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# Opportunities and Challenges of English Academic Writing Education in Japanese Universities

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# Introduction

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English academic writing in university contexts where English is an additional language exists where the fields of language education, higher education administration, research methodology, and cultural socialization converge. Successful participation in writing for academic or research purposes in English goes beyond understanding grammar or vocabulary; it also includes the teaching, learning, and research of new knowledge. So long as English remains the global language of higher education and research, education about writing practices in English will remain a core element that universities, even in non-English contexts, must provide to their communities. Whether English's dominance as a global lingua franca benefits higher education, more and more universities around the world have made efforts to integrate English academic writing education in their institutional policies and strategies. This is particularly true in this current era when the prestige sought by universities tends to be assessed largely in terms of publications in English. How to address these efforts toward promoting English academic writing, then, is the central concern of this publication.

This volume brings together scholarship that aims to address the different ways in which academic writing education shapes and is shaped by students, faculty and other stakeholders in a specific non-English as a first language context, namely Japan. Differences in language, literacy, and culture – seen in the negotiation of practices in multicultural environments – present challenges to all stakeholders involved. In addition, emerging and established academic writers bring disparate assumptions and expectations to the classroom and research domains within universities, which need to be navigated by practitioners.

The eight chapters in this volume offer broad discussions on the endeavors of English academic writing education in university contexts where English is not the first or essential language. In the first section, the roles that the writing center in Hiroshima University plays in providing essential support on academic writing education are highlighted. Section two focuses on faculty members, who are not only academic writers, but also practitioners who socialize students and junior faculty into the academic

writing community. Socialization into academic writing can be highly genre-specific, as discussed in section three, which emphasizes the importance of understanding a given field by common features of language used for presenting research. This section particularly examines the medical field as it is one of the fields where a great number of academic papers in English are produced by the researchers in Japan. Section four, then, takes a look at how theoretical and practical approaches open up new avenues for teaching and learning academic writing. Together, the discussions in the individual chapters can contribute profoundly to theory, policy, and practice in the domains of curriculum, research, and administration in university contexts. Such contributions can ultimately bolster the support Japanese universities and universities in similar contexts provide to students, educators, and researchers involved in the English academic writing culture.

# Part I:

# A writing center in Japan: Hiroshima University

## Chapter One:

# Development of the Hiroshima University Writing Center

## —From an administrative perspective—

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### 1. Introduction

When Hiroshima University (HU) launched its Writing Center in April 2013, it joined an increasing, but still limited, number of university writing centers established in Japan since 2004, when a few institutions, including Osaka Jogakuin College, Sophia University, and Waseda University, created the first-ever writing centers in Japan (Johnston, Cornwell & Yoshida, 2008). Most of those writing centers seem to follow the concepts and instructional approaches of writing centers, especially through one-to-one consultations with tutors for the development of tutees' independent writing skills (Kobayashi & Nakatake, 2019), which have been developed in Anglophone countries (Fujioka 2012; Okuda, 2018). Each center in Japan seems to have developed a slightly different scope of services (Delgrego, 2016). The Hiroshima University Writing Center (HU Writing Center) is probably unique in providing services to support the development of academic writing skills both in Japanese and English, and to students as well as faculty and staff members.

This chapter is co-written by two University Research Administrators (URAs)[1] who have been involved in the development of the HU Writing Center. It is presented as a case of one service delivery model from an administrative perspective. It begins

[1] Around the beginning of the 2010s, in response to the general recognition of the relative decline of the Japanese research competitiveness in the world, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Technology and Science (MEXT) started encouraging Japanese universities and research institutions to foster their own university research administrators (URAs) as new professionals who are to support the promotion of research activities. The URAs' roles vary among universities, but these URAs' main responsibilities are usually focused on the support related to grant applications for and financial management of research funds. Additionally, however, at some universities, including Hiroshima University, academic writing in English in terms of the promotion of publications in international academic journals has been regarded by their URAs as one of the other possible areas of the URA support.

with a contextual outline of the Center's administrative inception and development, and then offers a description of the Center's major services related to support for academic writing in English. Finally, in terms of this particular support, it highlights the opportunities and challenges which the HU Writing Center is now facing.

## 2. Creation and consolidation of the HU Writing Center

### 2.1 Organizational status quo

As of October 2020, the HU Writing Center organizationally belongs to the Office of Research and Academia-Government-Community Collaboration. The key units in charge of the Writing Center are the University Library and the URA Division at the Department of Research and Academia-Government-Community Collaboration. Since its inception, the Writing Center has been headed by the Center's Director, who is also the University Library's Director. The Director is assisted by three Associate Directors, including one faculty member with expertise in academic writing in English, and two administrative staff members (one from the Library and the other from the URA Division). Further, two to three administrative staff members from both the Library and the URA Division are included in the HU Writing Center Team.

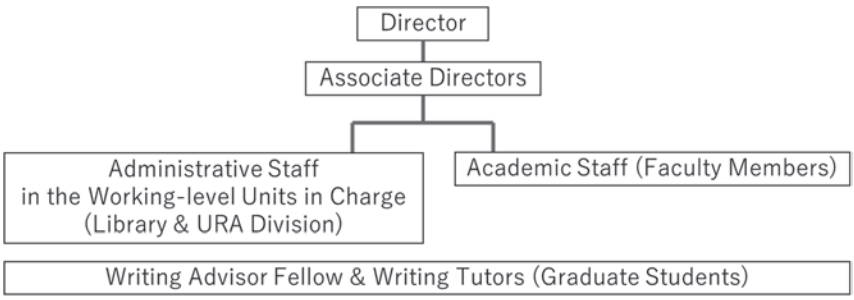


Figure 1. HU Writing Center's organizational chart as of October 2020

In addition to the instruction provided by the two faculty members (including one of the Associate Directors mentioned above), the Writing Advisor Fellow and some of the Graduate Student Tutors assist the Center's users to develop their skills in academic writing in English (the other Graduate Student Tutors are only involved in academic writing in Japanese). The human resource management of the faculty members and Graduate Student Tutors has been handled mainly by the Library, while the Writing Advisor Fellowship Program has been run by the URA Division.

In general, the dual objectives of our Writing Center of support for education and research are delivered by two administrative units. The education-focused services of learning support for students (essentially, writing tutorials both in Japanese and English) are dealt with by the University Library with the academic staff. The URA Division is responsible for the services for research support in English academic writing, in collaboration with the academic staff and the Writing Advisor Fellows.

The evolution of the Writing Center leading to the current organizational consolidation is contextualized below.

### 2.2 Early initiatives driven by the University Library

The establishment of the HU Writing Center was decided upon by the University in 2012. This decision was clearly noted under *The Action Plan 2012 for Strengthening the Functions of Hiroshima University*. Importantly, according to Ueda et al. (2017), this *Action Plan 2012* already indicated the dual objectives of creating a writing center at HU: support for student learning and support for research to strengthen HU as a research university. The HU Writing Center was established to provide its services to not only students but also researchers, including faculty members.

The University Library was no doubt the key player in the development of our Writing Center at the initial stage. The Library was well aware of a number of emerging practices in academic writing support for students at Japanese university libraries, often promoted by human resource restructuring in the context of the establishment of learning commons[2] at those libraries (Ueda et al., 2017). In 2012, the Library Director led a university-wide Working Group for the creation of the Writing Center, and the Library played the role of the group's secretariat. In 2013, the Library Director was concurrently appointed as the Writing Center Director, and the Center was installed in the university's Central Library. These arrangements for the directorship and location have remained unchanged.

In November 2013, our Writing Center started to provide its services, which at that time were limited to writing tutorials about academic writing in Japanese. Since then, these tutorials, offered exclusively by Graduate Student Tutors, have continued to be one of the main services of our Writing Center. While this particular service about

[2] Learning commons are learning spaces, for students' autonomous activities, which are often physically located in university libraries in Japan. While Europe and the USA saw the emergence of learning commons in the 1990s, a learning commons movement in Japan was initiated in the late 2000s (Augeri, 2019).

academic writing is available free of charge to all members of HU, the vast majority of the users are students, including many international students.

### 2.3 Further expansion fueled by the Program for Promoting the Enhancement of Research Universities

During 2013, another important change was made for the development of the HU Writing Center. In preparation for its proposal for the Program for Promoting the Enhancement of Research Universities (PPERU), a major 10-year national grant, HU reconfirmed its original plan to materialize one of the Writing Center's roles stated in *The Action Plan 2012* – supporting research, particularly in terms of publications in English. PPERU was funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Culture (MEXT), which had observed Japan's relative decline in the international competitiveness of its academic research for the previous decade or so. With the increased internationalization of higher education, the imperative for universities globally to focus on maintaining or improving their reputation and rankings has grown significantly. PPERU intends to augment the research capability of each university and contribute to vitalizing a core group of Japanese institutions engaged in world-class research activities.

The HU proposal for PPERU identified four key strategies to enhance its research capability: 1) improving research support (e.g., assigning URAs); 2) continuing to create its own world-class Centers of Excellence in research; 3) establishing a competitive environment to secure and foster excellent researchers; and 4) promoting international research activities (e.g., boosting the volume and quality of publications in high impact English-language journals). The proposal was successful and, particularly under the first and fourth strategies, several URAs ultimately joined the administrative operation of the HU Writing Center. Our communication with the URAs of the other 21 PPERU recipient institutions suggests that few have their URAs so substantially and directly involved in the university writing centers' administrative operations as does HU.

Fiscal Year 2014 saw not only the hiring of URAs, as expected by the acquisition of the PPERU funding in the previous year, but also of a professor, hired as one of the Associate Directors, to work with the administrative staff of the University Library for the HU Writing Center. This expansion of personnel, along with the limited but welcome new flow of PPERU funding, enabled our Writing Center to initiate most of its current services, which the next section of this article will describe in detail.

As mentioned earlier, the Writing Advisor Fellowship Program has been integral

to the Writing Center's operation since November 2016. International employees, usually those who have just completed their PhDs, have been recruited as Writing Advisor Fellows with expertise in academic writing in English for a fixed-term of up to one year. This has served both to maximize the Center's service provision while operating within the constraints of hiring new faculty members at the Writing Center, and also to internationalize the URA Division's work environment. These Fellows have made significant contributions to instruction in research writing as well as the development of the Writing Center's services.

## 3. Services to support English academic writing

Academic staff of the HU Writing Center teach classes on academic writing in English at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Besides those classes, the HU Writing Center offers various services to support HU members' English academic writing. In this section, we introduce each service in detail.

### 3.1 One-to-one consultation

The HU Writing Center has two different types of one-to-one consultations to support English academic writing for both students and faculty members of HU: writing tutorials by Graduate Student Tutors (hereafter Writing Tutorials) and consultations by the Faculty and the Writing Advisor Fellows (hereafter Consultations). Writing Tutorials are offered by Graduate Student Tutors who are trained in writing tutorial skills and protocols. The tutors mainly look at assignments, essays, master's theses, and doctoral dissertations and give advice on issues related to overall structure, clarity in meaning, and links between ideas. Second, Consultations are offered by academic staff of the HU Writing Center and Writing Advisor Fellows. They provide advice on more research-oriented writing such as journal papers, conference abstracts, and conference presentation scripts.

As is the case with other university writing centers, HU Writing Center's philosophy is "nurturing the writer's academic writing skills." Thus, in one-to-one Consultations, the HU Writing Center works collaboratively with our clients to provide them with the necessary skills and tools to become independent and confident writers of academic texts. As such, the HU Writing Center focuses on addressing problem issues in writing rather than proofreading or copy editing. However, we recognize the considerable demand for English proofreading and/or copyediting services. We will mention this matter in detail in the following section (3.5 Subsidy for English editing

services).

As mentioned in Section 2, when the HU Writing Center was established in 2013, it started Writing Tutorials only for Japanese academic writing. In response to the trend of globalization in academia and in order to enhance HU's international presence in research, an academic staff member specializing in English academic writing was appointed to the HU Writing Center in 2014 and started Consultations for English academic writing. The following year, the Writing Tutorials for English academic writing started, and in 2016 the HU Writing Center created a Writing Advisor Fellowship Program and the Fellow joined the academic staff in providing Consultations. Our one-to-one Consultation service has been expanding and the number of sessions is increasing; however, given the total number of students (approx. 15,000) and faculty members (approx. 1,600), the service has not yet reached out to the majority of our possible users.

Table 1. Number of sessions for Consultations

| | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic staff *1 | 9 | 35 | 22 | 48 | 70 | 389 |
| Writing Advisor Fellow *2 | | | 24 | 81 | 134 | 48 |
| Total | 9 | 35 | 46 | 129 | 204 | 437 |

*1 Since May 2019, two academic staff members have been conducting the Consultations.
*2 The Fellow conducted the Consultations from November 2016 to March 2017, April to June and November 2017 to March 2018, April 2019, and October 2019 to March 2020

### 3.2 Seminars and workshops

Since 2014, the HU Writing Center has been holding seminars and workshops on numerous and diverse aspects of academic writing in English. At the moment, we categorize those events as Writing Seminars, On-demand Workshops, and Series Workshops. A Writing Seminar is basically a stand-alone event in which lecturer(s) and topics vary. Sometimes the HU Writing Center invites the lecturer(s) from outside the university or outsources the seminar itself to outside organizations (e.g., to an editing company). On-demand Workshops are conducted by the academic staff of the HU Writing Center. They plan a workshop based on a request from a faculty member, course, program, or department. Series Workshops are conducted by the Fellows, whose role is solely concentrated on the HU Writing Center activities. Series Workshops are designed to cover specific aspects of the writing process in depth, such as a session dedicated

solely to abstract writing. These workshops with a specific topic and in-depth contents cannot be provided by a Writing Seminar, which is typically a one- or two-hour session of a one-day event.

Participants in seminars and workshops range from undergraduate students to faculty members, with the majority of participants being graduate students, most of whom are international. There are several factors to explain this participant distribution. HU offers academic writing courses at undergraduate and graduate levels in both Japanese and English, but those courses are not mandatory. Most international students are from Asian countries and enter graduate courses without having knowledge of academic writing in English. Consequently, graduate students, especially international graduate students, seek help for high-stakes pieces of academic writing including theses and dissertations. Graduate students also bring in journal manuscripts which need to be published to fulfill the graduation requirements. Meanwhile, reflecting the recent trend of globalization in academia, faculty members, and especially early career researchers, are under pressure to achieve a substantial research publishing record in international journals in order to meet the university's requirement to stay on tenure track.

As a result, HU seminars and workshops can play many roles, ranging from serving as an equivalent to credited writing courses on the one hand, to serving as a last resort for those who are struggling with academic writing in English on the other. This is why current seminars and workshops are open for all HU members. However, we have received some feedback from the participants that graduate students or faculty only would be preferred or that participants should be divided by writing proficiency levels. In future, it would be desirable to customize those events to suit participants' needs when staffing allows.

### 3.3 Writing retreats

Inspired by our visit to other writing centers in the United States, the HU Writing Center started holding writing retreat events that offered HU researchers an opportunity to focus on their writing, uninterrupted and in a supportive environment. It had tried to find more effective faculty support that went beyond seminars and workshops. We had also realized that faculty members are not able to secure time for their writing because of many other tasks imposed by the university. This seems to be happening not only in Japan, and we have learned that writing retreats are very popular among researchers in the United States and elsewhere. Even so, it has not been

easy to conduct successful retreat events at HU.

First, there is no equivalent Japanese term for "retreat," and it was difficult to explain to HU researchers what a retreat was and how beneficial a retreat could be for them. In fact, a researcher told us that he did not see the difference between attending a retreat event and working in his office. Second, the university also did not understand the advantages of retreats and consequently the HU Writing Center had no budget for holding a retreat event. Therefore, for the first retreat event, it set the theme of writing proposals for the Japanese national Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (KAKENHI), used a free university facility, and asked participants to contribute for snacks and drinks.

Now, "retreat" has become a common term at the university, and the HU Writing Center has been holding writing retreat events and improving them through trial and error. It has combined a writing retreat with a one-to-one consultation/mini-seminar, held an event in a specific department, and has been conducted with a science communication workshop[3]. Although the participants are satisfied in general according to their feedback, the Writing Center needs to increase its efforts to promote retreats and highlight the benefits these events can have for members of HU. These writing retreat activities will be examined in Chapter Four.

### 3.4 Writing groups

Our inaugural Writing Advisor Fellow, Dr. Karen Carter, suggested starting Writing Groups based on her experience at Arizona State University in the United States. In 2017, the HU Writing Center launched three Writing Groups as a new support project for assisting researchers at the university to write high quality journal papers. Our Writing Groups offer members the opportunity to give and receive peer feedback on their writing. The groups meet regularly, and the Fellow facilitates the group discussions and offers input based on the group members' needs. Currently, the HU Writing Center runs faculty and graduate student writing groups. A former Fellow,

[3] Since 2016, the HU Office of Research and Academia-Government-Community Collaboration has developed two international fellowship programs to promote the international dissemination of information on the university's research activities. One (i.e., the dissemination for the academic communities) is the Writing Advisor Fellowship while the other (i.e., the dissemination for the general public) is the Science Communication Fellowship, which has internationally attracted junior professionals trained as science communicators outside Japan. The two fellows' collaborative work, including the writing retreats, has been encouraged where such collaboration makes meaningful services to the university.

Dr. Todd Allen, reported on activities of our Writing Groups at the 10th Symposium on Writing Centers in Asia (Toyo University, Tokyo, 2018) and published a paper (Allen, 2019). Dr. Adina Staicov, another former Fellow, who is currently one of our faculty members at the HU Writing Center, will discuss Writing Groups for faculty in detail in Chapter Four.

### 3.5 Subsidy for English editing services

One of the missions of the HU Writing Center is to increase the number and improve the quality of English academic papers produced by HU researchers in order to enhance the University's research activities and international presence. However, as HU is a comprehensive university and research environments differ according to discipline, we suspected that the needs for English editing services likewise would vary by discipline. Therefore, the HU Writing Center conducted a survey about English editing services in July 2014[4] and found that these services are essential for almost all Japanese researchers who are preparing to submit journal papers for publication in the natural sciences and medical fields, and some in the social sciences. Conversely, some researchers in the arts and humanities said that they do not write papers in English but in Japanese. Responding to this result, the HU Writing Center established two subsidy programs for English editing services: a "partial subsidy program for English editing services" and a "full subsidy for English editing services of abstracts for university journals."

The "partial subsidy program for English editing services" started in the middle of Academic Year 2014 and has since become the most popular service of the Writing Center today. Researchers choose an editing company and request proofreading/copy editing for their papers. After submitting the papers to a journal listed on the Web of Science or Scopus, the program covers half (up to a maximum) of the cost of proofreading/copy editing services as an incentive for increasing the number and improving the quality of English academic papers. The HU Writing Center subsidized 171 papers in 2014: by 2019, the number of subsidized papers had increased to 427, with the number of those subsidized in 2020 anticipated to be greater still.

In contrast to the more broadly applicable partial subsidy program, the "full subsidy for English editing services of abstracts for university journals" program was

[4] This survey was conducted for Hiroshima University faculty members from July 10 to July 31 in 2014. We received 559 (31%) answers out of 1,804, of which 543 were L1 (first language) Japanese, 13 were non-Japanese, and three were L1 English researchers.

designed to introduce and promote research outcomes internationally, mainly from the arts and humanities and social sciences at HU. The HU Writing Center covers all costs of editing services for English abstracts of Japanese academic papers in the University's in-house journals. Posting such papers onto the University Repository, which makes them public and freely accessible, is required to receive this subsidy. The number of subsidized abstracts is annually about 100 on average. At present, our contracted English editing services polish those English abstracts translated by the researchers from Japanese before the papers are posted to the Repository. This sometimes results in a problem because the original abstract in Japanese was not addressed to non-Japanese speaking readers and its direct translation to English does not make sense to readers who do not speak Japanese or know little about Japan. To date, we have been unable to remedy this issue.

## 4. Opportunities and challenges

Although not an exhaustive list, this section presents several distinct points for both the HU Writing Center's opportunities and challenges.

### 4.1 Opportunities

One of the most significant opportunities for the HU Writing Center is the continued expansion of its personnel with its increased academic staff with expertise in English academic writing as well as its administrative staff with experience in the Center's operations. Early in 2019, the Writing Advisor Fellow at that time became a faculty member in the Center; later in the same year, the university's Personnel Committee approved the HU Writing Center's request for a tenure-track faculty position in English academic writing, which will make the number of its faculty members three in total by early 2021. Also, the HU Writing Center continues to run the Writing Advisor Fellowship Program, which annually attracts some 50 competitive applications from around the world for one position. We anticipate that our ever-strengthening academic team will improve the Center's services and facilitate further growth in the reach and scope of services.

To support such growth, the HU Writing Center will continue to provide strong administrative assistance from the Library staff and URAs. The Library staff are now experienced with all the logistics at the Center. The URAs' direct involvement in the operation, which seems unique in Japan as mentioned earlier, continues to facilitate the administrative improvement of the Center's services by following the University's

strategy for the enhancement of research capacity of HU.

