TEACHING WRITING

OBJECTIVES After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- understand issues and concepts in pedagogical research that are related to teaching writing
- appreciate some of the unique difficulties involved in learning to write effectively
- analyze types of written language, micro- and macroskills, and types of classroom writing performance
- apply principles of designing writing techniques to your own lesson designs and to your observation of others
- recognize some basic principles and formats for evaluating and assessing writing

The psycholinguist Eric Lenneberg (1967) once noted, in a discussion of “species-specific” human behavior, that human beings universally learn to walk and to talk, but that swimming and writing are culturally specific, learned behaviors. We learn to swim if there is a body of water available and usually only if someone teaches us. We learn to write if we are members of a literate society, and usually only if someone teaches us.

Just as there are nonswimmers, poor swimmers, and excellent swimmers, so it is for writers. Why isn’t everyone an excellent writer? What is it about writing that blocks so many people, even in their own native language? Why don’t people learn to write “naturally” as they learn to talk? How can we best teach second language learners of English how to write? What should we be trying to teach? Let’s look at these and many other related questions as we tackle the last of the “four skills.”

RESEARCH ON SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING

Trends in the teaching of writing in ESL and other foreign languages have, not surprisingly, coincided with those of the teaching of other skills, especially listening and speaking. You will recall from earlier chapters that as communicative language teaching gathered momentum in the 1980s, teachers learned more and more about how to teach fluency, not just accuracy, how to use authentic texts and contexts in the classroom, how to focus on the purposes of linguistic communication, and how to capitalize on learners’ intrinsic motives to learn. Those same trends and the principles that undergirded them also applied to advances in the teaching of writing in second language contexts.

Over the past few decades of research on teaching writing to second language learners, a number of issues have appeared, some of which remain controversial in spite of reams of data on second language writing. Here is a brief look at some of those issues.

1. Composing versus writing

A simplistic view of writing would assume that written language is simply the graphic representation of spoken language, and that written performance is much like oral performance, the only difference lying in graphic instead of auditory signals. Fortunately, no one holds this view today. The process of writing requires an entirely different set of competencies and is fundamentally different from speaking in ways that have already been reviewed in the last chapter. The permanence and distance of writing, coupled with its unique rhetorical conventions, indeed make writing as different from speaking as swimming is from walking.

One major theme in pedagogical research on writing is the nature of the composing process of writing (O’Brien, 2004; Silva & Brice, 2004). Written products are often the result of thinking, drafting, and revising procedures that require specialized skills, skills that not every speaker develops naturally. Further, students exhibit a number of different styles and preferences in their composing processes (Chen, 2005). The upshot of the compositional nature of writing has produced writing pedagogy that focuses students on how to generate ideas, how to organize them coherently, how to use discourse markers and rhetorical conventions to put them cohesively into a written text, how to revise text for clearer meaning, how to edit text for appropriate grammar, and how to produce a final product.

2. Process versus product

Recognition of the compositional nature of writing has changed the face of writing classes. A half a century ago, writing teachers were mostly concerned with the final product of writing: the essay, the report, the story, and what that product should “look” like. Compositions were supposed to (a) meet certain standards of prescribed English rhetorical style, (b) reflect accurate grammar, and (c) be organized in conformity with what the audience would consider to be conventional. A good deal of attention was placed on “model” compositions that students would emulate and on how well a student’s final product measured up against a list of criteria that included content, organization, vocabulary use, grammatical use, and mechanical considerations such as spelling and punctuation.

There is nothing inherently wrong with attention to any of the above criteria. They are still the concern of writing teachers. But in due course of time, we became better attuned to the advantage given to learners when they were seen as creators of language, when they were allowed to focus on content and message, and when their own individual intrinsic motives were put at the center of learning. We began to develop what is now termed the process approach to writing instruction. Process approaches do most of the following (adapted from Shih, 1986):
• focus on the process of writing that leads to the final written product;
• help student writers to understand their own composing process;
• help them to build repertoires of strategies for prewriting, drafting, and rewriting;
• give students time to write and reread;
• place central importance on the process of revision;
• let students discover what they want to say as they write;
• give students feedback throughout the composing process (not just on the final product) as they attempt to bring their expression closer and closer to intention;
• encourage feedback from both the instructor and peers;
• include individual conferences between teacher and student during the process of composition.

Perhaps you can personally appreciate what it means to be asked to write something—say, a letter to an editor, an article for a newsletter, a paper for a course you’re taking—and to allow the very process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thoughts into words, to sharpen your main ideas, to give them structure and coherent organization. As your first draft goes through perhaps several steps of revision, your thesis and developing ideas more and more resemble something that you would consider a final product. If you have done this, you have used your own process approach to writing.

You may also know firsthand what it is like to try to come up with a “perfect” final product without the above process. You may have experienced “writer’s cramp” (mental blocks) that severely hampered any progress. You may have felt a certain level of anxiety building within you as you felt the pressure to write an in-class essay that would be judged by the teacher, graded, and returned with no chance for your future revision. The process approach is an attempt to take advantage of the nature of the written code (unlike conversation, it can be planned and given an unlimited number of revisions before its “release”) to give students a chance to think as they write. Another way of putting it is that writing is indeed a thinking process.

Over three decades ago, Peter Elbow (1973) expressed the concept of process writing in urging teachers to discard the notion that “first you figure out what you want to say... don’t start writing till you do” (p. 14). Elbow and many experts since then have noted that “this idea of writing is backwards” (Elbow, 1973, p. 15). Instead, process approaches feature the following practices (adapted from Hedgecock, 2005, pp. 604–605):

• allowing students to discover their own voice (see #7 below)
• freewriting, journaling, and fluency activities
• tasks that engage learners in meaningful writing
• giving writers a sense of audience and authentic tasks

• encouraging invention, prewriting, and revision strategies
• providing formative feedback through conferencing

The current emphasis on process writing must of course be seen in the perspective of history and future developments (Casanave, 2004; Hedgecock, 2005; O’Brien, 2004; Silva & Leki, 2004). Some research (Atkinson, 2003) has already claimed that we are now in a “post-process” era, while others (Matsuda, 2003) are more circumspect by noting that the concept of post-process, in fact, only rejects “the dominance of process at the expense of other aspects of writing and writing instruction” (Matsuda, 2003, pp. 78-79). As in most language-teaching approaches, it is quite possible for you to go as far in emphasizing process to the extent that the final product diminishes in importance. Try not to let this happen! The product is, after all, the ultimate goal; it is the reason that we go through the process of prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Without that final product firmly in view, we could quite simply drown ourselves in a sea of revisions. Process is not the end; it is the means to the end.

