

TECHNIQUES FOR ANALYZING COHESIVENESS AND COMPOSITION CONVENTIONS IN AN ENGLISH ESSAY

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1. *INTRODUCTION*

It is generally accepted that, among the four language skills, Japanese students are better at reading and writing English than speaking and listening. This is often attributed to the grammar-translation approach used in Japanese junior and senior high schools. Although a more communicative approach to language teaching has been mandated by the Japanese Education Ministry, this has largely been confined to conversation classes. No reform of the traditional grammar-translation approach to written English has been introduced in Japan. Thus, in writing classes, Japanese students are still limited to manipulating grammatical elements within the sentence. Part of the reluctance to change this approach rests with the role of testing in the Japanese education system. Test scores (and test scores alone!) usually determine whether a student is admitted to a school. Because scoring grammar-translation test items eliminates the subjectivity inherent in judging longer text segments, an objective measure can be obtained, and the admissions processes can be deemed impartial. Although the students -- theoretically -- get grounded in grammar and sentence

structure, they rarely, if ever, write above the sentence level. Furthermore, as in conversation classes, they never get to write for a communicative purpose.

Although this situation might seem hopeless, it does offer a teacher who has relative freedom in the classroom (e.g., a university instructor) an inviting opportunity: the chance to get students to expand their sentence-level skills to create cohesive and coherent composition-length texts. Cohesion and coherence are central to written discourse. Other aspects of written discourse, such as genre, socio-cultural aspects, grammar, lexical organization, and so forth, are neither more nor less important than cohesion and coherence. But an approach focusing on these two concepts is very practical for Japanese students for two reasons. First, because cohesion is achieved above, below, and at the level of the clause, cohesive devices are highly "accessible" to Japanese students, who are well-drilled in sentence-level grammar. Also, depending on their grade, Japanese students have likely worked with some of these devices already, though mainly for the purpose of passing an exam. The second reason has to do with the importance of coherence in discourse. Coherence involves the art of making sense in English. It has to do with maintaining logic, being clear, and having a heightened awareness of the reader as a participant in the discourse.

This study analyzes one junior college student's essay, and it also examines four EFL writing textbooks. It is hoped that these analyses will provide possible analytical models which can be used on all texts, as well as textbooks. This study will also answer the following two questions: What are the number, and types, of mistakes made in the four elements of cohesion as defined here? Are "normal composition conventions" (to be defined) followed in the overall text structure?

The essay analyzed below was written by a junior college female

student, who I will call Junko, in 1996. This particular essay was chosen because it is clear enough to guess, with reasonable confidence, what the writer's intentions were. Yet there are enough errors to be able to illustrate common problems. Possible solutions and pedagogic implications will be discussed in section 4, and a rewritten text is found in the Appendix.

2. *LITERATURE REVIEW*

Researchers (Kobayashi and Rinnert, 1992, Rinnert, 1989, and Connor, 1996) probing the area of negative transfer from L1 into L2 writing are discovering ways that L1 influences L2 choices on all levels: lexis and semantics, phonemes and grammar, and composition conventions and organization. For example, Rinnert (1989) noticed how Japanese students preferred expressive terms to descriptive terms. Connor (1996, p.15) notes that where English rhetorical patterns "follow a linear development, oriental languages use an indirect approach which comes together only at the end." Freedle (in Tannen, 1984, p.xiv), noted that even people in multi-ethnic societies who share a same language "often have very different habits and expectations for organizing discourse." The fact that the communicative value of writing is often realized in discourse, and in its organization, is not appreciated in enough writing classes. Raimes (1983, p.4) noted, "a great deal of writing that goes on in ESL lessons...is sentence writing," and though sentence writing is useful to "reinforce sentence structure, grammar and vocabulary they [the students] have learned" there is a need to move to longer written pieces and, especially, to write for a communicative purpose. Successfully processing text requires that the text be both cohesive and coherent. The concepts of cohesiveness and coherence are central to any discussion of discourse. Connor (1996, p. 83) defines cohesion as "the use of explicit linguistic devices to signal relations between sentences

and parts of text" and cohesive devices as "words or phrases that act as signals to the reader in order to help the reader make connections with what has already been stated or soon will be stated." Halliday and Hasan (1976, p.4) define cohesion as "the interpretation of some element in the discourse [that] is dependent on that of another." Cohesion is realized through the grammatical and lexical relationship of clauses, sentences and text segments. Winter (in Holland and Lewis, 1996) and McCarthy (1991) identified various ways that clauses and sentences logically relate to other clauses and sentences that precede and follow them in the text. Among these are "cause-effect, phenomenon-reason and condition consequence" (Winter, 1996, in Holland and Lewis, p.30-31). There are four ways cohesion is realized in English: through reference, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion (Halliday, 1985; Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Brown and Yule 1983, et al.).

Cohesion is achieved through reference when an item previously mentioned in the text is referred to. For example, in the sentences 'My father was a good athlete. He was especially good at swimming,' *He* is an anaphoric reference to *my father* which creates a link between the two sentences. Items like "pronouns, demonstratives, the article *the*, and *such a* are examples of reference" (McCarthy, 1991, p.35).