Another opportunity for the HU Writing Center is its networking efforts with other writing centers and experts in English academic writing in Japan and other countries. The HU Writing Center has been developing this network by visiting university writing centers and attending/organizing symposia. On our campus, for example, the HU Writing Center organized a symposium, "Support for Researchers Publishing in English from the Perspective of Institutional Administration," in 2017, which attracted about 40 participants from around Japan. Our Fellows' own expertise and connections, too, have been another integral addition to our networking efforts. Indeed, one such positive result is the compilation of the articles written by leading experts for this very publication about academic writing education in Japanese universities. Without the HU Writing Center's ever-growing network, it would not have been possible to organize a number of virtual events such as student tutor exchanges with American counterparts and international journal editor roundtables. We look forward to continuing to have the privilege of collaborating with our partners in this expanding network.

Further, one silver lining of the dark cloud of COVID-19 in 2020 has been the opportunity it provided the Writing Center to significantly improve its online provision of support for English academic writing. As early as 2015, the HU Writing Center made our one-to-one Consultations available via Skype, specifically for those on our two smaller campuses. Before COVID-19, very few had used this virtual service. However, since the outbreak of the pandemic, the Center and its users have been forced to use virtual communication tools such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Virtual workshops which combine pre-recorded video clips about aspects of English academic writing with interactive follow-up live sessions are one of our popular new services. Also, our virtual one-to-one consultation instructors now include our former Fellow, who is located overseas. With this strengthened infrastructure for online communication and the newly emerging culture familiar with virtual support, we envision that the HU Writing Center will be able to devise and implement innovative support into the future.

### 4.2 Challenges

While it can be argued that the HU Writing Center has a promising future with the opportunities mentioned above, we also see at least two serious issues to overcome.

First, the limited budget for the HU Writing Center has been one of the threats for its operations and will likely continue to be a major challenge. Although we have managed to run our services with the given budget, the continuity of all the existing

services may come under question in the near future. Particularly as we see the end of the 10-year PPERU funding in 2023, HU needs to start securing the funds to continue its efforts to promote academic writing in English. PPERU strongly encourages all the selected 22 institutions to internalize their initiatives devised under PPERU. Fortunately, HU has already started to shift some of the expenses for the HU Writing Center from the PPERU grant funding to the university's own funds, e.g., the budget for our Writing Advisor Fellows' salary. However, we have not seen any indication of new substantial investment in maintaining and improving the HU Writing Center's services as a whole.

Second, as this may be related to the financial difficulty mentioned above, it seems that support for English academic writing (and perhaps, academic writing in general, both in Japanese and English) has yet to be recognized as one of the top priorities for the University's development. We suppose that many at HU (both students and faculty members) feel their own English academic writing skills are to some degree a barrier to their academic success, particularly in this increasingly globalized academia. Not enough university-wide moves to address this challenge faced by so many within the HU community have been seen; however, small-scale responses have been made at the HU Writing Center as described in this chapter. One of the examples of the low recognition of the importance of academic writing training at most Japanese universities, including HU, is the lack of established, university-wide mandatory courses of academic writing in Japanese as well as in English. Given the already tight class schedules and ever-increasing workloads, relatively few students or faculty members tend to be motivated to invest extra time to improve their academic writing skills. This seems like a difficult mindset to change. Also, except for the two subsidy programs for English editing services and the seminars/workshops conducted in Japanese, the users of the HU Writing Center tend to be international graduate students. Compared to this international cohort, most of whom are obliged to publish papers in English during their studies at Hiroshima University, Japanese students and faculty members use the academic writing support in English provided by the HU Writing Center much less often. It is possible that, for many students and faculty, the need for support is outweighed by their resistance to verbal communication in English, which, for a number of reasons, can be difficult to overcome.

## 5. Conclusion

As described so far, there is no doubt that services for English academic writing at

the HU Writing Center have been substantially developed and diversified in less than a decade. At the same time, as the internationalization of higher education has continued to grow, support for academic writing skills in English, which is imperative for academic communication, is now even more important than in 2012, when the design to establish the Center was spelled out in *The Action Plan 2012*. In order to continue to make the most use of the opportunities and best cope with the challenges explained above, we suggest the following two strategies at HU.

First, HU must convince the university community of the importance of support for academic writing in English by involving the wider community of HU in the discussion. As academic writing skills in English are critical, not only for research but also for education, HU should more intensively and extensively promote academic writing in English on campus. The HU Writing Center may be able to play a role in facilitating such efforts among the critical mass, including the key decision-makers at HU, to improve the system to help its students and faculty members develop academic writing skills in English.

Second, the HU Writing Center should consider starting to shift itself gradually into a more academic-staff-driven organization with even stronger support from administrative staff. As explained in this chapter, the development of the HU Writing Center in the earlier years was driven predominantly by the administrative staff. The administrative staff's commitment to the Center's operations will continue, but they are not experts in teaching and learning. Now that the academic staff team at the HU Writing Center is being expanded, more initiatives led by the academic staff with expertise in English academic writing education should be supported by the experienced administrative staff. Based on such expertise and administration, our services can and will become more practical, proactive, effective, and efficient than ever.

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## Chapter Two:

# Perceptions of academic writing support

## – A needs analysis of the Hiroshima University Writing Center –

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### 1. Introduction

Contemporary higher education in recent decades has shifted its view of academic writing, regarding it less as a quality among academics that can be taken for granted and more as a skill that education can and should explicitly foster. That said, while the advent of university writing centers reflects a perceived need to provide education on academic writing to undergraduate students (and, in limited cases, graduate students), less attention has been paid to the academic writing needs of the larger, overall community within any higher education context. This disparity of focus in research and professional circles suggests that, while universities have acknowledged that undergraduate students require socialization into academic writing practices, graduate students, faculty, and researchers are seen as requiring no such education or guidance. Recent discussion has begun to acknowledge that graduate students as prospective academics "often feel isolated and unsupported in their publishing endeavors" (Allen, 2019, p. 438). That said, there is need to investigate the extent to which all aspects of higher education face challenges with respect to academic writing and academic support.

To investigate this knowledge gap, this paper reports on a needs analysis conducted by the Hiroshima University Writing Center to assess the perspectives of graduate students, faculty, and researchers about their academic writing needs. Particularly where differences of language and culture raise potential challenges for non-L1 English speakers (i.e., speakers for whom English is not a first language) to successfully publish in English-language research literature, a needs analysis through survey and focus group research of members of the Hiroshima University community provides a good opportunity to examine how university members view the importance and extent of support provided for their writing practices.

Using Royse et al.'s (2009) framework for needs assessment, an analysis of the data brings to light concerns that students, faculty, and researchers have about their awareness and the acceptability of the services provided to them by the writing center. In conducting discussions with various members of the university community, the researchers in this study have generated meaningful implications for potential policies and endeavors that can expand the reach of the writing center in a manner that can better facilitate the process of writing and publishing academic research. The discussion of this research, in turn, can provide stakeholders in writing centers and other organizations of academic support in institutions of higher education with useful guidance on how to conduct needs analyses for their own contexts.

## 2. Background

Academic writing is a key component in any major university, not just for socializing undergraduate students into university education but also for facilitating the research reporting processes of university faculty and researchers. Published academic writing is a criterion for a number of university rankings, whether it is called "research productivity" or "citations per faculty," lending weight to research achievements taking the form of publications in peer-reviewed journals written by members of any particular university. In simple terms, the relative prestige of any particular university is determined by the breadth and depth of academic writing published in peer-reviewed publications by the members of that university. As a result, universities are incentivized to ensure that their students, faculty, and other affiliated researchers regularly produce published works within the greater academic community in order to maintain and increase their stature among other institutions.

Non-Western university contexts, and particularly contexts where English is not the main language of use, encounter challenges in this respect, as peer-reviewed academic journals published in English are considered within the larger academic research community as more prestigious than journals written in other languages. These challenges are not merely lexical or semantic in nature, but also structural, as there are bound to be differences in commonly accepted writing styles depending on language. As such, there are cultural expectations that non-L1 English-speaking university members need to negotiate when working toward publication in L1 English journals. This necessitates the provision of support within universities with respect to academic writing. Despite this need, writing centers are a relatively novel addition to Japanese higher education, providing a key opportunity to observe differences in

understanding about academic support. While Japanese universities in the postwar era have been modeled after American institutions (Murata, 1969), the evolution of both contexts in the decades since has seen a divergence between how Western and Japanese educators view the role and shape of universities.

A review of the contemporary literature indicates that university writing centers overall focus mainly on student work, whether it is tutors working directly with students or helping faculty work with students (Scott, 2015). Certainly, this is an important aspect of academic support that deserves significant focus. However, there is little, if any, discussion of the role of university writing centers in supporting research publication. Exploration of this research inquiry would have important implications for the formalization and standardization of effective practices for providing support to graduate students, faculty members, and researchers on their academic writing endeavors. A new study exploring the perspectives of faculty about writing centers is thus required.

## 3. Research context

This study was conducted for the Hiroshima University Writing Center. Within the Japanese higher education context, national universities such as Hiroshima University hold a certain prestige, meaning that admission into these universities is competitive. In the academic year beginning April 2019, the university had over 15,000 students, over 13% of whom are international students from 71 countries, most of which are not considered to have English as a first language. Faculty are similarly international in nature, with departments focusing on international development, education, and medical sciences in Japanese and international contexts.

The university's writing center was established relatively recently, in April 2013. At the outset, the writing center primarily served undergraduate students, but soon after its establishment, it formed a collaborative relationship with the university's research administration office, allowing for support for academic writing in Japanese in November 2013, and in English in April 2014. As a result of this collaboration, the writing center expanded services to assist graduate students, faculty, and other university community members in their academic writing endeavors. By the academic year beginning in April 2019, the writing center employed a team of graduate student writing tutors, two faculty members specializing in academic writing, and a full-time, non-faculty "writing advisor" whose services supplement those provided by the writing center faculty.

The writing center has a variety of services available to clients. While these services are addressed in the previous chapter, it is important to outline here what services were discussed for and during the study outlined in this paper. Consultations, or one-on-one sessions with clients to provide personalized support for their academic writing, make up the majority of interactive service to the university community. However, there are also regularly scheduled writing groups, seminars, and workshops throughout the academic year to provide general advice on academic writing. Finally, the writing center provides subsidies for clients to pay for proofreading services provided by outside vendors.

## 4. The needs analysis

This paper relies on a needs analysis conducted to sample and explore the dispositions and perspectives the university community has about its writing center. According to Royse et al. (2009), "needs assessment is a process that attempts to estimate deficiencies" (p. 3) of an organization or service by, among other methods, collecting the perspectives of the community to whom that organization or service provides support. By understanding what needs the university community expresses, stakeholders within the writing center can more effectively evaluate how their services address those needs in the present and going forward. Moreover, universities in all contexts are currently contending with consumerist narratives in which university units view their communities as prospective customers (Woodall, Hiller, & Resnick, 2012). Given this imperative, needs analysis becomes a necessary tool for academic support organizations in higher education in order to expand their reach and their contribution to their institutions.

The needs analysis consists of both survey research and focus group research. Method triangulation (Flick, 2018) allows for capturing data about the same context from different angles in order to provide a more comprehensive description and, thus, a more thorough analysis. That said, this paper will focus primarily on data collected from focus group research, which relies on discussions with members of the Hiroshima University community to gather their reflections about narratives generated from the survey.

Writing center staff created an online survey to assess the needs of and demand for the writing center from the larger university population. Survey research methods are aimed at "tapping the subjective feelings of the public" in order to collect a body of perspectival data (Fowler, 2014). Questions in this survey are aimed at capturing

whether respondents, who are members of the university community, are aware of the extent of the services that the writing center provides, use the writing center's services, and are satisfied with such services. The staff ensured that the survey was bilingual in English and Japanese. The staff collaborated to ensure that translations were as accurate as possible to ensure reliability of results. The survey was distributed via the university's online platforms for students and faculty, and through its mailing list of those who have attended seminars and workshops within the previous academic year. The survey research collected a total of 937 completed responses from all members of the university community, providing a confidence interval of 3.12 points, given a total population of 19,003 and a confidence level of 95%.

Data collection from focus group discussions was then conducted as a means to gather a deeper understanding of some of the insights collected from an analysis of the survey data. Focus group discussions were designed as semi-structured interviews with the potential for multiple respondents in order to allow for a development of dialogue among participants with as little intervention from the interviewer as possible. Questions posed to the respondents were based on initial findings from the survey data and were intended to elicit respondents' perspectives about academic writing and support for their writing practices. A total of nine respondents (six graduate students, two faculty members, and one postdoctoral researcher) participated in five focus groups that were conducted online via Microsoft Teams. Discussions of survey data largely centered around support for academic writing in English, given that all participants in discussions have used such services currently or in the past. All interactions with focus group respondents were transcribed for further analysis. Respondents were given codes (e.g., DM1, HF1) to preserve anonymity.

Data analysis employed Royse et al.'s (2009) framework for needs assessment. In their treatise, needs assessment can be conceptualized using focal points of awareness, availability, accessibility, and acceptability. First and foremost, prospective service clients need to be aware that a service exists before they consider taking advantage of it. Even after becoming aware of a service, they decide whether to use the service depending on the extent to which they perceive that the service is available to address their needs. Accessibility refers to whether prospective clients can reasonably take advantage of services without difficulty, while acceptability is the prospective clients' measure of the quality of such services, whether based on their own experiences or that of others (i.e., word of mouth).

## 5. Findings

Discussion of both survey data and focus group data yields useful insights that can be categorized by Royse et al.'s (2009) focal points for needs assessment. Each section of the findings will focus on responses collected in focus group discussions, with reference to survey data as a means to elicit perspectives from focus group respondents.

### 5.1 Awareness

Making sure that the university community is aware of the services that the writing center provides is an essential goal to ensure utilization and justify the presence of support for academic writing. Per the survey data, about 60% of the university community say that they are aware of the writing center's services. This means that the writing center is somewhat recognized within the university, while there is potential to further raise awareness, especially given the possibility that there are some university members who need support for their writing practices but do not know about the writing center.

In some cases, the extent of awareness about the writing center's services is minimal at best. DM1, a graduate student from Latin America and studying in Japan for one year, received a flyer advertising the writing center's services at the beginning of his time at the university. In the focus group discussion, he said that, because he was just beginning his research at the time, he did not have a need for writing support and, therefore, did not think about using the writing center until much later in his stay, after he looked at the flyer again. Because he did not hear about the writing center's services through other means, he indicated that he would not have considered the writing center had he not retained the flyer.

HF1, a postdoctoral researcher from East Asia, received even less information at the beginning of her time at the university, as she says there are no orientations or information sessions for incoming researchers, as there are for undergraduate students. Awareness of the writing center came from the leader of her research laboratory, who has used the writing center's services in the past. Moreover, she notes that there are not necessarily many ways in which university members become passively aware of the writing center.

> "If there is orientation, that would be better. And also, because you have got a mailing service, mailing list. We have to register myself, we are not

automatically registered." (HF1, September 4, 2020 focus group discussion)

HF1 uses the example of the writing center's mailing list, which provides recipients with email information about the writing center's events and services. In order to receive that information, however, recipients have to sign up. By implication, they have to already know about the writing center before they can subscribe to the mailing list. Whereas subscribing to the mailing list is more active in nature, HF1 suggests awareness could be improved by having university researchers already subscribed to the mailing list.

To that effect, word of mouth appears to be useful in promoting the writing center throughout the university. JM1 is an international faculty member from Europe who receives regular help from the writing center on his research papers. He is largely satisfied with the support he receives to the extent that he actively promotes the writing center to his students and other faculty when possible.

Despite the impact of word of mouth, there is little indication from the focus group discussions about the impact of formal means for raising awareness of the writing center's services. Both DM1 and HF1 indicated that there is inadequate promotion of the writing center at times when they need it. This suggests that more regular promotion of academic support can help to make the greater university community aware of the services of which they can take advantage.

### 5.2 Availability

The responses from the survey indicate that, when the university community thinks about academic writing, they perceive various needs that academic support can address, only some of which the writing center actually provides. University members are aware of the consultations, workshops, seminars, and editing subsidies that make up the core services of the writing center. That said, they also indicated that they are looking for different forms of support, such as direct help with proofreading and seminars on unexplored topics such as how to use referencing software (e.g., Zotero, Mendeley).

DF1 is a graduate student from East Asia who situates her perceptions of academic writing in the context of interacting with her fellow students and working with her supervisor, indicating that she could benefit from greater support from the latter, or at

least from within her department. As a result, she uses the writing center to seek out further academic support in ways that transcend the writing of research.

> "At first I came to Japan and, although I can speak Japanese, I cannot express my academic thinking in Japanese, so I went to the writing center. […] Another thing I get from the writing center is I talk about my research. And although a lot of them are not in my field and they cannot understand what I am saying, but by talking I organize my idea. That's what I get help at first from the writing center." (DF1, July 13, 2020 focus group discussion)

Indeed, the larger process of academic writing in the university, which sometimes involves collaborations among researchers and, in many cases, between students and their supervisors, has a bureaucratic aspect that is seen as necessary to achieve consensus. Such issues involving interpersonal relations and, at the margins, conflict resolution, while important in facilitating the academic writing process, are not necessarily related to the services that the writing center provides with respect to guidance on specifically crafting the paper. This does raise the question of whether the writing center should expand its scope of support to include such issues, though doing so runs the risk of interfering with other university support organizations that may be more relevant in such situations.

Regarding the services that the writing center does provide, HF1 provides an interesting insight in that the support given may actually require, at least for some, an unreasonable level of commitment of time and effort. In her focus group discussion, the conversation turned to writing groups, which the writing center conducts on a weekly basis to allow for peer support regarding the development of papers. HF1, who is confident in her writing abilities, indicated that she needs feedback on her writing, but only sporadically. While she finds the notion of peer support useful, the prospect of weekly meetings may be too much of a commitment in her case. Given the possibility that availability requires commitment, not only from writing center staff but also from its prospective clients, it is important to explore how support services can be tailored to university members in terms of what time and effort they can afford as well as what they need.

### 5.3 Accessibility

Under normal circumstances, the writing center is reasonably accessible to most of the university community who are connected to the main campus. The writing center is located near the front entrance of the campus' main library, which is situated in a prominent area in the northern end of the campus. Only a small portion of the survey respondents have indicated they do not use the writing center because they are busy during its operating hours. Otherwise, there are usually no major obstacles to taking advantage of the writing center's services.

That said, the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020, when this study was conducted, has posed challenges for all aspects of university life, requiring adjustments to how academic support is provided. In particular, international students during the pandemic have been unable to physically come to campus. WF1 is a doctoral student from East Asia who has not been allowed to enter Japan because of immigration restrictions due to COVID-19. In focus group discussions, she said that one of the challenges in her doctoral studies is the ability to fully take advantage of the university's library system from her home country in order to conduct her research.

AF1, another international student from East Asia, resides in Japan but also has difficulty in coming to campus because of COVID-19 restrictions. Both students, however, are able to use the writing center's online services, which were given greater focus after in-person services were limited during the pandemic. WF1 finds the workshops, which shifted to online events, useful for her writing, while AF1 takes advantage of the online consultations to work on her submissions to academic conferences. WF1, unable to come to campus, has resorted to working remotely and doing as much as she can in order to prepare for later stages of her doctoral career.

> "I'm doing my research, I send email to my professors, I search articles to do my research, and I attend online seminars, workshops, I watch the video. And at this stage, because this is my first time, my first semester of my PhD, this stage, I am collecting my literature and reading it and categorizing the literature into the relevant category so I can have more information and the literature review and things like that. So, to be honest, I haven't started academic writing, I'm just reading a lot." (WF1, September 7, 2020 focus group discussion)

The restrictions placed on the university due to the pandemic, as well as university community members situated in satellite campuses or conducting research away from university spaces, highlight the importance of online resources provided by academic support services. Particularly as online software such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom have made remote work more feasible, university education has become more accessible to students like WF1 and AF1 who are limited by restrictions imposed on physical travel. Especially in universities that are international in nature, it is essential for academic support services to consider how best to provide support across large physical distances.

### 5.4 Acceptability

Within the original framework defined by Royse et al. (2009), acceptability refers to the perceptions that current and prospective clients have regarding the quality of services that are provided, under the assumption that people will be more inclined to take advantage of services they feel adequately meet their needs. One nuance to add to this criterion is the extent to which clients believe that they themselves will be able to effectively use those services. According to the survey results, undergraduate and graduate students were somewhat more likely to say that they needed help on their academic writing than did faculty members. One open-ended response from a faculty member, when asked why they do not use the writing center, simply read, "[M]y students need it, I don't."

However, a sampling of the survey and focus group data indicates that when university members do take advantage of the writing center, they are satisfied with the quality of services that are provided. As noted previously, JM1, a regular client using the writing center's consultations, says that he actively advertises the writing center to his students and colleagues when possible. Most of the other focus group respondents are past or currently regular clients of the writing center and have similarly spoken positively about the services they use. In JM1's case, he recommends the writing center to others because use of its services can identify issues in academic writing that the author alone may not be able to see.