3. Contrastive rhetoric

Robert Kaplan’s (1966) article on contrastive rhetoric has been the subject of much discussion and debate ever since. Kaplan’s thesis was that different languages (and their cultures) have different patterns of written discourse. English discourse, according to Kaplan (p. 14), was schematically described as proceeding in a straight line. Semitic writing in a zigzag formation, Oriental [sic] written discourse in a spiraling line; and so forth (see Figure 21.1).

The point of Kaplan’s conclusions about how we write was, of course, that learners of English bring with them certain predispositions, which come from their native languages, about how to organize their writing. If English writers get “straight” to the point, and Chinese writers “spiral” around the point, then a Chinese speaker who is learning English will encounter some difficulty in learning to write English discourse.

Figure 21.1. Patterns of written discourse (Kaplan, 1966, p. 14)
There were problems with Kaplan's study (Casanave, 2004; Connor, 2002), some of which Kaplan has recently responded to (Kaplan, 2005). His diagrams and conclusions were simplistic and overgeneralized. Simplistic, because he based his conclusions about English discourse on style manuals rather than using data from actual writing in English. Overgeneralized, because one cannot conclude that English writers consistently use a "straight-line" attack on a thesis and certainly cannot make any generalization that applies, for example, to all Oriental languages. Furthermore, without a native-speaking English control group, one cannot determine if the "difficulty" of his sample data is simply the difficulty any inexperienced writer might encounter in learning to write.

Nevertheless, there was and still is a ring of truth to Kaplan's claims, as both Kaplan (2005) himself and Connor (2002) have noted. In fact, Connor has done much to move contrastive rhetoric out of the quagmire in which it had been lodged for so long (Casanave, 2004, p. 41). No one can deny the effect of one's native culture, or one's predispositions that are the product of perhaps years of schooling, reading, writing, thinking, asserting, arguing, and defending. In our current paradigm of attending carefully to schemata and scripts, native language patterns of thinking and writing simply cannot be ruled out. A balanced position on this issue, then, would uphold the importance of your carefully attending to the rhetorical first-language interference that may be at play in your students' writing. But rather than holding a dogmatic or predictive view (that certain writers will experience difficulty because of their native language), you would be more prudent to adopt a "weak" position (see PLL, Chapter 9) in which you would consider a student's cultural/literary schemata as only one possible source of difficulty.

In recent years new research studies have appeared that tackle the issue of contrastive rhetoric (Casanave, 2004; Connor, 2002). According to Connor, a theory of contrastive rhetoric is influenced by more than first language patterns; factors such as linguistic relativity, theory of rhetoric, text linguistics, discourse types and genres, literacy, and translation all contribute toward a comprehensive theory of contrastive rhetoric. One important conclusion from this renewed wave of research is the significance of valuing students' native-language-related rhetorical traditions, and of guiding them through a process of understanding those schemata while not attempting to eradicate them. That self-understanding on the part of students may then lend itself to a more effective appreciation and use of English rhetorical conventions.

4. Differences between L1 and L2 writing

In the 1970s, research on second language writing was strongly influenced by previous research on native language writing. Assumptions were made that the composing processes in both instances were similar if not identical. But it is imperative for teachers to understand that there are in fact many differences between the two, as Tony Silva (1993) so clearly demonstrated in a comprehensive survey of L2 writing. Silva found that L2 writers did less planning, and that they were less fluent (used fewer words), less accurate (made more errors), and less effective in stating goals and organizing material. Differences in using appropriate grammatical and rhetorical conventions and lexical variety were also found, among other features.

The questions that are currently being addressed in this area (Hedgcock, 2005) center on differences between L1 and L2 writing and sorting out appropriate approaches to L2 writing. Some pedagogical implications of these questions are that (a) it is important to determine appropriate approaches to writing instruction for L2 writers in different contexts, (b) writing teachers need to be equipped to deal effectively with the sociocultural and linguistic differences of L2 students, and (c) the assessment of L2 writing may need to take into account the fundamental differences between most L1 and L2 writing.

5. Authenticity

Another issue in the teaching of writing surrounds the question of how much of our classroom writing is "real" writing (Casanave, 2004; Hedgcock, 2005; Silva & Brice, 2004). That is, how authentic are the classroom writing exercises that we ask students to perform? One could address this question by asking how much writing the average college-educated person in Western society actually does, and what kind of writing. I would venture to say very little, and that little amounts to filling out forms, writing telephone messages, e-mailing, and occasionally dashing off a letter or postcard. In the era of electronic communication (video, phone, computer, etc.) we are less and less called upon to compose. I was recently consulted by a friend who is studying to be certified as a realtor. Part of his certification examination involved a simple one- or two-page written essay. The prospect frightened him!

So, why do we want students to write? In school, writing is a way of life. Without some ability to express yourself in writing, you don't pass the course. Across the age levels from elementary school through university, we write in order to succeed in mastering the subject matter. In English for Academic Purposes (EAP), writing ranges from short phrases (in fill-in-the-blank tests), to brief paragraphs (as in essay question exercises and tests), to brief reports of many different kinds, to a full-length research paper. In vocational-technical English (where students are studying English in connection with a trade or occupation), students need to fill out forms, write simple messages, write certain conventional reports (for example, a bid on a contract, an inspection report), and at the most "creative" end of the continuum, write a brief business letter. In adult education and survival English classes, filling out simple forms and questionnaires may be as sophisticated as students' needs get. This leaves EAP as the major consumer of writing techniques, especially writing techniques that concern themselves with the composing process: development of ideas, argument, logic, cause and effect, etc. as Patridge (2004) aptly describes in a survey of teaching EAP.

