

College Students' Writing Errors Based on High School English Curriculum*

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Kim, Youngroung & Seo, Haeryen. 2008. College Students' Writing Errors Based on High School English Curriculum. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 16(1), 175-192. This paper purposes to analyze college students' errors with which L2 learners have wrestled when translating Korean sentences into English both in short sentences and in composition, seeking a way to help them out of the woods in writing. We organize the data on students' writing errors into patterns in such a way that generalization between grammatical errors and the curriculum of high school English teaching can be made. To this end, we conduct a survey by exam questions of 40 college students twice, revealing a close connection between college students' writing errors and the components of their high school English textbooks. We show a desideratum on writing skills to express what we have in mind. By homing in on the finer details of the error analysis of college students' writing. We claim that college students' writing errors have generally been adduced to stress the need for reconstructing the overall parts of high school English textbooks and that improving writing skills should remain a key priority on a par with the importance of speaking skill. This nonetheless, education has been swayed by other demands away from this long-term priority.

Key Words: writing skills, writing errors, L2 learners, components of high school textbooks, curriculum of English textbooks

1. Introduction

It has been well recognized that in learning English, we cannot neglect at all the four skills of English: listening, speaking, reading, and

* Many thanks go to anonymous readers for their helpful comments and advice. All remaining errors are mine.

writing. However, out of the four skills, the one concerning how to write and how to think in English, i.e. English writing, has been considered to be the best way, than ever before, to get information and communicate with foreigners for various reasons, academic, business, personal, and professional. Before we get down to the nitty-gritty of the problems arising in English writing, we need to look at a raft of the underlying and structural problems with which college students have to be faced at school in Korea. The current trends strongly assert that speaking ability is everything in English education. Then, does this mean that other knowledge of English, including grammar and reading comprehension, is nothing more than rusty and patchy?

It is true that we should have a basic knowledge of grammar and reading to some extents. However, under the current circumstances, grammar and reading ability have been put aside, and importance in English learning is only attached to speaking skill. An atom of importance is not given to the knowledge of grammar and reading skills. We will take a close look at the data of the analysis of writing errors, examining how we can go about tackling them. In a nutshell, to improve writing skills, the importance should be attached to reading and grammar skills as much as it is attached to speaking skill. It is of concern to improve overall English ability. By basing the data on the error analysis, we will come up with some suggestions to improve writing skills.

Various L2 writing methodologies have so far come out, having a considerable effect upon how to teach writing to L2 learners at college and high school. To put forward a new method of L2 writing teaching, we need to understand the problems arising therefrom, which a majority of Korean students have been wrestling in English writing classes. Lots of scholars, including Raimes (1991), have viewed writing as "creative process thorough which learners express ideas and convey meanings," which may be interpreted as departing from the traditional and grammar-based EFL teaching method.

With a focus on the process-oriented writing, they require to devise fresh methods and techniques to help students accommodate the writing

process. In addition, it is claimed that English writing help students assemble sentences to express their individuality, enhances the linguistic experience through the realistic and pragmatic application of the English language, and diminishes their propensity to adopt poor writing habits. Given that the teaching of English writing involves a composite skill to clearly express one's ideas and thoughts, we can say that writing plays a complementary role in acquiring other language skills, thereby further enhancing learners' speaking ability. Accordingly, the teaching of L2 writing per se plays a crucial part in English teaching.

This nonetheless, we can not say that the teaching of English writing has weighed with middle and high school classes. Students, exposed to the opportunities to learn to express their experience and thought by writing sentence or paragraphs in English, are said to achieve the communication skills through various approach and process-oriented methods. However, the reality shows that this is not available for these and those reasons.

By piggybacking on college students' writing errors, this paper examines the current teaching methods of English writing both for college and for high school students. After reviewing the current teaching of English writing, we note some problems arising in teaching English writing at university and high school. To suggest an overall effective teaching of English writing, we handle lots of errors students make in writing short sentences and composition.