A second element in cohesion is ellipsis. Ellipsis is "the notion that something is left unsaid," but is understood anyway (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p.142). "We are referring specifically to sentences, clauses, etc. whose structure is such as to presuppose some preceding item, which then serves as the source of the missing information" (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p.143). For example, in the two sentences 'My father wanted to be a pro football player. But he couldn't because he was too small,' the ellipsis allows the writer to forego another mention of *be a pro football player* in the

second sentence. Ellipsis also includes the idea that the article *the* can be used to refer to things in the text that can be taken for granted. This is in addition to the usual usage of referring to something previously stated. For example, in the sentences 'My dad worked out constantly. He would spend two hours in the weight room, then one hour in the pool,' ellipsis allows the writer to leave 'which weight room?' and 'which pool?' unspecified.

A third element of cohesion is conjunction. According to Raimes (1983, p.53), "these connecting devices, in particular, cause problems." Rinnert (1987, p.204), in her research into L1 interference in English writing, found "a striking feature [involving] the stylistic question of [Japanese university students] beginning a sentence with a coordinating conjunction." Conjunctions are "words and phrases which explicitly draw attention to the type of relationship which exists between one sentence or clause and another" (Cook, 1989, p.21). Halliday (1985) sets out a highly detailed analysis of types of conjunction. He lists three main types of conjunction: Elaboration, extension, and enhancement, under which he lists 40 additional subsets. However, this is an unmanageable number for pedagogic considerations, so most textbooks create eight to ten categories, as in Mack (1993). Conjunctions create cohesion between clauses by adding information, elaborating or exemplifying it, contrasting or summarizing it, raising opposing viewpoints, giving reasons or locating time, or introducing something new.

The fourth item of cohesion is lexical cohesion. Lexical cohesion is "related vocabulary items which occur across clause and sentence boundaries in written texts and across act, move and turn boundaries in speech and are a major characteristic of coherent discourse" (McCarthy, 1991, p.65). Halliday and Hasan (1974) break down lexical cohesion into reiteration, synonymy, and collocation. Reiteration is an actual repetition of an item

mentioned earlier in the text. Synonymy is when one item is a synonym of the other or relates to it lexically, and collocation is the tendency of certain words to occur in the presence of each other. McCarthy, however, disagrees with Halliday and Hasan about collocation being a cohesive element. "Collocation only refers to the probability that lexical items will co-occur, and is not a semantic relation between words" (McCarthy, 1991, p.65).

Unlike cohesion, which is realized through lexical relationships, coherence is determined by semantic relationships. These relationships are not limited to items in the text, but also include how the reader interacts with and interprets the text (Connor, 1996). Freedle (in Tannen, 1984, p. xiv) defines coherence as the "organizing structure making the words and sentences into a unified discourse that has cultural significance [for the writer and reader]." Readers expect that ideas will be presented to them in a particular way, and text that does not conform to an established pattern will be difficult to process. Some of these patterns which are found in English texts were identified by McCarthy (1991) and Coulthard (1994) as problem-solution, claim counter-claim, and general-specific to name just a few.

Raimes (1983) describes five basic techniques of controlled writing used in the classroom to help students learn the writing process. Controlled writing means "all the writing your students do for which a great deal of the content and/or form is supplied" (Raimes, 1983, p.95). Raimes (1983, p.96) suggests five types of controlled writing tasks that "provide practice in a specific feature of the written language or the process of writing." These include controlled composition, where students are given a text to work with and exercises to do using the given text. Guided composition is similar to controlled composition, but gives students less content and form, which requires them to produce more original writing. Question and answer is a third technique. Students are given questions, and their answers

provide the material from which to construct a new text. Sentence combining involves giving students two sentences, and letting them combine them using various connecting words to form different meanings. The fifth technique is parallel writing. "Instead of making changes in a given passage or writing according to an outline or given sentences, students read and study a passage and then write their own on a similar theme, using as a guide the vocabulary, sentence structure, cohesive devices and organization of the model passage" (Raimes, 1983, p.109).

3. ANALYSIS

3.1 ANALYSIS OF COHESIVE DEVICES.

Junko's text is evaluated in two ways: The first is on the basis of the four elements of cohesion as defined in Section 2: reference, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion. (See Table 1, and Figures 5-10 in the Appendix). Cohesion will be considered to have been achieved when: (1) in the case of reference, the antecedent or determiner can be identified in the preceding clause; (2) in the case of ellipsis, meaning is maintained in the absence of a lexical or grammatical item; (3) in the case of conjunction, a logical sequence has been maintained between clauses through the use of connecting words as categorized by Mack (see Figure 10); and (4) in the case of lexical cohesion, content words are repeated, or synonyms or colates appear in different parts of the text.

Table 1 shows which of the four elements of cohesion has, or has not, been achieved between sentences and clauses. In 22 cases of lexical cohesion, repetition counted for 14 cases, and synonymy for four cases. The four errors were an unclear collate, redundancy, and improper lexical selection. There were 18 cases of reference. Ten cases were correct, eight were incorrect. There were four cases where ellipsis would have added cohesiveness if

it had been used. There was one case of successful ellipsis use. There were 23 instances of conjunction: seven errors, nine successes, five omissions, and two undetermined.