Another way to look at the authenticity issue in classroom writing is to distinguish between real writing and display writing. Real writing, as explained by Ann Raines (1991), is writing when the reader doesn't know the answer and genuinely wants information. In many academic/school contexts, however, if the instructor is the sole
reader, writing is primarily for the display of a student’s knowledge. Written exercises, short-answer essays, and other writing in test situations are instances of display writing.

Should we as teachers incorporate more real writing in our classrooms? In some ways, yes. If ESL courses strive to be more content-based, theme-based, or task-based, students are more likely to be given the opportunity to convey genuine information on topics of intrinsic interest. But display writing is not totally unjustified. Writing to display one’s knowledge is a fact of life in the classroom, and by getting your students to perform well in display writing exercises, they can learn skills that will help them to succeed in further academic pursuits.

6. Responding to student writing

The gradual recognition of writing as a process of thinking and composing was a natural by-product of CLT. With its emphasis on learner-centered instruction, student-student negotiation, and strategies-based instruction that values the variability of learners’ pathways to success, CLT is an appropriate locus for process writing. As students are encouraged (in reading) to bring their own schemata to bear on understanding texts, and in writing to develop their own ideas, offer their own critical analysis, and find their own voice (see p7 below), the role of teacher must be one of facilitator and coach, not an authoritative director and arbiter.

This facilitative role of the writing teacher has inspired research on the role of the teacher as a responder to students’ writing (Casanave, 2004; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Hedgcock, 2005; Silva & Brice, 2004). As a facilitator, the teacher offers guidance in helping students to engage in the thinking process of composing but, in a spirit of respect for student opinion, must not impose his or her own thoughts on student writing. However, as Joy Reid (1994, p. 275) pointed out, our penchant for laissez-faire approaches to commenting on student writing may have gone too far. “Instead of entering the conversation of composing and drafting, instead of helping students negotiate between their interests and purposes and the experiences and intentions of their academic readers, many teachers have retreated into a hands-off approach to student writing.” Short of “appropriating” student text, we can offer useful feedback that respects students’ values and beliefs. Dana Ferris (1997) offered useful guidelines for making teacher commentary more effective. For example, Ferris found that when teachers (a) requested specific information and (b) made summary comments on grammar, more substantive student revisions ensued than when teachers (a) posed questions and (b) made positive comments.

We are still exploring ways to offer optimal feedback to student writing.

7. Voice and identity

Weaving in and out of several of the above topics, especially the last one, is the issue of how to preserve the cultural and social identities of students but at the same time to teach English writing conventions. This issue is especially acute in the case of EAP writing programs where a major goal is for students to write acceptable academic prose in their respective subject-matter fields (Pullridge, 2004). In other writing courses, however, the problem is also significant as course

designers and instructors must attend to “the socially and politically situated contexts of writing and how these contexts influence both how writing gets done and the end products of writing” (Casanave, 2004, p. 84). In some ways the issue is one of authenticity, mentioned above, and in other ways it has overtones of critical pedagogy (see Chapter 26). Recent research indicates that some progress is being made toward focusing students on writing for meaningful purposes within their own sociopolitical contexts (Atkinson, 2005; Casanave, 2003), and not just creating writing assignments that will force certain rhetorical competencies.

These seven categories comprise just a few of the many intriguing current questions in teaching writing. By acquainting yourself with these issues, you will begin to gain an appreciation of some of the challenges of becoming an effective writing teacher.

TYPES OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE

In Chapter 20, on pages 362–363, were some 30 odd types of written language “forms.” As you consider an ESL class that you might be teaching, how many of these types of writing will your students be likely to produce themselves? Those types that they will indeed need, either for further study of English or for their ultimate academic/vocational goals, should then become the prime focus of “real” writing in your classroom.

CHARACTERISTICS OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE: A WRITER’S VIEW

In Chapter 20, some characteristics of written language from the perspective of a reader were set forth. Let’s revisit those from a writer’s viewpoint.

1. Permanence

Once something is written down and delivered in its final form to its intended audience, the writer abdicates a certain power: the power to emend, to clarify, to withdraw. That prospect is the single most significant contributor to making writing a scary operation! Student writers often feel that the act of releasing a written work to an instructor is not unlike putting themselves in front of a firing squad. Therefore, whatever you can do as a teacher, guide, and facilitator to help your students to revise and refine their work before final submission will help give them confidence in their work.

2. Production time

The good news is that, given appropriate stretches of time, a writer can indeed become a “good” writer by developing efficient processes for achieving the final product. The bad news is that many educational contexts demand student writing within time limits, or “writing for display” as noted in the previous section (examination
writing, for example). So, one of your goals, especially if you are teaching in an EAP context, would be to train your students to make the best possible use of such time limitations. This may mean sacrificing some process time, but with sufficient training in process writing, combined with practice in display writing, you can help your students deal with time limitations.

3. Distance
One of the thorniest problems writers face is anticipating their audience. That anticipation ranges from general audience characteristics to how specific words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs will be interpreted. The distance factor requires what might be termed “cognitive” empathy, in that good writers can “read” their own writing from the perspective of the mind of the targeted audience. Writers need to be able to predict the audience’s general knowledge, cultural and literary schemata, specific subject-matter knowledge, and very important, how their choice of language will be interpreted.

4. Orthography
Everything from simple greetings to extremely complex ideas is captured through the manipulation of a few dozen letters and other written symbols. Sometimes we take for granted the mastering of the mechanics of English writing by our students. If students are nonliterate in the native language, you must begin at the very beginning with fundamentals of reading and writing. For literate students, if their native language system is not alphabetic, new symbols have to be produced by hands that may have become accustomed to another system. If the native language has a different phoneme-grapheme system (most do!), then some attention is due here.