> "For me, the challenge is flow of contents, and I received good help from writing center in depth terms. Somehow, maybe, also apply for other researchers, but for me, surely apply that somehow I am blind to see my imperfections in paper. So, when I see my paper, it look all logical and

> good, but…then he can point out some logic parts where concept was not good. For this part, I receive great help for already two papers from writing center and I would recommend to also try this services. I think challenge for many researchers that they cannot easily see, how to call it, maybe bias or imperfection that something, they are missing some parts. For example, I didn't mention implications. Validation is good, conclusion, but implications, how important for society, I didn't mention it in my paper, so it was good catch by writing advisor." (JM1, July 21, 2020 focus group discussion)

On the other hand, the data provides indications that those university members who have not used the writing center perceive that they do not need its services because they are confident in their own writing abilities. JF1, a doctoral student from east Africa, expresses a good deal of confidence in her writing, citing the education she received in her home country. Moreover, the sole official language in her country is English, which reinforces her belief that she does not need help with academic writing in English.

In that sense, the data illustrates a perception shared by at least a portion of the university community that academic writing, at least in English-speaking contexts, is primarily a function of English proficiency. In focus groups, DF1 indexed her proficiency in writing to her proficiency in English, indicating a connection between the specific practice of writing and the overall level of mastery in the language. Interestingly, data analysis highlights the possibility that those members who do not feel confident about their proficiency in English may also be disinclined to use the writing center. Indeed, open-ended responses by students and university staff also reflect this characterization that the level of required language proficiency that they perceive the writing center to require is too high. Whether such members perceive this as a challenge of communication with writing center staff or of expectations of the larger academic writing community (e.g., academic journals, conferences) is less clear. Regarding the former, the writing center's staff communicates with clients in both English and Japanese, ensuring that clients can receive academic support regardless of their language background. Still, this is a challenge with respect to how the writing center can shape perceptions within the university about the expectations of academic writing and of how academic support services can be tailored to meet the needs of the entire community.

## 6. Discussion and conclusion

As the findings indicate, the writing center faces not one significant challenge to the development and growth of its services, but several small considerations that cumulatively contribute to the perceptions of current and prospective writing center clients. The findings from this study provide indications that there are challenges defined by each of the four components that can and should be addressed for future expansion of the writing center. As such, there are implications for discussing not one singular policy change but a series of incremental changes that could benefit the writing center and the university community.

Immediate changes that writing center stakeholders have discussed during consideration of this needs analysis relate to the expansion of writing center services, namely in changes to the scope of support the writing center can provide. For example, respondents to surveys and in focus group discussions have indicated a need for support for grant writing, referencing software, and research methods, areas in which the writing center at the time did not provide guidance. The main considerations for including such support deal with the specific support in writing academic papers on which the writing center focuses and the extent to which other entities within the university (e.g., research administration, supervision by faculty) already address such needs. While those discussions are ongoing, it is important to note that needs analysis through interaction with members of the university community raised awareness of such issues in a meaningful manner that can guide future policy and planning.

Moreover, this study, while bringing clarity to the perspectives expressed by university members, opens up new avenues of inquiry given the differences in perspectives students, faculty, and other researchers have about support for academic writing. This paper highlights some data excerpts where some respondents believe they do not need support for themselves, but perceive others as requiring support. Furthermore, other respondents characterize academic writing as a function of English proficiency rather than a process of socialization into the academic community. To that end, the writing center faces challenges in how to clarify to the larger university community expectations about effective academic writing, in that such clarification may facilitate greater awareness of the need for the writing center's services.

Finally, this study affirms Royse et al.'s (2009) framework for needs assessment, as categorizing respondents' perspectives along the four defined considerations allows for a clearer discussion of needs that have and have not been addressed by the current dimensions of the support provided. The discussion among writing center staff and

other relevant stakeholders has helped to explore “modification of policy” and “improvement of services,” two typical uses of needs assessment defined by Royse et al. To be sure, there are limitations to discuss in terms of the research as conducted, such as the lengthy sampling window for the survey (at least six months) and the small number of focus group respondents (n = 9). Future iterations of this needs analysis can be informed by the experiences drawn from the execution of this study. Nonetheless, the collected data represents a useful body of perspectives from various members of the university community that can be used to shape the future directions of the writing center in a way that academic support entities in other universities can emulate.

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# Part II:

# Faculty development for academic writing

## Chapter Three:

# Potential roles of writing centers for writing related Faculty Development

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### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to examine the potential roles of a writing center in supporting instructors (graduate students and faculty members) to teach academic writing. The ability to write well academically is one of the essential attributes graduate students are expected to develop. In Japan, written assignments are given to students throughout the undergraduate program and often they are expected to write an undergraduate thesis to complete their degree program. In developing academic writing skills, the role of instructors related to undergraduate research is critical. However, an instructor's ability to guide students is overlooked in the context of Faculty Development (FD). To shed light on this context, we ask: How do students learn to carry out undergraduate research and what are the challenges and issues with undergraduate thesis writing education? How do instructors learn to guide students?

From around the 1980s, there was a growing awareness of problems with writing education in Japan. In the 1990s, some universities started to offer a subject on Japanese composition. Since the 2000s, many universities have been offering academic writing as a first-year education subject (Inoshita, 2008). To support credited academic writing subjects, universities began to establish supporting structures such as writing centers and learning support desks within libraries. There are many activity reports and published research papers related to those centers and desks; topics include methods for supporting academic writing and training of writing tutors.

Meanwhile, there is only a small body of literature on thesis writing education. This is partly because thesis supervision is usually conducted within a closed laboratory or research group. It is not clear what kind of writing expertise supervisors are expected to have, and in practice, supervisors tend to follow their own experience of being supervised. Under these circumstances, as far as we examined, there are few practices

where writing centers get involved with the training of supervisors. However, writing centers have been offering training to writing tutors (Sadoshima & Ota, 2013) and therefore should have accumulated practical knowledge and methods about training in addition to their knowledge on writing education. In other words, the writing center could potentially engage with the professional development of supervisors.

In order to examine this new potential role of writing centers, we first summarize the situation of writing education including undergraduate research education at universities in Japan. Next, we overview practices of writing centers. Finally, we suggest that we can see writing centers as a place with both academic and practical knowledge of writing education and training of writing educators.

## 2. Writing education at the university

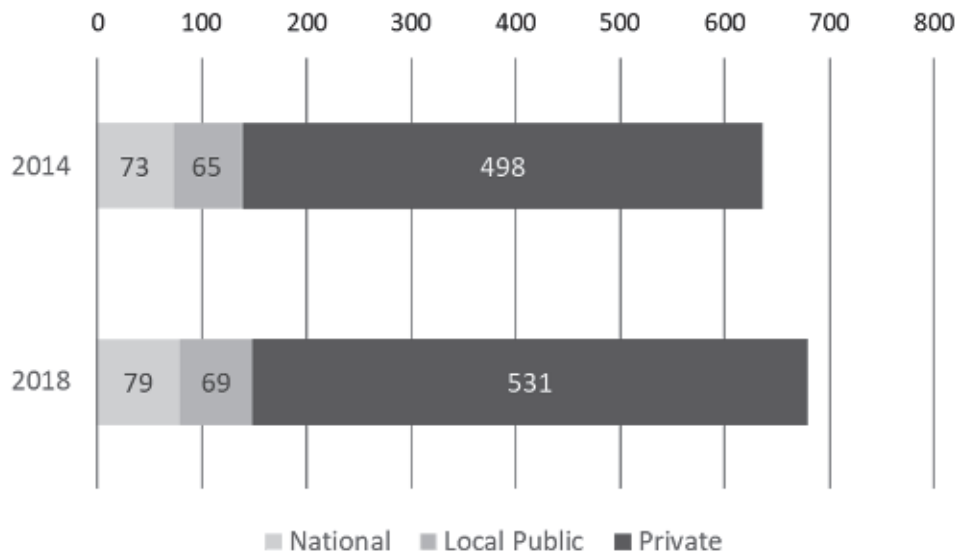
There are four types of academic writing education at universities: (1) academic skill type, which aims for students to acquire basic writing skills, (2) foundation for disciplinary field type, which aims to offer discipline specific writing skills, (3) general writing skills within the field type, which aims to teach writing skills to express their learning outcome in the specialized field, and (4) general writing skills type, which aims to equip students with autonomy as learners and methods of expression (Inoshita, 2008). The first two types can be categorized as academic skills training and are usually taught during first-year education and/or at writing centers. Therefore, it can be offered as an independent academic skill subject. The latter two are considered to be embedded within writing assignments and undergraduate research.

### 2.1 Writing education as an academic skill

First, we will look at writing as part of academic skills education (report and essay writing skills). It was not until the 2000s (Nishimori et al., 2003) that the term “academic skills” was introduced and positioned as a mandatory subject in first-year undergraduate education in Japan. What led to its introduction was the impact of massification of higher education. Since the 1970s, a growing number of 18-year-olds joined higher education and, by the 2000s, universities saw a lowering academic level among students as a challenge （Yamada, 2012, p. 32）. Many universities experienced difficulties in offering the same level of education they previously provided because of a lack of content knowledge, academic skills, and motivation on the students’ side. To address these difficulties, universities began to offer first-year education. The main purpose of first-year education is to prepare students for university-level education and

to encourage the acquisition of an active and autonomous learning attitude, which includes: (1) study skills, (2) student skills, (3) orientation and guidance, (4) guidance for specialized education, (5) liberal arts subjects and seminars, (6), information literacy, (7) history of the university, and (8) career design (Yamada, 2013). Writing education is offered as one of the study skills in the university.

As Figure 1 shows, the number of universities with a program "writing for academic purposes" in first-year education increased from 636 in 2014 (73 national universities, 65 local public universities, and 498 private universities) to 679 in 2018 (79 national universities, 69 local public universities, and 531 private universities) (MEXT, 2020).




(Source) Created by the author with reference to page 12 of the "Ministry of Education Survey".

Figure 1. Number of universities implementing a program on "writing for academic purposes" in the first year of education.

A typical program on "writing for academic purposes" offers the following contents; differences between academic writing and other writing, format of academic writing, paragraph writing, finding relevant literature, data collection, citing sources, evidence-based reasoning, and plagiarism. Table 1 shows an example of subject contents from Waseda University. Waseda University is one of the first universities to offer academic writing as an undergraduate subject in Japan, which is called "Writing academic texts." It is a foundation subject for students across departments and, therefore, does not deal

with discipline-specific contents (such as the originality of an argument and quality of evidence within specific fields). The main learning outcome is for students to be able to think rationally based on evidence and express thoughts in writing academically (Sadoshima et al., 2015).

Table 1. "Creation of academic texts" Class contents

| Class | Title | Contents |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | What is the Academic Writing? | Relationship between words and thoughts, characteristics of academic writing |
| 2 | Sentence Structure | Write sentences as a unit of thought. Be aware of the relationship between sentences |
| 3 | Using academic terms | Articulate the meaning of each academic term and use |
| 4 | Structure the paper | Structure the paper with introduction, body, and conclusion |
| 5 | Organize arguments | Categorize the contents, check the level of argument, and organize |
| 6 | Using Sources | Importance of referencing literature, creating references |
| 7 | Citation 1 | Block quotation |
| 8 | Citation 2 | Keyword citation from literature, guide to readers |

(Source) Sadoshima et al. (2015, p. 156)

As this example shows, if a writing course is offered for students from any discipline as a foundation subject, it is inevitable for it to set general writing abilities as the learning outcomes. As a result, some criticize such courses for being too general and those students should get discipline-specific writing training.

To argue against such criticisms and improve writing courses, various studies attempt to discuss the effectiveness of writing courses as first-year education (Kushimoto et al., 2016; Negishi et al., 2017; Sugaya, 2018). Sadoshima et al. (2015) examined and found that those students who had taken a writing course in the first year wrote academic papers with better articulated arguments and contents than they do in later stages of undergraduate education. They argue that students with foundational writing abilities enhance their abilities by working on various writing assignments throughout the curriculum and become well prepared for undergraduate thesis writing. They claim that a writing course with an emphasis on cognitive and rhetorical aspects can have a positive effect on students when they enter specialized fields.

Based on these points, in recent years, the idea of teaching writing skills across undergraduate programs has been introduced at some universities. (e.g., an Aoyama Gakuin University GP (Good Practice) project titled "Development of academic writing ability as undergraduate attribute"). GP projects are "University Education and Student Support Promotion Projects" which support effective efforts to improve the quality of higher education funded by MEXT. Temple University Japan Campus, for example, states that they provide educational opportunities for students to develop their writing skills throughout their four-year undergraduate program (Temple University, Japan Campus website, 2017).

### 2.2 Writing education as part of undergraduate thesis research

We now turn to an overview of writing education as part of undergraduate thesis research. Undergraduate research is seen as one of the characteristics of Japanese undergraduate education. Regardless of the field, many universities place undergraduate research as a requirement to complete the bachelor's degree program. According to the "Reform Status of Educational Content at Universities in 2018 (Overview)" (October 2020, hereafter "Ministry of Education Survey") by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), 96.8% of universities had undergraduate research as credited subject in AY2018. 89.7% of universities (national, local public, and private) require undergraduate research in all or some undergraduate degree programs. 94.2% of national universities, in particular, include undergraduate research as a part of bachelor's degree programs. According to the survey study by Shinoda and Higeta (2014, p. 60), most national, public, and private universities give four to eight credits for an undergraduate thesis.

While writing education as a foundational academic skill simply focuses on the development of general writing abilities such as paragraph writing and referencing, thesis writing education within undergraduate research training focuses not only on writing but also on the process of conducting research, such as setting a research question, doing a literature review, building a conceptual framework, collecting data, and analyzing and making evidence-based arguments. Therefore, the supervisor's role is significantly important as he/she is required not only to teach how to research but also how to write a thesis (Kodama, 2013).

The details differ amongst universities and fields of study but, generally speaking, students would join laboratories or research groups in the third or final year of an undergraduate program to develop and carry out a research project and write the thesis

(Kaneko, 2013, pp. 112-113; Yamada, 2019). This process is supported by seminars and consultation sessions offered within laboratories and research groups. Students would receive guidance from the supervisor, other junior faculty members, and students who join the same laboratories and research groups. This kind of structure allows students to participate in a small, specialized unit and have the opportunity to learn foundational knowledge necessary for carrying out the undergraduate research (Kaneko, 2013, p. 112; Kaneko, 2013, p. 117). Yamada (2019) points out the significant educational role the laboratories and research groups play in promoting peer learning between the supervisor, senior students and novice students. Similarly, Kodama (2013) analyzes the educational significance of students and the supervisor as follows.

> "For students, engaging with an undergraduate research project is not only about learning to conduct own research. It also offers the experiences of learning from others and deepening their thoughts by having discussions with peer students and the supervisor within the same laboratory or research group. They can experience a sense of achievement and self-growth in the process" (Kodama, 2013, p. 25, underlined by the authors)

> "The supervisors are often made reflective about their attitude toward research. They also learn together with students" (Kodama, 2013, p. 25, underlined by the authors)

What emerges from these accounts is that the experience of conducting (or supervising) undergraduate research is valuable for both students and supervisors. However, because of the closed nature of laboratories and research groups, the actual practices of undergraduate research education, including thesis writing, have been under researched. We do not know what kind of thesis writing advice supervisors offer, what issues and challenges exist in this type of research training, or how supervisors develop necessary competencies and proficiencies to support students in writing an undergraduate thesis. In fact, it has been pointed out that in undergraduate research education, guidance, and advice on how to proceed with research itself tend to be prioritized over how to write the thesis (Fujii, 2017).

In the context of FD, research supervision is overlooked. According to the Standards for Establishment of Universities (hereafter the Standards), universities are

mandated to offer institutional training opportunities and to carry out research to improve educational activities (Article 25-3). Here, educational activities include lectures, seminars, laboratories, and practical training (Article 25). Often, institutional FD focuses on classroom pedagogies, course design, and curriculum development in general. Subject-specific pedagogies and research education are left in the hands of each department and faculty.

In addition, there is a consensus that each laboratory and research group should hold autonomy. This is partly due to the impact of a chair system many Japanese universities employed in the past, which was deleted from the Standards in 2007. This chair system, mainly held at national universities, was both an autonomous administrative unit and research unit. It was generally composed of a full professor with a few assistant professors, technical staff, and a secretary. Within this system, research students would receive guidance from senior research students, assistant professors as well as the professor. This culture of shared responsibility in training junior researchers still exists in current laboratories and research groups. Those graduate students who belong to such laboratories and research groups naturally get involved with undergraduate research education, which can be identified as an apprenticeship model.

While this structure promotes the creation of learning communities and can be effective if managed well, graduate students usually do not have formal training in supporting undergraduate research and thesis writing; therefore, they often end up following the methods of his/her supervisor. There are literatures by those graduate students to build a model of effective undergraduate research guidance (Fujii, 2017; Higuchi et al., 2012; Yamada, 2011). However, this kind of empirical studies is limited.

### 2.3 Potential of the writing center

In the previous sections, we have described how under-researched academic writing education in Japan is and the lack of professional development opportunities for those who are involved with academic writing education, including supervisors. Now we would like to turn to the writing centers which, we argue, have the potential to both offer empirical data on writing education, competencies, and skills required to be writing tutors, instructors, and thesis supervisors, and methods of professional development.

A writing center is a new addition to students' learning support structure in Japan (Sadoshima & Ota, 2013). Waseda University was one of the first universities to set up

the center in 2004 and has been leading the field since then. This was followed by the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in 2005, and Tsuda University and Tokyo University in 2008 (Kimura et al., 2013, pp. 133-138). In the 2010s, the number of writing centers increased greatly (Kobayashi & Nakatake, 2019, p. 6). There are studies that examine roles, purposes, practices, and organization of the writing center (e.g., Delgrego, 2016; Kikuta & Nagasawa, 2016; Kobayashi & Nakatake, 2019; Sadoshima & Ota, 2013; Sugano & Makiya, 2016; Ueda et al., 2017). Those studies point out that the writing centers not only support students in enhancing their ability to write academically but also to be independent and responsible learners. They also argue that, for writing tutors who are mostly graduate students, it offers the opportunity to develop proficiencies as a writer and tutor. However, they also show that there is a lack of understanding amongst faculty members about the role of the writing center. Those faculty claim that academic writing can only be taught with content and that different disciplines have different formats of writing. Therefore, having a generic writing center is of no use.

Instead of joining the discussions around the role and practices of writing centers, we want to offer an alternative view of writing centers as a pool of various critical data to examine types of challenges undergraduate students may face, methods of writing education, and professional development for those who are involved with writing education. Writing centers offer services such as individual writing consultation (thesis, essays, and academic papers) and workshops on academic writing. This means there is an accumulation of records of consultation information and writing assignments given in various courses. Writing centers usually have their own training structure of writing tutors. Therefore, they also have records of training materials and outcomes. Those resources are valuable for improving writing education and professional development for instructors.

There are many action research studies conducted by graduate students and faculty members who are involved with writing centers. Those studies are published as posters, annual reports, and academic papers. For example, writing tutors at the Waseda University Writing Center studied various themes such as examination of questions during the consultation (Ito, 2016), the importance of the reader's perspective in supporting writing process (Sunyoung, 2016), and support methods for organizing issues (Hiramatsu, 2016). Another important movement is the establishment of the Writing Centers Association of Japan (WCAJ) in 2011 to offer a space for practitioners and researchers mainly involved in academic writing in English, but also in Japanese

to exchange ideas. They organize an annual symposium, which is a move to accumulate existing knowledge to generate new practices and knowledge. By reviewing those studies, we should be able to have rich data to think about writing education as a whole.

We can see new movements by writing centers. One is their involvement with FD. For example, Temple University has a "teacher workshop (Temple University, Japan Campus website, 2017)" and the staff of Waseda University Writing Center holds a number of workshops for faculty members (see website). They design FD workshops based on their training for writing tutors and their knowledge in teaching how to write. This kind of movement is still rare, but this can be a new role of writing centers may be able to play. Especially for those junior academics who are new to giving guidance to students with undergraduate thesis writing, it would offer a great opportunity to encounter the scholarship of academic writing.

## 3. Conclusion

In this paper, we presented an overview of academic writing education in Japan based on the literature and explored the potential new role of writing centers.

There are two types of academic writing education; (1) teaching academic writing as a foundational academic skill and (2) teaching as part of undergraduate research. While the former is genuinely standardized and similar in contents and well-studied, the latter is unclear and under researched. The existing studies on undergraduate research and supervision suggest that laboratories and research groups create a learning community and promote peer learning amongst students in a different stage of research activity. Still, they also identify a lack of professional training for graduate students and junior academics who are involved with undergraduate research supervision. There is a need to unpack the practices of undergraduate research and analyze the impact and challenges of undergraduate research supervision.

This paper suggests viewing writing centers as a pool of knowledge (both academic and practical) about writing education and training of writing tutors. We can analyze publications based on practices and data collected at writing centers to generate new knowledge about writing education. In collaboration with an FD unit, writing centers can also adopt their training methods for writing tutors to develop FD opportunities about how to teach writing.

Since the establishment of writing centers in Japan, the main interests amongst the practitioners and researchers of those centers were on the role and practices of the center, including institutional management. We still need to work together to collect

more evidence to show the effectiveness of having writing centers in the context of Japanese universities. However, as we have seen, writing centers have another potential to advance university education and professional development of graduate students and academics. We hope to stimulate discussions about seeing writing centers as a pool of empirical data and practical methods.

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## Chapter Four:

# Academic writing support for faculty members

## —Writing Groups and Writing Retreats—

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### 1. Introduction

The importance of writing for publication purposes and the related implications for academic careers have already been highlighted in previous chapters in this volume. In this chapter, focus is placed on how universities can support their faculty members and researchers[1] in writing for publication in English. Particular attention is paid on how this support can foster a sense of community and belonging among writers.