Each sentence in Junko's paper has been numbered, and those numbers are used for reference in this report. These numbers are maintained in the rewritten text (Figure 4 in Appendix) to show how text segments were reorganized. Finally, 'p' (found in figures in this report) signals a new paragraph in Junko's text.

3.2 ANALYSIS OF COMPOSITION STRUCTURE.

The second way Junko's text is analyzed (see Figure 1) is for evidence of usual composition conventions as defined in Smalley and Ruetten (1995). The introduction is the reader's initial contact with the text. Thus, as in any type of human relationship, first impressions are important. The introduction should: (a) introduce the topic, (b) indicate how the topic will be developed, (c) contain a thesis statement which expresses a specific opinion or idea, but not a fact, and (d) be interesting enough to make the reader want to continue reading. Next come the developmental paragraphs, which form the body of the composition. These paragraphs should: (e) each include a topic sentence containing one idea which controls/limits the scope of discussion in that paragraph to that one idea, (f) include sentences which support the controlling idea in the topic sentence, and (g) display a logical ordering of ideas. Finally, the concluding paragraph (h) should restate the thesis, although in slightly different words, (i) can briefly summarize the main points discussed, but (j) should never introduce a new topic.

A rewritten version of Junko's essay appears in Figure 3 (in Appendix). The changes are discussed in Section 4.

3.3 TEXTBOOK ANALYSIS.

An analysis was also done on four EFL writing textbooks (See Figure 1). The purpose of this examination was to determine how the four elements of cohesion, and the composition conventions (as defined by Smalley and Ruetten, 1995), are treated in these textbooks. The four textbooks are "Well Written, Well Spoken," "Write Ahead: A Process Approach to Academic Writing," "Writing Strategies: An Intermediate Textbook for Classroom Use," and "Paragraphs That Communicate: Reading and Writing Paragraphs."

TABLE 1

ANALYSIS OF COHESIVE DEVICES : NUMBER AND TYPES OF ERRORS, OMISSIONS AND SUCCESSFUL USES

	IN JUNKO'S TEXT			
	<i>Error</i>	<i>Omission</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>Undetermined</i>
1. REFERENCE	8	-	10	-
2. ELLIPSIS	4	-	1	-
3. CONJUNCTIONS	7	5	9	2
a. Example	1	2	3	-
b. Time	2	-	1	-
c. Space	-	-	-	-
d. Cause-Effect	4	-	-	-
e. Comparison	-	-	-	-
f. Contrast	-	-	1	-
g. Continuation/ expansion	4	4	3	-
h. Conclusion	-	-	-	-
4. LEXICAL COHESION				
a. Repetition	-	-	14	-

b. Synonym	-	-	4	-
c. Lexical error	1	-	-	-
d. Unclear collate	1	-	-	-
e. Redundancy	2	-	-	-

Note: Figure 5-9 in Appendix gives further breakdown.

Figure 2

TEXTBOOK ANALYSIS :
THE TREATMENT OF COHESION, TEXT STRUCTURE AND
EXERCISES IN EFL WRITING TEXTBOOKS

	Well Spoken WellWritten	Write Ahead Process Approach	Writing Strategies	Paragraphs That Communicate
<i>COHESION</i>				
Conjunction	Exam, time, space, c/e, pare trast, ext, concl	Thorough use. coord., subord., adverb conjun	in dep clauses. time, condition c/e, opposition	chron, c/e, exam classify, pare, process, direction
Ellipsis	none	none	none	none
Reference	deter-noun agree pronoun-antecd agreement	indirectly *	none	none
Lexical Cohesion	none	indirectly *	none	indirectly * synonym, collocate
<i>TEXT STRUCTURE</i>				
Single Paragraph	none	fill in blanks find items model outline	fill in blanks find items model outline	highly controlled ans ques from info given. find items
Topic Sentence	none	types of	too broad/narrow mult. choice write own	mult. choice write own
Support Sentences	none	types: example statistics, quotes	lexical items in support sentence	cross-out irrelevant sentences.
Multiple Paragraphs	none	detailed model outline	none	none
Overall Pattern (gen-specific, problem-	none	academic patterns	none	none

solution, etc.)

* The nature of some exercises requires that various cohesive devices be used to complete the exercise, but the particular cohesive device is not the focus of the exercise.

KEY:

Exam = example. time = temporal relations. dep. clauses = dependent clauses. chron = chronology. c/e = cause-effect. space = spatial relations. pare = compare. trast = contrast. cord = coordinate. subord = subordinate. cond = condition. class = classify. adverb conjun = adverbial conjunction. opp = opposition. proc = process. dir = direction.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 REFERRING

Eight of 18 cases of reference were misused, all of them involving either pronoun-antecedent agreement or noun-determiner agreement. For example,

"(22) At the outside of the course content, I learned to have some friendships or make friends. (23) From then it is continuing and it will be. (24) I think it is important for a future career." 'It' could be referring to [the skill of] 'learning,' the [skill of] 'making friends,' or [the benefit of] 'having friends.' The conjunction 'or' creates two referents which cannot both be referred to by 'it.' These errors are found elsewhere:

(4) Next, I learned to greet to other people. (5) In *this case* I greeted to my teacher.