5. Complexity
In the previous chapter, the complexity of written—as opposed to spoken—language was illustrated. Writers must learn how to remove redundancy (which may not jibe with their first language rhetorical tradition), how to combine sentences, how to make references to other elements in a text, how to create syntactic and lexical variety, and much more.

6. Vocabulary
As was noted in Chapter 20, written language places a heavier demand on vocabulary use than does speaking. Good writers will learn to take advantage of the richness of English vocabulary.

7. Formality
Whether a student is filling out a questionnaire or writing a full-blown essay, the conventions of each form must be followed. For ESL students, the most difficult and complex conventions occur in academic writing where students have to learn how to describe, explain, compare, contrast, illustrate, defend, criticize, and argue.

MICRO- AND MACROSKEILLS FOR WRITING
Following the format from the previous three chapters, micro- and macroskills for writing production are enumerated in Table 21.1.

Table 21.1. Micro- and macroskills for writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Microskills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Produce graphemes and orthographic patterns of English.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Produce writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose.</td>
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<td>3. Produce an acceptable core of words and use appropriate word order patterns.</td>
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<td>4. Use acceptable grammatical systems (e.g., tense, agreement, pluralization), patterns, and rules.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macroskills</th>
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<tr>
<td>6. Use cohesive devices in written discourse.</td>
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<td>7. Use the rhetorical forms and conventions of written discourse.</td>
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<td>8. Appropriately accomplish the communicative functions of written texts according to form and purpose.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Convey links and connections between events and communicate such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Distinguish between literal and implied meanings when writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Correctly convey culturally specific references in the context of the written text.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Develop and use a battery of writing strategies, such as accurately assessing the audience’s interpretation, using prewriting devices, writing with fluency in the first drafts, using paraphrases and synonyms, soliciting peer and instructor feedback, and using feedback for revising and editing.</td>
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</table>

TYPES OF CLASSROOM WRITING PERFORMANCE
While various genres of written texts abound, classroom writing performance is, by comparison, limited. Consider the following five major categories of classroom writing performance:

1. Imitative, or writing down
At the beginning level of learning to write, students will simply “write down” English letters, words, and possibly sentences in order to learn the conventions of the orthographic code. Some forms of dictation fall into this category, although dictations can serve to teach and test higher-order processing as well. Dictations typically involve the following steps:
a. Teacher reads a short paragraph once or twice at normal speed.

b. Teacher reads the paragraph in short phrase units of three or four words each, and each unit is followed by a pause.

c. During the pause, students write exactly what they hear.

d. Teacher then reads the whole paragraph once more at normal speed so students can check their writing.

e. Scoring of students' written work can utilize a number of rubrics for assigning points. Usually spelling and punctuation errors are not considered as severe as grammatical errors.

2. Intensive, or controlled

Writing is sometimes used as a production mode for learning, reinforcing, or testing grammatical concepts. This intensive writing typically appears in controlled, written grammar exercises. This type of writing does not allow much, if any, creativity on the part of the writer.

A common form of controlled writing is to present a paragraph to students in which they have to alter a given structure throughout. So, for example, they may be asked to change all present tense verbs to past tense; in such a case, students may need to alter other time references in the paragraph.

Guided writing loosens the teacher's control but still offers a series of stimuli. For example, the teacher might get students to tell a story just viewed on a videotape by asking them a series of questions: Where does the story take place? Describe the principal character. What does he say to the woman in the car?

Yet another form of controlled writing is a dicto-comp. Here, a paragraph is read at normal speed, usually two or three times; then the teacher asks students to rewrite the paragraph to the best of their recollection of the reading. In one of several variations of the dicto-comp technique, the teacher, after reading the passage, puts key words from the paragraph, in sequence, on the chalkboard as cues for the students.

3. Self-writing

A significant proportion of classroom writing may be devoted to self-writing, or writing with only the self in mind as an audience. The most salient instance of this category in classrooms is note taking, where students take notes during a lecture for the purpose of later recall. Other note taking may be done in the margins of books and on odd scraps of paper.

Diary or journal writing also falls into this category. However, in many circumstances a dialogue journal, in which a student records thoughts, feelings, and reactions and which an instructor reads and responds to, while ostensibly written for oneself, has two audiences.

Figure 21.2 is an entry from a journal written by an advanced ESL student from China, followed by the teacher's response (contributed by Lauren Vanett and Donna Jurich).

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Figure 21.2. Journal entry—advanced student from China

**Journal Entry:**

Yesterday at about eight o'clock I was sitting in front of my table holding a fork and eating tasteless noodles which I usually really like to eat but I lost my taste yesterday because I didn't feel well. I had a headache and a fever. My head seemed to be broken. I sometimes felt cold; sometimes hot. I didn't feel comfortable standing up and I didn't feel comfortable sitting down. I hated everything around me. It seemed to me that I got a great pressure from the atmosphere and I could not breathe. I was so sleepy since I had taken some medicine which functioned as an antibiotic.

The room was so quiet. I was there by myself and felt very solitary. This dinner reminded me of my mother. Whenever I was sick in China, my mother always took care of me and cooked rice gruel, which has to cook more than three hours and is very delicious, I think. I would be better very soon under the care of my mother. But yesterday, I had to cook by myself even though I was sick. The more I thought, the less I wanted to eat. Half an hour passed. The noodles were cold, but I was still sitting there and thinking about my mother. Finally I threw out the noodles and went to bed.

Ming Ling, PRC

**Teacher's Response:**

This is a powerful piece of writing because you really communicate what you were feeling. You used vivid details, like "... eating tasteless noodles...", my head seemed to be broken..." and "... rice gruel, which has to cook more than three hours and is very delicious." These make it easy for the reader to picture exactly what you were going through. The other strong point about this piece is that you bring the reader full circle by beginning and ending with "the noodles."

Being alone when you are sick is difficult. Now, I know why you were so quiet in class.