Writing academic texts in English can be particularly challenging for writers for whom English is an additional language (EAL). Not only do they need a good command of English grammar and vocabulary, they also need to be familiar with the conventions and styles required by specific journals and be able to write for different audiences, from highly specialised to more general (c.f., Englander & Corcoran, 2019; Carter et al., 2019). These requirements can exert intense pressure on EAL writers. While writing academic texts is challenging even for writers whose first language is English, research suggests that it comes at a higher price in EAL contexts (Englander & Corcoran, 2019; Heng Hartse & Kubota, 2014; Politzer-Ahles et al., 2016). EAL writers not only spend more time composing a text, but they also often lack confidence in their language abilities and feel pressure to have their writing checked by native speakers (Politzer-Ahles et al., 2016). In countries like Japan, where the present study was conducted, EAL writers often employ the services of editing companies to ensure that their writing appears native-like, a service that can be both costly and time-consuming.

To support especially EAL writers during the writing process, Hiroshima University created the Writing Center[2]. A key service provided by the center involves one-on-one consultations on writing in English for research publications offered to

[1] The term “researchers” here refers to academics who have completed their PhD and are employed at an institute or faculty, but do not have teaching responsibilities.
[2] Chapter One of this volume provides a detailed description of the history and services of the Writing Center.

Japanese and international faculty members and researchers. During such consultations, clients receive individualised feedback on journal articles by facilitators who have a background in academic writing. Such targeted consultations can be valuable as direct interventions, but they rarely address the writing process in depth or help create a sense of community for writers. This community building can be tackled by two other services offered by the Writing Center, namely Writing Groups and Writing Retreats. Both types of intervention require the participation of a group of faculty members or researchers and can foster the creation of communities of practice, in which participants work together towards the shared goal of publishing articles.

Writing Groups were established at Hiroshima University in 2017 for students, faculty members, and researchers. While the first Writing Group was open to both faculty members and students, later groups were offered separately for faculty members and students to avoid possible issues due to power imbalances. During a Writing Group meeting, members share writing they are working on and give each other feedback, focusing on structural elements and clarity (Allen, 2019; Carter et al., 2019). The Writing Group is facilitated by a member of the Writing Center who offers comments to complement the peer feedback. Writing Groups have been shown to affect writers' output and productivity positively and to encourage collegiality and confidence (Allen, 2019; Carter et al., 2019). The Writing Group can thus function as a valuable intervention that offers direct support during meetings, encourages exchange between group members, and can promote more engagement with writing outside of the sessions (Carter et al., 2019).

Another intervention that can successfully support academics in becoming more confident and successful writers is a Writing Retreat. A Writing Retreat offers an immersive experience of writing that is supportive and communal and fosters a community of practice (Moore, Murphy, & Murray, 2010). In so-called structured retreats (Murray & Newton, 2009), dedicated writing time alternates with peer and mentor feedback, which can positively affect productivity (Kornhaber et al., 2016). Retreats can further help participants to set aside time for writing in their often busy work schedule (Murray & Newtown, 2009). An academic's everyday working life often requires the balancing of research, teaching, and administrative duties, with very little time left for preparing publications. Writing Retreats allow participants to focus on writing, to discuss their writing with peers, and to share experiences of their work life. Such interactions can help alleviate pressure and show faculty members or researchers that they are part of a community of writers.

Based on a small-scale online survey distributed to faculty members and researchers, this study focuses on Writing Groups and Writing Retreats and investigates: 1) how faculty members and researchers perceive the two services, and 2) how a university or Writing Center can use this feedback to improve and promote such writing interventions.

## 2. Data and methodology

### 2.1 Participants

Participants in this study are Japanese and international faculty members and researchers at Hiroshima University who attended a Writing Group or Writing Retreat offered by the Writing Center between 2018 and 2020. As the Writing Group and Retreats were only offered in English, participants who attended services in Japanese were excluded from this study. While this approach limits the number of participants, it increases the likelihood of participants who have used more than one of the provided services. Such participants can compare the services, which may offer an additional layer of information.

### 2.2 Methods

This study employed an online questionnaire to collect faculty members' and researchers' perspectives on the services offered at the Writing Center. Participants gave informed consent for their answers to be used for research and in publications. They were informed that all personal information would be anonymised, and that consent could be withdrawn at any time by contacting the researcher.

The survey contained both choice and open-ended questions on Writing Groups and Writing Retreats. These choice questions consisted of eight prepared statements about the possible benefits (e.g., receiving peer feedback by people outside my discipline) and shortcomings (e.g., writing together is not motivating) of the two services. The open-ended questions that followed the set of statements allowed participants to express their opinion more freely and in more detail. At the end of the questionnaire, information on the participants' academic position (e.g., assistant professor, researcher), research field, and their experiences with writing journal articles in English were collected.

The data were analysed to discover trends in participants' perceptions of the Writing Center's services. As this study is small-scale, only descriptive statistics are reported for the choice questions. This approach does not allow for generalisations but

can provide insight into existing views in the faculty and researcher community. Answers to the open-ended questions serve to complement the trends observed in the choice questions. Together, the responses offer insights into how faculty and researchers can be supported in their writing endeavours and allow the Writing Center to further tailor services to the community's needs.

## 3. Results and discussion

### 3.1 Participant profiles and writing requirements

The online survey was sent to 39 faculty members and researchers; only 15 completed the survey, which corresponds to a response rate of 38.5%. A reason for the low response rate may be that during the summer months, faculty members and researchers tend to be busy writing articles or grant applications and, thus, filling in the survey may have been considered too time-consuming. Nevertheless, the data allows us to draw some preliminary conclusions on participants' perceptions of the Writing Center's services.

As regards disciplines, participants were from both the natural and social sciences, with specific disciplines including astronomy, physics, applied chemistry, education, linguistics, and psychology. In addition, participants from all academic positions attended one of the services offered, with Assistant Professors making up the largest group (N=7), as illustrated in Figure 1.

The survey asked participants how many manuscripts they normally work on during an academic year. As can be seen in Figure 2, most participants (N=9) work on one or two manuscripts, whereas six participants indicated that they work on 3-4 or more texts in one year.

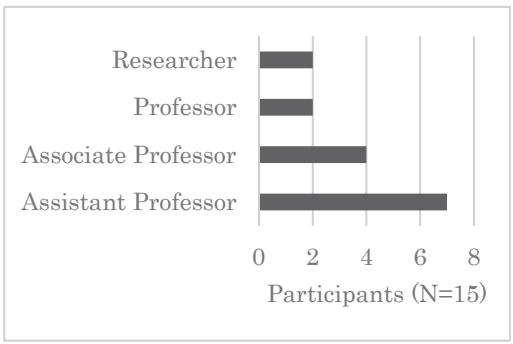


Figure 1. Participants' academic position

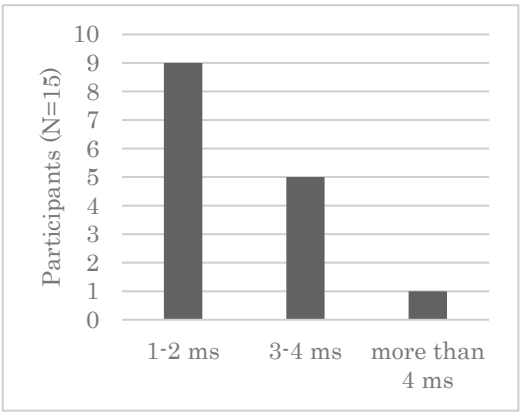


Figure 2. Manuscripts (ms) in one year

As shown in Figure 3, most (N=13) participants co-author manuscripts, with 10 participants reporting to be the first author of the paper. Single authorship seems to be less common, at least among respondents to this survey. The publication language of manuscripts is English for all but one respondent (see Figure 4). However, three respondents stated that they had to switch from writing articles for publication in Japanese to writing articles published in English.

Respondents recognise the expectations to publish papers in English, and most stated that this is common in their field. For some, publishing in English ensures that a wider, international audience can read their research, but some also mentioned that they feel pressure to publish in English. One respondent even stated that the "university does not value papers in Japanese".

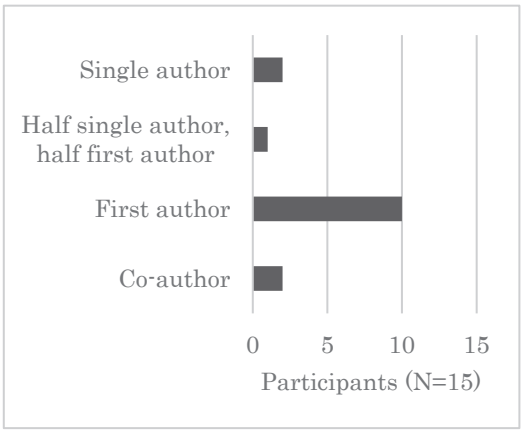


Figure 3. Type of authorship

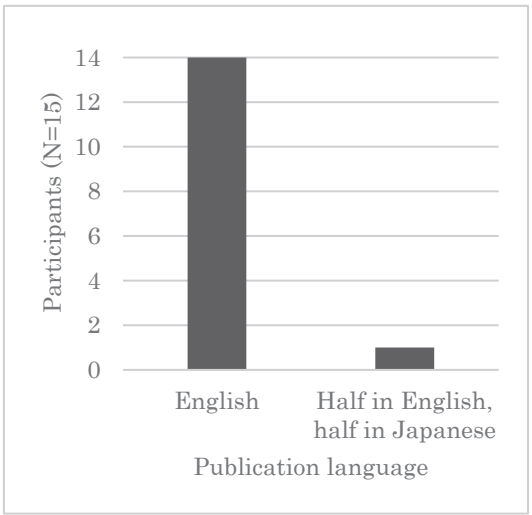


Figure 4. Publication language of manuscript

### 3.2 Participants' perceptions of Writing Center services

Figure 5 shows that the different Writing Center services enjoy some popularity among respondents, with nine participants reporting to have used one of the services, and six reporting to have used a combination of services. One participant indicated not to have used any service. I will now turn to the results on participants' perceptions of the services offered, focusing on the Writing Groups and Writing Retreat.

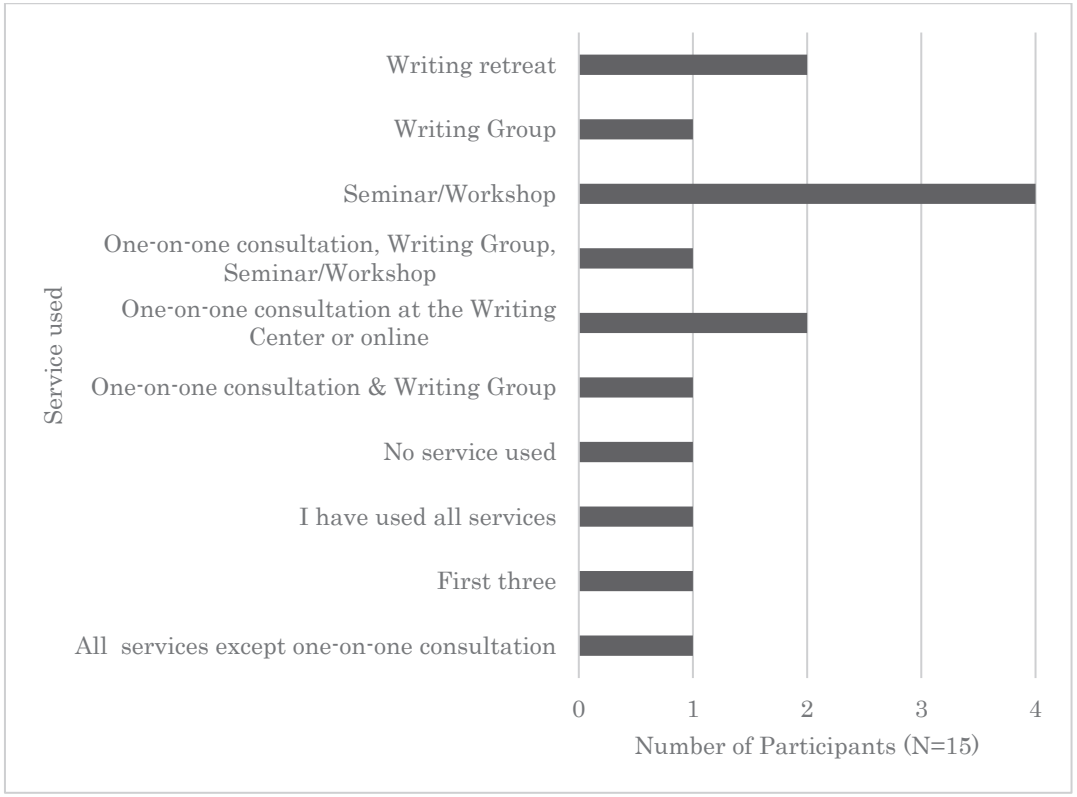


Figure 5. Services used

**(1) Writing Groups**

The Writing Groups seem to be a popular service, with eight participants reporting that they have attended sessions. Of these eight, however, only three were still attending the group at the time of data collection.

Responses to the choice-question regarding positive aspects of the Writing Group revealed that participants value the group for three main reasons: 1) feedback from peers outside one's discipline, 2) structure (*It supports my writing schedule*, *It helps me structure my writing*), and 3) access to a facilitator (*The facilitator is supportive*, *The facilitator's feedback is helpful*). In addition to these main aspects, the Writing Group is perceived as a supportive environment that allows attendees to share their experiences with writing in an informal context. As one participant stated, "Getting together for writing cheers me up".

While respondents assessed the Writing Group positively, some were critical about the composition of the Group. Receiving feedback from outsiders was generally

welcomed; however, some participants would prefer feedback from peers from their own discipline, as this would allow for a more critical discussion of content. Another point for improvement is the time allocated to discuss papers, which respondents suggest could be increased. Overall, however, those respondents who attended the Writing Group highlighted the positive aspects.

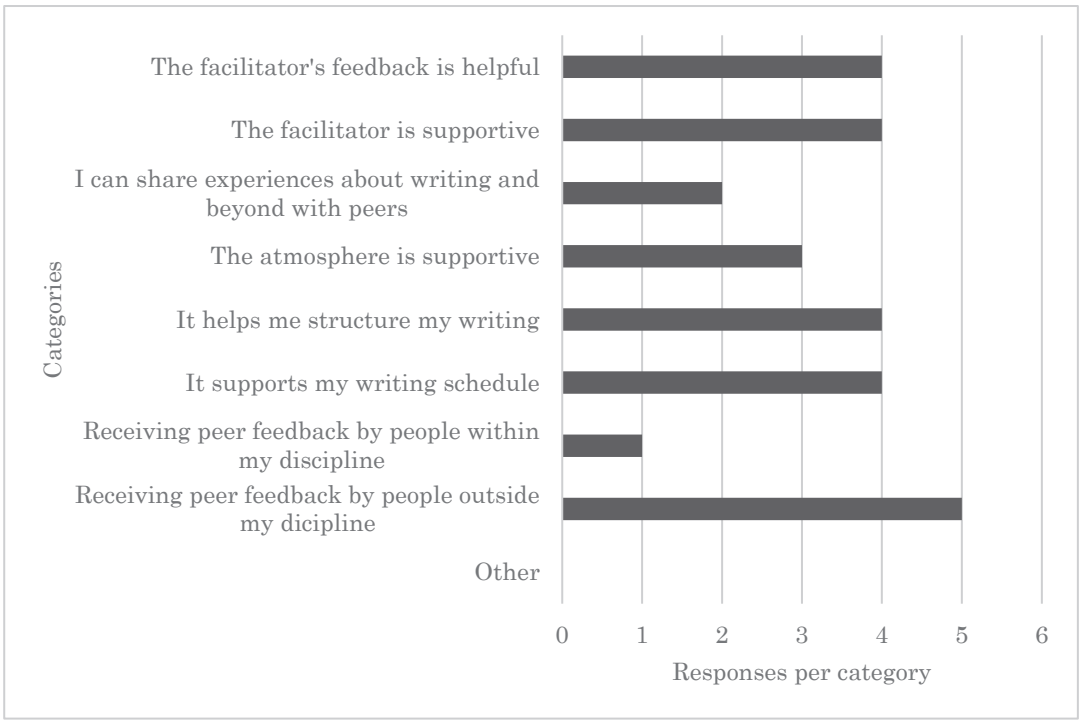


Figure 6. Benefits of the Writing Group

As shown above, peer feedback is seen as a critical component of the Writing Group. This finding echoes previous studies on writing groups in Japan (Allen, 2019; Carter et al., 2019) that also found the collaborative nature of the writing group to be of particular value to group members. Receiving feedback from outsiders can help writers to ensure that their texts are clear and easy to understand (Carter et al., 2019). The comment in Example 1 illustrates this aspect:

> Example 1: It is not always easy to assume how other people understand my own writing and the Writing Group helps me to correct what is not comprehensible or logical for others.

Connected to the above point is the aspect of organising one's thoughts and writing clearly. As shown by Carter et al. (2019, p. 129), Writing Group discussions can help writers decide "what needs to be written", which is an important skill to ensure that a text is appropriate for a specific audience.

### (2) Writing Retreats

Writing Retreats are another more communal type of writing intervention provided by the Writing Center. While only six participants have attended one of the retreats, they are discussed here as they offer another opportunity for forming a community of practice for writers at Hiroshima University.

Like the Writing Groups, the Retreats were perceived positively and for similar reasons. Here, too, responses to the choice question show that participants value the Retreats because they offer opportunities to 1) interact with peers (Receiving feedback from Peers, Exchanging experiences and ideas with peers); 2) communicate with facilitators (Being able to get feedback from the facilitator); and 3) structure writing time. In addition to these three reasons, participants again commented on the supportive environment.

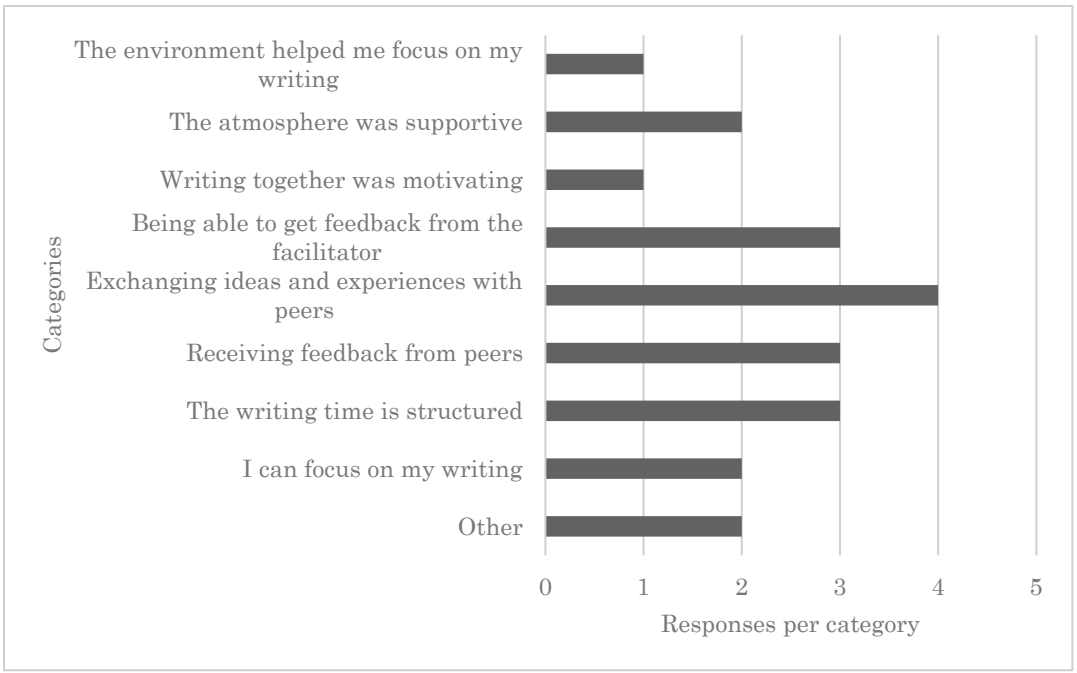


Figure 7. Benefits of the Writing Retreat

Participants who perceived the Retreats negatively commented that writing together with other people was distracting and not motivating. Such participants seem to prefer writing alone, and thus the Writing Retreat may not be the right type of intervention for them.

The above findings support Murray and Newton (2009) who observed similar trends in a Writing Retreat conducted in the UK. The main benefit reported in their study is the protected and structured writing time, as it affords participants the chance to focus on their writing, which is often difficult during the workweek. While structured time was not the central aspect reported here, responses indicate that setting aside time is valuable, as illustrated by the comment in Example 2:

> Example 2: I was able to attend the writing retreat because it was on Saturday. I can't usually attend events that are longer than 2-3 hours during weekdays. It's sad to lose a day on a weekend, but it was worth it. I might be a minority who feels this way, but maybe consider offering more events on weekends? Maybe twice a year or so?

Respondents' willingness to participate in Retreats at the weekend suggests their usefulness for writing. For the Writing Center, offering Retreats on weekends, and possibly off-campus, may be a useful tool in further attracting participants to this type of writing intervention.

