This study investigated the possible effects of L1 or L2 writing experience, or combined L1 and L2 experience, on the English writing of first year university students in a Japanese educational context. In particular, the influence of special preparatory L1 and L2 training in writing short essays for university entrance exams was examined through text analysis, supplemented by in-depth interviews. The participants, all novice L2 writers with intermediate level English proficiency, comprised four groups: (1) those having received intensive essay writing training in both L1 and L2 (N = 9), (2) those with only L1 training (N = 7), (3) those with only L2 training (N = 7), and (4) those with no such special training (N = 5). The results indicate that the intensive L1 training developed meta-cognitive awareness of rhetorical organization, the L2 training facilitated the placement of a position statement toward the beginning of an essay, and each of them taught the need for elaboration of support. Whereas a lack of any intensive training led to self-reflective writing, a combination of the two types of training tended to engender greater audience awareness, more control over organization, and richly elaborated support, suggesting that the combined training promoted the ability to apply the meta-cognitive knowledge the students had acquired.
I. Introduction

According to a large-scale questionnaire study of Japanese students (N=389) (Kobayashi & Rinnert 2001a, 2002), a significant number of Japanese high schools (85 percent of 79 sample schools chosen) provided special first language (L1) training outside of regular Japanese classes to help individual students prepare to write short essays for university entrance exams. This training was given on a short-term basis consisting of 1 to 4 months of intensive, individualized instruction. According to the students interviewed in the study (N=21), the common task was to write opinion-stating essays, in which they were instructed to take a clear position, for example, for or against the author’s assertion or on a social issue presented in the text, and to provide supports from such sources as personal experience, observations, or factual knowledge (Kobayashi & Rinnert 2002: 102). Moreover, the interviews in a pilot study carried out prior to the present study revealed that intensive second language (L2) English writing training geared for university entrance exams was also provided for many high school students. The results of these studies led to the exploration in the present study of the possible effects of such special preparatory L1 and L2 writing training on the English writing of first year university students, and also the effects of possible interaction between the kinds of writing training provided in the two languages.

1. Background

The factor of writing experience in a first or a second language (or both), the main focus of the present study, is closely related to students’ cultural/linguistic background and the writing instruction that they have received in their home country or a new educational environment, or in both. Possible effects of such L1 writing experience on L2 writing, particularly on the texts produced, have been extensively researched in the area of contrastive/intercultural rhetoric (e.g., Connor 1987; Hinds 1987, 1990; Kaplan 1967, 1988; Kubota 1998a; see Casanave 2004; Connor 1996, 2002, 2005; Kubota and Lehner 2004; Leki 2000 for overviews and discussion). Primarily text-based studies have identified L2 students’ preferred cultural patterns in their L1 writing and investigated the transfer of the patterns into their L2 writing. For example, Japanese EFL (English as a foreign language) students were found to favor an inductive pattern over a deductive one in their L2 writing (Hinds 1983; Kobayashi 1984; Oi 1984). Although recent studies suggest that the Japanese rhetorical preference has shifted to the deductive pattern, at least in expository or persuasive writing (Kubota 1998a, 1998b; Kubota and Shi 2005; Hirose 2003; Kobayashi and Rinnert 2002), writing experience and exposure to English rhetorical features were also found to contribute to such a shift in the students’ writing of a second language and in their evaluation of the quality of L2 essays (Kobayashi and Rinnert 1996; Rinnert and Kobayashi 2001).

Unlike contrastive rhetoric, which examines relationships between culture and writing, cognitive-based approaches have looked at the composing processes of individual writers. Many studies have compared inexperienced student writers to expert writers in terms of the writing strategies they employ (Hayes and Flower 1983: Hayes, Flower, Schriver, Stratman and Carey 1987; Cumming, 1989; Sasaki 2000, 2002). The major finding of such studies has been that regardless of whether they are composing in L1 or L2, expert writers employ more effective planning and revising strategies than novices. One assumption underlying these studies is that the writing behaviors of expert and novice writers constitute a single continuum (Carter 1990; Grabe and Kaplan 1996), and thus it is possible for novice writers to improve their writing ability by acquiring the strategies used by more skilled writers.

Research based on a cognitive perspective
has indicated that there is a positive effect of L1 writing experience on L2 writing (Bosher 1998; Carson and Kuehn 1994; Cohen and Brooks-Carson 2001; Cumming, 1989; Raimes 1987a; Uzawa 1996). For example, Cumming’s (1989) investigation of the English writing by 23 French-speaking university students, using a think-aloud method, showed that the composing strategies and the quality of their written texts were affected by their L1 writing expertise. In particular, those participants who had extensive professional L1 writing experience employed problem-solving strategies and attended to complex aspects of writing, producing essays with effective discourse organization and highly developed content. At the same time, the study found that second language proficiency had no obvious effect on writing processes. Raimes (1987a) similarly observed little correlation between the language proficiency and composing strategies of eight ESL students, although those with confidence in their L1 writing ability revised and edited most frequently. These results imply that L1 writing ability and L2 language proficiency are somewhat independent of each other, and also that L1 writing ability, which is made up at least in part of L1 writing experience, can be transferred to L2 writing.

L2 writing experience has also been found to affect L2 composing processes and the quality of L2 writing. For example, a cross-sectional and longitudinal comparison of EFL expert and novice writers’ L2 writing processes, using stimulated recall protocols, revealed that the experts engaged in more detailed overall organizational plans and frequent rhetorical refinement of their texts, while the novices tended to do less detailed planning and make mainly local-level corrections and translations (Sasaki 2000, 2002). Regarding writing quality, Japanese students regularly writing more than one English paragraph in high school were found to be better L2 writers than those without such experience (Sasaki and Hirose 1996). Similarly, students who had more experience of writing short and longer L2 texts were better able than less experienced students to detect and correct problems at inter-sentential, paragraph, and essay levels of discourse (Kobayashi and Rinnert 2001b). These findings indicate that L2 writing experience has a positive effect on L2 composing strategies. However, caution is merited because writing experience and language proficiency are often inseparable due to a high correlation between the two factors (Kobayashi and Rinnert 2001b). Therefore, it is crucial to control participants’ L2 language proficiency in order to investigate the separate effect of their writing experience on their L2 writing.

2. The Study

The purpose of this study is two-fold. First, we aim to investigate the possible effects of both L1 (Japanese) and L2 (English) writing experience on L2 English writing, including written texts and writing process. Second, we attempt to explore possible interaction between L1 (Japanese) and L2 (English) writing experience. As stated earlier, we are focusing particularly on the effects of special intensive training to prepare high school students to write short essays in Japanese and/or English as part of university level entrance examinations. Thus, we compare the behavior of writers in four distinct groups: those with preparatory training in both L1 and L2 writing, those with training in only L1, those with training in only L2, and those with no training.

The following specific research questions are addressed in this paper:
1) How does past L1 and L2 writing experience affect the choice of discourse type in the L2 essays by the four groups?
2) How are the L2 essays by the four groups structured?
3) How are discourse markers used in the L2 essays by the writers in the four groups?
4) How does the development of content vary in the L2 essays by the four groups?