If you want to do another entry related to this one, you could have a dialogue with your "sick" self. What would your "healthy" self say to the "sick" self? Is there some advice that could be exchanged about how to prevent illness or how to take care of yourself better when you do get sick? Start the dialogue with your "sick" self speaking first.
4. Display writing

It was noted earlier that writing within the school curricular context is a way of life. For all language students, short-answer exercises, essay examinations, and even research reports will involve an element of display. For academically bound ESL students, one of the academic skills that they need to master is a whole array of display writing techniques.

5. Real writing

While virtually every classroom writing task will have an element of display writing in it, some classroom writing aims at the genuine communication of messages to an audience in need of those messages. The two categories of real and display writing are actually two ends of a continuum, and in between the two extremes lies some combination of display and real writing. Three subcategories illustrate how reality can be injected:

a. Academic. The Language Experience Approach gives groups of students opportunities to convey genuine information to each other. Content-based instruction encourages the exchange of useful information, and some of this learning uses the written word. Group problem-solving tasks, especially those that relate to current issues and other personally relevant topics, may have a writing component in which information is genuinely sought and conveyed. Peer-editing adds to what would otherwise be an audience of one (the instructor) and provides real writing opportunity. In certain ESP and EAP courses, students may exchange new information with each other and with the instructor.

b. Vocational/technical. Quite a variety of real writing can take place in classes of students studying English for advancement in their occupation. Real letters can be written; genuine directions for some operation or assembly might be given; and actual forms can be filled out. These possibilities are even greater in what has come to be called “English in the Workplace,” where ESL is offered within companies and corporations.

c. Personal. In virtually any ESL class, diaries, letters, postcards, notes, personal messages, and other informal writing can take place, especially within the context of an interactive classroom. While certain tasks may be somewhat contrived, nevertheless the genuine exchange of information can happen.

PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHING WRITING SKILLS

Out of all of these characteristics of the written word, along with micro- and macroskills and research issues, a number of specific principles for teaching writing skills emerge.

1. Incorporate practices of “good” writers.

This first guideline is sweeping. But as you contemplate devising a technique that has a writing goal in it, consider the various things that efficient writers do, and see if your technique includes some of these practices. For example, good writers

- focus on a goal or main idea in writing,
- perceptively gauge their audience,
- spend some time (but not too much!) planning to write,
- easily let their first ideas flow onto the paper,
- follow a general organizational plan as they write,
- solicit and utilize feedback on their writing,
- are not wedded to certain surface structures,
- revise their work willingly and efficiently,
- patiently make as many revisions as needed.

2. Balance process and product.

Because writing is a composing process and usually requires multiple drafts before an effective product is created, make sure that students are carefully led through appropriate stages in the process of composing. This includes careful attention to your own role as a guide and as a responder (see #8). At the same time, don’t get so caught up in the stages leading up to the final product that you lose sight of the ultimate attainment: a clear, articulate, well-organized, effective piece of writing. Make sure students see that everything leading up to this final creation was worth the effort.

3. Account for cultural/literary backgrounds.

Make sure that your techniques do not assume that your students know English rhetorical conventions. If there are some apparent contrasts between students’ native traditions and those that you are trying to teach, try to help students to understand what it is, exactly, that they are accustomed to and then, by degrees, bring them to the use of acceptable English rhetoric.

4. Connect reading and writing.

Clearly, students learn to write in part by carefully observing what is already written. That is, they learn by observing, or reading, the written word. By reading and studying a variety of relevant types of text, students can gain important insights both about how they should write and about subject matter that may become the topic of their writing.

5. Provide as much authentic writing as possible.

Whether writing is real writing or for display, it can still be authentic in that the purposes for writing are clear to the students, the audience is specified overtly, and there is at least some intent to convey meaning. Sharing writing with other students in the class is one way to add authenticity. Publishing a class newsletter,
writing letters to people outside of class, writing a script for a skit or dramatic presentation, writing a résumé, writing advertisements—all these can be seen as authentic writing.

6. Frame your techniques in terms of prewriting, drafting, and revising stages.

Process writing approaches tend to be framed in three stages of writing. The prewriting stage encourages the generation of ideas, which can happen in numerous ways:

- reading (extensively) a passage
- skimming and/or scanning a passage
- conducting some outside research
- brainstorming (see below)
- listing (in writing—individually)
- clustering (begin with a key word, then add other words, using free association)
- discussing a topic or question
- instructor-initiated questions and probes
- freewriting (see below)

Examples of brainstorming and freewriting, from Challenges (Brown, Cohen, & O'Day, 1991), are shown in Figure 21.3.

The drafting and revising stages are the core of process writing. In traditional approaches to writing instruction, students either are given timed-in-class compositions to write from start to finish within a class hour, or they are given a homework writing assignment. The first option gives no opportunity for systematic drafting, and the second assumes that if students did any drafting at all, they would simply have to learn the tricks of the trade on their own. In a process approach, drafting is viewed as an important and complex set of strategies, the mastery of which takes time, patience, and trained instruction.

Several strategies and skills apply to the drafting/revising process in writing:

- getting started (adapting the freewriting technique)
- "optimal" monitoring of one's writing (without premature editing and diverted attention to wording, grammar, etc.)
- peer-reviewing for content (accepting/using classmates' comments)
- using the instructor's feedback
- editing for grammatical errors
- "read-aloud" technique (in small groups or pairs, students read their almost-final drafts to each other for a final check on errors, flow of ideas, etc.)
- proofreading

Figure 21.3. Brainstorming and freewriting (from Brown, Cohen, & O'Day, 1991, pp. 4-5)

GENERATING IDEAS

- Brainstorming

Let's think about the future for a moment. Let's focus our attention on how it might affect your present or future job. Have you thought about the changes that might occur in your field? To help you think about this question, you are going to make two lists of ideas concerning changes in your field or in the field you plan to enter.

DIRECTIONS: Use your knowledge and imagination to follow these steps.

1. Prepare two sheets of paper with the following: a. What changes have occurred in my field in the last twenty years? Your field—today's date b. What changes do I expect to occur in my field in the next twenty years? Your field—the date twenty years from now

2. As quickly as possible, think of as many ideas as you can to answer the question on sheet a. a. Take between five and ten minutes to list every idea that comes to your mind. b. Do not evaluate your ideas. That will come later.