To bring to light the common reason for errors in college students' writing, we conduct a survey of 40 students of a departments of a university, which was done twice over mid/final term exam, regarding their English writing practice. The English writing practice consists of the translation of short sentences into English and of English compositions, over the period of a semester. Thereupon, after arranging and sorting out the errors found in college students' paper into grammatical categories, we present statistical tables to reveal which grammatical categories and contents are involved in their writing errors. To see what has made college students fall into errors in writing practice, we analyze a high school English textbook set

randomly sampled, comparing learners' grammatical and lexical errors with the contents of the textbooks¹⁾.

2. Pending Issues Concerning Writing

Everyone is aware that even though lots of college and high school students desire to command English fluently to express themselves in English through both writing and speaking, they sometimes manage to make themselves understood in spoken English. However, they feel frustrated and helpless when trying to write in English, in particular.

In some respects, it is true that it is not easy for high school and college students to express what they have in mind through writing, unless they have contacted many English reading materials to enhance writing proficiency and have been exposed to an English environment for a considerable period of time in a bid to learn English words and phrases.

For L2 learners in Korea, it is quite hard to learn how to write because of the current circumstances, in which nearly all curriculum activities have been devised for a university entrance exam. In other words, under these circumstances, students do not have to make efforts to learn how to write in English, as all that they require is to build up the ability to choose or find out correct answers to reading comprehension questions.

In a nutshell, they have not been offered the opportunities to be prepared to write down their ideas and thoughts in English, not necessary to acquire the basic English syntactic structures, including the English linearity, that is, English word order. There may be many reasons for not learning how to write in English. Then, who should be held responsible for those students not being offered the opportunity to try to express what they have in mind through English writing?

As is noted further below, most students could not develop their own

1) For reasons of space, we do not attach specific exam papers' questions and students' corresponding answers, surveyed twice over the mid/final term exams.

writing skill at middle and high school. Should all the consequences arising therefrom be simply placed upon those students, regardless of educational and social contexts facing them? How much should we, educators and those in charge of English teaching, measure up the responsibility for students, who have not been offered a proper educational environment to learn sophisticated writing skill at school?

High school students in Korea have had no choice but to acquire the skill to choose just correct answers to difficult and long reading comprehension questions. We are wondering whether the contents of textbooks presented at most high schools exempted from the responsibility for not providing even a small portion to help students acquire writing skill throughout the 3-year high school period, indeed. Should the current university entrance system be attributable to most L2 learners not being able to how to write in English? Is all this attributable to education standardization policy whose main contents are the three Nos policy?²⁾

Proceeding from such questions, this paper takes up the errors arising from not teaching students how to write in English at middle and high school through the contents of their textbooks. To look into the problems arising therefrom, we looked over some literature data, taking into consideration the knowledge of reading comprehension and grammar to boost speaking skills. This paper also tries to devise a way for college students to express what they want to convey their thoughts and ideas in writing.

English writing aims to help L2 learners be able to communicate in English in a logical way as to various subjects they want to express. We cannot but have a doubt about whether there have been proper curriculum contents in the textbooks presented in high school, to lead middle and high school students to acquire the writing skill. In this regard, we can say again, 'No.'

The lack of English writing teaching at middle and high school,

2) The 3 Nos policy refers to the government's ban on school holding their own admittance tests, ranking students differently according to which high schools they attend, and admitting students based on donations.

which has been said to be put on a wrong track, contributes to impeding the progress and development of learners' thoughts through writing. As for why the teaching of English writing skill has not been properly implemented at middle and high school, there, of course, have been various reasons. However, both the lack of concern and research towards the teaching of English writing and, in particular, the indifference to the development of proper writing textbooks have been one of crucial factors, bringing about the ineffectiveness of the teaching of English writing.

Worse, workshops for English teachers to devise a way on how to teach English writing skill to students at middle and high school have been so far intangible. We can definitely say that there has been much talk but little action when it comes to ameliorating the level of English writing skill at middle and high school.