Similar to the present study, peer feedback was also a key benefit of the writing retreat observed in Murray and Newton (2009). Exchanging ideas and experiences with other writers can create a sense of community that can help participants become more confident and to be recognised as writers (Murray & Newton, 2009). This latter aspect is particularly important, as producing written research output is integral to an academic's work. To account for this aspect of an academic's identity, universities should encourage and promote protected writing time to allow faculty members and researchers to meet the publication requirement, which is often part of a work contract (Kornhaber et al., 2016; Murray & Newton, 2009).

## 4. Conclusions

The present study aimed to identify faculty members' and researchers' perceptions of two writing interventions offered by Hiroshima University's Writing Center: Writing Groups and Writing Retreats. Both services cater especially to EAL writers, who often

face challenges in producing research output in a language that is not their own. Results showed that both services are seen as beneficial by the university community, especially as they offer a chance to receive peer feedback and to interact with peers in a supportive environment.

These observations resonate with previous studies on the two writing interventions (c.f., Allen, 2019; Kornhaber et al., 2019; Murray & Newton, 2009; Carter et al., 2019) that suggest that universities should promote such services. These studies have shown that Writing Groups and Retreats can increase productivity and lead to the successful publication of research findings. Since the number of publications has become a critical factor in assessing an academic's performance, universities should invest in Writing Centers and their services to support academics in meeting publication requirements.

The Writing Center itself can use the findings to make the two services more attractive and accessible to faculty members and researchers. The positive feedback can be leveraged to advertise the benefits of Writing Groups and Retreats to the larger university community. Writing Groups can be further improved by, for example, extending the time allocated to reading a text to ensure that each member receives the feedback they want. The Writing Center can also facilitate discipline-specific Writing Groups for academics who prefer peer feedback from within their field. Writing Retreats are still relatively new and many faculty members and researchers are not familiar with the service. The results from the study can be used to highlight the positive effect of Retreats to attract more participants, but more research is necessary to identify specific measures to improve the Retreats. For example, the Writing Center should identify if holding Retreats at the weekend or off campus may increase interest and participation in the events.

While the present study draws from a limited number of responses, findings lend support to the popularity of Hiroshima University's Writing Center. Further research that includes interviews with clients of the Writing Center and that takes a more longitudinal perspective can provide insights into writing interventions, how they can help writers during the writing process. and how they can potentially alleviate some of the pressure surrounding the publication of research outputs.

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# Part III:

# Genre-specific education: Cases in the medical field

## Chapter Five:

# How to write the Introduction of biomedical research articles

## —Move analysis of the first and last sentences—

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Tatsuya Ishii
(Kobe City College of Technology)

### 1. Introduction

For international publishing, authors need to write articles in English. Although this fact scares non-native English speakers, "academic English is not anyone's native language" (Hyland, 2012, p. 59). Both native and non-native speakers of English especially in the biomedical field have to know rhetorical convention in discourse community (Kanoksilapatham, 2005). Following Swales (1990), genre studies have clarified linguistic characteristics in a particular discourse, advocating "move" as a unit of text used in the sections of the traditional Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion. Although Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p. 89) defined a "move" as "a unit that relates both to the writer's purpose and to the content that s/he wishes to communicate, the flow of "moves" is shared by the writers in the same academic field. Based on the genre analysis model, we constructed a move corpus comprising 12 moves from 395 research articles in the clinical medical field and found valuable information on the combination of words including keywords in each move that were statistically significant (Kawamoto & Ishii, 2018a, 2018b). Previous studies also identified various move-specific phrases by using an n-gram approach (Cortes, 2013; Mizumoto et al., 2016). However, conventional move analysis did not show strategies to construct the story lines within a move.

Recently, we collected text data from research articles in the biomedical field and divided the Results section into three moves. Using a corpus-based move analysis, various key phrases containing adverbs in the Results section were clarified (Ishii & Kawamoto, 2020). To elucidate the flow and structure of the Introduction section, we here focus on the first sentences of each move of 300 biomedical research articles. Our results will provide insights into how the typical Introduction section is constructed.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1 Construction of move corpus

We selected 300 articles from 30 leading journals in the biomedical field[1] and divided their texts of the Introduction section into three moves (IM1, IM2, and IM3), according to the criteria presented by Nwogu (Nwogu, 1997). The function, word numbers, and frequency of three moves are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of moves in the Introduction sections

| Moves | Function | Average word number (%) | Frequency of occurrence (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| IM1 | Presenting background information | 135 (26) | 100.0 |
| IM2 | Reviewing previous studies | 270 (53) | 100.0 |
| IM3 | Presenting new research | 107 (21) | 98.3 |
| Total | | 511 (100) | – |

### 2.1 Analysis of the first sentences of each move

We extracted the first sentences of each move and analyzed their roles, subjects, verbs, and expression of beginning. For this analysis, four to six categories were selected. The roles of the first sentences were categorized into “background,” “previous studies,”

Table 2. Examples of words used as subjects in the first sentences of each move in the Introduction section

| Categories | Words |
|---|---|
| objects | cells, protein(s), macrophages, microRNAs, genes, RNAs, miRNAs, complex(es), genome(s), mitochondria, patients |
| phenomena | system, pathway(s), activation, function, methylation, role(s), autophagy, changes, effects, mutations, regulation, reprogramming, uptake |
| disease names | cancer(s), disease(s), adenocarcinoma, obesity, disorders |
| research | studies/study, understanding, analysis, advances, evidence, group(s), identification, models |

[1] Journal list: Brain, Cancer Cell, Cancer Res., Cell, Cell Metab., Cell Rep., Cell Stem Cell, Cell. Microbiol., Curr. Biol., Dev. Cell, EMBO J., Genes Dev., Genome Res., J. Biol. Chem., J. Cell Biol., J. Exp. Med., J. Neurosci., J. Virol., Mol. Cell. Biol., Mol. Cell, Nat. Cell Biol., Nat. Genet., Nat. Immunol., Nat. Med., Nat. Neurosci., Nat. Struct. Mol. Biol., Neuron, Oncogene, PLoS Biol., PLoS Genet.

"problems," "possibility," and "present study." The subjects were classified into six categories: four categories shown in Table 2 and categories "we" and "others". Words used in three or more articles are shown in Table 2. The last sentences of IM2 were also extracted and analyzed.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 The roles of the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3

The first sentences of IM1 were most frequently used to show background information (83.7%) (Figure 1). Only 12.0% of them referred to previous studies. Similarly, the first sentences of IM2 also most commonly presented background information (58.0%). Notably, 26.7% of the first sentence of IM2 were used to explain previous studies; the percentage was almost twice as high as that of IM1. In contrast, most (94.2%) of the first sentences of IM3 were for presenting the current study. These findings are consistent with the function of each move, although more than half of the first sentences of IM2 were used to present background information.

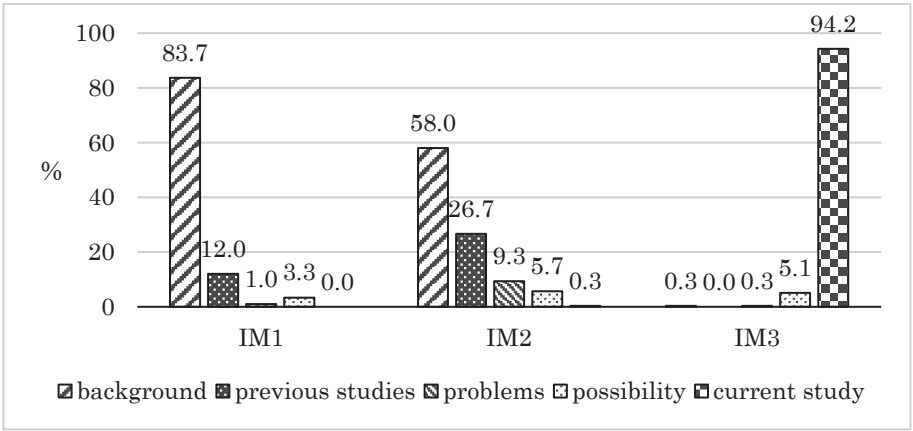


Figure 1. The roles of the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3

### 3.2 Subjects of the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3

Research objects and phenomena related to research objects were frequently used as the subjects of the first sentences of IM1 (37.7% and 31.0%, respectively) (Figure 2). The first sentences of IM2 also showed a similar tendency, although disease names were present in IM1 at a higher rate (17.0%) compared with that of IM2 (1.7%). Remarkably, "we" as the authors was used as the subjects of those of IM3 at an extremely high rate (92.9%). These results suggest that the viewpoint of IM3 is completely different from those of IM1 and IM2, although IM1 and IM2 share similar contents.

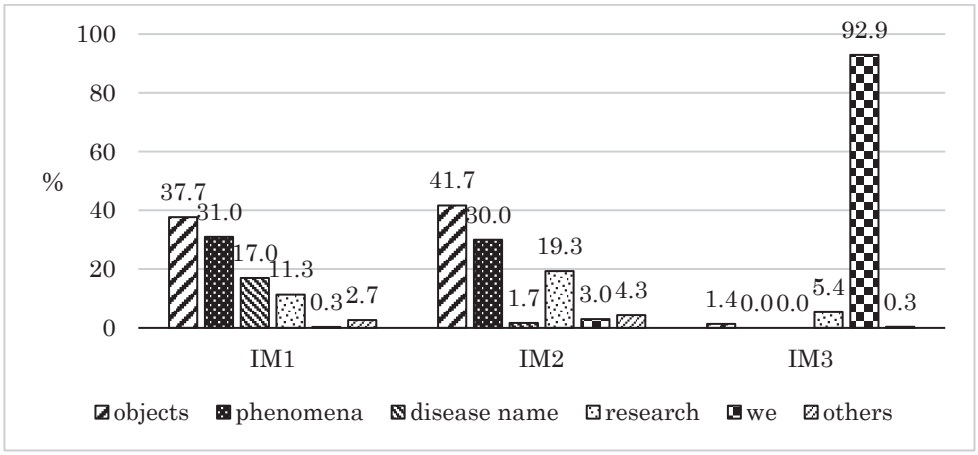


Figure 2. Subjects of the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3.

### 3.3 Tense of the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3

The present tense was most frequently used in the first sentences of both IM1 (82.0%) and IM2 (67.7%) (Figure 3). In addition, present perfect tense was the second most frequently used in IM1 and IM2 at the rate of 11.0% and 22.7%, respectively. The higher frequency of the present perfect tense in IM2 appears to reflect the characteristics of IM2, which reviews previous studies. The past tense was rarely used both in IM1 and IM2, but most frequently appeared in IM3 (51.1%). These data may be consistent with the fact that what the authors performed is often described in IM3.

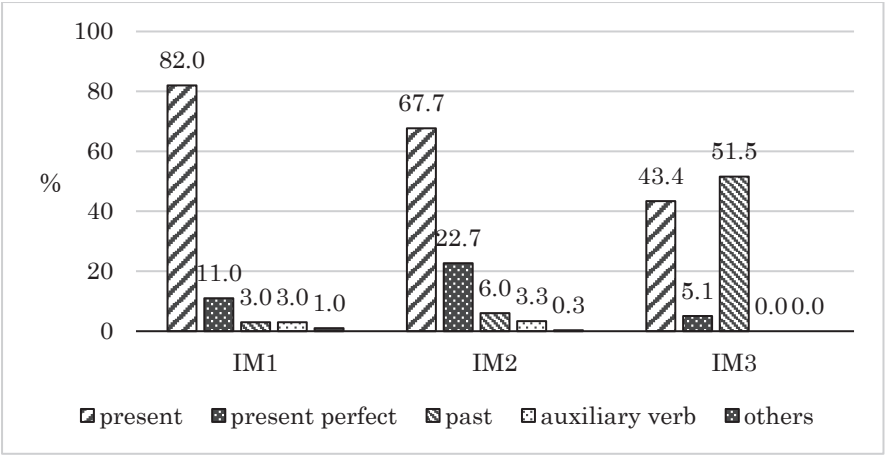


Figure 3. Tense of the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3

### 3.4 Verbs in the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3

Copular verbs, such as “are”, “is”, and “remain,” were present at the highest rate (42.3%) in the first sentences of IM1 (Figure 4). These verbs are usually used to define research objects or to show the characteristics of them. In contrast, both active and passive verbs were frequently used in the first sentences of IM2 (33.7% and 29.7%, respectively). The usage rate of passive verbs in IM2 was almost twice as high as that in IM1 (16.0%), suggesting another characteristic of IM2. In the first sentences of IM3, passive verbs were used at an extremely high rate (95.6%) in combination with “we” as the subject.

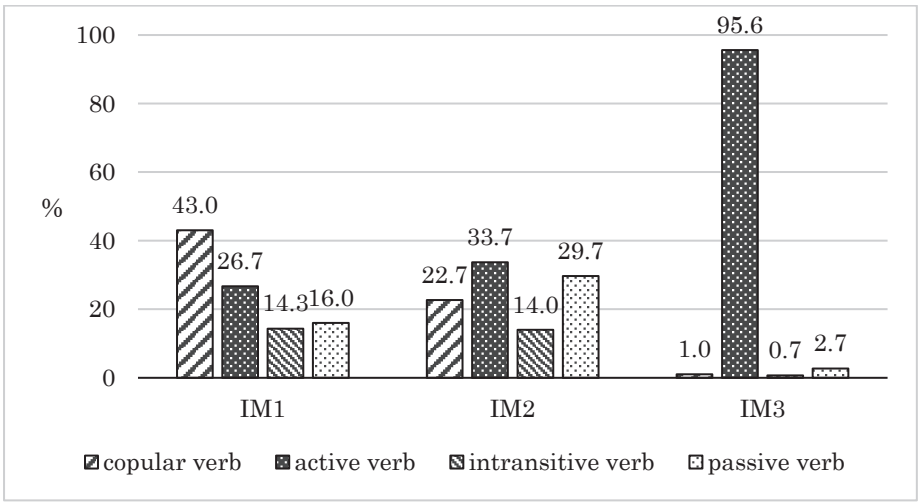


Figure 4. Verbs in the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3

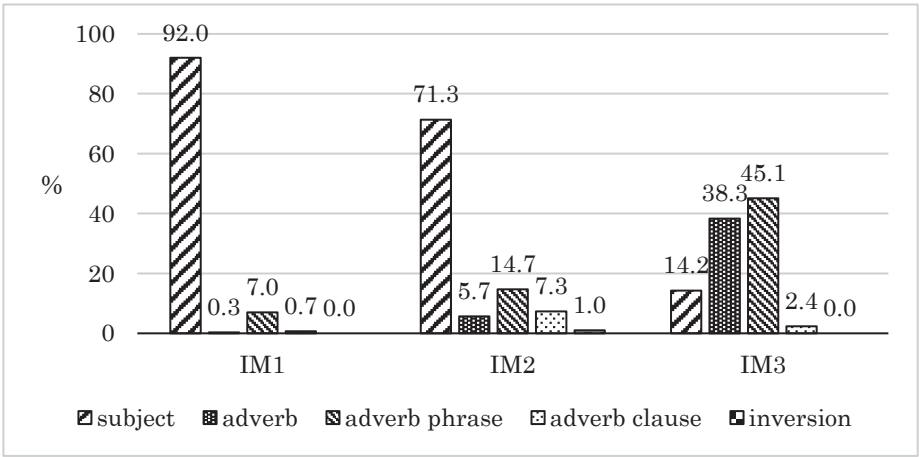


Figure 5. Expressions at the beginning of the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3

### 3.5 Expressions at the beginning of the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3

Most (92.0%) of the first sentences of IM1 began with their subjects (Figure 5). The first sentences of IM2 also most frequently began with the subjects. In contrast, 45.1% and 38.3% of the first sentences of IM3 began with adverb phrases and adverbs, respectively. Only 14.2% of those of IM3 began with subjects. Adverbs such as "Here" and adverb phrases such as "In this study" at the beginning of sentences are important to start explaining the current study.

### 3.6 The last sentences of IM2

IM2 reviews previous studies and usually clarifies unsolved problems. However, we found that only few first sentences of IM2 mentioned problems or questions (Figures 1 and 6). Thus, we analyzed the last sentences of IM2 and compared them with the first sentences. As shown in Figure 6, 38.7% of the last sentences of IM2 raised a problem, and 21.0% of those showed expected possibilities, although only small numbers of its first sentences were used for the same purposes. These results suggest that the first and last sentences of IM2 have different functions. The first sentence tends to show previous studies, whereas the last sentence is supposed to raise questions.

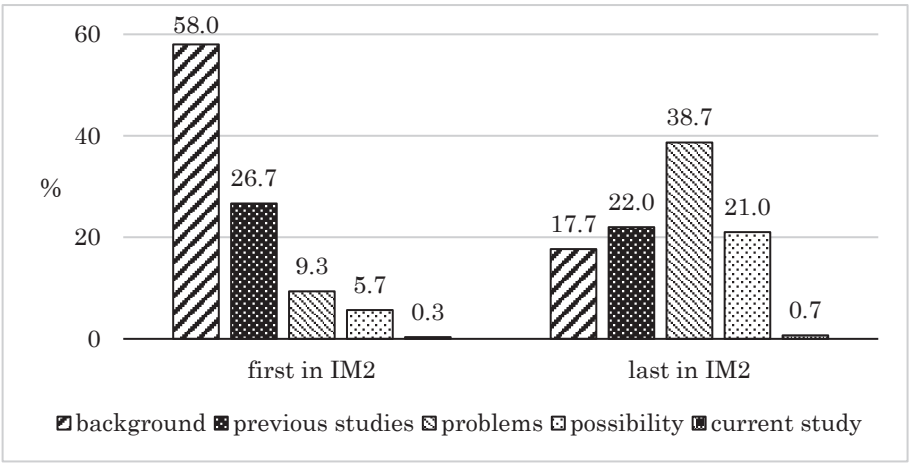


Figure 6. Comparison between the first and last sentences of IM2

## 4. Discussion

In the present study, we constructed a move corpus of research articles and confirmed that biomedical research articles published in leading journals share moves in the Introduction section with moves reported by previous studies (Kanoksilapatham,

2005; Kawamoto & Ishii, 2018a; Nwogu, 1997; Swales, 1990; Williams, 1999). Although keyword analysis identified various important words specific for each move (data not shown), information about how to construct each move by using keywords was still missing. Thus, we focused on the first sentences of each move to clarify the flow of the story within a move.

Table 3 shows representative phrases of the first sentences of IM1, IM2, and IM3 and the last sentences of IM2. The typical first sentence of IM1 contains a copular verb in the present tense, begins with its subject, and provides the background information of the research object. Key phrases, such as "_ is a leading cause of ..." and "_ is essential for ...", fulfill the criteria. These phrases can be used for explaining the characteristics and importance of research objects.

Table 3. Typical examples of the first sentences in IM1, IM2, and IM3 and the last sentences in IM2. Core phrases are underlined.

| | |
|---|---|
| IM1 | _ cancer is a leading cause of ...<br>_ is essential for ... |
| IM2 | _ cells have been shown to ...<br>_ cells express ... |
| IM2 Last | However, the role of ... remains unknown.<br>These findings suggested ... |
| IM3 | Here, we report ...<br>In this study, we investigated whether ... |

IM2 explains what previous studies have demonstrated. The first sentence of IM2 seems to provide information on the research object obtained from previous studies. Phrases such as "_ cells have been shown to ..." and "_ cells express ..." can be used for this purpose. However, we observed that the first sentences of IM1 and IM2 share similar contents. The roles, subjects, verbs, and structures of the first sentences are similar between IM1 and IM2. Theoretically, IM1 is supposed to provide general information, whereas IM2 may show more specific information based on recent studies. It may be difficult to connect their difference to their phraseological characteristics.

IM2 is supposed to have another function, which shows what is not clarified or what is expected from previous studies. Actually, we found phrases such as "remains unknown" and "findings suggested" in the last sentences of IM2, which can be used for introducing research problems. Thus, the last sentence is particularly important to

properly construct IM2 in the Introduction section.

The structure of the beginning of IM3 is extremely different from those of IM1 and IM2. The first sentence of IM3 starts with special phrases such as “Here, we” or “In this study, we” or its equivalent. An adverb or adverb phrase serves as a signal of the beginning of IM3 and can be used to lead the thesis statement of an article by using phrases such as “we report ...” and “we investigated whether ...”.

Move analysis can extract keywords specific for each move, which may be useful for the authors to construct each move or section, such as the Introduction. Although the list of move-specific keywords is valuable, the authors need to know how to use those keywords for constructing each move. Thus, detailed information about usage of individual words in research articles is required. For that purpose, the corpus provided by the Life Science Dictionary Project[2], which consists of 1.6 billion words obtained from PubMed database[3] serves as an extremely powerful tool to find appropriate combinations of words in research articles of the life science field (Kawamoto et al., 2017). We strongly recommend researchers in the biomedical field to use this corpus when they need to find words and phrases suitable for their research articles.

In conclusion, we have demonstrated that the three moves presented here are essential for the Introduction section of biomedical research articles. Our data provide a comprehensive view of the structure of the Introduction section. Carefully considering the function of three moves, authors can find an effective way to construct a research article. Detailed information of the usage of words and phrases can be obtained from the Life Science Dictionary Corpus. Phraseology of individual moves based on our analysis of the 300 articles will be available in the near future.