3. When you have written down everything you can think of, go over the list to evaluate what you have written. Cross out the ideas that don't fit.

4. Repeat this process (steps 2 and 3) for sheet b.

This process, called brainstorming, is a useful technique in writing because it permits you to approach a topic with an open mind. Because you do not judge your ideas as they emerge, you free yourself to come up with ideas that you might not even know you had. Brainstorming is one of several different ways to begin writing. In the following pages, we will introduce some other methods that will help you to explore ideas that you might want to write about.

- Working in a Group

In the preceding exercise you worked individually, using brainstorming to establish your own ideas, to follow your own train of thought. Another effective way to generate ideas is to work in a small group where you share your brainstormed ideas with the rest of the group members. By doing this, each of you will have an opportunity to further expand your own ideas.

DIRECTIONS: Form a small group (three to five people). Use the following guidelines for your group discussion.

1. Take turns reading your lists of changes in your field to each other.
2. Compare your classmates' lists to yours, looking for similarities and differences. a. Mark the changes on your list that are similar.
   b. Add to your list new ideas of changes that apply to your field.
3. As a group, select three changes that applied to the fields of each group member. If you have time, you can discuss these three ideas. (Continued)
4. Choose a reporter from your group to share your three changes with the rest of the class. Here is an example of what the compared lists of a group of three students might look like. (Notice that each list has some ideas that have been crossed out. These ideas had already been eliminated by the student in the last step of the brainstorming exercise because they did not fit.) The changes that were similar in each list have been labeled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching—Today</th>
<th>Sales—Today</th>
<th>Health Care—Today</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attitudes toward teachers</td>
<td>computerized inventory</td>
<td>malpractice suits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information explosion</td>
<td>customers’ bad attitudes</td>
<td>less respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>union activity</td>
<td>distance from owners</td>
<td>hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more job security</td>
<td>pressure</td>
<td>educational needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>better benefits</td>
<td>need to know more about products</td>
<td>pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>larger class size</td>
<td>more responsibility</td>
<td>information increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>computers as teaching tools</td>
<td>more advancement changes</td>
<td>consulting with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>computers for record keeping</td>
<td>fewer personnel</td>
<td>competition for clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competition for jobs</td>
<td>time clocks</td>
<td>advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greater student maturity</td>
<td>students’ increased knowledge</td>
<td>computerized business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>higher diplomas</td>
<td>better benefits</td>
<td>computerized diagnosis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Freewriting**

You have just begun to explore the question of changes in your field. Some of your ideas will interest you more than others. Now you will have an opportunity to develop your thinking about one of these ideas.

**DIRECTIONS:** Follow these steps to generate further ideas on this topic.

1. From your lists of changes, choose one idea that interested you.
2. Write that idea at the top of a clean sheet of paper.
3. For ten minutes, write about this topic without stopping. This means that you should be writing something constantly.
   a. Write down everything that comes to your mind.
   b. Do not judge your ideas.
   c. Do not worry about your spelling and grammar.
   d. If you run out of things to say, continue writing whatever comes to your mind.

This process is called freewriting. It is designed to help you free ideas that you might not realize you have. An important aspect of freewriting is that you write without being concerned about spelling, punctuation, or grammar. Of course, these elements of writing are important, but students concern about them can sometimes inhibit the free flow of their ideas. Freewriting is a technique to generate ideas; it should be used as a beginning, as an initial exploration of the ideas that you have about a topic.

You can use your freewriting to help you get started with related tasks. In fact, you might want to refer to this freewriting when you are doing other writing tasks later in this unit. Therefore, you should put this and all other freewriting that you do into a notebook that you can refer to when you are generating ideas for future assignments.

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**LESSON 3**

**COMPOSING ON YOUR OWN**

In this unit you have read about the issues surrounding the predicted population explosion. You have also worked with important writing techniques such as showing and using facts and statistics. Let's now try to apply what you have learned to the writing process.

**THE FIRST DRAFT**

**Choosing a Topic**

**DIRECTIONS:** Choose one of the following topics to write about in a paragraph.

A. Explain the information introduced in the following bar graph.

B. In the final paragraphs of the article “The World’s Urban Explosion,” the author raises the question of what the effects of the population explosion might be in the future. Imagine your city, town, or village in the year 2025. Imagine that the population predictions did, in fact, come true. Place yourself in the scene, and describe what you see.

Note: Notice how different these topics are from one another. The first topic asks you to write an explanation which analyzes a graph. The second topic asks for a description. Think about the possible purposes of each topic. How do you think these purposes will affect the tone of each piece?

(Continued)
Writing the First Draft

After exploring your ideas, put them into paragraph form, keeping in mind how showing and using facts and statistics makes writing powerful and convincing. Our task here is to discover how we can best express our ideas in the clearest manner possible so that our readers will receive the same message, with the same impact, that we intended.

Peer-editing

What follows is an element of the writing process that is especially important: sharing what we have written with others, our readers, to see if we have been successful in conveying our intended meaning. This step can be a fascinating adventure. We step out of our own selves, to see what we have created through the eyes of others, to discover the impact of our words on the thoughts of our readers, so that we can then use the information to improve what we have written. We call this peer-editing. Peer-editing is a true sharing process. Not only do you get feedback from your classmates, but you also give feedback to them. It is a two-way street. You learn to be a better writer and a better reader. In the following exercise you will work with several classmates, taking the roles of both reader and writer.

Directions: Work with four other classmates who chose to write on the same topic as you did.

1. Discuss the idea-generating techniques that you each used to write this composition.
2. Read each other’s papers silently, and answer the following questions for each paper:
   a. What do you like the most about the writing?
   b. What is the main idea?
   c. Who is the audience, and what is the purpose?
   d. What convincing details does the writer use?
   e. Where could the writer add details to make the piece more convincing?
   f. What areas in the writing seem unclear?
   g. How could the writer make the piece clearer?
3. Now, for each paper, compare your notes on the questions to help the writer think of ways to improve the piece.