In essence, this study examines students’ L2 writing in terms of rhetorical features (discourse type, text structure, and discourse markers), as well as the development of content. What is meant by “development of content” is to formulate ideas in an analytic way, in which a main thesis or opinion is supported and elaborated with specifics. Whereas the first three types of rhetorical features have been examined in the text-oriented studies described in the literature review, the thesis-support development does not seem to have received sufficient attention in L2 writing research, although it is widely covered in most American English L1 writing textbooks (e.g., Raimes 1987b) and Internet materials which prescribe how to support a main idea (e.g., those cited in Liu 2005). In reality, however, many L2 writing teachers (Ferris 2001; Goldstein 2004; Hinkel 1994; Zamel 1983) point out L2 students’ difficulty with the development of ideas in a thesis-support relationship when teachers give feedback on students’ drafts. This may be due in part to L2 students’ lack of familiarity with the notion of text support, which characterizes English written discourse (Hinkel 1994). Moreover, L2 writing teachers, like their L1 counterparts, perceive thesis-support as among the most important criteria to judge students’ writing (Haswell 2005; Rinnert and Kobayashi 2001). Given this importance, it was decided that the study would include students’ development of content in terms of a thesis and support relationship for data analysis (see section II.3(3) for detailed explanation of the content development analysis).

II. Method

After a pilot study was conducted in August, 2002 (see note 2), the data were collected over a two-year period between October, 2002 and January, 2004.

1. Participants

The participants were recruited through a multi-stage process. Based on responses to a preliminary questionnaire on students’ past L1 and L2 writing background, including intensive pre-university writing training, potential candidates for each of the four groups were selected for further interviews. The main criterion for selection was the number of essays they had written during their training: 8-10 or more for those with intensive training and none (or in two cases not more than 2) for those without intensive training. During the interviews, responses were confirmed, more information about the participant’s past writing experience in Japanese and English was elicited, and the logistics of the research procedure were explained. Those who still fit the criteria and agreed to participate became members of the groups.4

The participants, first-year Japanese university students (N = 28), included 23 females and 5 males, all 19 or 20 years old. They were novice EFL writers, in that they had received no university-level L2 writing instruction. They were selected to form four distinct groups: (1) Group 1, those with intensive experience writing essays in both L1 and L2 (N = 9); (2) Group 2, those with intensive experience writing in only L1 (N = 7); (3) Group 3, those with such experience in only L2 (N = 7); and (4) Group 4, those with no such experience in either language (N = 5).5 Because this study aimed to investigate the effect of writing experience, we controlled the factor of language proficiency of the participants. Thus, their English proficiency was held constant at an intermediate level,4 according to a computerized
CASEC test, as shown in Table 1.

Although the groups differed in terms of whether they had experienced intensive pre-university writing training in one or both languages, it should be noted that all the students had received some L1 writing instruction and experience in elementary, junior and senior high school kokugo (Japanese language) classes.

### Table 1: Characteristics of Participant Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Preparatory Training</th>
<th>English Proficiency Mean* (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CASEC score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>L1 &amp; L2</td>
<td>615.11 (47.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>L1 only</td>
<td>559.00 (96.46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>L2 only</td>
<td>599.00 (59.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Little or none</td>
<td>592.20 (13.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TOEFL equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>470.44 (18.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>447.71 (37.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>462.71 (23.76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>461.20 (5.26)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*no significant differences among groups

2. Data Collection

Each participant wrote one Japanese and one English essay and engaged in individual in-depth interviews in two separate sessions. They all wrote in Japanese during their first session and in English during their second one, because it was determined from the pilot study (see note 2) that asking students to write first in their native language would put them more at ease than writing in the reverse order. Participants were interviewed individually in Japanese about their writing in both sessions. The writing portions of the sessions were video-taped, and the interview portions were audio-taped.

(1) Essays

The study employed two open-ended essay prompts eliciting students’ opinions: Topic 1, living at home or living alone; Topic 2, traveling with a group or traveling alone (the prompts are shown in Appendix 1). Unlike many previous studies that have used prompts requiring particular task responses, such as argumentation or exposition discourse types (e.g., Hirose 2003; Kubota 1998a, 1998b; Sasaki 2000), in this study we were interested in how the participants’ writing experience might affect the way they approached the writing task, based on the discourse type they chose for their text. That is, we were concerned with how the students with different L1 and L2 writing experience would choose to frame their essays when open-ended topics were given.

To control for any potential topic effect, the prompts were alternated: half of the students in each group wrote on Topic 1 in Japanese and on Topic 2 in English, and the other half did the opposite. Although the essays were written in both languages, the data analysis for the present study is based only on the L2 essays.

Similar to Pennington and So (1993) and Uzawa (1996), we gave no time limitation and allowed electronic dictionaries. No particular time allocation was established because we wished participants to feel free to take as much time as they needed to develop their essays. It was decided to allow dictionary use because it reflected the most natural condition for these students when writing in their L2 in non-testing situations, and because students could demonstrate their highest level of composing competence if they were unconstrained by any feelings of insecurity about their vocabulary limitations (Porte 1996). Comparing the mean frequencies of overall dictionary use by the four groups, there was no significant difference in the number of times that writers consulted.
dictionaries while writing their L2 essays (mean: 15.82 times, SD: 6.75). The writing times for the essays ranged between 17 and 82 minutes, with an average of 38 minutes, but most participants took between 30 and 40 minutes.

(2) Interviews
Immediately after each essay was completed, the writer was asked to view a videotape for elicitation of retrospective reflections on their pausing behavior (which is not included in the present study) and then asked in-depth questions about their composing processes (for example, how much they had planned before actually writing) and about their L1 and L2 writing background (such as the specific types of writing they had done throughout their school years and the kinds of meta-knowledge they had acquired). Each interview session lasted between 90 and 120 minutes.

3. Data Analysis
(1) Discourse Type and Organizational Structure
The essays were first analyzed in terms of how the writers chose to frame their responses to the open-ended topics. Four basic discourse types were identified. One was the frame of an argument, where students stated their opinion in favor of one or the other of the two choices (living at home or living alone for Topic 1: traveling with a group or traveling alone for Topic 2). A second type comprised a discussion of the topic in an expository framework, not taking a side, but analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of each or creating an original thesis related to the topic. The third was a conscious or unconscious choice to approach the writing as a “sakubun” (self-reflective writing, widely practiced in Japanese L1 classrooms from elementary school on). The fourth was a mixed approach where students combined two discourse types, for example, mixing exposition and argumentation, or mixing self-reflection with either exposition or argumentation. Sample Argumentation and Mixed mode essays are shown in Section III.5, and examples of Exposition and Self-reflection essays are presented in Appendix 2. The text structures identified in the essays were closely related to the discourse types. Except for the Self-reflection essays, which had no clearly identifiable structure, each of the types was found to take a distinctive organizational form, as explained in section III.2.

(2) Discourse Markers
Various kinds of discourse markers signaled the internal structures of the essays and provided logical connections among the parts. Such devices in the essays were identified and categorized in terms of the text level to which they related: overall meta-discourse (essay level) markers, such as *There are three main reasons* and *In conclusion;* partial meta-discourse markers (connecting paragraphs or multi-segment chunks of discourse within paragraphs), such as *First,* and *There are several advantages;* and inter-sentential markers (connecting two sentences), such as *In addition* and *On the other hand.* As can be seen in the sample essays in section III.5, the inter-sentential markers tended to be relatively short, whereas the partial and overall meta-discourse markers varied in length from one word to a full clause.

(3) Development of Content
For the content analysis, the development of ideas in the body of the essays was analyzed by identifying (a) thesis statements, (b) the number of supporting points given, and (c) the extent to which the points were developed in the form of elaboration, based mainly on van Wijk (1999). For the analysis of the elaboration, the focus was limited to the two main categories of elaboration that were identified as predominating in these essays: *context* (background, conditions, contextual evidence) and *specification* (examples, characteristics, consequences).