(6) Moreover, I learned to say "Thank you." (7) Now I put my things into *the shelf*, desk and I put books into my bookcase. No "case" was mentioned in 4, and no "shelf" was mentioned in 6. It should be remembered, however, that the definite article does not always require an antecedent. There are many instances where the antecedent is omitted but understood. The nature of these mistakes suggests that Junko has some understanding of how to use reference. Many of her errors were either the misuse of

determiner, or misuse of 'this' and 'that.' The lack of exercises devoted to reference in text books (see Figure 1 above) suggests something else: It is likely that Junko practiced reference at an early stage of her English study, but since then has had little direct instruction or evaluation on this. Only "Well Written, Well Spoken" includes instruction specifically regarding determiner-noun agreement, and pronoun-antecedent agreement. However, even these exercises are not as helpful as they could be. In these exercises, the determiner is given, and the student is only required to change the noun (which is given) from singular to plural, or plural to singular. Furthermore, in these exercises, the antecedent appears in the same sentence rather than a previous sentence, which is where Junko made her mistakes. Only one textbook examined in this study included exercises specifically concerning reference. These exercises forced students to identify the correct pronoun or noun in sentences where the antecedent or determiner was given. Students would also benefit from exercises in which the antecedent or determiner are missing, not only the same sentence, but in previous and following sentences as well.

4.2 ELLIPSIS

Junko used ellipsis only once, in 26. There were places ellipsis would have reduced the repetitiveness (see 4.4). For example,

(1) Now I am reflecting on my days which I spent in kindergarten, I think I learned a lot of things.

P - (2) In the morning, I had to *go to my kindergarten* on time. and (14) I have to get my job by myself. (15) If I have a trouble *with the job*, I have to get over it by myself, sometimes. and (18) In my kindergarten there are some classes, for example singing, drawing, reading. (19) I remember that I hated those things. (20) But I had to sit *in those classes*.

Students need to incorporate ellipsis in their writing to avoid needless

repetition as in 20. One teaching option is a variation of controlled and guided activities. In the case of 20, the teacher presents alternatives from which the students choose the most appropriate, or the students could choose their own ellipsis.

4.3 CONJUNCTION

In addition to reference, the other cohesive device presented in this paper that Junko is weakest on is the use of conjunction. She begins four sentences with 'now.' Curiously, none of the four textbooks analyzed in this paper include the item 'now' nor the various uses of it. Junko used 'now' as an "outer" temporal conjunction, one referring to what she was actually doing at the moment she was writing, rather an "internal" sense, which refers to the progression of a topic in the discourse itself.

The most serious error is when Junko uses a conjunction where none can exist.

(1) *Now* I am reflecting on my days which I spent in kindergarten, I think I learned a lot of things.

Conjunctions, as we have said, relate clauses and sentences to each other. In the first sentence, there is no preceding clause to connect with. A similar problem occurs in 7.

(6) Moreover, I learned to say "Thank you." (7) *Now* I put my things into the shelf, desk and I put books into my bookcase.

There is no clause relation among 6 and 7. Junko reverted to using the outer temporal form, completely abandoning clause 6.

One of the most common logical sequences is cause-effect, which can be realized in various ways, including through the use of 'now.' For example, 'My teacher scolded me. Now I never misbehave.' But Junko clearly fails to understand how to achieve cause-effect, as seen in 11-12.

(11) In addition, I created a lot of things by myself. (12) *Then* I learned

that I get over many things by myself without helping by other people.

'Then' is a temporal conjunction. But 11 and 12 is a cause-effect relation. In 20-21 also is a cause-effect relationship, yet the same mistake can be seen.

(20) But I had to sit in those classes. (21) I think that then I learned endurance. This type of mistake is a challenge for the teacher. It is possible to understand the basic relationship between two clauses, but not know the conjunction that would correctly link them. It is another matter if a student cannot understand even the basic relationship of two clauses (e.g., in a temporal sense, or contrastive, or cause-effect, and so forth). Teachers need to be aware of how the student is perceiving the relationship. "Well Written, Well Spoken" deals with this potential problem well by separating its chapters according to these relationships.

Another major problem area for Junko are conjunctions of continuation and expansion. Instead of expanding on 5 or 6 below, Junko actually expands on 4.

(4) Next, I learned to greet to other people. (5) In this case I greeted to my teacher. (6) *Moreover*, I learned to say "Thank you." (7) *Now* I put my things into the shelf, desk and I put books into my bookcase.

But unlike the possible perceptual problems in 20-21, Junko understands that she is adding to something previously stated. However, she doesn't understand that being one sentence removed from what she wants to expand on creates a different clause relation. A book like "Well Spoken, Well Written," which focuses on transitions and connecting words, would help students understand how clauses and sentences relate to each other and how to achieve cohesiveness.

4.4 LEXICAL COHESION

Lexical cohesion was achieved in this text largely through repetition.

But excessive use of this repetition sometimes hurts cohesion. Not every lexical item or text segment needs to be tied to the original through a string of repetition. Reference or ellipsis can be used instead of repetitive lexical items in some cases. For example,

(p1) Now I am reflecting on my days which I spent in kindergarten, I think I learned a lot of things.

(p2) In the morning, I had to go to *my kindergarten* on time.

In this case, 'there' or the elliptical omission of 'my kindergarten' achieves cohesion better than repetition. Getting students to understand their options and use cohesive devices more strategically, as in this case, is one way in which this type of analysis can be exploited in the classroom.