Revising

You have gotten feedback about your composition from several classmates. Now you can use what you learned about your writing to improve it, to make it clearer and more convincing. Writers call this step of the process revising. All good writers go through several steps of revision because they want to make their writing the best it can be. At this point they reconsider what they have written, get feedback from others, and then make changes.

(Continued)
7. Strive to offer techniques that are as interactive as possible.

It is no doubt already apparent that a process-oriented approach to writing instruction is, by definition, interactive (as students work in pairs and groups to generate ideas and to peer-edit), as well as learner-centered (with ample opportunities for students to initiate activity and exchange ideas). Writing techniques that focus on purposes other than compositions (such as letters, forms, memos, directions, short reports) are also subject to the principles of interactive classrooms. Group collaboration, brainstorming, and critiquing are as easily and successfully a part of many writing-focused techniques. Don’t buy into the myth that writing is a solitary activity! Some of it is, to be sure, but a good deal of what makes a good writer can be most effectively learned within a community of learners.

8. SENSITIVELY APPLY METHODS OF RESPONDING TO AND CORRECTING YOUR STUDENTS’ WRITING.

In Chapter 19, some principles of error correction were suggested for dealing with learners’ speech errors. Error correction in writing must be approached in a different manner. Because writing, unlike speaking, often includes an extensive planning stage, error treatment can begin in the drafting and revising stages, during which time it is more appropriate to consider errors among several features of the whole process of responding to student writing. As a student receives responses to written work, errors—just one of several possible things to respond to—are rarely changed outright by the instructor; rather, they are treated through self-correction, peer-correction, and instructor-initiated comments.

As you respond to your students’ writing, remember that you are there as an ally, as a guide, as a facilitator. After the final work is turned in, you may indeed have to assume the position of judge and evaluator (see below for some comments on evaluation), but until then, the role of consultant will be the most productive way to respond. Ideally, your responses—or at least some of them—will be written and oral as you hold a conference, however short, with a student. Under less than ideal conditions, written comments may have to suffice.

Here are some guidelines for responding to the first draft.

a. Resist the temptation to treat minor (local) grammatical errors; major (global) errors within relevant paragraphs—see (c)—can at this stage be indicated either directly (say, by underlining) or indirectly (for example, by a check next to the line in which an error occurs).

b. Generally resist the temptation to rewrite a student’s sentences.

c. Comment holistically, in terms of the clarity of the overall thesis and the general structural organization.

d. Comment on the introductory paragraph.

e. Comment on features that appear to be irrelevant to the topic.

f. Question clearly inadequate word choices and awkward expression within those paragraphs/sentences that are relevant to the topic.
For the subsequent drafts, your responses can include all of the above except that (a) now may change its character slightly:

   g. Minor ("local") grammatical and mechanical (spelling, punctuation) errors should be indicated, but not corrected for the student.
   h. Comment on the specific clarity and strength of all main ideas, supporting ideas, and on argument and logic.
   i. Comment on any further word choices and expressions that may not be "awkward" but are not as clear or direct as they could be.
   j. Check cohesive devices within and across paragraphs.
   k. In academic papers, comment on documentation, citing sources, evidence, and other support.
   l. Comment on the adequacy and strength of the conclusion.

9. Clearly instruct students on the rhetorical, formal conventions of writing.
   Each type of writing has its formal properties. Don’t just assume that students will pick these up by absorption. Make them explicit. A reading approach to writing is very helpful here. For academic writing, for example, some of the features of English rhetorical discourse that writers use to explain, propose solutions, debate, and argue are as follows:
   • a clear statement of the thesis or topic or purpose
   • use of main ideas to develop or clarify the thesis
   • use of supporting ideas
   • supporting by ‘telling’: describing
   • supporting by ‘showing’: giving evidence, facts, statistics, etc.
   • supporting by linking cause and effect
   • supporting by using comparison and/or contrast

ASSESSING WRITING

The assessment of writing, especially in a process-oriented classroom, is a thorny issue (see Ferris & Hedgecock, 2005, for an overview). If you are a guide and facilitator of students’ performance in the ongoing process of developing a piece of written work, how can you also be the judge? What do you judge? The answer to the first question—how can you be a judge and a guide at the same time—is one of the primary dilemmas of all teachers. Juggling this dual role requires wisdom and sensitivity. The key to being a judge is fairness and explicitness (reliability) in what you take into account in your evaluation.

Evaluation Checklists

One way to view writing assessment is through various rating checklists or grids that can indicate to students their areas of strength and weakness, and in many cases such taxonomies are scoring rubrics. Table 21.2 is a typical list of general categories that are often the basis for the evaluation of student writing.

Table 21.2. Categories for evaluating writing (adapted from J. D. Brown, 1991, pp. 42–46)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• thesis statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• related ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• development of ideas through personal experience, illustration, facts, opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• use of description, cause/effect, comparison/contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• consistent focus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• effectiveness of introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• logical sequence of ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• appropriate length</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• topic sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• paragraph unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• discourse markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• cohesion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• rhetorical conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• variation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syntax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• citation of references (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• neatness and appearance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing specialists disagree somewhat on the system of weighting each of the above categories, that is, which of the six is most important, next, and so on. Nevertheless, the order in which the six are listed here at the very least emphasizes the importance of content over syntax and vocabulary, which traditionally might have had high priority.

In your evaluation of student writing, the most instructive evaluative feedback you can give is your comments, both specific and summative, regarding the student’s work. The six-category list in Table 21.2 can serve as the basis for such evaluations. If numerical scores are either pedagogically or administratively important to you, then you can establish a point scale (say, 0 to 5) for each of the categories and return papers with six different scores on them. By avoiding a single overall score, you can help students to focus on aspects of writing to which they need to give special attention. If you still need to assign a single “grade” or score to each paper, then consider weighting the first few categories more heavily. You can thereby emphasize the content-based flavor of your evaluation. Such a weighting scale might look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content:</th>
<th>0 - 24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization:</td>
<td>0 - 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourse:</td>
<td>0 - 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syntax:</td>
<td>0 - 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary:</td>
<td>0 - 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics:</td>
<td>0 - 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A key, of course, to successful evaluation is to get your students to understand that your grades, scores, and other comments are varied forms of feedback from which they can benefit. The final evaluation on one composition simply creates input to the learner for the next composition.