For the analysis, this study followed a modified version of PISA, Procedure for
Incremental Structure Analysis (Sanders and van Wijk 1996), and of TRACE, Text-based Reconstructions of Activities by the Conceptual Executive (van Wijk 1999). The texts were first segmented into basic meaning units (segments) and then coded in terms of their contribution to the argument or exposition, as explained below.

The segments are basically syntactically identifiable meaning units, mainly single clauses or verb phrases that represent separate actions. For example, in the sample essay shown in Appendix 3, the third sentence is divided into 3 segments: 3a, 3 and 4 (the segments are numbered, with each independent clause receiving a separate number and syntactically subordinate segments indicated with lower case letters: a, b, c). Similarly, a later sentence is divided into 4 segments, 8, 8a, 8b, 8c, and 8. As the numbers indicate, the first and last lines are analyzed as part of the same segment (i.e., they have to cook by themselves), and the three verbs in the middle are considered separate segments. In contrast, verbal elements that function as subjects or objects of clauses are not separated into distinct segments. Thus, the preceding sentence of the same essay (segment 7) is analyzed as a single unit.

In order to make it possible for the content analysis to encompass the wide range of essay types produced by the participants in both Japanese and English, including both argumentation and non-argumentation essays, we refined the coding of the segments to identify position statements (for argument essays), thesis statements (for expository essays), meta-discourse segments (overall or partial discourse markers, such as there are three reasons for my opinion or there are also advantages, as explained under discourse markers above), points (reasons, advantages/disadvantages or other main supports), and two kinds of elaboration of points: context and specification. Context was defined as giving background, conditions, or evidence that provided a context for or led up to a point; specification consisted of examples, characteristics, or consequences used to explain a point.

In practice, when difficulties arose in coding particular segments, an attempt was made to formulate heuristic principles that could be applied consistently (such as the differentiation between verbal and nominal uses of verbal units in determining the segmentation, as explained above). After separate coding of 4 of the 28 essays (14% of the data) by two raters (the authors) achieved an agreement rate of 58 out of 64 segmentation decisions (90.6%), which was considered acceptable, the remaining essays were coded separately and any disagreements were resolved through discussion.

III. Results

Before presenting the results of the analysis, we will provide a brief overview of the essay writing process. Table 2 shows the group breakdown for basic fluency measures for the English essays. These include the means and standard deviations (SDs) for the total words produced: the number of words per minute of writing time: and the planning time before starting to write, in minutes and percentage of total time.

As the numbers in Table 2 indicate, Group 1 tended to write more words, at a faster rate, and spend more time planning (15% of the total time) than the other 3 groups. According to a 2 (Group 1 vs. the other three groups combined) x 3 (words, speed, planning time) repeated measures test of effects, Group 1 students (N = 9) wrote at a significantly faster rate ($F = 6.327$, $p = .018$) than the students in the other three groups combined (N = 19). In addition, Group 1 showed an almost significant tendency to spend more time planning ($F = 4.032$, $p = .055$) than the other three groups together. One interpretation of these results is that the combined L1 and L2 training led writers to plan their English essays more fully before they started writing, which in turn tended to
allow them to produce more fluent L2 writing. We will return to this issue in the discussion in Section IV.

1. Discourse Type

Appendix 4 shows the breakdown of discourse types by individuals in the four groups. As seen in Appendix 4, the most frequently chosen type overall was Argumentation (13/28, 46%), which was used by almost half of the students, and the next most popular one was Mixed type (10/28, 36%), whereas Exposition and Self-reflection were chosen rather infrequently (3/28, 11% and 1/28, 4%, respectively). (Sample essays illustrating the most common types are included in section III.5, below.)

These results indicate that there were rather different preferences in the choice of types among the four groups. Most notably, Group 3, who had received only the L2 training, employed Argumentation most often (5/7, 71%) and Mixed pattern (1/7, 14%) least frequently. In contrast, Group 1, with both L1 and L2 training, chose either Argumentation (5/9, 56%) or Mixed type (4/9, 44%), whereas Group 2, with only L1 training, was split across the three types of Argumentation (3/7, 43%), Exposition (2/7, 29%) and Mixed type (2/7, 29%) in their essays. Finally, Group 4, who had no special training, most frequently chose a Mixed type (3/5, 60%, and 3 of the 4 students, 75%, who used identifiable patterns in their papers).8 Although the numbers are small and these results need to be confirmed with a larger sample size, a chi-square test of the frequency of use of argumentation type as opposed to non-argumentation type showed that the distribution across the four groups tended toward statistical significance ($\chi^2 (3) = 6.430, .05 < p < .10$), with Group 4 (0 argumentation essays and 5 non-argumentation essays) manifesting a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$).

2. Text Structure

(1) Structure of Argumentation Essays

The overall structure of Argumentation essays was seemingly simple with a position statement (in favor of one or the other of the two alternatives), reasons to support the position, and a restatement of the position, a structure taught in both L1 and L2 training, according to the interview reports. However, sometimes within this basic structure, a counter-argument (the opposite position) was acknowledged either before or after the supporting reasons were given. In the interviews, some students reported learning to include a counter-argument in their intensive L1 training and transferring it to their L2 writing, whereas others said they had acquired it from their L2 writing instruction.

The Argumentation schema shown in the diagram in Figure 1 was used by all of the 13 students who wrote Argumentation essays: five members of Group 1, three of Group 2, and five of Group 3.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{Writing Fluency Measures by Group}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & Total Word Count & Words/Minute & Planning Time & \\
 & Mean (SD) & Mean (SD) & Minutes & \% of Total Time \\
\hline
Group 1 & 190.33 (46.56) & 6.39** (2.15) & 6.38* (4.49) & 15.2 (9.4) \\
Group 2 & 158.43 (50.71) & 4.35 (1.89) & 4.02 (3.95) & 9.2 (7.6) \\
Group 3 & 176.57 (43.98) & 4.35 (1.76) & 3.83 (3.71) & 8.5 (9.2) \\
Group 4 & 180.60 (41.77) & 5.07 (1.25) & 1.75 (1.16) & 4.6 (2.7) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\footnotesize{**p < .05, *p < .1 for Group 1 versus Groups 2, 3, 4 combined}
\end{table}
Figure 1: Schematic diagrams of Argumentation, Exposition and Mixed discourse structures

(2) Structure of Exposition Essays

The main organizational pattern identified for the Exposition essays was basically a comparison/contrast structure, presenting the advantages and disadvantages of each of the two alternatives (living or traveling alone vs. in a group), with a relatively neutral thesis statement (for example, that the decision to travel by ourselves or with people we know depends on the time and place) appearing at the end, or both at the beginning and at the end. The Exposition schema shown in Figure 1 represents the basic structural components employed by the three writers who wrote Exposition essays: two members of Group 2 and one member of Group 3.

(3) Structure of Mixed Essays

The Mixed type essays most frequently involved a combination of Exposition and Argumentation, as represented by the Mixed schema in Figure 1, and next most frequently a combination of Self-Reflection and Argumentation. The first organizational pattern consisting of a comparison/contrast structure, followed or preceded by a position statement with supporting reasons, was used by five writers: three members of Group 1 and two members of Group 2. The second pattern, comprising self-reflection about a given topic first, followed by a position statement [see sample essay 5 in section III.5(4)], was employed by four writers: one member of Group 1 and three members of Group 4.