Why has all our talk resulted in so little behavioral change? Thus, we, in this paper, analyze the errors based on the English writing exam papers of sophomores of a university, surveyed of 40 students at mid and final-term exams, respectively, with a view to finding out why and where they have made as many errors in writing as seen in the tables below, even though they have studied English for up to 6 years throughout middle and high school. Through the error analysis of the English writing exam papers, we will bring to light lots of errors into which university students have fallen in writing classes.

I, through this analysis, will look into the relations between the components of an official high school textbook set and college students' writing errors. This assumption starts from the fact that the common errors, with which L2 learners have been wrestling in English writing courses, are partly attributable to the components of high school textbooks. No sufficient contents concerning composition/writing skills are included there. To show that there is not an atom of writing skill guidance in a high school textbook set and that students' writing errors seem inevitable in this way, we put forward the tables graphically revealing the correlations between them.

3. Writing Errors and High School English Curriculum

Given that when we use our mother tongue, we cannot help making errors, it seems inevitable for Koreans, as foreigners, to make errors while using a foreign language. The difference between the two is that, when we make errors while using mother tongue, we can realize and correct the errors we made. However, when using a foreign language, high school and college students sometimes do not realize or correct what their sentences or constructions were wrong, syntactically and lexically.

As shown Table 1 and Table 2 below, we analyze where, how often, and in what way college students made errors in the translation of Korean sentences into English both in short sentences and in composition. The data were organized into patterns in such a way that generalization of the errors can be made. Even though there were some murkiness of the data not easy to be classified into a grammatical category, there happened various syntactic errors in the writing of short sentences as follows³⁾: no articles (46), subject-verb agreements (13), participles usage (11), no verbs (11), intransitive/transitive verb confusions (11), concurrence of two verbs in a single sentence (9), no verbs following 'to' (6), incorrect subjects of gerund and infinitive sentences (6), no objects of transitive verbs (5), incorrect object forms of prepositions (4), no bare verbs following modal verbs (4), and others⁴⁾.

Looking into the analysis of the errors in the writing of short sentences, we see that the errors are mostly related with 'verb usage,' totalling up to 59 errors; followed by 'no articles,' totalling 46; and confusion of 'noun forms,' including 'objects of prepositions.' When it comes to the errors seen in the translation of paragraphs into English, it is revealed that the errors come to as many as 121, out of which they are mostly related to syntactic ones⁵⁾. In the meantime, the errors

3) The figures in the parentheses show the number of errors in total that college students made in writing exam papers.

4) The errors not accounted for here are followed by 'no subjects following conjunction' and 'confusion between the forms of verb and noun,' and so on.

5) After the paragraphs were handed out to students, and they were asked to

related to lexical usage numbered 12 out of 121 errors in total. However, the errors pertinent to lexical usage came to 16, in which the inappropriate use of idiomatic expressions, confusion between indefinite article 'a' and 'an,' and misspellings are involved.

