



WRITING, WRITING, WRITING
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 ALT Spring Contact Meeting
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WHAT IS WRITING?

- Form of communication
 - Self-expression
 - Persuasion
 - Information
- Demonstration of language ability
 - Usage and experimentation of existing vocabulary and grammar
- Opportunity for self-growth and understanding
 - Evaluation of one's personal thoughts and ideas

WHY IS WRITING IN ENGLISH IMPORTANT?

For students, writing in English:

- Improves language skills
 - Enhances word/grammar usage in writing, speaking, and reading
- Prepares for the future
 - Is a necessary skill in higher education, employment
- Is the highest language goal
 - Expressing complex ideas in a way that cannot or might not be communicated verbally

(Bohinc)

INSTRUCTION IN THE JAPANESE CLASSROOM TODAY

- Primary focus on memorization and translation
 - Basic sentence patterns
 - Translating from Japanese to English, English to Japanese
 - No distinction from Japanese writing style
 - Inexplicit vs. Explicit
 - Japanese: "reader (listener)-responsible language"
 - English: "writer (speaker)-responsible language"
 - Few real-world opportunities for English usage
 - Real English materials and situations are not available to many students
 - Students have little to no exposure to real English materials and realistic situations
 - Lack of teacher training
 - Many teachers were educated the same way
- (Matsuhara)

THE COURSE OF STUDY FOR UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

○ Writing

- “Objectives: To further develop students' abilities to write down information, ideas, etc. in English in accordance with the situation and the purpose, and to foster a positive attitude toward communicating by utilizing these abilities.”

(“The Course of Study for Upper Secondary School”)

THE COURSE OF STUDY FOR UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

○ Contents:

- Language Activities:
 - “To write down the outline and the main points of what has been listened to or read in accordance with the situation and the purpose.”
 - “To organize and write down one’s own ideas etc. of what has been listened to or read.”
 - “To organize and write down one’s intended messages in accordance with the situation and the purpose so that they can be understood by the reader.”

(“The Course of Study for Upper Secondary School”)

THE COURSE OF STUDY FOR UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

○ Treatment of the Contents:

- “Writing instruction is conducted more effectively by integrating writing activities with listening, speaking and reading activities.”
- “The purpose for writing should be emphasized in instruction, not only learning language elements but also transmitting information and ideas etc. In so doing, emphasis should also be placed on the process of writing to make the students' writing richer in content and more appropriate in form.”

(“The Course of Study for Upper Secondary School”)

IMPLEMENTATION IN THE JAPANESE CLASSROOM

○ Implementing Writing Activities Effectively

- Give the students a specific purpose/meaning for writing *
 - Setting realistic goals and reasons for writing and sharing them with the students builds motivation and interest
- Give the students a specific audience to whom they will write *
 - Identifying the reader generates additional motivation and better understanding of writing from a Western perspective
- Link the writing activity to reading *
 - Better reading skills helps students in their writing skills
- Give explicit examples and instructions on structure/format**
 - Teaching students how to construct a Western-style paragraph provides a better foundation for writing

* (Matsuhara)
** (Hakine)

IMPLEMENTATION IN THE JAPANESE CLASSROOM

- Communicative Writing Activities
 - Instructions (OC classes)
 - Directions
 - Students write directions for the ALT or for a tourist guide/ map of their city (e.g. how to get to a specific place from the train/bus station)
 - Process Instructions
 - Students write instructions on how to do certain processes (e.g. how to bake a cake)
 - Autobiography (English classes)
 - Students write about and present to the class a significant event in their lives
 - Students create a timeline of significant events in their lives and share them in groups

(Matsubara)

IMPLEMENTATION IN THE JAPANESE CLASSROOM

- Communicative Writing Activities (continued)
 - Letter (OC/English)
 - Students write a letter to a real audience (e.g. a government official from the ALT's home country, the JTE/ALT)
 - E-mail (OC/English)
 - Students exchange e-mails with the ALT or with students from an English-speaking country
 - Journal (English/Elective)
 - Students write using teacher-selected prompts or topics of their own
 - The JTE/ALT can write a response to the students' writing and start a written dialogue
 - Written response (Any class)
 - "Students record their reactions to various stimuli" such as a movie, book, song, field trip, photograph, etc. (Bello, "Improving ESL Learners' Writing Skills")

(Matsubara)

SOURCES

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