These results suggest that whereas the L2 writing training induced the students’ frequent use of Argumentation type, the L1 training led them to use the Mixed (Exposition + Argument) pattern relatively often in their English essays. At the same time, those students who had not received the intensive L1 training appeared to have drawn upon their early writing experience to produce essays containing self-reflection.

3. Use of Discourse Markers

The frequency of occurrence (means and SDs) of discourse markers of each kind by group is shown in Table 3. Although an ANOVA test showed that group was not a significant factor overall, tests of effects showed significant group differences for the categories of overall discourse ($F = 3.462, p = .032$), partial discourse ($F = 8.728, p = .000$), total discourse markers ($F = 9.747, p = .000$), and inter-sentential markers ($F = 4.221, p = .046$). In addition, post-hoc Scheffé tests showed that Group 4 used more inter-sentential markers than Group 1 ($p = .046$).

As Table 3 shows, there were striking inter-group differences in the use of meta-discourse segments (explicit markers of overall essay structure), which appeared in 75% of both Group...
1 and Group 2 essays, but in very few of the Group 3 or 4 essays. Similarly, inter-paragraph transition markers, such as First, On the other hand, and Finally, occurred in all of the essays by Group 1 and in 75% of those by Group 2, but in only one of the essays by each of the other two groups.

Although inter-sentential connectors appeared in almost every essay, the quality and variety of connectors varied across the four groups. In the Group 4 essays, the only connectors used were And, But and So. Although these three also occurred frequently in essays by members of the other groups, a much richer variety appeared in Group 1, including Above all, Besides, For example, In addition to that, In fact, In short, and However, and to a lesser extent in Group 3, who used Also, In fact, However, and Therefore, and Group 2, who used For example, and However.

Similar to the case with text structure, in the interviews some students of Group 1 made it clear that they had learned to use both overall and partial discourse markers in their L2 writing training, and had transferred this feature to L1 writing, while some Group 2 students did the opposite, learning it in their L1 training and transferring it to L2 writing. The frequent use of meta-discourse markers across the two languages appears to relate to the writer’s strong concern with the reader, as illustrated in one student (S1:2) comment, “I [definitely] want my readers to follow my ideas easily and clearly, so I used connectives” (this and all student comments are translated from the original Japanese).

4. Development of Content

Table 4 displays the means and standard deviations of the number of points per essay; the number of segments in each of the two categories of elaboration: context and specification; the total number of segments devoted to each of the two kinds of elaboration; and the ratio of total elaboration segments per point for the essays in each group. As shown in Table 4, Group 4 tended to give fewer points than the other three groups.

Distinctions can be seen among the groups in terms of the amount of total elaboration. Group 2 had a remarkably smaller number of segments of elaboration (3.73) as compared to Groups 1, 3 and 4 (with 6.09, 5.82 and 5.20, respectively). Groups 1, 3 and 4 all outscored Group 2 in terms of the mean number of elaboration segments per reason (a range of 3.03 to 4.31 versus only 1.45 for Group 2). However, considering that Group 4 gave relatively few points (with a mean of less than 1.5 per essay), as opposed to the other groups, as mentioned above, this last apparent similarity between Group 4 and Groups 1 and 3 has to be treated cautiously.

The most salient group differences in terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Discourse Markers (adjusted per 100 words): Means and SDs by Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Number of Points and Amount of Elaboration (per 100 words) by Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Points Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Category of Elaboration Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Total Elab. Frequency Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Total Elab. Segs./Point Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.42 (1.02)</td>
<td>S:0.61 (1.40)</td>
<td>6.09 (2.87)</td>
<td>3.40 (2.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.70 (1.69)</td>
<td>S:0.77 (1.18)</td>
<td>2.96 (2.06)</td>
<td>1.45 (1.23)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.50 (1.16)</td>
<td>S:2.08 (2.01)</td>
<td>3.74 (2.82)</td>
<td>5.82 (2.55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.47 (0.53)</td>
<td>S:3.02 (1.82)</td>
<td>2.18 (1.29)</td>
<td>5.20 (1.27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Context: condition/background; Specification: example/characteristic/consequence
b S = Adjusted number of segments per category; *one paper eliminated because no identifiable points (entirely self-reflection); *p < .05

d of categories of elaboration are represented graphically in Figure 2. These include the greater amount of specification by Group 1 (90% of elaboration) as compared to the other three groups (who ranged from 58% to 79%), and the relatively less frequent use of context by Groups 1 and 2 (10% to 21% of elaboration, as opposed to 36% to 42% for the other 2 groups). It should be noted that self-reflective writing tended to contribute more toward context (mainly background) than toward specification, which probably explains the higher number of contextual segments produced by Group 4 writers, as compared to the other groups.

Many students of Groups 1 and 2 reportedly practiced writing relatively long Japanese essays consisting of a main point (or a position) and supporting points, and they were likely to have internalized this logical relationship. Although Group 2 students were aware of the relationship, they were not able to elaborate supporting reasons sufficiently in L2, perhaps due to lack of English writing practice. On the other hand, Group 1 students succeeded in developing such reasons to a greater extent, apparently because they were more used to expressing their ideas in English.

We also looked at the use of personal (as opposed to general) evidence to support the points in the English essays. This distinction was based on the use of first person singular (e.g., I depend on my family for everything) for personal evidence, as opposed to first person plural (e.g., if we have trouble, we can’t ask our parents to help us), third person (e.g., lots of students have no time to make their own meals) or in some cases second person (e.g., living with your family is very economical) reference for more general evidence. For this analysis, a simple count was made of how many of the essays in each group contained references to personal (self-centered) experience, in the form of first person examples, context and/or narratives. Whereas personal (self-centered) experience was included in 100% of the essays by members of Group 3 and 4, it was used in 75% of Group 2 and only 50% of Group 1 essays. These findings suggest that the intensive L1 training led to the use of more general and less personal evidence.

5. Group Characteristics

In this section the most salient characteristics of each group’s writing are illustrated through sample essays. The section concludes with a
table summarizing the main features associated with each group.

(1) Group 1 (both L1 and L2 training)

In sample essay 1, which illustrates the basic argumentation structure shown in Figure 1 above, a Group 1 writer presents an argument in favor of traveling with a small group, defined as a group of two or three people. [In this and all student essays, only spelling errors have been corrected; the underlined italicized (non-bold) sentences are position statements; and the sentences in bold italics are points; the words in bold non-italics are meta-discourse markers (overall underlined, partial not underlined); and the remaining sentences in non-bold, non-underlined italics are elaboration in the form of specification (examples, explanation) or context (background, conditions).]

Figure 2: Percentages of Context and Specification Elaboration by Group
I prefer traveling with my close friend, one or two to traveling alone or in a big group. There are some reasons.

First, in a big group, we cannot visit places I want to go, because many people travel together and we have to think where to visit, considering members’ opinion. On the other hand, in a small group (me and one or two close friends) we can go anywhere without planning where to visit. The places we visit depends on weather and mood of that day. In short, we can travel freely.

Secondly, there are many dangers to us in traveling alone. Especially women tend to be harmed by strangers. For example, snatch, rage, and luggage lifting. It is very difficult to avoid these cases by oneself. However, in a small group, they can be avoided. If one person have his or her bag snatched away, another person can run after the snatcher or call the police. At worst, we can help together. Like this, in a small group, we expose ourselves to lesser danger.

Lastly, in the case of suffering from illness, members nurse us. So, we don’t have to worry about health problem seriously.