Junko's biggest error in achieving lexical cohesiveness was the separate, poorly linked clauses 7 and 10.

(7) Now I put my things into the *shelf, desk* and I put books into my *bookcase*. (8) This is what I learned in kindergarten. (9) This came to be like a habit. (10) If I am in a *office* and my *desk* is so messy, other people think I cannot control myself.

Junko mentions 'desk' in both 7 and 10. And though cohesion has been achieved, coherence has not. Junko has introduced 'kindergarten,' but also mentioned an 'office' she will work in someday during her career. The 'things' in 7 could be things for kindergarten, or for a career. Also, 'shelf,' 'desk' and 'bookcase' are things that link semantically with both school and office. The reader might well wonder if these items are part of her current surroundings as a student, or in an office which she alludes to (in 10) but never defines, or part of a foreseeable future job. This is a good example of how good discourse cannot be achieved through cohesiveness alone, but requires coherence as well. Students must be taught that sprinkling text with lexically-related items will not necessarily produce good writing. There

must also be coherence, and logical sequencing through all clauses, sentences and text segments.

4.5 COMPOSITION

Whereas the previous section dealt with how clauses relate to each other, this sections deals with basic composition conventions, such as thesis statements and topic sentences, and support for them. Also dealt with is what information is necessary for effective introductions, developmental paragraphs and conclusions. It will also consider ways in which a reader might be involved with the text.

Junko's introductory paragraph is more of a directive than it is an introduction. It reveals a style that is evident throughout the text, in that Junko rarely uses more than one or two sentences to "elaborate" on the things she learned in kindergarten. Readers expect the introduction to introduce one specific, interesting topic, and a thesis statement that states an idea or opinion. Introductions should also, very briefly, give some context to the topic. In Junko's paper, the reader is immediately hit with a declarative statement that she is reflecting on her days in kindergarten. Readers are likely to wonder, Why is she reflecting? Examples in the rewritten essay (see Figure 4 in the Appendix) give an example of how this could be handled. The fact that Junko has reached a milestone in her life -- graduation -- provides a reason for reflecting on her past and future. Adding to the weakness of the introduction, and the essay as a whole, is a thesis statement that is boring, vague and tentative. To prevent topics from being too broad and to give a reader a reason to continue reading, thesis statements should state an opinion and a "controlling idea." The controlling idea narrows an opinion. In Junko's introduction, such an idea would be how kindergarten prepared her for "a future career." Junko's text -- indeed the entire paper -- lacks direction and force because of her failure to state a

position and include a controlling idea. Junko's vagueness and unforceful position is very likely a carryover from the Japanese rhetorical approach, which begins broadly (and sometimes aimlessly in Westerners' opinions) and gets closer to the point only at the end. Many English composition conventions - clarity, brevity, organization, and argumentation, for example - go against Japanese learned tendencies in writing, and more importantly, their cultural sensitivities. Anyone teaching composition-length writing skills to Japanese students would benefit by familiarizing himself or herself with current research on Japanese rhetorical and lexical patterns.

The organization of items which relate to the controlling idea, and the order in which they are presented, effects cohesion and coherence. The items in developmental paragraphs of Junko's text show a certain organizational logic. When mentioning multiple items (such as places, or events, or concepts and so forth), an established organizing strategy is to group items according to their similarities or differences. In Junko's text, the items can be divided into "common sense" items and "larger life" items. For example, being on time (2-3), greeting people (4-5), saying "thank you" (6), and putting things away (7) might be thought of as common sense skills. The next set of items, if compared to the common sense items, have a definite sense of being more significant to leading a successful life: being responsible, solving problems, maintaining friendships, and being cooperative. Unfortunately, the clear separation of these two sets of items is destroyed when Junko (improperly) uses the conjunction 'in addition.' This, in effect, grouped 'being responsible' and 'solving problems' with the common sense items.

In addition to being aware of how certain items can be grouped to create logical categories, students need to be taught that the way information is ordered within categories and paragraphs also effects cohesion and

coherence. By concentrating on how list items are related semantically, the flow of Junko's text can be improved. For example, 'independence' (11), 'cooperation' (16), 'endurance' (21), and 'making friends' (22) are things she learned. Junko has (intentionally?) acknowledged the relationship between 'independence' and 'cooperation' by listing them successively. But her next item, 'endurance,' is misplaced. Here would be the ideal place to introduce 'friendship,' to link it with 'cooperation' (after all, people who cooperate with each other are more likely to be friends, and vice versa.) Finally, learning to not 'bug people' (25-31) is also misplaced. There are two options regarding this item: This could be placed with 'cooperation.' The idea of bothering people intentionally equates with cooperation. On the other hand, it also equates with common sense items of greeting, thanking and being on time. After all, even a child knows when it is playing tricks on others, or making fun of others. Adding an item to the list of "larger" benefits of kindergarten will strengthen Junko's claim that kindergarten prepared her well for a future job. Reconstruction activities are effective in helping students practice both organization and logical ordering of items. In these activities, a lengthy text is cut into segments, and students "reconstruct" it.