Table 1. Errors in the Mid-term Exam

| Error Types | TSC | NE | TEQ | ER | SE/LE | EC |
|---------------------------------------|-----|----|-----|-------|-------|----|
| *subjects of gerunds & to-infinitives | 10 | 5 | 20 | 9.09 | SE | S |
| *bare verbs after 'to' | 10 | 6 | 20 | 10.90 | SE | V |
| *objects of verbs | 13 | 5 | 20 | 9.09 | SE | N |
| *objects of prepositions | 5 | 4 | 20 | 7.27 | SE | N |
| *participle (ing/pp) form | 11 | 11 | 20 | 20.00 | SE | V |
| *relative pronouns | 3 | • | 20 | 0.00 | SE | C |
| *bare verbs after modals | 3 | 4 | 20 | 7.27 | SE | V |
| *conjunctions | 8 | 4 | 20 | 7.27 | SE | C |
| *participle constructions | 6 | • | 20 | 0.00 | SE | V |
| *tense | 2 | • | 20 | 0.00 | SE | V |
| *idiomatic expressions | 4 | 1 | 20 | 1.81 | LE | I |
| no verbs | 20 | 11 | • | 20.00 | SE | V |
| no articles | 11 | 46 | • | 83.63 | SE | D |
| complement | 4 | 2 | • | 3.63 | SE | N |
| subject agreement | 20 | 1 | • | 1.81 | SE | N |
| vi/vt confusion | 13 | 11 | • | 20.00 | SE | V |
| a/an confusion | 4 | 4 | • | 7.27 | LE | D |
| subject-verb agreements | 20 | 13 | • | 23.63 | SE | V |
| two verbs in a single construction | 20 | 9 | • | 16.36 | SE | V |
| no subjects | 20 | 1 | • | 1.81 | SE | S |
| N-V form confusion | 20 | 2 | • | 3.63 | LE | N |

Legends:

Superscript * means that the questionnaires are Intended Test Questions. TSC stands for number of total relevant sentence constructions; NE for number of error happenings, ER for error frequency rate (%), SE for syntactic error, LE for lexical error, EC for error category, and TEQ for total exam questions.

put them into English according to their own syntactic and lexical knowledge, not confined to the literal meaning of the Korean paragraphs. Thus, the errors, seen in the translation of paragraphs into English, are viewed not as ones invoked by intended questions but as ones made by their own knowledge of English.

Table 2. Errors in the Final-term Exam

| Errors Types | TP | TSC | NE | ER | SE/LE | EC |
|-----------------------------------|----|-----|----|-------|-------|----|
| subjects of gerunds & infinitives | 5 | 42 | 2 | 3.63 | SE | S |
| objects of prepositions | 5 | 42 | 2 | 3.63 | SE | N |
| no verbs | 5 | 42 | 8 | 9.09 | SE | V |
| no articles | 5 | 42 | 6 | 10.90 | SE | D |
| bare verbs after 'to' | 5 | 42 | 1 | 1.81 | SE | V |
| objects of verbs | 5 | 42 | 5 | 9.09 | SE | N |
| bare verb after modals | 5 | 42 | 7 | 12.72 | SE | V |
| complement | 5 | 42 | • | 0.00 | SE | N |
| subject agreement | 5 | 42 | • | 0.00 | SE | S |
| 2 or no conjunctions | 5 | 42 | 3 | 5.45 | SE | C |
| vi/vt confusion | 5 | 42 | 5 | 9.09 | SE | V |
| participle (ing/pp) usage | 5 | 42 | • | 0.00 | SE | V |
| a/an confusion | 5 | 42 | 5 | 9.09 | LE | D |
| subject-verb agreement | 5 | 42 | 6 | 10.90 | SE | V |
| two verbs in a construction | 5 | 42 | 22 | 40.00 | SE | V |
| no subjects | 5 | 42 | 3 | 5.45 | SE | S |
| two subjects for a verb | 5 | 42 | 1 | 1.81 | SE | S |
| noun-verb confusion | 5 | 42 | 3 | 5.45 | SE | N |
| idiomatic expression confusion | 5 | 42 | 12 | 21.81 | LE | I |
| adj/adv confusion | 5 | 42 | 2 | 3.63 | LE | A |
| don't/not confusion | 5 | 42 | 1 | 1.81 | LE | NE |
| indirect question confusion | 5 | 42 | 1 | 1.81 | SE | C |
| possessive position | 5 | 42 | 1 | 1.81 | SE | D |
| incorrect word form | 5 | 42 | 2 | 3.63 | LE | W |
| reflexive pronoun confusion | 5 | 42 | 2 | 3.63 | LE | N |
| relative pronoun | 5 | 42 | 1 | 1.81 | SE | C |
| no 'be' in passives | 5 | 42 | 7 | 12.72 | SE | V |
| lower/upper case confusion | 5 | 42 | 2 | 3.63 | LE | W |
| subject-object position | 5 | 42 | 2 | 3.63 | SE | SO |
| noun-adjective confusion | 5 | 42 | 1 | 1.81 | LE | W |
| noun-noun linking confusion | 5 | 42 | 1 | 1.81 | LE | W |
| adjective form confusion | 5 | 42 | 1 | 1.81 | LE | A |
| conjunction/preposition error | 5 | 42 | 1 | 1.81 | SE | C |