I mentioned three reasons. That’s why I prefer traveling in a small group to traveling alone or in a big group.

In this essay, the writer has three main reasons to support her chosen position. The essay is clearly structured, with 10 meta-discourse markers (3 overall and 7 partial).

As explained earlier, the overall structure of an Argumentation is seemingly simple with a position statement, pro-reasons and a restatement of the position. However, if the body contains not only direct reasons but also indirect reasons, which are the negative points of the other side, it can be internally more complex, and at the same time the inclusion of such points can be seen to strengthen the writer’s position. For example, to explain the first reason, embodied in the summary statement “we can travel alone freely” in the second paragraph, the writer first stated a negative aspect of the other side, traveling in a big group, and then turned this aspect into a positive one of traveling in a small group. This same arrangement of ideas was also used in the third paragraph, which gives a parallel structure to the two paragraphs. Although the third reason was not as fully developed, the above essay is coherently structured with primary focus on the body. At the same time, the content is richly developed, with the 3 reasons being elaborated using indirect and direct specification.

Whereas the Argumentation essays by Group 1 presented the argument coherently, their Mixed type essays tended to be somewhat weak in this respect. Such essays can have coherency problems due to the combination of two modes. In spite of the abundant meta-discourse markers (2 overall and 6 partial) to guide the reader, sample essay 2, which consists of Exposition and Argumentation, has a rather abrupt transition between the two components.

In this essay, the writer explained the positive and negative points of each side, traveling alone first and then traveling in a group. The expository portion of the essay is clearly structured in terms of comparison and contrast. Then, in the second to last paragraph the writer shifted to argumentation, by pulling out “meeting something new” as the strongest reason among those stated earlier in the expository section and also introducing a new point that traveling alone enriches college students, which was not stated explicitly earlier. These reasons led her to the conclusion, a clear statement of her chosen position.
There are many chances that we travel when we are university student. Which one is more beneficial traveling alone or group travel?

First, I’d like to observe on strong point of traveling alone. First of all, it is good for us not to bother about anyone. So, we can travel freely. Besides, we can get a sense of responsibility, because we have to do everything by oneself. In addition to that, if we are in group, we are apt to satisfy without meeting something new, but if we are alone, we tend to seek meeting more positively.

In the contrary, sometimes traveling alone is danger, especially women.

Second, I’d like to observe on strong point of group travel. Above all, it is more safety than traveling alone. And, we can share pleasure or happiness of travel with someone of group.

However, group travel has some bad point. We tend to ease too much, because we can enjoy the travel without meeting something new. Besides, it is little difficult to go to somewhere we want to go freely.

I think the most attractive point of travel is meeting something new. In addition to that, travel makes us more rich psychically, especially traveling alone.

So, I come to the conclusion that traveling alone is better than group travel if we are student particularly. I’m sure that we can develop through traveling alone. There are many chances that we travel when we are university student.

In such an inductive movement of ideas, a quick shift from one mode to another is likely to create a gap between the two modes unless the writer makes an effective transition, by including an extended perspective or giving sufficient explanation for the chosen reason. This writer and also another Group 1 writer (S1-1) who used the same Mixed mode (moving from Exposition to Argumentation) failed to create a smooth transition, which resulted in a coherence problem.

(2) Group 2 (only L1 training)

Sample essay 3, written by a Group 2 member, illustrates the basic argument structure (Figure 1) with a counter-argument before the supporting reasons. The essay presents an argument in favor of living alone. Like sample essay 1, it has a clear structure consisting of an introduction, body and conclusion. The organizational structure is indicated with explicit meta-discourse markers (3 overall, 2 partial). However, the body of the essay is relatively thin, containing two reasons (two supporting points) without much elaboration.

I think that it’s better for an undergraduate to live alone, staying away from his or her family.

You may think “Why? If graduates live with their family, they don’t to do housework and they can study long time. But I think it’s not so important.

There are two main reasons for my opinion.

First, living alone enables undergraduates to be independent from their family. They have to cook, wash, clean and study by themselves. No one helps them do it. Living alone can be a step to independence.

Secondly, staying away from family have undergraduates confirm the importance of their family’s being.

So, I think living alone is better choice for undergraduates.

The introduction of essay 3 is elaborated including a position statement for living alone, followed by a meta-discourse marker (You may think “why?”) and two points in support of a counter-argument for the other side, living with a family. After devaluing the importance of the counter-argument, the writer announces what is to come in the body, using the meta-discourse segment, “There are two main reasons for my opinion.”
The body to follow is intended to explain these reasons in detail, but is not well developed: the third paragraph contains only a reason without elaboration. Considering the clear structure created and the inclusion of a counter-argument, the writer of this essay demonstrates meta-cognitive knowledge of writing that he has presumably obtained from L1 writing practice. However, he apparently could not generate enough ideas to substantiate his position in the language he was still learning.

(3) Group 3 (only L2 training)

Sample essay 4, by a Group 3 member, also represents the basic argument structure with a counter-argument. Although the position in favor of group travel is clearly stated at both the beginning and end of the writing, the essay has a weak sense of overall structure, with seemingly arbitrary paragraphing, and few meta-discourse markers. Moreover, the writer relies on personal accounts (elaboration through context) to substantiate her chosen position.

The writer states a position for traveling in a group three times in the essay: at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end position. However, the reader may find it difficult to determine where supporting reasons are located because the body is not effectively segmented into paragraph units, the way it tended to be in the essays by Group 1 and Group 2, and there are only 3 partial and no overall meta-discourse markers. Also, the movement of ideas within the body is rather inductive, with a disproportionate amount of background information (context) leading up to the points. That is, the writer appears to be searching for reasons while creating text rather than to be explaining the reasons in this essay.

Essay Sample 4 (S3-1)

I prefer traveling in the group to traveling alone.

When I travel somewhere, I see the sights and eat food which special of the tourist resort, whether traveling in the group or traveling alone. Because of the deeds, I get amazement, discover, and strong emotion which I can’t get in usual living. I want to express and tell someone those discovery, amazement, strong emotion and various feelings. Because I am able to be happy when I tell someone who I want to tell, about my experience at the tourist resort. So, I prefer traveling in the group to traveling alone. When I travel in the group, I can tell someone my feeling and amazement sooner and more direct than traveling alone.

Also, I may be able to find things which I can’t find by myself by someone’s telling. Indeed, traveling alone is good. Wherever I want to go, I can. But, by traveling with someone, I may get more happiness, enjoyment, strong emotion and various feelings. And I can share those joy or happiness with them. So, I like traveling in the group than traveling alone.

Nevertheless, the writer clearly has some meta-knowledge of English writing: she intentionally added a position statement at the beginning of the essay after completing the whole essay and included a counter-argument, with one supporting reason, in the final paragraph. During the interview, she reported having learned all this in the special English writing training she received in high school. Despite such awareness, it appears that she had little idea of how to structure paragraphs, nor did she know how to build up the argument in the body. The essay ended up as a collection of personal thoughts in a loosely structured framework, in which the writer’s position was reiterated several times.
(4) Group 4 (no intensive L1 or L2 training)

Sample essay 5 is written by a Group 4 member in a Mixed discourse type combining Self-reflection and Argumentation. Like all the writers in Group 4, this writer makes extensive use of narratives or personal stories and uses no meta-discourse markers.

Essay Sample 5 (S4-5)

This summer, I went to Tokyo Disney Resort with a friend of mine. This was first time that I took a trip with someone but my parents. It was very difficult for me to make an appointment. I quarreled with a friend. But the trip was a success. Because of this experience, I learned difficulty of taking a trip.