**Writing Assessment Tasks**

Writing an essay in successive drafts, with checklists to guide evaluation, is one general category of writing assessment. There are many more. Hedge (2005) describes over 50 different writing techniques, all of which can have an assessment component. In my *Language Assessment* textbook (Brown, 2004), in the chapter on assessing writing, I have described a number of possible writing tasks according to their level of linguistic complexity, and list them here just to stimulate your own creativity.

1. **Imitative writing**
   - exercises in handwriting letters, words, and punctuation
   - keyboarding (typing) exercises

2. **Intensive (controlled) writing**
   - dictation of phrases and simple sentences
   - dicto-comp (rewrite a story just heard)
   - grammatical transformation exercises
   - picture description tasks
   - use vocabulary in a sentence
   - ordering tasks (re-order a list of words in random order)
   - short-answer tasks
   - sentence completion tasks

3. **Responsive writing**
   - paraphrasing
   - guided writing, e.g., question and answer
   - paragraph construction tasks (topic sentence, main idea, etc.)
   - responding to a reading or lecture

4. **Extensive writing**
   - essay writing tasks
   - tasks in types of writing (narrative, description, argument, etc.)
   - tasks in genres of writing (lab report, opinion essay, research paper)

It is of course of paramount importance to be absolutely clear, in your designing of assessment tasks in writing, about what you are trying to test and why you are testing written performance. The concept of *formative* assessment is prominent in a course that uses a process approach to writing. Our assessments should serve the purpose of facilitating improvement in a student’s written work, and judgment of the final product should occur only when such *summative* evaluation is warranted. Ferris and Hedgcock (2005), Sokolik (2003), and Weigle (2002) all stress the need for teachers to act responsibly in evaluating writing. Respect the time-tested principles of validity, reliability, and washback in writing assessment.
Writing instruction in a communicative, interactive language course should be deeply rooted in the 12 principles of language learning and teaching that have formed a train of thought throughout this book. As you think about each principle, you can make the connections. Automaticity, for example, is gained as students develop fluency in writing, which can best be promoted through the multiple stages of a process writing approach. Meaningful learning and intrinsic motivation are paramount as you try to get your students involved in topics of interest and significance to them and in authentic writing tasks. Strategic investment is clearly at the center of the composing process. Perhaps you can continue down the list yourself.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION, ACTION, AND RESEARCH

[Note: (I) Individual work; (G) group or pair work; (C) whole-class discussion.]

1. (G) Review with your students what is meant by a process approach to teaching writing. Ask if they discern any cross-cultural issues involved in teaching writing as a process. Are these viable alternatives to teaching through a process approach?

2. (G/C) Direct groups to review the comments on cross-cultural differences and contrasting rhetoric (pages 393-394), and then discuss the validity of Kaplan's diagrams. How do writing conventions differ between or among cultures that are familiar with? Ask the groups to pick one other culture to contrast English writing to, and to sketch out salient differences between the two sets of rhetorical conventions. What does this indicate about what to teach in an ESL writing class? Have groups report back to the whole class.

3. (G) Direct pairs to pick an ESL audience, brainstorm reasons or purposes for that audience to write, and talk about how one would teach toward those purposes by getting students to do as much real writing as possible.

4. (C) Engage the class in a discussion of what it means to recognize and respect a student's voice and sociocultural identity. Have any students experienced, in their prior language-learning classes, writing assignments or evaluation systems that violate their sense of cultural or personal identity? If so, what might the teacher have done to change these situations into more authentic, respectful experiences?

5. (G) Ask pairs to turn back to pages 362-363 in Chapter 20 and review the types of written language listed there. Then have them pick several familiar audiences or contexts and decide which of the genres their students might actually need to produce. Finally, tell them to prioritize them and share their conclusions with the rest of the class.

6. (C) On page 403, things that "good" writers do are listed. Ask your students the following: Do you agree with the list? Can you add to the list? In what way do the other suggestions that follow implement these behaviors?

7. (I) On page 404, some specific steps for guiding students through stages of drafting and revising a composition are listed. Review those steps again. If possible, sit in on a teacher-student conference in which the student's essay is being discussed. Notice the interaction between student and teacher. Was the session effective? Why?

8. (G) Ask your class to carefully look through the guidelines on methods of responding to written work (pages 411-412). Supply them with a sample first draft and ask them to try to provide some written responses that would stimulate the writer to make some appropriate revisions. In a whole-class discussion, solicit some responses and evaluate their effectiveness.

9. (I/G) If possible, observe an ESL writing class. Use the list of nine principles (pages 403-404, 411-412) for teaching writing skills to evaluate what you see. Discuss your observations in a small group.

10. (I/G) There are numerous scales and inventories for rating and scoring written work. The one presented here (Table 21.2 on page 413) is not exhaustive by any means. Can students think of things they would add to the inventory? Distribute to pairs an actual student's composition and ask them to rate the student's performance on the basis of the taxonomy. To do so, pairs might want to experiment with assigning a numerical weighting scale (page 414). Facilitate the comparison of the various "diagnoses," and discuss how well the scale served its purpose.

FOR YOUR FURTHER READING


In this excellent teacher reference book, now in its second edition, Dana Ferris and John Hedgcock have provided many references to research and a practical orientation to second language writing courses.


Christine Casanave offers a unique perspective in this survey of writing pedagogy by describing a number of issues and controversies over the last few decades. She provides a balanced perspective to each.


*These three survey articles offer overviews of the state of the art in second language writing pedagogy. Extensive lists of references are included in each article.*


Tricia Hedge describes over 50 different writing activities, categorized into sections on communication, composing, crafting, and improving. *It is highly practical and teacher friendly. A bibliography is included.*