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## Chapter Six:

# Error analysis of overt lexicogrammatical errors in the prepublication English-language manuscripts of Japanese biomedical researchers

## —With implications for the teaching of writing for biomedical research—

Flaminia Miyamasu
(University of Tsukuba)

### 1. Introduction

Writing is an essential part of the scientific endeavor. The necessity for scientists to have their work published is encapsulated in the oft-quoted "If you haven't written it, you haven't done it" (Lindsay, 2011, p. 2). For scientists who seek to disseminate their work through high-impact journals and to gain recognition within their global research networks, this means publishing in English, for English has become "the global language of experiment and discovery" (Graddol, 1997, p. 9). In the 2006–2015 period, English-language articles accounted for 96.94% of all articles in the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE) database (Liu, 2017), and in 2015, for 96% of all PubMed indexed articles (Rosselli, 2016). Therefore, to compete in this research environment in which English is the lingua franca, writing skill in English is a must. Yet, training in scientific writing is rarely offered to scientists (Douglas & Grant, 2018; Hofman, 2014), with fewer than 5% of all scientists estimated to have received any such formal training (Lindsay, 2011). Instead, scientists are left to their own devices and expected somehow to "pick up" writing skill through their reading of the research literature (Lindsay, 2011). Moreover, when scientific writing courses are available to scientists, the course instructors often may not be qualified for teaching scientific or medical writing (Hofman, 2014) or have little precedent to follow (Ossola, 2014), not to mention a dearth of quality specialized textbooks to which they might refer. Thus, they are compelled to design their own courses and pedagogic materials (Ossola, 2014).

A starting point for designing such courses is to conduct an analysis of students' needs. For instructors of English as a Second Language (ESL), one approach to doing this is through error analysis (EA) (Salehi & Bahrami, 2018). Error analysis is a

methodology to identify and analyze the errors that second-language (L2) learners make, not just for the purpose of eliminating those erroneous forms but also, and more importantly, for investigating the state of the learners' L2 (Corder, 1981). The making of errors is a fundamental part of the learning process (Brown, 1993; Corder, 1981), and just as the errors that children make in the process of learning the mother tongue (L1) reveal their stage of learning the L1, so, too, do the errors of L2 learners reveal, both to the instructor and to the learner, the latter's current level of L2 learning (Corder, 1981). Moreover, EA is useful to researchers because, by understanding the sources of the errors, they can elucidate how the L2 is learned as well as the strategies that L2 learners use to learn the language (Corder, 1981; Ellis, 1994). Identification of the most frequently occurring errors leads in turn to pedagogic application as teachers design courses/materials around the aspects of L2 learning shown by the analysis to be in need of attention (Ellis, 1994). Thus, errors are not to be viewed negatively but as an opportunity to understand students' needs (Carrió-Pastor & Mestre-Mestre, 2014).

How is "error" defined in the field of L2 acquisition? According to Ellis (1994), an error is a "deviation from the norms of the target language" (p. 51)—the "norm" being understood here as the standard L2 written dialect. Such deviations may be nonsystematic or systematic. Nonsystematic errors are errors of processing (Ellis, 1994) and include those caused by slips of the tongue, tiredness, hurriedness, memory lapses, and—in the case of writing—careless misses. These errors are usually easily corrected by the speaker/writer and are made by native English speakers (NESs) too. Corder (1981) termed such deviations "errors in performance" or, simply, "mistakes" (p. 10). Systematic errors, on the other hand, occur because of inadequate knowledge of or failure to follow a rule of the L2 (Ellis, 1994). Being less easily correctable by the speaker/writer, systematic errors are more serious. Corder (1981) termed such deviations "errors in competence" or, simply, "errors" (p. 10), and because these errors indicate inadequate learning, he advocated that they alone should be the focus of EA.

The simplest taxonomy of errors is one based on linguistic categories, which allows a detailed description and quantification of the errors. The linguistic categories include morphological errors (e.g., "They thinks"), lexical errors (incorrect vocabulary use), syntactical errors (e.g., incorrect subject-verb agreement), and orthographic errors (e.g., misspelling).

To explain the sources of errors in language learning, linguists generally distinguish between interlingual and intralingual errors. Interlingual errors are those that occur because of the influence of the L1 in terms of transfer of grammatical

structures and lexical expressions from the L1 to the L2 (Corder, 1981). If the structures or expressions are not equivalent between the L1 and L2, the transfer that occurs to the L2 is said to be "negative transfer"; thus, interlingual errors are also known as "transfer" or "interference" errors. Intralingual errors occur because of difficulty with or partial/faulty learning of the L2. Causes of intralingual errors include the following (Touchie, 1986): simplification or avoidance—the learner avoids using difficult structures in favor of simpler ones; overgeneralization—having learned how to use one form/expression correctly, the learner inappropriately generalizes its use to other forms/expressions (e.g., "to have an influence on" is overgeneralized to "to influence on"); fossilization—the learner persistently makes the same error; inadequate learning—the learner has not learnt a rule completely; induced errors—the learner has been exposed to faulty teaching or teaching materials; false hypothesizing—the learner incorrectly assumes rules about the L2. Interlingual errors tend to be more frequent at the earlier stages of learning, whereas intralingual errors are more frequent in the intermediate and advanced stages, at which stages, interlingual errors that do occur tend to be errors of lexis (Brown, 1993).

Errors can also be described as overt or covert (Ellis, 1994). Overt errors are those that are obvious regardless of the context (e.g., "times fries," "when I was a children"). Covert errors, on the other hand, are those that become evident only within the context; in other words, an expression that appears correct superficially turns out not to represent what the speaker/writer intended.

Finally, errors can be classified according to the extent to which they impede communication (Ellis, 1994). Thus, local errors have little impact in terms of disrupting communication and usually consist of single elements within a sentence, such as misspellings or misused prepositions. Global errors, on the other hand, do disrupt communication and usually occur at the overall sentence level, such as faulty word order or transitional word use.

Despite the usefulness of EA in elucidating an L2 learner's state of progress and despite the resultant insights that taxonomies of error can provide for curricular design and creation of pedagogic materials, only a few such studies have been conducted in Japan (Bryant, 1984; Davis, 2010; Thompson, 2001). Moreover, apart from an Iranian study (Salehi & Bahrami, 2018), no such studies have been conducted on the prepublication English-language research manuscripts of nonnative English speakers (NNESs). Therefore, in this study, I conducted an EA to identify and analyze the most frequently occurring overt lexicogrammatical errors in Japanese biomedical

researchers' prepublication English-language manuscripts. The resultant taxonomy of errors may be useful to ESL specialists designing courses/materials related to biomedical research writing for Japanese students/researchers.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1 Sample

The sample consisted of 20 randomly selected articles submitted for English-language editing to the publications support center (Medical English Communications Center [MECC]) of the medical faculty of the University of Tsukuba from March to September 2020. The papers were intended for publication in international journals and comprised original biomedical or clinical research manuscripts and clinical case reports. All the papers were coauthored, typically by research laboratory team members and thus with research writing experience ranging from that of masters/doctoral-level graduate students to that of principal investigators. The main text and figure legends of each paper were examined.

The EA approach used was that of Corder (1981), entailing 3 stages: identification of errors, description of errors, explanation of errors. The details of each stage are described below.

### 2.2 Identification of errors

Each article was examined sentence by sentence, and overt errors (i.e., usages that were unambiguously deviant from the norms of scientific English) were extracted. For each paper, recurrently occurring errors (i.e., the same types of error) were extracted only once. Since all the papers were coauthored in teams, it was presumed that the texts had been viewed several times and undergone peer language revision; thus, any deviant forms that remained at the time of this analysis were judged to be errors of competence, not of performance.

### 2.3 Description of errors

Each error was then codified into categories based on the linguistic levels of morphology, lexis, syntax, and orthography to establish a descriptive taxonomy of the lexicogrammatical errors occurring in this sample. For quantification of the errors, the errors from all the categories were first summed and then the frequency of each error category was determined by calculating the number of the errors in each category as a percentage of the total errors.

### 2.4 Explanation of errors

For each error category, an attempt was made to understand the source of the error—whether it was of the interlingual or the intralingual type.

### 2.5 Ethics approval

Institutional review board approval for this study was obtained from the University of Tsukuba (approval no. 1571). For each representative error-containing sentence presented herein, any information that might identify the authors' laboratory (e.g., a specific name of a studied molecule) was removed, and informed consent to use the modified sentences was obtained from the author under whose name the paper was originally submitted to MECC for English editing.

## 3. Overall results

Table 1. Frequently occurring errors in a sample of prepublication biomedical manuscripts written by Japanese researchers

| Total errors *N* = 1,400 | *n* | % | Source of error |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Zero article** | 611 | 43.6 | Intralingual |
| **Preposition** | 134 | 9.6 | Intralingual |
| **Misused word** | 118 | 8.4 | Interlingual/Transfer |
| **Singular/plural noun** | 96 | 6.9 | Intralingual |
| **Punctuation** | 80 | 5.7 | Intralingual |
| **Verb tense** | 60 | 4.3 | Intralingual |
| **Capitalization** | 53 | 3.8 | Intralingual |
| **Connector** | 34 | 2.4 | Interlingual/Transfer? |
| **Anthropomorphism** | 32 | 2.3 | Interlingual/Transfer? |
| **Subject-verb agreement** | 31 | 2.2 | Intralingual |
| **Others**[a] | 151 | 10.1 | |

[a]Others = spelling, passive/active, indefinite article, relative pronoun, dangling modifier, adjectival form, tautology, run-on sentence, definite article, faulty abbreviation, misplaced modifier, sentence fragment, contraction.

Of the 20 prepublication manuscripts studied, 10 were biomedical research articles, and 10 were clinical research articles or reports. Of the 16 papers with author information available, the mean number of authors was 11.1 (*SD* = 7.26). The mean number of words for all the papers was 2,650.9 (*SD* = 1,622.96). Altogether, 1,400

linguistic errors were extracted from the sample, and these were classified into 23 error types. The majority of the error types were errors of syntax (11/23, 47.8%), followed by errors of lexis, orthography (5/23, 21.7% each), and morphology (2/23, 8.7%). The 10 most frequently occurring erroneous uses were of the following: the zero article, prepositions, words, singular/plural nouns, punctuation, verb tense, capitalization, connectors, anthropomorphisms, and subject-verb agreement; of these, errors in use of the zero article were by far the most common (43.6% of the total). In the majority of the most frequently occurring errors (7/10), the source of the error was judged to be an intralingual one (Table 1).

## 4. Top 10 frequently occurring errors, possible causes, and pedagogic implications

Representative erroneous sentences from the sample are numbered below. In addition to the removal of identifying information (e.g., by replacement with an "X"), some sentences have been slightly further modified owing to space constraints. As per convention, an asterisk indicates that the sentence is faulty, and the correct forms are presented in superscript (Bryant, 1984).

### 4.1 Zero article

1. *The lesions were mainly X1 according to the magnifying endoscopic classification of $^{the}$Japanese Endoscopy Association.
2. *Mucinous metaplasia may show glandular structures in some organs such as $^{the}$endometrium and urinary bladder.
3. *The X kappa coefficient of the seaweed intake of $^{the}$2 groups was X.
4. *Glomus $^{tumors}$tumor frequently develops as $^{a}$round mass.

The overwhelming majority of errors in this study were errors in article usage (combined zero, definite, and indefinite article errors: 636/1,400, 45.4%). Given the lack of an article system in the Japanese language, this error is an intralingual one, and that the overwhelming majority of article-related errors were zero articles, we may infer that the factor involved was avoidance due to difficulty with this grammatical form. Pedagogically, the instructor must explain the complex concepts of definiteness versus indefiniteness and of specific versus generic reference. However, if time does not permit, the biomedical research writing instructor may provide tasks focusing on article uses specific to the biomedical discipline, such as the use of the definite article for individual

organizations (as in #1 above), parts of the body (as in #2), entities already mentioned (as in #3), and lesions of the body (as in #4).

### 4.2 Prepositions

5. *The micropapillary configuration was composed [of]by a single layer of columnar epithelial cells.
6. *The tumor specimens were collected from 264 patients [at]in X Hospital from 2006 to 2010.
7. *The reason [for]of this discrepancy is unclear.

Given that preposition use in English is not easily generalizable, inadequate mastery of this lexical form likely explains this error, making it an intralingual one. For biomedical scientist learners of English, tasks focusing on typical prepositional collocations in scientific English such as those shown in the sample sentences here would be useful.

### 4.3 Misused words

8. *That study compared British [participants]subjects aged 35–46 years and Japanese [participants]subjects aged 40–56 years.
9. *Conservative treatment is not effective in patients [with suspected]suspicious for hyperplasia.
10. *The [histopathologic findings]histopathology showed follicular hyperplasia.
11. *Four of the [patients]cases had gastric erosions.

The error here consists in misuse of words in the scientific context. The source of this error is lexical transfer, by which the author has assumed an equivalent lexical form between Japanese and English. It may also be argued that the erroneous forms have been picked up from those of the scientific jargon used by NES authors themselves. Thus, some terms in scientific jargon have the potential to cause offense (such as “subjects” in #8, considered pejorative by some, and “suspicious for” in #9) and some are inaccurate in meaning (in #10, “histology” denotes a field of study; in #11, a “case” is a recorded instance of a disease, not a human being). Instructors, therefore, must point out to biomedical students the notions of scientific jargon and of language that has the potential to offend and the associated need to avoid emulating examples of poor

scientific writing by NES authors and instead to use language that is both accurate and sensitive to the human beings it describes.

### 4.4 Singular/plural nouns

12. *These results suggest that the digestive [tract]tracts could be secondarily involved in X patients.
13. *The authors thank the health care [staff]staffs of X community.
14. *We investigated the days of opioid use for each chemotherapy [cycle]cycles with/without PBT.

Given that pluralization of nouns does not correspond between Japanese and English (it is possible in Japanese for plural entities not to take a plural marker), the source of this error is likely intralingual. Pedagogic tasks that guide students in the identification of count and noncount entities in English would be useful in remedying this error.

### 4.5 Punctuation

15. *Thirty-six patients (75%) had survived without disease progression at the last [follow-up]follow up.
16. *The findings were marked plasmacytic infiltration, compatible with plasma cell-type CD[-], negative X infection[-], and elevated IL-6 (28 pg/mL).

Given the differences in punctuation marks and usages between Japanese and English, the source of punctuation problems for Japanese learners of English is likely intralingual. Whilst the punctuation problems identified in this sample rarely disrupted comprehensibility, instructors should nevertheless explain to students the importance of particular punctuation rules in scientific writing (e.g., hyphens in certain permanent compound nouns, as in “follow-up” in #15, and semicolons in place of commas to separate items in complex lists, as in #16).

### 4.6 Verb tense

17. *Cook et al [5] proposed a continuum model of tendon pathology that [has]had 3 stages.

18. *The purpose of this study [was]is to determine an objective measure of X thickness.
19. *The operative setting [is]was shown in Figure 2.

Correct tense usage is particularly important in scientific discourse because verb tense signals whether a phenomenon has been established as fact by the scientific community (as in the model described in #17) or was the result of an experiment(s) that has yet to be verified through the review process or through validation within the greater scientific community. Therefore, any course on scientific writing should include explanation about the verb tense system of English scientific discourse. Students should also be able to identify completed events in the past, which are expressed in the simple past tense ("Cook et al proposed" in #17 and the revised verb in #18), as well as statements referring to the contents of the paper itself, which are expressed in the present tense (as in #19). The errors here suggest that the authors may be unaware of these distinctions in meaning in scientific discourse, making the likely source of the error an intralingual one.

### 4.7 Capitalization

20. *The Mini-Mental [State Examination] state examination (MMSS) score was X.
21. *X was purchased from Y company; [cisplatin]Cisplatin and [paclitaxel]Paclitaxel were purchased from Z company.
22. *The high irradiation dose was maintained, as shown in [Figure]figure 2.

The Japanese language has no equivalent to the capitalization system of English, and thus, the source of this error is an intralingual one, perhaps explained by inadequate teaching or mastery of the rule. Students should understand the difference between proper names (e.g., title of the scale in #20) and generic names (e.g., "cisplatin" and "paclitaxel" in #21) and that the specific sections of a research article take initial capital letters (as in #32).

### 4.8 Connectors

23. *Cases were classified as ischemic stroke [or]and hemorrhagic stroke.
24. *We performed enrichment analysis of these tissues. [The results showed that]As a result, the clustering analysis of PPI enriched X.

Although the source of this error is unclear, I speculate that it is lexical transfer from Japanese. Interviews with the authors are necessary to confirm or refute the speculation. Needless to say, logical flow is vitally important in scientific discourse; therefore, students should be aware of the need to scrutinize their writing for correct use of connectors and transitional words.

### 4.9 Anthropomorphism

25. *The airway pressure was measured [with]by a manometer.
26. *[The nodule could not be detected by means of ultrasonography]Ultrasonography could not detect the nodule owing to the smallness of the lesion.
27. *Extraction of DNA from the peripheral blood samples was performed [using]by a QuickGene DNA whole blood kit.

These sentences suffer from the error of anthropomorphism, i.e., attribution of human intention or behavior to a nonhuman agent. This error may be one of transfer, but interviews with the authors are needed to confirm their reasons for using the anthropomorphic expressions. Scientific writing instructors should explain the concept of anthropomorphism to students and stress the importance of pairing human agents, not inanimate ones, with verbs that express intention or human behavior.

### 4.10 Subject-verb agreement

28. *The leak pressures of the X sealant [were]was significantly higher.
29. *The amino acid sequence data [were]was uploaded to the X database.
30. *Studies on this issue have been scant in Asian populations, whose BMI and prevalence of obesity [are]is lower than those of western populations.

Agreement of the verb with the number of the subject is a problem not only for NNES authors but also for NES authors (Hofman, 2014). A common reason is the complexity of scientific prose; for example, the length of the sentence might be such that the true subject is not adjacent to the verb, thus causing the author to mistakenly identify a noun(s) nearer to the verb as the subject(s) (as in #28). Another reason is the frequency in scientific English of non-English (especially Latin or Greek) words, whose plural marker lacking an “s” may distract the author into erroneously judging a noun to be singular (as in #29). Moreover, Japanese verbs are not inflected for number, which

may explain the error in #30. Given these reasons, then, we can infer that the source of this error is intralingual, perhaps caused by inadequate teaching or mastery of the L2. Instructors of scientific writing must call students' attention to the need in English to identify and agree the verb with the true subject of the sentence, as well as to the presence of scientific words that can be mistakenly understood to be singular forms (e.g., "criteria," "fungi," "protozoa").

## 5. Discussion

This EA has provided a taxonomy of the prevalent overt lexicogrammatical errors found in a sample of prepublication writing by Japanese biomedical researchers. In particular, it has highlighted the burden posed by the article system of English (as evidenced by apparent avoidance of the use of any article) as well as by singular/plural differentiation (as evidenced again by use of the zero article and by errors in the use of singular/plural noun forms and in subject-verb agreement). These results confirm Thompson's (2001) assertion that "Many Japanese learners achieve really creditable proficiency in all aspects of written English except articles and the number-countability problem" (p. 304), as well as previous findings on the difficulty of the article system for Japanese learners of English (Bryant, 1984; Davies, 2010; Master, 1997). In addition, the finding that a high proportion of the errors were intralingual is consistent with the findings of other EA studies that the majority of errors are intralingual in origin, particularly in intermediate and advanced learners (Ellis, 1994), as the authors were here. Interlingual/transfer errors in these learners tend to occur at the lexical rather than at the grammatical level (Ellis 1994), which is also borne out by the results of this EA (i.e., misused words, connectors, anthropomorphisms).

Pedagogically, the taxonomy of errors produced here may be useful in helping instructors of biomedical research writing to anticipate the problems that their learners may have and, accordingly, to develop effective teaching methodologies and materials. For example, the instructor may provide samples of erroneous sentences, such as those shown here or from the instructor's own collection, which the instructor can then use to explain the error, as well as its source. The instructor can then follow up by providing similar erroneous sentences for the students themselves to analyze, revise, and discuss.

Whilst this was a study of errors in the research writing of NNESs, it behooves us also to mention what was done correctly by this sample of NNES authors (Ellis, 1994). Despite the number of errors uncovered, the errors rarely, if at all, affected the overall comprehensibility of the texts, reflecting the advanced competence of these authors in

using English, the lingua franca of their global biomedical fields. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that the focus of the study was on surface, overt errors. Another study focusing on deeper, covert errors may reveal more insidious effects on comprehensibility.

The limitations of this study should be mentioned. The writing sample analyzed was from authors of a single institution. To consolidate the error taxonomy produced here, further analyses at other institutions are needed. In addition, in several instances, the source of the error was inferred. To confirm these inferences, interviews with the authors are needed. Furthermore, the study covered only the surface, overt lexicogrammatical errors. Analysis of the deeper, covert errors remains to be done. Future studies are also needed on other error types, such as errors at the discourse level (content organization) and errors caused by sociocultural interference (usages inappropriately transferred from the author's sociocultural context) (Salehi & Bahrami, 2018).