Through this trip, I was helped by a friend. If I had gone to there alone, this trip hadn’t been a success. There were many accident, I forgot my cellular phone, we mistook a desk. But because of a friend, it succeeded.

Sharp person can do many things about a trip. But many people may be able to do. Taking a trip alone is very difficult. If there are some worrisomes, you must solve it by yourself. Also when you feel happy, pleasant, interested, you can’t share it with someone. I think it is dull. Moving to other place is enjoyment of trips. During morning, you can talk with someone, talk about plan of a trip. I like this time the best in a trip. Taking a trip is not only for doing at a destination, but also planning, moving, talking after returning.

I like taking a trip with someone. I want to share worrisomes, pleasant on the trip. Talking with many people is more enjoyable than thinking of something alone.

The writer starts her essay by telling about her personal trip to Tokyo Disneyland with a friend and describes what she had experienced there; that is, owing to the friend, she had a good trip without running into serious problems. Through the description of personal experience, she implicitly refers to the positive points of traveling with another person. However, in the third paragraph, she explicitly explains the negative points of traveling alone, for example, it is not possible to share pleasure with a friend, and turns this indirect support into more direct support for the position she takes in the conclusion. In short, although the writer states her position at the end of the essay, the whole essay is written in a personal tone, reflecting the writer’s own experience, feelings and thoughts. In spite of such strong reliance upon self-reflection, however, this student, like the other members of Group 4, appeared to have some awareness of being expected to state an opinion when writing an English essay.

(5) Summary of Group Characteristics

Table 5 summarizes the most salient characteristics of the essays by each group. The first column (task response/discourse type) corresponds to research question 1, the second (overall essay structure and discourse markers) subsumes research questions 2 and 3, and the third (planning and development of ideas) relates to research question 4.

IV. Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the intensive training received by Groups 1, 2, and 3 tended to influence the choice of discourse type, the structure, the use of discourse markers, and the development of content in the L2 essays they produced. By examining the patterns observed among the essays by the 3 groups, along with their interview data, it is possible to trace probable contributions of each kind of intensive training (L1 or L2) or their combined effects.

First, nearly half of the students (48%) in this study chose the single type of Argumentation in their English essays: Group 3, with L2 writing training only, most frequently (71%); followed by Group 1, with both L1 and L2 training (56%):
Group 2, with L1 training only (43%); and Group 4, with no training (0%). The choice of this argumentative discourse clearly relates to the overall essay structure. The basic schema used in all the argumentation essays consisted of position (contra) pro (contra) position, with the placement of the position statement at both the beginning and end of the essay, presentation of reasons in support of the position, and optionally, the inclusion of a counter-argument.

Based on the fact that argumentation essays by all 3 groups who had received the L1 and/or L2 training used this schema, it can be inferred that elements of this basic schema were taught in both L1 and L2 training sessions. In fact, this interpretation is confirmed by interview reports by many of the students, as mentioned earlier. For example, two students (S1:1 and S2:2) reported learning from their L1 training that the purpose of a short essay was to express an opinion and support it with reasons, and another (S2:7) said she learned that the purpose of L1 essay writing was to express her own definite opinion with confidence, which she also tried to do in her L2 writing. In contrast, another student (S3:3) said she learned from her L2 training to first state her opinion, then use examples to support it, and end with a conclusion.

Second, just as the L1 and/or L2 training affected the students’ use of the basic schema, the kinds of training they received also influenced their use of discourse markers. The writers who had received L1 training (Groups 1 and 2) made extensive use of meta-discourse markers,

Table 5: Summary of Group Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Response/Discourse Type</th>
<th>Overall Essay Structure and Discourse Markers</th>
<th>Planning and Development of Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arg, Mixed</td>
<td>Clearly structured essays</td>
<td>Detailed pre-writing planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 9)</td>
<td>with focus on body</td>
<td>Highly elaborated support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Arg,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Arg/Exp,</td>
<td>Use of many meta-discourse markers (overall &amp; partial)</td>
<td>More general than personal evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Self/Arg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>At least 3 paragraphs, including intro, body and conclusion</td>
<td>General pre-writing planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arg, Exp, Mixed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Well-developed introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 7)</td>
<td>Use of meta-discourse markers (overall &amp; partial)</td>
<td>Underdeveloped body, listing many points without much elaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Arg,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Arg/Exp,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Exp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Weak sense of overall structure</td>
<td>General pre-writing planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly Arg</td>
<td>Sometimes arbitrary paragraphing</td>
<td>Relatively many points with elaborated support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 7)</td>
<td>Minimal use of overall &amp; some use of partial meta-discourse markers</td>
<td>More personal than general evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Arg,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Exp,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Self/Exp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>Extensive use of personal narratives</td>
<td>Minimal pre-writing planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed, Self</td>
<td>No use of overall &amp; minimal use of partial meta-discourse markers: substantial use of inter-sentential markers</td>
<td>Few points with rich elaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Much more personal than general evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Self/Arg,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Self,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Ill-defined</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arg = Argumentation, Exp = Exposition, Self = Self-reflection
as opposed to the minimal use by those who had not (Groups 3 and 4). Most notably, the first two groups greatly out-performed the latter groups in the use of those discourse markers that signal the overall essay structure, such as There are three main reasons and In conclusion. In the L1 training, the students practiced writing a relatively long essay with 800 to 1000 characters (approximately 500 to 800 English words) because they were expected to write Japanese short essays of this length for college entrance exams. For this length essay, the use of discourse markers at both overall and partial essay levels is particularly important in terms of writers’ giving the reader clear direction for their writing (Kotou 1999). On the other hand, in the English training, the students were taught to write shorter pieces of writing (50 to 120 words) because that was the expected length for them to write in English for college entrance exams, depending on the tasks the particular university asked them to perform (Kambe 2005). Such paragraph level writing may not require overall discourse markers to any great extent; the statement of an opinion together with the use of partial discourse markers would be sufficient to signal short discourse.

Awareness of the need for discourse markers was likely to have been reinforced by the two kinds of writing training, which had a real audience (university professors) whom students had to convince in order to be accepted into the university they hoped to enter. In essence, it would seem that the combination of L1 and L2 training together contributed not only to the increased use of discourse markers, but also to greater variation in the choice of discourse markers, particularly partial markers such as First, and Finally.

Third, regarding development of content, the findings from the textual analysis indicate that the students who had received the L2 training (Groups 1 and 3) tended to elaborate the content for supporting points in greater detail than those with the L1 training only (Group 2). This finding could be interpreted to suggest that the L2 training emphasized the importance of elaborating the content by providing concrete support more than the L1 training did. However, many students in Groups 1 and 2 reported having learned the importance of providing specific support from their L1 training, so the inability of Group 2 students to include such support in their L2 writing most likely came from a lack of experience writing in English. For example, one Group 2 student (S2-1) said that she knew supporting points needed to be elaborated, but she had difficulty with generating support for each point and expressing it in English. Another student (S2-3) said that she was overwhelmed by writing in English, paying attention to various aspects from spelling and grammar to overall essay structure; as a result she could not develop ideas to the extent she had intended. Although all the students in the present study experienced such difficulty to different degrees, those with the L1 training alone appeared to have suffered to a greater extent due to lack of L2 writing experience, which led to the Group 2 English essays having the greatest number of points but not much development in terms of elaboration.