Junko's paragraphs suffer from the absence of a topic sentence -- one idea which relates to the thesis statement, and which determines what will be talked about in the paragraph. This is a problem related to the points mentioned above - organization and order. These problems can be eliminated by outlining the main points of the text before writing, then listing the supporting items of each main point. Outlining is a useful technique in organizing ideas, and can be helpful to students who otherwise might feel overwhelmed about creating cohesion in multi-paragraph English compositions.

As stated earlier, a key element of coherence is the reader interacting

with the text. Readers are rarely passive recipients of a writer's idea. Japanese students should know that their ideas will be scrutinized and challenged by the reader. One common rhetorical "defense strategy" in English is to acknowledge possible challenges to a stated position, then somehow refute or minimize those challenges. For example, two arguments could be raised in regards to Junko's text. First, all the things that the writer learned in kindergarten are also learned in higher grades. This weakens the writer's claim about kindergarten. Second, common sense is not learned only in kindergarten, but also from parents and society in general. This kind of "reader orientation" should not be overlooked in writing classes, where the production of text is usually, and understandably, the focus.

4.6 TEXTBOOKS

Three of the four books deal with writing both at sentence level and above it. However, only "Write Ahead" takes students from sentences, to paragraphs, then on to composition-length processes. "Writing Strategies" and "Paragraphs That Communicate" deal with sentence and paragraph construction, but stop short of full-length composition instruction. "Well Spoken, Well Written" limits itself to sentence-level writing. As with any teaching approach, method or material, there are advantages and disadvantages to any of these texts. The biggest weakness of these four books is the lack of communicative exercises. Conversation-oriented textbooks these days often include activities such as one-way and two-way information-gap and information exchange tasks. The same theory, amended for the particular realities of writing classes, would give students an opportunity to *communicate rather than simply finish an assignment.*

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evident from this paper that this particular Japanese junior

college student, despite six years of sentence-level grammar-translation exercises, has learned only some of the devices required for creating a cohesive, coherent, well-structured composition. With this in mind, there are four recommendations.

1. In addition to practicing writing in class, construct exercises based on the type of analysis done in this paper. Specifically, make students link the pronoun to the antecedent, and noun to determiner. Secondly, make them find where ellipsis might eliminate repetitiveness. Third, have them link lexical items that reappear repetitively, synonymously, or collocationally, and select alternatives that might be more cohesive. Finally, students need to understand the concept of clause relations, and which conjunctions help realize these relationships.

2. The textbooks reviewed here are well-structured and have good content. They should be used to give students and teachers overall guidance in a writing class. However, what is needed are interesting, communicative activities, authentic materials and, ideally, a native speaker audience. A letter-exchange program between Japanese students and English speakers living abroad would allow more opportunity for real communication. Students who know that their writing will be read, and responded to, will likely be more interested in the writing process.

3. Determine the items that students have already covered in earlier schooling. This study lacks the knowledge of which specific items Japanese students were taught in junior and senior high school. For example, were they taught the use of ellipsis? It is helpful if teachers know if errors are the result of learning loss, or of never having been taught the material at all.

4. Finally, a more comprehensive study is called for. A larger study that investigated the use of cohesive devices would help in the development of tasks and materials. Specifically, a study of how conjunctions are used in

various clause relation categories (e.g., concession-cause, instrument-achievement, and so forth).

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APPENDIX

Figure 3. JUNKO'S ORIGINAL PAPER

(1) Now I am reflecting on my days which I spent in kindergarten, I think I learned a lot of things.

(2) In the morning, I had to go to my kindergarten on time. (3) This means that in the future I had to go to office accurately. (4) Next, I learned to greet to other people. (5) In this case I greeted to my teacher. (6) Moreover, I learned to say "Thank you." (7) Now I put my things into the shelf, desk and I put books into my bookcase. (8) This is what I learned in kindergarten. (9) This came to be like a habit. (10) If I am in a office and my desk is so messy, other people think I cannot control myself. (11) In addition, I created a lot of things by myself. (12) Then I learned that I get over many things by myself without helping by other people. (13) This is the most important for a future career. (14) I have to get my job by myself. (15) If I have a trouble with the job, I have to get over it by myself, sometimes. (16) But in

kindergarten I also learned cooperation. (17) On a rainy day we have to help each other.

(18) In my kindergarten there are some classes, for example singing, drawing, reading. (19) I remember that I hated those things. (20) But I had to sit in those classes. (21) I think that then I learned endurance.

(22) At the outside of the course content, I learned to have some friendships or make friends. (23) From then it is continuing and it will be. (24) I think it is important for a future career.

(25) I often made a fun of others and played a trick on others. (26) Then at every times I was scolded. (27) For example, when my parents were doing something, I made a noise. (28) I was scolded many times. (29) Because I was just a child, I was doing same things again and again. (30) Gradually I learned If someone is doing something, I must not bug him or her. (31) Now If I make a noise in a library, everyone will hate me.

(32) Now I am reflecting on the days in kindergarten, it's useful and helpful for me for a future career, I think.

- Junko Sasaki

Figure 4.

REWRITTEN ESSAY

[1] I am about to achieve a milestone in my young life. I am about to graduate from college. As I near the end of my formal education and prepare to enter the work force, I think about all the things I have learned in my school days, and how it has prepared me to be a good employee. And as I reflect on this, I realize that much of what I need to know was actually learned in kindergarten.

