complex sentences and structures. This also conforms with Truscott’s views that checking for grammar mistakes doesn’t actually improve overall writing accuracy, but at the same time shows that this correction stage is perhaps helping students increase in confidence to write, and at the very least is not having a negative effect on their overall output.

Regardless of what I believe from the results, they may indeed have been observed ‘too early’ in the students’ writing development. Hyslop (1990) cites Harmon (1988), saying that “teachers should withhold measuring students’ progress until a suitable period of time has elapsed which allows for measurable growth”.

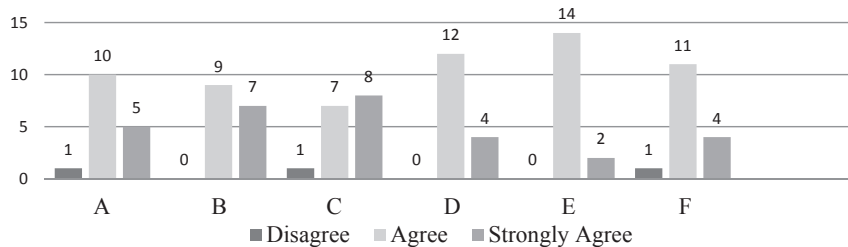
To find out the effects of the course on students’ perceptions of their own writing ability, I also included six relevant statements (*Table 4*) in our end of year course evaluation surveys, which are completed by all students using SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.net).

Table 4: Course Evaluation Survey Statements

	Statements
A	My understanding of how to plan and write a paragraph has improved.
B	My ability to express my ideas in writing has improved.
C	Using the correction guide helps me find my own mistakes.
D	Using the writing recipe improves my writing.
E	I can use the writing recipe to help me write for other classes.
F	Making a writing plan and using the correction guide is better for my writing than just translating paragraphs and having a teacher correct them.

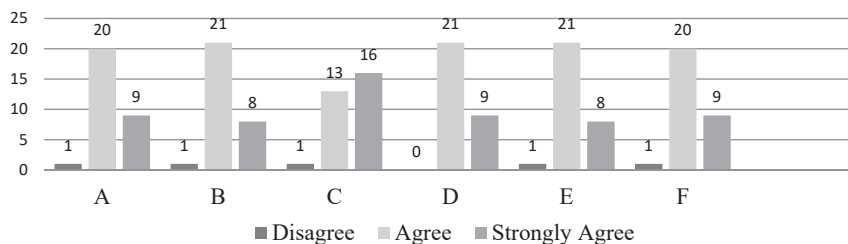
The results shown below in *Figure 4* reveal that the students themselves feel very positively about the effects of using this process based writing course. In the case of questions A, C and G, where one student disagreed, I would very much like to find out why, but the surveys are anonymous, and I do not teach the students in their second year of study.

Figure 4: 2016 End of Year Course Evaluation Survey



This year's (2017) students have not been doing the same kind of book reports, so I could not continue the study. However, at the end of the first semester I did include the same questions in their end of semester surveys. *Figure 5* reveals remarkably similar results, even down to only one student disagreeing with the statements.

Figure 5: 2017 End of Semester 1 Course Evaluation Survey



Conclusion

Is it acceptable to give first year university students in an English language orientated Global Communication department a foundation course in English writing? Does the 'writing recipe' and process writing work? It is my belief that due to the overall low English ability levels of our incoming students, there is a need for them to spend their whole first year learning how to think, plan and edit in 'English'. In the same way foundation courses prepare overseas students for the rigours of language programs in native English-speaking countries, I believe a writing foundation course can help students take the step up from passive, teacher led writing, as it is taught in the majority of high schools, and prepare them to write for themselves, by themselves. Given that the most common figure quoted for necessary guided language hours to improve by one band of the CEFR is 200 hours (a caveat being that this is for taking exams, and includes all areas of study), I would actually suggest that the majority of students need two years of practice using a process writing approach before they are asked to try more traditional essay, creative or academic writing courses. Indeed, bearing in mind the more practical goals of our courses, I would question whether the majority would need these kinds of courses at all. As students do not have to write a graduation thesis in English, and have most of their final two years classes in Japanese, it is clearly more practical for any writing course to assist them with the writing they have to do in their first two years of classes (at the A1 to B1 levels), and to give them the fundamental skills to write unaided for their third and fourth year classes.