Nevertheless, Group 2, similar to Group 1, produced a greater amount of specification, and a lesser amount of context than the other two groups (Groups 3 and 4). That is, those with the combined L1 and L2 training or only the L1 training tended to provide more elaboration in the form of examples, characteristics, and consequences, whereas those with the L2 training or no training tended to rely on elaborated background and conditions (context). This finding appears to be related to the use of general, as opposed to personal, evidence reported earlier. It would appear that the L1 instruction led students toward relatively less use of personal evidence, perhaps because they were reportedly encouraged to approach their essays in a logical, objective way. On the other hand, Group 3 and 4 students tended to give evidence in the form of first person
examples, background and narratives because their writing frequently included self-reflection, as shown in the essay examples earlier. Whereas Group 3 relied on personal feelings, thoughts and events to illustrate their points within a deductive frame, Group 4 described such personal accounts while moving toward the statement of an opinion in an inductive style. It is likely that both groups relied upon past L1 writing practice (expressive writing) they had done regularly in elementary and junior high school (Watanabe 2001) and transferred it to English writing.

The tendency for Group 4 students to depend upon expressive writing could explain why they apparently did not suffer to the same extent as Group 2 in terms of generating elaboration, even though they also had not been given chances to write in English. Considering the minimal time they spent planning their English essays (1.75 minutes on average for Group 4 as opposed to 4.02 minutes for Group 2, see Table 2) and also the inductive style they employed, they apparently resorted to a knowledge-telling approach to their given writing task (Bereiter and Scardamalia 1987): they produced content to a greater extent “by means of topic association rather than by analytical association” or “in a sequential rather than in a hierarchical fashion” (Roca de Larios, Murphy and Marin, 2002: 24). Such characteristics correspond to those of unskilled L2 writers identified by other researchers (Cumming 1989; Sasaki 2000; Uzawa 1996).

Based on all these findings, we can say that there is evidence of a positive transfer of L1 writing experience to L2 writing ability, which accords with the findings of previous studies (Bosher 1998; Carson and Kuehn 1994; Cohen and Brooks-Carson 2001; Cumming 1989; Raimes 1987a; Uzawa 1996). Whereas the students in the present study were novice L2 writers, they all had had substantial L1 writing experience, having learned how to write in Japanese in kokugo (Japanese language) classes since their elementary school days. Nevertheless, the special pre-university L1 writing training Group 1 and Group 2 students experienced appears to have exerted a strong influence on their second language writing. Both groups of students were able to write relatively well-structured English essays that were clearly signaled by discourse markers. In contrast, Group 3, who had intensive English writing training only, seemed to have difficulty creating the internal structure of the body, although they had a strong meta-cognitive awareness of stating an opinion at the beginning of an essay. This difficulty with internal structure presumably resulted, at least in part, from the fact that the special English writing training they received in preparation for university entrance exams focused mainly on the paragraph level, and also in part from their lack of experience writing this kind of opinion-statement essay in Japanese. Such a marked difference could suggest that a positive transfer of L1 writing experience definitely benefits second language writers when there are similarities between L1 and L2 writing features.

The most significant findings of the study suggest that there is interaction between L1 and L2 writing experience, and that the effects of combined writing experience on L2 writing may be potentially far-reaching. At every level of the analysis, from the initial planning time and fluency measures to the various features of the written text, the students who had undergone intensive preparatory training in both L1 and L2 writing outperformed the other three groups. These Group 1 writers spent more time planning their essays, wrote more words, and created relatively more well-balanced texts with more meta-discourse markers, points, and elaboration in the form of specification. Thus, it would seem that not only did the two types of training reinforce each other, but their cumulative effect was enhanced in some way by the interaction between them.

This may have been related to the achievement of a much stronger sense of audience
after completing around 20 pieces of writing for at least two different teachers who emphasized the importance of impressing their ultimate judges, the university professors deciding on their admission. Virtually all of the students who had received the two types of training were able to articulate their meta-knowledge about this kind of academic writing. At the same time, they reported strong effects from their training in both L1 and L2, including an increased level of confidence in their ability to produce L2 essays that could meet their readers’ needs for clear, logical development of their ideas. In all, it appears that the L1 and L2 writing training helped Group 1 students to develop writing skills toward knowledge-transforming through a dialectical process between meta-knowledge and writing practice (Bereiter and Scardamalia, cited in Grabe and Kaplan 1996: 125).

Along with such positive effects of L1 special writing training on L2 writing, however, it should be pointed out that this training could negatively affect the novice writers’ construction of coherent texts in English. As reported earlier, several students of Groups 1 and 2 wrote essays with a coherence problem when they used a Mixed pattern combining Exposition and Argumentation. Being exposed to L1 writing training, they were likely to have learned some valued characteristics of Japanese writing, such as an overall inductive movement of ideas and a balanced view of a topic (presenting the advantages and disadvantages of each of the two sides impartially, Rinnert and Kobayashi 2001), and to have transferred them to L2 writing. It is possible that the Mixed discourse type of Exposition and Argumentation may work effectively in Japanese essays with a strong transition provided, as seen in one Japanese essay (S1-2) in this study, although Kubota (1998a) reported that student essays with such a combined pattern (comparison ➔ induction, in her terms) were not rated highly even by Japanese raters in her study. This type may not necessarily be effective for English essays because it cannot lead to a strong argument, due to the use of two different discourse types in one essay. This possibility as well as the evaluation of Japanese essays with this Mixed pattern requires further investigation.

Finally, the findings of the present study suggest that particular text features, such as inclusion of a counter-argument as part of the structure of an argument and the use of meta-discourse markers, are commonly shared by both Japanese and English writing. This confirms what an earlier study (Kobayashi & Rinnert 2002) reported on the content of the instruction students received in the special L1 short essay training, and also what Kubota and Shi (2005) observed in the analysis of Japanese language arts textbooks used in junior high schools. Further study is required to verify this apparent commonality by analyzing Japanese essays written by the same students. At the same time, more investigation is needed to determine whether the correspondence between Japanese and English persuasive writing, which accords with the recently reported shifts in preferred Japanese writing patterns in this particular genre (Kubota and Shi 2005; Hirose 2003; Kobayashi and Rinnert 2002), results from the influence of English writing or has developed independently, or perhaps is related to a combination of factors. Furthermore, future study should look in greater depth at individual decisions in transferring text features and composing strategies from one language to another based on students’ own perceptions and intentions.

Acknowledgements

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conducting the interviews. We also appreciate the stylistic refinements offered by Michael Gorman, and the helpful suggestions for improvement by the anonymous reviewers. An earlier version of this paper, reporting on the preliminary stages of this study, was presented at the 2003 conference of the British Association for Applied Linguistics and published in a volume of the proceedings of the conference (Kobayashi & Rinnert 2004).

Notes

1. In the study (Kobayashi & Rinnert 2001a), 1000 questionnaires were sent to 200 sample high schools selected by stratified random sampling, with 5 questionnaires per school. A total of 180 questionnaires was returned from 79 schools located in 37 prefectures. The samples represented 78.7% of all the prefectures in Japan.

2. In the summer of 2002, four first-year university students participated in the pilot study. The purpose of this study was to check to see how the participants would respond to the given writing tasks (Traveling and Living place) and prompts, and to elicit information about the special preparatory writing training they had received when they were in high school.

3. It should be noted that the degree to which the two factors are separable is still open to question, given that some studies, particularly in EFL contexts (e.g., Sasaki and Hirose 1996), have found that writing ability and L2 language proficiency are interdependent factors because the students are still learning the L2 in the context.