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first EA conducted of Japanese biomedical researchers' prepublication manuscripts. It is hoped that the taxonomy of errors that it has produced will be useful to research writing instructors in understanding the English writing needs of Japanese biomedical researchers and in responding to those needs with appropriate teaching strategies and materials. In this way, we will affirm that the value of EA is in highlighting not what is unwanted but what has already been achieved and what remains to be improved in the ongoing process of L2 acquisition.

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# Part IV:

# Theoretical and practical approaches to academic writing

## Chapter Seven:

# Language socialization and writing centers

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### 1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the relevance of perspectives of *language socialization* (Duff & Talmy, 2011; Kramsch, 2002; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986) and theories derived from, or closely related to language socialization (e.g., Canagarajah, 2018a; van Lier, 2002, 2004), to everyday practices of Writing Centers in the world. Throughout the chapter, by Writing Center I refer to self-access learning centers of various forms in various languages where students who seek academic support go to and consult with tutors who are one way or another ahead of students in the academic activities including but not exclusively writing.

I, the author, am a sociolinguist and a university English teacher who, for the past decade, has been supervising a self-access learning support center for first-year academic English courses at a research university in urban Japan. It is important to note upfront that the chapter is not a rigorous data-based study but a casual reflection by one Writing Center supervisor about her daily observation of occurrences at the center. People and events in this essay are all composite of realities if not fictional; furthermore, all the names of people are pseudonyms. These events were salient or recursive, thus unforgettable, in my ten years at the Writing Center.

### 2. Language socialization, mother of theories and perspectives

Language socialization in its early years was primarily regarding first language, or L1, learning; that is, how children were socialized into their caregivers' communities: Bambi Schieffelin and Elinor Ochs, who were called founding mothers of language socialization, reframed the concept of socialization in anthropology to have a specific focus on language. The two scholars explained that language socialization considered language learning as becoming a member of a community *to be able to use the language* shared in the community *in the language* (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). The theory considers language learning to be inherently social phenomena which are always and everywhere context sensitive; moreover, in and through a language or languages, one learns various social practices and values shared in the target community (Duff & Talmy, 2011).

The theory of language socialization was soon adopted by scholars who were interested in how people learn a language other than their mother tongues at different ages and life stages (e.g., Atkinson, 2003; Duff, 1995; Talmy, 2008). L2 learning has issues which L1 learning is less likely to have. This is because in the cognition of L2 learners, L1already exists; in addition, learners have already learned social practices which include the use of L1. Language socialization studies of learning L2, L3, or more, added complexity to research and further stimulated the development of multiple theories and research based on theories including neo-Vygotskian sociocultural theory (e.g., Lantolf, 2000; Ohta, 2000), studies of identity (e.g., McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton & Toohey, 2001), and ecological perspectives (e.g., van Lier, 2002, 2004).

This anthropological, thus social, stance to view language learning was regarded as an antithesis to traditional and mainstream cognitivist view of language learning (e.g., Ellis, 1999; Long, 1990), and language socialization became not merely a theory but a paradigm for some researchers (Watson-Gegeo, 2004). Language socialization takes the position that language is inherently social; therefore, events and phenomena of learning, or non-learning, of language needs to be understood without detaching from the environment; for instance, classrooms, institutions, families, and local communities. Computation of language by the brain is, of course, an important scientific question (DeKeyser, 2007; Gass & Mackey, 2007), and it certainly has informed, and will continue to inform, language education. However, a Newtonian approach to the mechanism of language learning has not sufficiently answered particular questions that second or foreign language teachers and learners had about how language learning happened, or did NOT happen, in their unique situations. Furthermore, it is fair to say that the frustration was felt more intensely in foreign language education; in other words, education of the languages which were not spoken in the environment including English as a foreign language (EFL), where the purposes of language learning and language use vary extensively. For example, in Japan, formal English education does not seem to have been informed by cognitivist acquisition theories. English education in Japan's school system has long been Japanese-medium education focusing on knowledge about English, not because of cognitive limitation of the learners but most likely social reasons such as efficiency in test preparation for high-stakes entrance exams, which are knowledge-based rather than based on functional proficiency.

Language socialization studies of second language learning became a driving force of what David Block called *the social turn of second language acquisition (SLA)* (Block, 2003), namely, a major shift to holistic, context-conscious approaches to language and language learning, and many *exemplar* studies (Mishler, 1990) were publicized (e.g., Duff, 1995;

Kobayashi, 2003; Talmy, 2008) which depicted highly complex and often conflict-prone processes of second and foreign language learning.

The research methods of studies guided by language socialization are, like in anthropology and sociology, qualitative or more broadly ethnographic. Researchers stay in their research sites for an extended period of time observing, taking fieldnotes, and interviewing the people, sometimes repeatedly to achieve an in-depth understanding of the people and the community. Nowadays, electronic devices such as audio and video recorders are also used to collect data in multiple modes, but researchers are still the main collectors and interpreters of data. It is sometimes said that good teachers are good ethnographers. One can also say that the research methods of language socialization also share some similarities to daily activities of Writing Center staff members who carefully observe and interview visitors.

Studies guided by language socialization have informed not only researchers but second and foreign language educators, and it is not because of the studies' generalizability but *transferability* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) and *particularizability* (Clarke, 1994) or, to put it simply, *usefulness in their practice*. A Francophone Canadian student and Japanese student may both make many grammar errors in essays in English, but good teachers and good Writing Center tutors instinctively know that there is no universal reason for poor writing and thus, there is no almighty solution. Good teachers and tutors carefully try a suitable intervention for each case. Practitioners have been informed by the body of knowledge accumulated by cognitivist research in language learning, but they also wanted to find alternative ways to understand, perhaps not generalizable causes, but reasons why and how this particular student they teach or tutor in this particular environment learn or not learn a language.

In almost four decades of the history of language socialization being adopted in studies of second and foreign language learning, many new and innovative theories have spawned from the epistemology of language socialization. Language socialization as a theory is remarkably inclusive and compatible with other theories of education and communication. Kasper (2002) pointed out that language socialization is ontologically and epistemologically compatible with pragmatic competence and sociocultural theory, which was derived from neo-Vygotskian psychology of education. Language socialization is also combined with theories of discourses (Katayama, 2008; Morita, 2004) for finer analysis of unique local practices and phenomena of language learning including refusal of learning. Many theories that guide qualitative studies of language learning and language use no longer adopt the term language socialization, but evidently inherited the worldview of language socialization;

that is, language is a temporally and contextually situated phenomena, which is highly complex and unreducible to general rules and norms (Kramsch, 2002). Leo van Lier's (2002) ecological approach to language learning, which will be discussed later in this chapter, is one of the earlier examples of such development. Nowadays, the epistemology of language socialization incorporates contemporary ideas of poststructuralism, post modernism, and posthumanism and is further developing into more dynamic, more complex, and more contemporary guide to capture and understand second and foreign language learning.

## 3. Language socialization perspective and Writing Center

> *Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.*
> *You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink.*

Above are Writing Centers' favorite proverbs. They reflect a paradigm shift in education from teaching-centered to learning-centered. North's (1984) proposal, "produce better writers, not better writing" (p. 438), which has become the Writing Center axiom, is the ideal for many Writing Centers in the world; however, in reality, Writing Center managers and tutors are negotiating on a daily basis with the local realities of students, institutions, and conditions beyond institutions (see Araki & Miyokawa in this volume). For example, in many tertiary institutions in the world, idealism of learner-centered education hits the wall of financial constraints. It is well-known that many universities cannot afford smaller classes, thus traditional, large, teacher-fronted lecture classes are adopted so often at the cost of learner-centeredness (Sullivan, 2000). Likewise, it is presumed that the ideal of the paradigm shift is not easily translated into local practices of Writing Centers.

Perspectives derived from language socialization will inform Writing Center practitioners in dealing with such local realities not in the form of direct instructions but suggestions regarding attitudes. In the following section, I attempt to discuss three important notions of language socialization in its broad interpretation which directly inform practices or Writing Centers:

1) Situated learning: holistic and local
2) Mutual socialization among people
3) Room and artifacts surrounding human actors

The three episodes in the section are loosely based on various occurrences at the Writing Center I supervise. I reiterate that these stories are not based on research data. Rather, each

story as well as each person, with a pseudonym, is a composite of multiple events and people. I witnessed numerous tutorial sessions as well as casual interactions during the past decade at the Writing Center, which was small enough for the manager to see and hear concurring tutorials from her desk. It must be added that interactions in this Writing Center were mostly in the tutees' L1, Japanese.

### 3.1 Situated learning: Tutor Yamada-san and tutee Suzuki-san

Tutor Yamada-san, a veteran female tutor, was booked by a male science major student Suzuki-san, who wanted to consult about the method section of a lab report in English. Suzuki-san showed up and sat down looking pale and nervous. After a greeting and quick self- introduction, Tutor Yamada-san started a tutorial session with this first-timer with a small talk telling him, "You look tired. Do you have a lot of assignments this week?" Tutee Suzuki-san looked tense and hesitant but slowly muttered, " …Uh, I am a hopeless procrastinator." Yamada-san responded quickly and matter-of-factly, "Ah, then you are my friend." Suzuki-san's nervous face immediately softened, and he started explaining how he was behind his assignment to write the method section of his experiment. Suzuki-san confessed that he got sick in the week when he already had a backlog of two other assignments from other courses, and the deadline of the method section of the paper was 23:55 tonight. Yamada-san quickly read Suzuki-san's method section, which was incomplete and confusing. Yamada-san asked Suzuki-san to describe what experiment he did and together with him re-constructed the section. At the end of the 40-minute tutorial session, Tutor Yamada-san had a better understanding of Tutee Suzuki-san's circumstances including his English ability, which led to her assessment of how much Suzuki-san could do before the deadline, so Tutor Yamada-san's advice was modest; making the tense consistently past and labeling the samples in the Figure.

Writing Center tutorials are all local and situated. Tutors' advice to their client students usually reflects such situated realities. In the episode above, Yamada-san, being a graduate student at the same university and once was a freshman at a similar competitive university had a good idea of the weekly workload of science-major undergrads like Suzuki-san. Like most experienced tutors, Yamada-san would subtly but attentively observe her clients, particularly first-time visitors. From Tutee Suzuki-san's demeanor Yamada-san immediately sensed that the stress Suzuki-san was under when he came in. Yamada-san's attempt to relax the nervous client was successful in this case, and she could elicit some information to adjust her advice and make it feasible for the client. In fact, it turned out that Tutee Suzuki-san was recovering from a bad cold but still felt weak. He was overwhelmed

by not only the academic workload but also by the general life-style change of living alone in a big city for the first time.

What makes tutorials successful is impossible to generalize because advice at Writing Centers is always and everywhere local and uniquely situated. The student, Suzuki-san, was certainly not the piece of paper with an error-ridden methodology section of a lab report. Yamada-san, the tutor, did not simply correct Suzuki-san's grammar mistakes; instead, she made a holistic assessment of his situation and, then, made suggestions feasible for her client between the end of the tutorial and the submission. In doing so, Yamada-san tapped into her existing general knowledge about lives of first-year science students at this university as well as the information about this particular client gathered on the spot. Needless to say, Yamada-san would give very different advice to other clients with similar quality of drafts.

### 3.2 Mutual socialization: Tutor Sato-san and tutee Tada-san

Perhaps because early language socialization studies presumed asymmetry in power relations between socializers and the socialized, language socialization may give the impression to some that it is regarding a unidirectional influence of socializers on ones who are expected to be socialized; however, realities of social lives observe that socialization is rarely a one-way street. Static possession of knowledge or power has been contested by poststructuralist and postmodernist thinkers such as Chris Weedon and Michel Foucault. Furthermore, recent empirical studies focus more on bi- or multi-directional socialization (e.g., Talmy, 2008).

In a macro sense, students at institutions such as research universities which have fairly specific goals appear to be directly socialized into practices of socializers' community, but realities of such seemingly straightforward socialization are much more complex and conflict prone. At a research university Writing Center, tutors do socialize young undergraduate students and initiate them into the world of research. However, the tutors are often graduate students of the same institution who are not yet full-members of the target community, namely, academia. The tutors bring newly acquired knowledge and practices of their graduate school into the Writing Center and pass them on to undergraduate clients, which is generally considered an ideal apprentice-expert learning model. However, one cannot assume that the socializers are the sole knowers. In fact, on the course of tutorials, tutors often discover a set of knowledge their clients possess but the tutors do not. The following composite episode is one such instance.

Tada-san was taking a compulsory English academic writing course for humanity

students in the fall semester of her first year at the university. Tada-san went to the Writing Center because she wanted a tutor to read her argument in the draft of her argumentative paper. Until this semester, Tada-san had written few academic papers in English or in Japanese. The body of her paper was criticized as confusing earlier in class by her classmate in a peer feedback session. Sato-san, a tutor, came back to graduate school after teaching at high school for nearly ten years. He was a literature major and in his second semester tutoring at the Writing Center. Tutor Sato-san expected tutee Tada-san to provide a paper copy, which he could underline or jot down notes, but Tada-san opened her laptop on which she had her Google doc draft with her peer's comments on. In her writing class, Google Classroom was used as a learning management system, or LMS. Tada-san politely asked her tutor, Sato-san, how he would like her Google Doc draft to be shared. Sato-san looked perplexed. Sato-san was a self-proclaimed "analogue man," who had little experience of using a learning management system. When he was an undergraduate more than a decade ago, LMS existed but was unpopular. His own professors preferred hard copies, so he always printed out his papers. After brief negotiating exchanges, the two decided that Tutor Sato-san read tutee Tada-san's draft, as well as the critical feedback from her classmate, directly from Tada-san's laptop computer. Then, Sato-san orally give his comments on the draft, so Tutee Tada-san herself would type in notes directly on her draft. Sato-san pointed out the cause of confusion in Tada-san's draft: her paragraphs were too long with rather unnecessary details. Tutee Tada-san rapidly typed in notes about portions to edit later. She was thankful about every piece of advice from Tutor Sato-san who was, to her, an expert writer in English.

Throughout the session, Sato-san was amazed by the ways notes were quickly added on the Google Doc on the computer screen by his teenager tutee. Sato-san was not booked after the session with Tada-san, so he opened one of the Writing Center's laptops, searched for how to use Google Docs and successfully started a Google Doc. Sato-san spent some time trying out Google Docs and its comment function.

The mutual nature of language socialization is frequently observed at Writing Centers. Computer literacy is important academic knowledge which seems to defy unidirectional socialization based on the hierarchy of seniority. Writing Center tutors are often helped by their clients about troubleshooting their malfunctioning computers. The development of computer technology at educational institutions is remarkably fast. Furthermore, as education communities all over the world are currently being forced to learn computer-mediated education to cope with COVID-19, emergencies would create situations in which institutional authorities need knowledge from their juniors.

It must be noted that mutual language socialization at Writing Centers is much more

complex than this simple composite. Tutees inevitably bring classroom practices into Writing Centers, some of which could socialize tutors back to a simplified, formulaic version of academic writing. Tutors as graduate students are expected to be in the process of growing out of simplified practices of academic writing for undergraduate education. They are becoming writers to be published in their fields, where writing practices constantly change. This creates gaps between what tutors advocate at the Writing Center and what they as graduate students need to be socialized into. Such dilemmas require attention, too.

The mutual nature of language socialization is still one important characteristic for researchers of Writing Centers to be investigated and reported on. Likewise for practitioners, awareness of the mutuality will contribute to planning of tutorial activities and, more broadly, managing the facility.

### 3.3 Room and things: A deserted book, tutee Kimura-san, tutor Watanabe-san, Watanabe-san's smartphone, and more

The third point to discuss regarding language socialization and Writing Centers is non-human 'things' in the 'room.' Things have always been observed, collected, and analyzed in traditional ethnography as artifacts, but they tend to be in the category of background or peripheral information in contrast with the main human practices and activities. Contrarily, recent studies in line with the epistemology of language socialization pay increasing attention to non-human objects in a social scene which are indispensable beings when learning takes place in the *room*. Although traditional research and practice of education including Writing Center activities have paid maximum attention to people, occurrences in such social scenes are intermingling of the human and non-human. The act of Writing Center tutorials, that is to say, traditional, off-line ones, can only be recognized as a 'tutorial' when two people, one of whom has a red pen in hand, are sitting next to each other at the same table with a piece of paper in between on the table in the room designated by the institution as a Writing Center. The *things* in the scene are constantly interacted with people during the tutorial session and make this social practice meaningful. For that reason, some recent research of language learning proposes that the 'things' and the 'room' deserve equal attention to the attention to humans (e.g., Canagarajah, 2018a).

One theoretical framework to guide such perspective is the ecology of language learning (van Lier, 2002). Ecology in its original conceptualization is explained as "the economy of nature" (Gibson, 1979) which is distinctively different from the Cartesian worldview of binarity and orderly models for the purpose of generalization. Ecology attempts to explore organisms in their relationship with the environment (van Lier, 2002). Ecological

perspective of language learning is highly inclusive and dynamic in depicting language learning (van Lier, 2002, 2004). Like animals that live on what the surrounding nature affords them (Gibson, 1979), people learn a language through the *affordance* their environment provides, more specifically by relating to and reaching out to various affordances (van Lier, 2002, 2004).

People at a Writing Center are in the ecology of the Writing Center. At a Writing Center, tutees learn from explicit instructions from their tutors, but what is equally important for learning but less noticed is things around tutors and tutees. Tutees' learning depends on a variety of things available for them such as pens and scratch paper, to write down what the tutor says, a used conference poster on the wall donated by one of the tutors, a laptop computer a student can google and show what "dangomushi or *pill bugs"* looks like to a non-Japanese tutor who does not know what it is, then together they learn the Latin name of the gray bug is *Armadillidium vulgare.*

The formation of the room also makes affordances of learning. Placing a table and two chairs is how many basic Writing Centers launch their operation. How the chairs are placed decides the angles of the two people, which affects the style of communication a tutor and a tutee are having. The tutorial session between Tutor Sato-san and Tutee Tada-san in the previous section was only possible because the two were sitting at the same table with Tada-san's laptop in the middle of the table. Sato-san's post-tutorial action to bring out the Writing Center laptop to learn about Google Docs was afforded by one of the free-to-use laptops at the Writing Center, which Sato-san rarely used previously but was available at that moment for him. Books, stationery, furniture, IT equipment, and many more things regardless of intentionally implemented or accidentally left in the room, where these things are located constantly affect the language socialization organically happening at a Writing Center.

Yamamura (forthcoming) called tutorials at a science study support center in her ethnographic data metaphorically as "felt". Influenced by the concept of *rhizome* by Deleuze and Guattari (1987), which is a mushroom-root like, no-beginning, no-ending network structure of social occurrences, Yamamura attempted posthumanistic analysis of people and things in science tutorials. As felt's fibers are not woven but interlocking with each other in a disorderly manner, in the space of a Writing Center—and beyond the physical space when the Internet is involved—people and things are at the equal level intermingling and producing knowledge.

Kimura-san, a first-year male university student majoring in science, came to the Writing Center on time for his booked tutorial, but the tutor he was supposed to meet was still occupied with the previous session. At the Writing Center room as large as a small

classroom, four tables were placed facing the wall, and at one table on the corner, the previous session was going on. Kimura-san had to wait, so he selected a vacant seat at a large round table placed in the center of the room. The table was cluttered with leaflets, scratch papers, pens, and a few books. Bored, Kimura-san picked up and thumbed through one of the books which happened to be within his reach on the table. The book was in Japanese and seemed to be about the publication process of a science paper. Kimura-san was not keenly reading the book, but one peculiar expression caught his eye: he looked up and rather abruptly asked "What is 'daburu buraindo (double blind)?'"

The Writing Center manager at the reception desk less than two meters away looked up from her computer screen. The manager looked around, but there was no tutor, so, she started giving a general idea of how journals select submitted manuscripts. Before the manager reached the very meaning of double blind, a Writing Center tutor and a doctoral student, Watanabe-san, walked in for her shift and joined the talk. Tutor Watanabe-san quickly tapped her smartphone, which happened to be in her hand when coming in, and showed Kimura-san a website of a prominent international journal. Kimura-san stretched his neck and very slowly read the portion where Watanabe-san's fingertip was at, which stated in English how submitted manuscripts were reviewed. Kimura-san, the first-year undergrad, beamed to find the term "double-blind" in Watanabe-san's smartphone screen. By then, the manager withdrew from the conversation and went back to her computer. The doctoral student tutor, Watanabe-san and the first-year student Kimura-san, who was not even Watanabe-san's tutee at the moment, continued chatting about the importance of unbiased peer review process for a few more minutes until the tutor Kimura-san had booked finally finished the prolonged tutorial.

This less-than-five minute interaction and knowledge co-construction in the moment were not afforded only by humans in the scene. The book which was not put back in the shelf against the manager's repeated cautions, the positions of the tables and chairs in the room, and the shift schedule to bring in the science major tutor Watanabe-san all became affordances for Kimura-san, who could not start his tutorial on time, to learn. His affordances did not remain in the room. Tutor Watanabe-san's smartphone, which happened to be in her hand at the moment, afforded Kimura-san the knowledge in the cyberspace created by journal editors who shared the same time and space neither with Kimura-san nor Watanabe-san.

The ecological perspective provides in-depth explanations with an overarching notion of language socialization and its depictions of social realities of language learning. Ecosystems are not replicable. While each event of language socialization is perhaps nothing but a case,

a meticulous and methodical description and analysis of particularity of learning and its ecosystem is highly informative for practitioners.