[2] In kindergarten, I learned the importance of being on time. If I was late for class, my teacher would scold me. If I have a job and I am late, my boss or coworkers might be angry. [4] Something else I learned was the importance of maintaining

good relations with those around me. I learned to greet people, and to say "thank you." If I didn't do these things my relationship with people might suffer. And good relations is important anywhere: in school, at home, or in a job. Another thing I learned was to keep my desk tidy, and to put things back where I found them. This is important, because no one likes to see clutter around them. Also, if someone is looking for something, but cannot find it because I haven't returned it to the proper place, people would be troubled.

Being polite and to put things away are, of course, good things to learn early in life. But these might be thought of as "basic" skills because they are easy to learn and do. But, there were other things I learned that were not so "basic." For example, [21] I learned endurance. [18] There were many classes I hated in kindergarten: singing, drawing and reading. But I had no choice. [20] I had to do those things. This was a good thing to learn early in my life, as it helped me cope with hard study in high school. I am sure it will help me someday on my job, too. Another thing I learned was how to be independent and responsible. [11] In kindergarten, I completed various tasks by myself. Sometimes I had problems. [12] But by solving the problems myself, I learned responsibility, independence, and I developed confidence. [13] This will be very important in any job I do in the future. However, we are never completely independent of other people. [16] We often have to cooperate with each other, too. Kindergarten also taught me to cooperate. It also taught me that my actions could cause problems for other people. [25-26] When I would play tricks on people, or be noisy, I would be scolded. This helped me learn that certain actions in certain situations is unacceptable. [22] Making friends was another thing I learned. This often happened because of, or as a result of, the cooperation that I just mentioned. [24] Of course, friends are not just important for a career, but in any part of life.

[32] I have certainly learned a lot through out my school days to prepare for life, and a future career. But as I reflect back, I realize that I learned some of the most important things as a small girl in kindergarten.

Figure 5.

TYPES OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN USE OF COHESIVE DEVICES: A
 CLAUSE-BY-CLAUSE ANALYSIS

	<i>Refer</i>	<i>Ellip</i>	<i>Conjun</i>	<i>Lexical Cohesion</i>
(1) Now I am reflecting on my days which I spent in kindergarten, I think I learned a lot of things. (p2) In the morning, I had to go to my kindergarten on time.			x- c/e o- ext o	 rep1
(3) This means that in the future I had to go to office accurately.			x- c/e	?col2
(4) Next, I learned to greet to other people.			*-cont	
(5) In this case I greeted to my teacher.	x		x-exam.	syn4.rep4
(6) Moreover, I learned to say "Thank you."			*-cont.	rep1
(7) Now I put my things into the shelf, desk and I put books into my bookcase.	x		x-cont.	?col3
(8) This is what I learned in kindergarten.	*		rep6,2	
(9) This came to be like a habit.	*			
(10) If I am in a office and my desk is so messy, other people think I cannot control myself.			o-exam o-exam	rep3,7,4 x
(11) In addition, I created a lot of things by myself.			x-cont	
(12) Then I learned that I get over many things by myself without helping by other people.			x-c/e	x-red11;rep8 syn12
(13) This is the most important for a future career. *				syn3
(14) I have to get my job by myself.			o-cont	syn13,rep12
(15) If I have a trouble with the job, I have to get over it by myself, sometimes. *		o		?red14 rep14
(16) But in kindergarten I also learned cooperation.				rep8,12

(continued on next page)

Figure 5 continued.

TYPES OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN USE OF COHESIVE DEVICES: A
 CLAUSE-BY-CLAUSE ANALYSIS

	<i>Refer</i>	<i>Ellip</i>	<i>Conjun</i>	<i>Lexical Cohesion</i>
(17) On a rainy day we have to help each other.	* *		o-exam	
(p18) In my kindergarten there are some classes, for example singing, drawing, reading.				rep16;col18; * -exam.o-ext syn18
(19) I remember that I hated those things.	*			
(20) But I had to sit in those classes.	x	o	* -trast	
(21) I think that then I learned endurance.			x-c/e	rep16
P - (22) At the outside of the course content, I learned to have some friendships or make friends.			x-ext	syn20 rep21
(23) From then it is continuing and it will be.	xx		* -cont	
(24) I think it is important for a future career.	x			rep13,13
(p25) I often made a fun of others and played a trick on others.	x	o		x-rep25
(26) Then at every times I was scolded.		*	*	
(27) For example, when my parents were doing something, I made a noise.				* -exam col25,25
(28) I was scolded many times.			o-ext	x-rep26
(29) Because I was just a child, I was doing same things again and again.	*		* -ex	syn25
(30) Gradually I learned if someone is doing something, I must not bug him or her.			* -cont	syn27 syn27
(31) Now If I make a noise in a library, everyone will hate me.	*		x-time	rep27
(p32) Now I am reflecting on the days in kindergarten, it's useful and helpful for me for a future career, I think.			x-time	rep18,1 rep24

KEY: Reference and ellipsis: x = error. * = okay. o = omission. conjunction = (see Figure 4). lexical cohesion = rep (acceptable repetitive), x-rep (excessive repeating), x-red (redundant), syn & col (cohesiveness thru synonymy or collocation)?(unclear linkage item)