4. In those cases where more than the target number of potential participants fit the criteria (mainly Group 1), the interviewees were randomly selected, and interviews were continued until the quota was filled.

5. Of the original six participants with no intensive writing training, one had to be dropped from the study because it was determined that she had acquired English writing instruction after entering university and before writing the essays for this study.

6. It should be noted that students were not specifically selected on the basis of identical language proficiency scores, but as members of a relatively homogeneous population whose language proficiency was similar. Because the students had passed competitive English exams, including the “Center Exam” and public university entrance exams, in a sense they were already pre-screened, in that any low English proficiency students had been eliminated from the pool of potential participants. Thus, the proficiency tests were intended mainly to check that none of the students had unusually high English proficiency for the population.

7. The computerized CASEC (Computerized Assessment System for English Communication) test, created by the Eiken (English STEP Test) administrators, contains four sections: vocabulary, idioms, listening, and dictation. Students self-administer the test at their own pace and their scores are reported in the form of a numerical score (out of a possible 1000 points) and a proficiency level (like the Eiken step test), along with TOEIC and TOEFL equivalents.

8. As shown in Appendix 4, one of the 5 essays by Group 4 (S4-1) was categorized as “ill-defined,” because it was not possible to identify any overall discourse type or structure.

9. During the interview, the writer said that for the English essay she intentionally chose a pattern consisting of an introduction, a body and a conclusion, and not a traditional 4-part organizational pattern, ki-sho-ten-ketsu (introduction – continuation – change – conclusion). This is because she thought that an important feature of English writing was to state an opinion explicitly and a 3-part essay structure (introduction – body – conclusion) could better serve that purpose. This writer appeared to have clear knowledge of writing and a view of English structure as different from that of Japanese writing.

10. At the two universities the students in this
study were attending, the expected length was approximately 80-100 words.

11. A language proficiency factor may in part contribute to creating a gap between the two different types, in that their limited command of the English language constrained their ability to express their ideas fully.

12. In her Japanese essay, shown in Appendix 5, by following a traditional organizational pattern, \textit{ki-sho-ten-ketsu} (introduction – continuation – change – conclusion), the student (S1-2) succeeded in creating a coherent Mixed Exposition to Argumentation essay by bringing in an extended perspective in \textit{ten}, which strengthened her position.


14. Kobayashi (2005) took a first step in this direction through a case study analysis involving a subset of the students in this study who chose the same discourse type across the two languages.

References


Hayes, John R., Linda Flower, Karen A. Shriver, James


Appendix 1

English Translations of Essay Prompts

Topic 1: Place to live
Students at universities often have a chance to choose where to live. They may choose to live alone in an apartment near their school, or they may choose to live with their family and commute to their university. What do you think of this topic? Write an essay in Japanese/English, explaining your opinion about it. Your written essay will be included in a compilation of class essays and your classmates will read it.

Topic 2: Travel
Many university students often have a chance to travel. They may choose to travel alone, or they may choose to travel in a group. What do you think of this topic? Write an essay in Japanese/English, explaining your opinion about it. Your written essay will be included in a compilation of class essays and your classmates will read it.

Appendix 2

Sample Essays in Exposition and Self-reflection Modes

Exposition Essay by Group 3 (S3-3)
I like to travel by myself. And I like to travel with friends, too.

When I travel by myself, I can go anywhere I want to go. I don’t have to do everything without thinking of a companion. However, if I’ve lost my way, I’ve lost my purse, I have to deal with the problem by my own efforts.

When I travel with friends, I can’t act just as my likes. I have to hear other’s opinion, and act as a group. It may be annoying. However, when we have trouble, we can cooperate to deal with the problem with the group.

I think either traveling alone or a group tour have a good part. We can select one of them according to a kind of the travel.

Self-reflection Essay by Group 4 (S4-2)
I had hankered after a single life since I was a high school student. So, absolutely, I wanted to do a single life if I could be a university student, because I wanted my space. At first, I enjoyed cooking my own food. I worked enthusiastically, for example, cooking, cleaning, and washing, so on. But, about one month after, I got tired of doing. And I come to miss my parent’s home. If I don’t move, I can eat food, have a bath. But when I come back home, I had no thing to do. And that, I had to go back home at ten o’clock. So, when I played with my friends until late at night, My parents flew into a rage. At that moment, I thought that I wanted to go back quickly to my home which is in [university town]. So, I had stayed in [my hometown] only one week. I thought that though, there are much serious matter, a single life is very comfortable. I want to live in comfort.

But, now, it is very cold in [university town]. So, I sometimes think that I want to go back my home
and go to see my family.

Appendix 3
Sample Analysis of Segmentation and Categorization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEGMENT</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think that it’s better for an undergraduate to live alone,</td>
<td>Position statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staying away from his or her family.</td>
<td>Context (condition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You may think “Why?”</td>
<td>Meta-discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If graduates live with their family,</td>
<td>Context (condition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they don’t have to do housework</td>
<td>Point 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and they can study long time.</td>
<td>Point 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But I think it’s not so important.</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are two main reasons for my opinion.</td>
<td>Meta-discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First, living alone enables undergraduates to be independent from their family.</td>
<td>Point 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have to cook,</td>
<td>Spec.* (example)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wash,</td>
<td>Spec. (example)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clean</td>
<td>Spec. (example)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and study</td>
<td>Spec. (example)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by themselves.</td>
<td>Spec. (characteristic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one helps them do it.</td>
<td>Point 3 (repeated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living alone can be a step to independence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondly, staying away from family have undergraduates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confirm the importance of their family’s being.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So, I think living alone is better choice for undergraduates.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Spec. = Specification
## Appendix 4

### Individual Writers’ Discourse Types in English Essays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>S1·1</th>
<th>Mix (Exp -&gt; Arg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1·2</td>
<td>Mix (Exp -&gt; Arg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1·3</td>
<td>Mix (Self &lt;-&gt; Arg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1·4</td>
<td>Mix (Arg &lt;-&gt; Exp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1·5</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1·6</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1·7</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1·8</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1·9</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>S2·1</th>
<th>Arg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2·2</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2·3</td>
<td>Mix (Exp -&gt; Arg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2·4</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2·5</td>
<td>Mix (Arg &lt;-&gt; Exp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2·6</td>
<td>Exp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2·7</td>
<td>Exp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>S3·1</th>
<th>Arg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3·2</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3·3</td>
<td>Exp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3·4</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3·5</td>
<td>Mix (Self -&gt; Exp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3·6</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3·7</td>
<td>Arg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>S4·1</th>
<th>Ill-defined (no determinable pattern)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S4·2</td>
<td>Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S4·3</td>
<td>Mix (Self -&gt; Arg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S4·4</td>
<td>Mix (Self -&gt; Arg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S4·5</td>
<td>Mix (Arg &lt;-&gt; Self)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arg: Argumentation; Exp: Exposition; Self: Self-reflection; Mix: Mixed; ->: direction of overall movement; <->: movement back and forth; S4·3 was dropped from the study, as explained in note 5.
Recently, I’ve seen news that an increasing number of senior citizens have begun living together after they became alone or lost living partners, forming a new type of family. I think living alone for ×× University students is closer to this type of living arrangement. When someone gets hurt or ill, we can come and take care of him or her immediately. If someone feels lonely eating alone, we can join him or her too. There are easy things to do for students because most students live alone themselves.

(Revised version received 23 July 2007)