Legends:

TP: total paragraphs. TSC: number of total relevant sentence constructions. NE: number of error happenings. ER: error frequency rate (%). SE: syntactic error.

LE: lexical error, EC: error category. S: subject. N: noun. V: verb, D: Determiner. C: conjunction. I: idiomatic expressions. A: adj/adv form confusion. NE: negation. W: word. SO: subject/object confusion. (There are no Intended-Test Questions, as the students were asked to translate the paragraphs into English on their own style)

Even though students were encouraged to create or make sentences by self-generated meanings and to draft and redraft for themselves, a majority of students made recursive errors as seen in Table 3 below. In particular, the syntactic errors bear conspicuous relations to verb usage, reaching as many as 44 errors: Many students, as shown in the error analysis of short sentence writing in English, two main verbs consecutively used in a single sentence construction (22); no verbs in a sentence construction (8); no 'be' verbs in passive constructions (7); and no bare verbs following modal verbs (7). Next, they did not use articles before a common noun (9). They are not aware of the agreement between subjects and verbs and, in particular, of the agreement between an antecedent and a relative pronoun (6). No objects in transitive verbs come next (5), followed by the confusion between transitive and intransitive verbs (4). Other errors come as following order: no subjects, no conjunctions between two independent sentences, etc.

As noted in the Table 3 below, we see that most errors are rooted in the verb use. This means that a lot of students do not precisely understand when, where, and how they have to put pertinent verbs in a string of words to render them into a proper sentence. Aside from the differentiative properties ensuing from the distinctive features of transitive and intransitive verb usage, most students do not mind consecutively putting two verbs in sequence within a single sentence construction. As seen in Table 3, out of 62 sentence constructions in total, the number of errors come to 110, whose error rate rises up as high as 200%. Errors regarding determiner use come next, totalling 98 and taking 178.18%, nearly the same figures as high as those of verb errors. This means that the errors on determiners constitute a large proportion of total errors, no less than those of verbs. The errors other than those of verbs and determiners come as follows: nouns regarding objects, subjects, idiomatic expressions, participles, conjunctions,

passives, confusion of adjective/adverb/noun form, and so on.

In particular, it is noteworthy that the errors regarding the use of verbs and determiners are extremely high, compared with those figures regarding other components. Thus, it must not go unnoticed that in teaching writing to L2 learners, we should attach more importance to the usage of verbs and determiners, positively encouraging learners to put into practice various types of writing concerning verbs and determiners. It is learned that most students ignore the usage of determiners, thinking that they only have to put such words as nouns and verbs in sequence, with no concern to use determiners before common nouns. This cannot be construed otherwise than as thinking that determiners can come before a common noun whatsoever and that they do not have any influence upon the meaning of a sentence. For them, writing simply means an arrangement of words with no appropriate determiners. The total number of errors other than verbs and determiners is less than those of verbs and determiners, respectively. We see that understanding the use of determiners is no less important than studying the properties of verbs in writing.