Figure 6

COHESION THROUGH REFERENCE: SUCCESS AND FAILURES
OF USE OF NOUN-DETERMINER / PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT

<i>Mark</i>	<i>Determiner / Antecedent</i>	<i>Referent noun / pronoun</i>
x	In this case 5	(no case stated)
x	the shelf, desk 7	(no shelf or desk stated)
ref	This 8	putting things away 7
ref	This 9	putting things away 7
ref	This 13	get over things by myself 12
ref	it 15	trouble 15
ref	we 17	(assumed)
ref	each other 17	(assumed)
ref	those things 19	classes 18
x- rep	those classes 20	those things 19
x-?	it 23	Unclear (friends,make friends?) 22
x-?	it 23	Unclear (" ") 22
x-?	it 24	Unclear (" ") 22
x- rep	on others 25	on others 25
ref	same things 29	played a trick 25
ref	him or her 30	someone 30
ref	everyone 31	(assumed)
x- ?	it's 32	Unclear (reflecting?) 32

KEY

- x = Kind of error noted in parenthesis.
 x- rep = Repetitive. Cohesive flow of text disrupted.
 x- ? = Unclear antecedent. See note in parenthesis.
 ref = Cohesiveness achieved / proper referral

Figure 7

COHESION THROUGH ELLIPSIS: SUCCESS AND FAILURES
OF USE OR NON-USE OF ELLIPSIS

x to my kindergarten 2
 x with the job 15
 x those classes 20
 x on others 25
 e every time I played tricks I was scolded

KEY

x = Place where ellipsis would have added cohesion.

e = Effective use of ellipsis. Crossed out text shows possible items ellipsis eliminated.

Figure 8

COHESION THROUGH CONJUNCTION: SUCCESS AND
FAILURES OF USE OF TYPES OF CONJUNCTIONS

x- c/e	Now 1	* - trast	But 20
o- ext	and 1	x- c/e	then 21
* - cont	Next 4	x- ext	or 22
x- exam	In this case 5	x- ext	or 22
* x- cont	Moreover 6	* - cont	and 23
o-exam	For example 10	* - time	Then 26
* x- cont	In addition 11	* - exam	For exam. 27
x- c/e	For example, such as 12	o- c/e	As a result 28
o- cont	because 14	* - c/e	Because 29
o- exam	especially, for instance 17	* - cont	Gradually 30
* - exam	for example 18	x- time	Now 31
		x- time	Now 32

KEY

* /x misused conjunction but correct conjunctive set (time, cause-effect, etc.)	
x = misuse of connecting device.	trast = contrast conjunction
* = correct use of connecting device.	cont = continuation/expansion
o = omission of connecting device.	c/e = conjunc of cause-effect
exam = conjunction of example	pare = conjunc of comparison
time = conjunction of time	cncl = conjunc of conclusion
space = conjunction of space	ext = extension

Figure 9

LEXICAL COHESION THROUGH REPETITION,
SYNONYMY & COLLOCATION SUCCESS AND FAILURES

Mark	Earlier item (location)	Later item (location)
rep	kindergarten 1	kindergarten 2
x- lex	on time 2	accurately 3
rep	greet 4	greeted 5
syn	other people 4	teacher 5
rep	learned 1	learned 6
?- col	office 3	shelf, desk, bookcase7
rep	kindergarten 2	kindergarten 8
rep	learned 8	learned 6
rep	office 3	office 10
rep	desk 7	desk 10
rep	other people 4	other people 10
rep	learned 8	learned 8
x- red	myself 11	myself 12
?- syn	myself 12	without other people12

syn	office 3	career 13
syn	career 13	job 14
rep	myself 12	myself 14
x- red	job 14	job 15
rep	myself 14	myself 15
rep	kindergarten 8	kindergarten 16
rep	learned 12	learned 16
rep	kindergarten 16	kindergarten 18
col	kindergarten 18	classes 18
syn	classes 18	singing, drawing, reading 18

KEY:

rep/col/syn = Cohesion achieved through repetition/collocation/synonymy

x - lex = Lexical item a mistake

?- = exact referent not clear, but probable

x- red = Redundancy hurts cohesion or flow.

Figure 10

EXAMPLES OF VARIOUS CONJUNCTIONS AND TRANSITIONS *

EXAMPLE

For example, such as, as, for instance, especially, in particular...

TIME

During this period, at the same time, meanwhile, afterwards, following that, before, then, at that point, finally, later, while, until, after...

SPACE

In the back/front/middle, to the left/right, opposite of, next to, which, where, whose...

CAUSE AND EFFECT

Hence, consequently, therefore, as a result, to this end, for, so, now, * because * ...

COMPARISON

Similarly, in the same way, at the same time, both, compared to, or, nor...

CONTRAST

Yet, however, whereas, on the other hand, nevertheless, but, although...

CONTINUATION AND EXPANSION

Moreover, in addition, furthermore, in fact, also *, next *, gradually, * because, since...

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, as shown above, as can be seen, to sum up, in short, in summary, if, that...

EXTENSION

and...

* Taken from "Well Written, Well Spoken," except where asterisked, when an item from Halliday (1985) was added.138