Within the BECC, the GCD courses have all, up to now, been designed to work independently from each other. However, as all classes contribute to a student's learning experience, it seems natural to have these courses support each other wherever possible. This has always passively been the case when we think in terms of speaking, but traditionally writing courses have been viewed by students as courses that just teach how to write for that course. With an overall goal of 'course integration' in mind, in 2015 the writing course recipe was considered the 'standard' model for both first and second year writing courses, and was incorporated into the reading course as the model from which to write book report summaries. In 2016 the writing recipe model was taken up by the first year Basic English Communication course as the way in which to write reports and in-class presentations. As of 2017, some teachers of third and fourth year courses also expect students to be using the writing recipe when writing for their courses, and will ask to see a students' 'recipe style' plan if they have questions about what a student has written. Finally, there are copies of the correction guide in the SALC, so that any teacher asked by a student to review their work can still keep to the model.

Through using the writing recipe based course, students themselves have indicated that they become more confident about writing, more willing to try to write longer pieces on their own, and more aware of how to check for their own mistakes. At the same time, by making the 'process' the focus of the course, rather than the grade, students have become less wary of making mistakes, and therefore less dependent on the teacher, preparing them for writing for other courses, and eventually for the 'real world'. My goal, (corrupting Robert Louis Stevenson's famous

quote), is that by the end of the course, students do not write merely to be understood by English teachers used to dealing with Japanese students, but so they cannot be misunderstood by anyone who they are completing CEFR style writing tasks for.

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Appendix

1. The Correction Guide (adapted for printing purposes)

	WRONG sentence (間違った文)	CORRECT sentence (正しい文)
1. Agreement (一致)	× She wear jeans everyday.	○ She wears jeans everyday.
	× My sister is nice. He likes shopping.	○ My sister is nice. She likes shopping.
2. Word choice & Collocation (語の選択・連結)	× She ate some pig .	○ She ate some pork .
	× The traffic was very big .	○ The traffic was very busy/heavy .
3. Word form (語形・品詞)	× Vending machines are convenience .	○ Vending machines are convenient .
4. Verb tense (動詞の時制)	× She has been to Disneyland last summer.	○ She went to Disneyland last summer.
5+. Adding a word (語を加える)	× I saw him at ___ station.	○ I saw him at the station.
5-. Taking out a word (語を取り除く)	× I went to shopping.	○ I went shopping.
6. Combining (文の統合)	× I can't go. Because I'm busy.	○ I can't go because I'm busy.

	WRONG sentence (間違った文)		CORRECT sentence (正しい文)	
7. Spelling (スペル)	×	This soap is dericious.	○	This soup is delicious.
8. Punctuation (. , ! ? : ;) (句読点)	×	Do you have any questions.	○	Do you have any questions?
9. Capitalization (大文字)	×	lisa is from england.	○	Lisa is from England.
10. Word order (語順)	×	I'm after class going shopping.	○	I'm going shopping after class.
11. Japanese English (和製英語)	×	I want to level up my English. (英語の力を伸ばしたいです。)	○	I want to improve my English.
	×	I play with my friends. (友達と遊びます。)	○	I hang out with my friends.
12. Unintelligible sentence (理解不能な文章)	×	I can to go with my friends at Sunday shopping fun.	→	Please look and try again! (再度書き直して下さい)

2. CEFR based Final Draft Rubric (adapted for printing purposes)

CEFR Level	Spelling & Grammar	Content	Organization	
B1	<p>Uses everyday vocabulary generally appropriately, while occasionally overusing certain lexis.</p> <p>Uses simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control.</p> <p>While errors are noticeable, meaning can still be determined.</p>	<p>All content is relevant to the task.</p> <p>Target reader is fully informed.</p> <p>All aspects of task clearly communicated.</p>	Text is connected and coherent, using basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices.	5
A2+	Between 4 & 5	Between 4 & 5	Between 4 & 5	4.5
A2	<p>Uses basic vocabulary reasonably appropriately.</p> <p>Uses simple grammatical forms with some degree of control.</p> <p>Errors may impede meaning at times.</p>	<p>Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present.</p> <p>Target reader is on the whole informed.</p> <p>All aspects of task communicated.</p>	Text is connected using basic, high-frequency linking words.	4
A1+	Between 3 & 4	Between 3 & 4	Between 3 & 4	3.5
A1	Expression requires interpretation by the reader and contains impeding errors in spelling and grammar.	<p>Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present.</p> <p>Target reader is minimally informed.</p> <p>Most aspects of task communicated but some aspects not attempted.</p>	Text consists of mostly simple sentences, without linking words.	3
Pre-A1	<p>Some errors in spelling and grammar.</p> <p>Errors in expression may require patience and interpretation by the reader / impede communication.</p>	<p>Some attempt to address the task but response is very unclear.</p> <p>Target reader is not informed.</p>	Text consists mostly of fragments, rather than complete sentences.	2
Pre-A1	Minimal, or totally incomprehensible response.	Content is totally irrelevant.	Garbled syntax.	1