Table 3. Overview of mid/final-term error analysis

| Grammatical Categories | TSC | NE | ER | SER | SE/LE |
|--|-----|-----|--------|--------|-------|
| subjects | 62 | 13 | 23.63 | 20.96 | SE |
| verbs | 62 | 110 | 200.00 | 177.41 | SE |
| nouns (objects) | 62 | 16 | 29.09 | 25.80 | SE |
| determiners (articles) | 57 | 98 | 178.18 | 171.92 | SE |
| conjunctions | 46 | 10 | 18.18 | 21.73 | SE |
| participles | 53 | 11 | 20.00 | 20.75 | SE |
| noun-verb confusion | 62 | 5 | 9.09 | 8.06 | LE |
| passives | 42 | 7 | 12.72 | 16.66 | SE |
| adj/adv/noun/neg/confusion | 62 | 7 | 12.72 | 11.29 | LE |
| idiomatic expression confusion | 46 | 13 | 23.63 | 28.26 | LE |
| complements | 62 | 2 | 3.63 | 3.22 | SE |
| other lexical form confusion (including lower/upper case) | 62 | 4 | 7.27 | 6.45 | LE |

Legends:

SER: Sentence error rate (%) (others are the same as above)

Table 4 below shows the grammatical explanations of parts of speech, presented in a high school textbook set. The proportion constituted by parts of speech, respectively, ranks as follows: conjunctions, gerund/infinitive usage, participle constructions, auxiliaries, tense, subjunctive, passives, prepositions, verb properties, relative pronouns, indirect questions, inversion, and so on. What attracts our attention amidst the contents of the grammatical explanations is that there is even not a passing reference to the use of determiners before common nouns, contrary to lots of errors recurring as high as 98 in writing. Worse still, the explanations for the properties of verb use are nothing but 5 out of total 24 chapters in the high school textbook set. This can be interpreted as meaning that there are not as many explanation of the use of verbs and determiners as there are writing errors relevant to verbs and determiners. Accordingly, rules or principles for writing have not been presented for students at middle and high school, indeed. Lots of errors occurring concerning verbs and determiners are, in fact, attributable to the lack of explanations of them. In other words, those errors ensued in the wake of insufficient explanations.

Table 4. Grammatical Contents in a high school Textbook Set

| Grammatical Categories | textbook 1 | | textbook 2 | | AFR |
|--|------------|--------|------------|--------|--------|
| | NO | FR | NO | FR | |
| conjunctions | 19 | 158.33 | 13 | 108.33 | 133.33 |
| participle constructions | 6 | 50.00 | 9 | 75.00 | 62.50 |
| indirect questions | 3 | 25.00 | 1 | 8.33 | 16.66 |
| passives | 5 | 41.66 | 2 | 16.66 | 29.16 |
| relative pronouns | 5 | 41.66 | . | . | 20.83 |
| auxiliaries | 4 | 33.33 | 8 | 66.66 | 49.99 |
| tense (present/past perfect) | 3 | 25.00 | 8 | 66.66 | 45.83 |
| gerund/to-infinitive usage | 12 | 100.00 | 13 | 108.33 | 104.16 |
| objects of transitive verbs | 4 | 33.33 | 2 | 16.66 | 24.95 |
| subjunctive | 2 | 16.66 | 6 | 50.00 | 33.33 |
| verb properties (perception, causative verbs) | 2 | 16.66 | 3 | 25.00 | 20.83 |
| preposition usage | 4 | 33.33 | 2 | 16.66 | 24.99 |
| comparatives | 2 | 16.66 | 5 | 41.66 | 29.16 |
| others | 4 | 33.33 | 17 | 141.66 | 87.49 |
| inversion | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 33.33 | 16.66 |
| subject of gerunds | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 8.33 | 4.16 |
| number agreement | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 16.66 | 8.33 |

Legends:

NO: number of relevant grammatical category occurrence. FR: frequency rate (%). AFR: average frequency rate

4. Conclusion

This paper has studied English writing, focusing on how to find out the best way of teaching L2 learners English writing, looking into the most common errors with which L2 learners have been wrestling, rather than suggesting a *sui generis* skill on writing. Those errors, which EFL learners have fallen into and had not been conscious of during the English lessons at high school, must have gone on to lots of similar mistakes even when writing short sentences even at college. Such being the case, in the field of teaching English writing in Korea, writing should be a consistent concern both at middle/high school and at

college. Not merely regarding learning English words or vocabulary as the fittest way for reading comprehension, those in charge of teaching English and of working out English teaching curricula and lesson plans should lead high school and college students to learn how to express themselves with correct writing skills, with more concern on using appropriate words, combining them into grammatical structures based on a correct linear ordering, and arranging the structures into paragraphs to effectively convey their ideas and thoughts.

Thus, what is urgently needed is that we should spare no efforts to narrow down the gap between students' common writing errors and the components of a school textbook set, with a more concern on the development of writing and communication skills. In other words, given the recursive errors on the use of verbs and determiners by a majority of students, there should be a shift in working out English textbooks: a foundation laid for how to teach English writing and for how to develop the overall effective method of English writing. Based on a subordinate goal to help students be proficient in speaking English, the overall re-engineering of high school textbooks should be required. It is a well-known fact that writing exercise and practice in the form of self-generated topics and meanings can enhance L2 learners' writing ability.

As noted by Zamel (1983) and Raimes (1983), writing is an exploratory and generative process whereby writers can discover and reformulate ideas and thoughts. This nonetheless, it is quite regrettable that there is no writing practice and drill sections in the high school textbooks surveyed in this research. To form a habit of writing through middle/high school days, the education authorities are to research and develop proper textbooks, focusing on leading students to freely express, through free writing, what they have in mind. This is a shortcut method for acquiring speaking ability skill. Under the current circumstances in which proper writing textbooks have not been supplied for high school students, new writing teaching methods and techniques are required to help high school students improve their speaking abilities. Such a plan is said to be in tandem with the demands and wishes of a changing reality.

By developing proper school writing textbooks and teaching methods, teachers should motivate students to create their own sentences with positive and confident attitude toward English. If we are to go a step further and to solve the problems recursively arising in college students' writing practice, which a majority of Korean students are facing, we need to bring forth a newly-developed textbooks, in ways never before approached in the history of authoring school textbook. The traditional or ongoing approach of teaching writing courses that largely consist of putting Korean sentences into English should, if possible, be refrained.

The long-esteemed teaching method is no longer a model of writing. Instead, creating sentences by self-generated ideas and meanings, such as writing of essays and compositions, which respect the respective contents of their writings, should be positively encouraged, as writing is a thinking process. Through practices and writing drills on various levels, students will be able to write about their own ideas and thoughts. Thus, by the time L2 learners graduate from high school after they have studied English for up to 6 years, they can have a firm foundation to use English, including four skills. Upon reaching college and university, they only have to brush up and improve their English ability, further focusing on learning communicativeness skills.

In a way, as noted in Dong-A Ilbo, a Korean vernacular newspaper dated 19 Feb, 2008, on L2 learners' part, students should be given a chance to reflect on themselves regarding whether they have had sufficient practice to learn current school studies, including reading, grammar, vocabulary, and so on, not just placing the responsibility upon the current education system (Dong-A Ilbo dated 19 Feb, 08). It is, of course, necessary to further beef up the part of English speaking skills, echoed by many schools within and without. However, reading should not be disregarded, as it has played a pivotal role in helping students understand and acquire a better writing skill. To put it differently, the current social circumstances, in which reading and grammar are regarded as not helpful to English speaking and may be disregarded unilaterally and unconditionally, are not a desirable viewpoint.

Reading and writing skills, related to each other both in syntactic and in semantic understanding, are in complementary relations. Therefore, the ability to write down their ideas and thoughts in a logical way can be improved by reading as many related materials as possible and by developing reading skills needed to express themselves. Thus we can say that college students' lack of writing competence is attributable not only to insufficient writing practice but also to the limited reading experience. This bespeaks how to turn the pending issues into a way to meet the current demand on English like never before. In addition, we should press our eyes on the redevelopment of high school textbooks to meet students' demands on writing.

Making the current public education and university entrance system a pretext for refusing to reshuffle the overall components of the textbooks is grossly inadequate excuse.

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