The ecological perspective added important insights about context to traditional language socialization studies, and invited further theoretical development in the studies of language learning, and I dare say that sociolinguistics of language learning is currently in the most exciting phase of its development particularly regarding how non-human elements and cyberspace are incorporated in understanding language and language learning. Some new theories to guide such attempts are: Spatial Repertoire (Canagarajah, 2018b), Super diversity (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011) and Metrolingualism (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015), all of which boldly depart from the cognitivist perspective of language learning and view the phenomena of languages as highly inclusive events in temporary and contextually dynamic spheres.

## 4. Concluding Remarks

Language socialization is a promising concept to understand Writing Centers. This chapter briefly discussed the development in the theory and epistemology of language socialization. Then, the chapter introduced three perspectives; situatedness, mutuality, and interconnectedness of human and non-human; from traditional to recent ideas of language socialization with the composite episodes at a Writing Center which exemplify the three characteristics. Among many informative features of language socialization and related theories, these three characteristics are particularly illuminating to understand Writing Center activities.

One of the purposes of this chapter was to encourage researchers to conduct ethnographic studies of Writing Centers. Longitudinal *in situ* data collection is time-consuming, but meticulous analysis and report of such data by engaged researchers will find an audience who can use the study, particularly tertiary schools have just started, or are going to start Writing Centers. Furthermore, to make such research possible, institutional support is also much needed. As mentioned earlier, studies of language socialization are typically qualitative, thus generalizability is never claimed. However, readers of such studies will find what could be transferred to and particularized in their own situations. *Thickly-described* particularity of local practices will find audiences who can transfer the knowledge to their own locality.

The other purpose was for practitioners to look at their practices from the perspectives of language socialization. The way that language socialization and theories influenced by language socialization perceive language learning has high compatibility with the everyday

practices of Writing Centers. Writing Center staff members are observing people's transformation from novice to expert. Students are not the only ones to change but tutors and even supervisors grow from less experienced to more experienced. There is no single almighty tutorial method or Writing Center management but the perspective of language socialization guides Writing Center practitioners to better practices in which management and tutors pay attention to the temporal and situational context of all the people involved, pay attention to the nature of interactions, and to the environment of tutorials; how people are organically related to human and non-human resources in the room and beyond including cyberspace.

Being involved in Writing Center activities is a privilege. There is no single tutorial which is the same as other tutorials, and witnessing people learn and grow in a Writing Center in whatever roles they are in, tutors, tutees, or managing staff members, is truly a blessing. At the same time, we practitioners are all regularly reminded that it is a daunting responsibility. The temporally and locally situated nature of Writing Center activities are currently tested in various forms by the unprecedented pandemic in many places in the world. While some institutions can afford online tutorials, others may not have such luxury of choice in their operation. It is my sincere hope that this chapter, however modestly, gives research ideas to researchers of language and language learning, and helps practitioners in their daily endeavor of support activities.

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## Chapter Eight:

# Socialization into integrity

## —Using plagiarism software to teach L2 writing—

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### 1. Introduction

It has been six years since Japan's academic community became the focus of intense scrutiny in the STAP cell scandal that severely damaged the reputations of several researchers and ultimately led one of them to suicide. The problems with the eventually retracted *Nature* article were numerous but this incident brought the issue of plagiarism in Japan's academia to light for many average citizens who were not aware of the severity of this issue in the realms of education and research. Even now, researchers in Japan still recall the lessons that they learned from the incident and lament the lack of response from the government and from universities in helping to deal with Japan's problems with plagiarism and other forms of research misconduct (Enoki, 2019).

Plagiarism has continued to be a particular problem in academia for quite some time. Research on college-level cheating in the United States has shown that between 70-90% of all college students have cheated at one time or another (Genereaux & McLeod, 1995). In other countries as well, this continues to be a problem. In the United Kingdom, it was reported that over 50,000 university students had cheated in some way between 2013-2016 in what was termed a "plagiarism epidemic" (Ali, 2016).

In Asian countries in particular, the issue of plagiarism has caused numerous scandals. Just last year, a famous Chinese actor who has a PhD in film studies was found to have plagiarized in his dissertation leading to enormous amounts of bad press (Yi & Chen, 2019), while a famous Chinese government researcher was stripped of his PhD after his plagiarism was brought to light several years after graduating and holding important government positions (Zuo, 2019). In South Korea, nearly 200 university professors were brought to trial over stealing the work of other authors in late 2015 (Matthews, 2015). Japanese university researchers have the unfortunate honor of being three out of the top five on Retraction Watch (Marcus & Oransky, n.d.), an independent website that monitors research articles that get retracted for various

forms of academic dishonesty. Although such news is shameful to many, we must remember that plagiarism is not a new thing and, in fact, many famous scholars and authors in history have been both victims and accused of it.

History cites the Roman poet Martial as being the first to complain about plagiarism. It is said that he was unable to prove that he was the author of poems that were stolen by his competitors leading him to criticize his enemies in verse. Of course, this is not the only known case of plagiarism in history. Many famous works that are taught around the world are currently believed to have been plagiarized in some way or another. Accusations of plagiarism have been levelled at such literary giants as Mark Twain, Edgar Allen Poe, and William Shakespeare (Park, 2003, p. 474). Such claims are frequently raised again and again in academia as new techniques and findings by various researchers lead to new evidence in such cases. Interestingly, recent research utilizing plagiarism detection software has led some researchers to believe that Shakespeare's plays have also been plagiarized (McCarthy & Schlueter, 2018).

The use of such software for this type of research is interestingly innovative but it really should not be particularly surprising. It is quite common these days for universities and other research institutions to have extensive subscriptions to plagiarism-detecting software. Software and apps like this are quite commonly used by teachers of all different levels on the writing assignments of students to check for the similarity between what is in the text under inspection and large databases of work available from academic sources and on the internet. In all likelihood, the need for such software and services has continued to grow over the years since the development of cutting and pasting functions in word processing software.

Although many teachers and their institutions make common use of such software to detect plagiarism in students' homework and submissions, not many make the use of such services openly available for students to use on their own. Still yet, even fewer teachers in these institutions think about using such software for educational purposes, not to catch cheaters but instead to help students learn how to write in a way that better satisfies the requirements of an academic paper by today's standards. After years of my own experiences with teaching academic writing at the college level in the U.S. and in Japan, I firmly believe that anti-plagiarism software should be used by teachers as a tool for students of English to learn how to become members of the academic community.

## 2. Asian learners of English and research on plagiarism

### 2.1 Culture and plagiarism

Often the research on plagiarism for students learning English as a second or foreign language focuses on the reasons why students plagiarize and in particular the role of culture in this issue, constructing the issue of academic writing as a battleground of East versus West.

Shared anecdotes of international students who freely copy words out of old books and encyclopedias are often used as proof that we must teach new sets of values to students whose previous teachers either do not notice such borrowings (McLeod, 1992, p. 13) or worse yet, see no particular need to do anything about it (Dryden, 1999, p. 76). At the same time, such uses are also described as a sign of respect for the original authors and that not explicitly stating the name of the author is a gesture of respect towards the reader (Lund, 2004; Sowell 2018, p. 3). Such cultural approaches mostly serve as entreaties to instructors to not perceive such uses negatively, calling for greater intercultural understanding in the field of writing and composition.

One particular aspect of culture that is often blamed for these issues is the style of education used in Asian countries. In particular, the emphasis on rote learning in Confucian Heritage Cultures (CHC) is often seen as leading to plagiarism for students (Sowden, 2005). Such studies often intimate that the reason these students plagiarize is that they are so conditioned to memorize things that the plagiarism is totally accidental or that within a culture that assumes high memorization skills, to use the exact words of someone else without clearly attributing them is normal and acceptable (Pennycook, 1996). In contrast to this, other researchers who hail from such Confucian countries have stated quite clearly and stridently that they are not taught to copy others' words as their own and are specifically warned against doing so (Liu, 2005). Additionally, evidence has been shown that textbooks often specifically warn against plagiarizing and give instruction on how to cite the source (pp. 235-236). Furthermore, other research has shown that students coming from CHCs that prefer their traditional style of education are less likely to plagiarize than other students (Brennan & Durovic, 2005).

### 2.2 Types of plagiarism

Other research on the issue of plagiarism with students of English often focuses on the different types of plagiarism that can occur in schools. These type-oriented studies often serve the purpose of defining and grading acts so that teachers develop a sense of

gravity towards certain behaviors over others.

Certainly, one of the most common types of plagiarism discussed is accidental plagiarism. One of the reasons for its popularity in the literature is the belief that this form of plagiarism is extremely common and that it is easily fixed through education. Such research often starts off with the basics of helping students to understand the various definitions of plagiarism before covering citation and reference techniques along with specific examples. These sorts of studies may also include suggestions to teachers and librarians on how to teach the arts of paraphrasing and summarizing, two skills which are often quite difficult for learners of English to master due to the high lexical requirements.

The second type of plagiarism commonly talked about in the research is unintentional plagiarism. With this type of plagiarism, it is assumed that the student already knows the techniques to avoid plagiarizing but due to being overwhelmed with so much information on the topic, ideas and concepts which are not accepted as common knowledge may end up entering into the writing without a citation or reference (Maurer, Kappe, & Zaka, 2006, p. 1051). Certainly, during the course of learning information for a paper or article, the lines of what is common knowledge on the subject and what is not can be blurred. One specific type of unintentional plagiarism is known as *patchwriting* where the second language writer relies too heavily on the language in the source (Howard, 1995). Suggestions on solving issues related to both patchwriting and unintentional plagiarism in general are not always helpful as they simply recommend what amounts to as "more practice" for the learners or earlier education (i.e., Divan, Bowman, & Seabourne, 2015). Still, some research on this area has turned up more specific information on the relationship between ownership and authority in the language with unintentional plagiarism suggesting that by having learners feel empowered with their language use they can be more certain about stating which ideas are their own and which are not (Elander, Pittam, Lusher, Fox, & Payne, 2010).

The third type of plagiarism often discussed is intentional. Maurer et al. (2006) define this as a "deliberate act of copying complete or part of someone else's work without giving proper credit to original creator" (p. 1051). Obviously, this is usually treated as the most egregious of plagiarisms with most studies with a fair number of people stating that it is quite common among second language (L2) learners although with only anecdotal evidence to support such claims (Bamford & Sergiou, 2005, p. 17). Many studies in this area do not focus on any particular course of action in such cases but often instead focus on making sure that teachers and administrators can tell the

difference between intentional and unintentional cases (Adhikari, 2018; Sutherland-Smith, 2005).

The final type of plagiarism researched is that of self-plagiarizing. Self-plagiarism, while normally referring to career academics re-using segments of texts from other published work they have written, may also be an issue for students in a more difficult to discover way. Students using segments from a paper written for another teacher's class would also fall under this category. Suggestions for how to deal with this are often quite similar to accidental plagiarism with researchers suggesting education to increase awareness. Like all the other types mentioned here, the treatments are more about what needs to occur in the minds of the writer rather than having concrete suggestions as to what tools teachers can introduce.

### 2.3 Use of anti-plagiarism software

In the literature regarding anti-plagiarism software, most studies are focused on the question of whether or not the software is effective in identifying and reducing plagiarism. Without a doubt this type of software has made serious inroads in academic institutions around the world. Whether it is the extremely popular service Turnitin, the publishing industry standard iThenticate, the open-sourced WCopyfind, or something like Google Classroom's originality reports, more and more teachers and institutions are gaining access to these services for use in classrooms where writing assignments are given. Often such access comes through the many arrangements such services have with various Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Moodle and even systems such as Canvas without any direct contracts. Such services offer easy means to connect to them, so that teachers can receive reports that rate the originality of students' writing. In Japan as well, we can see that these services are increasing in popularity as Turnitin has recently established its presence in the Japanese corporate world with the expectation that demands for its services will continue to increase at Japanese universities (Jiji Press Ltd., 2020).

Most of the evaluations on this type of software and its use for tertiary institutions are quite positive although troubling in some respects. Many studies have reported success in reducing plagiarism using these software solutions (Heckler, Rice, & Hobson Bryan, 2013) with some instructors using it for typical writing assignments as well as checking the originality of presentation materials such as slides or handouts (Balbay & Kilis, 2019). Unfortunately, services like Turnitin are often seen as an absolute means of detecting and measuring plagiarism although its effectiveness as a deterrent to such

practices is often contested (Walker, 2010) and such practices raise issues of trust and appropriateness in multicultural educational institutions (Canzonetta & Kannan, 2016). Additionally, there are certain situations where the software is still not able to check things especially when the plagiarized source is in a different language from the end product (Baydik & Gasparyan, 2016). Indeed, most teachers who have used these services understand the need to exercise careful judgment when reading the similarity reports and to not accept them completely. Simple sentences and phrases can only be paraphrased in so many ways and with each checked manuscript being added to the databases of these services eventually we end up with cases that are likely not plagiarism but are still flagged as matching.

Other critics of these services maintain that there are other solutions and options which are better suited to the classroom, in particular the idea of teaching about plagiarism and how to avoid it. Many such researchers claim that focusing on teaching students about how to use sources through process writing is still one of the best methods at beating plagiarism (Braumoeller & Gaines, 2001). Yet, despite these calls for an increased focus on pedagogy, it is difficult to argue with the need to utilize whatever tools are available when the teacher is grading a large number of papers all at once. It then behooves us to make use of such software, not to catch our students' academic misconduct in a top-down authoritarian manner, but in a way that allows them to utilize such services as tools in their overall socialization into academic writing.

### 3. Using anti-plagiarism software in the classroom

Research from university settings where anti-plagiarism software is used gives us several ideas on the ways that this software can be used. Much of the research is in agreement that it can be an excellent tool to support teachers so that they do not feel overwhelmed with trying to detect all cases of plagiarism themselves and when presented in an equitable way as a tool for student use many pupils find it helpful as well (Graham-Matheson & Starr, 2013; Savage, 2004). One particularly interesting study by Kunschak (2018) showed that Japanese college students were able to get excellent use out of plagiarism detecting services by using it as an aid for tutoring sessions. Furthermore, students in this study felt that the other resources offered by the service were helpful in improving both grammar and the ability to edit their own papers for themselves (p. 63). I myself have used Turnitin with several of my writing classes and found that it is an excellent tool to teach academic writing in the modern era just as much as spell-check or word count functions in a word processor.

### 3.1 Anti-plagiarism services and teaching writing

There are many ways that a service like Turnitin can be used to teach paraphrasing in the classroom. Even for advanced English learners, paraphrasing often remains one of the most difficult skills to master and feel confident in. At the simplest level, teachers can use services like this to increase awareness of the issue and how there are different definitions of what it means to plagiarize. Used in such a way, teachers may then choose to present the service at whatever level of authority they wish to the students. Alternatively, the teacher can choose to engage students in a discussion as to what level of authority they themselves choose to give the service as writers taking ownership of their own language use. By having students run their own past papers and other assignments through the service themselves, students can then become aware of other ways that their writing can be evaluated. Moreover, by using past papers and assignments, students become more familiar with it and the authoritarian feel of the service is weakened so that it is less intimidating, reducing one of the major faults that previous research projects had found with implementing such services with English learners at the tertiary level (Penketh & Beaumont, 2014, p. 103).

Another simple way that teachers can make use of such services to teach writing in the classroom is to make the originality reports available to students whenever they turn in an assignment. These reports typically highlight sections of the paper that are similar to text found in the database with a percentage score for how similar each phrase is and a total score for how much of the paper is problematic. By clicking on the highlighted phrases, students or teachers are then typically able to compare the student writing with the sample from the database. Thus, students are instantly able to see any problematic areas as soon as they turn the paper in. Students wishing to make use of this method need only (1) submit their assignments early to see any potential problems, (2) compare problematic phrases with the original source material, (3) fix them, and (4) continue to resubmit checking their work against the system's algorithm multiple times before the paper is due. Of course, this is depending on the settings that the institution or teacher has set for the timing of submission to the service and the number of times a document may be resubmitted. Such basic techniques were well received by students in previous research and were shown to effective in improving student writing (Dodigovic & Xiaotong, 2013, p. 35).

While the first two methods are useful in helping students gain a basic awareness and understanding of the issue of plagiarism, there are still other ways to integrate similarity reporting services into the writing classroom. Rather than giving

assessments towards the end of the writing process which tend to be summative, a more formative approach is possible by using these services to help in paraphrasing exercises. It is quite simple for a teacher to take sentences from articles that are clearly indexed within the services' database and then assign several of these as in-class or homework exercises that students must paraphrase. After paraphrasing the sentences, students can submit their finished sentences to the service to see how they did in terms of paraphrasing. While it is true that such exercises may lead to patchwriting, it is also understood that this can be a natural part of an L2 writer's development (Howard, 1995). In fact, techniques commonly referred to as patchwriting by composition and rhetoric specialists are often taught to L2 writers in many writing textbooks (i.e., Dollahite & Haun, 2012, p.10) with the goal that practicing specific grammatical moves in paraphrasing may serve as a kind of scaffolding for the writing student.

A final way that these services can be used in the writing classroom is for peer review, the collaborative learning process during which students read each other's writing and give constructive feedback often used in the process writing classroom. Just as previous research utilized the similarity report for tutoring sessions (Kunschak, 2018), it is equally possible for students to print out or make a PDF of their own similarity report and give it to their partners in a peer review session. Although some of these services like Turnitin have a peer-review function, similarity reports are typically not available to peers. However, nothing prevents the writer from taking their own initiative or from following the instructions of their teacher in sharing the results and asking a peer for advice or help in paraphrasing a sentence marked on these reports as too similar to the source. If teachers were then to combine this with the peer review interfaces offered with such services along with well-thought-out feedback questions, we could not only help students with their language skills but we would gain the added benefits of critical thinking from successful peer reviews that offer constructive advice to the writer (Alharbi & Al-Hoorie, 2020).

I have personally used these techniques in many of my classes with students feeling more confident in their writing as a result. For many L2 English students, paraphrasing seems like a total mystery and the typical advice of "just put it in your own words" often ends up being confusing and frustrating when teachers are not able to specifically say when a sentence is paraphrased enough. Teachers are not available for students to practice withat all hours of the day or night, but services like Turnitin are easily available at all hours.

### 3.2 Potential difficulties with anti-plagiarism services in the classroom

I personally enjoy using Turnitin as a regular part of teaching writing, but not everyone may feel the same as I do about embracing new technologies. As with any system of teaching, there are always certain points that must be considered which could cause difficulty, the incorporation of services like Turnitin is no exception to this.

One major area of concern is the potential for students to perceive the use of a service like this as an accusation of cheating. It is very important for teachers to explain to students their reasons for incorporating such technology into the classroom and to make sure that they understand that it is not a tool to be used in the search for dishonest students (Savage, 2004). It is also important that students see the service as a tool for their use, not as big brother wishing to spy on them and find fault in their work.

Another important factor to consider is the fact that not all students and faculty are comfortable with using a computer. A program or teacher wishing to incorporate such technology should think about making an accessible instruction guide or tutorial video for others to use. Although companies like Turnitin often have ready-made tutorials and instruction sheets, some are confused and frustrated by even small differences in using the system which might be unique to your school's LMS. It is often a good idea to take that into consideration and make your own tutorials and instruction guides just in case.

Additionally, students and teachers should be made aware of what the software/service can do, and what it cannot do. To date, these services are only really useful for examining matching text. They are not yet capable if seeing whether a concept or idea has been taken from another source and then paraphrased and presented as someone else's original idea. The software is also unable to tell when few other paraphrase options exist for certain theories or ideas that have been paraphrased by large numbers of people already. Students and teachers need to understand that these are tools, not replacements for the human analytic ability.

Finally, some students may feel concerned about issues of privacy where these services are concerned given that the students' writing then becomes a part of the services' databases for other future papers to be checked against. Remember that for some, the electronic space is a frightening place where strangers without their best interests at heart could be lurking. It is important to give students and teachers a choice. Present the service and explain your reasons behind incorporating it into your class or program. If after that they choose not to use it, make sure that you have an alternative

possibility prepared that does not involve the service.

## 4. Conclusion

In this article I have tried to present the possibilities of using plagiarism detecting software or services in the L2 writing classroom as a viable means of socializing L2 English writers into the larger academic writing community. The issues of plagiarism have haunted learners of English who hail from CHCs for many years spawning a large collection of discourse in the research that puts such practices simply down to cultural differences. By looking at the issue of plagiarism in the CHC context I hope I have shown that this is far more complex than mere cultural differences and lies instead at a nexus point of conflicting messages in practices and formal texts leading to extreme cases of linguistic anxiety for many students when confronted with the need to follow Euro-American-centric practices while in school.

The options and possibilities that I have presented here are based in actual practice and I firmly believe that the use of these software/services is of great benefit to many students if they are presented and utilized in the right way. By understanding the issues surrounding plagiarism and being sensitive to writers' fears and concerns, I believe that these tools can empower and scaffold these learners to greater levels of ownership and belonging in relation to their English writing practices.

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# Opportunities and Challenges of English Academic Writing Education in Japanese Universities

Norifumi MIYOKAWA (Ed.)*

Today, whether English's dominance as a global lingua franca benefits higher education, more and more universities around the world have made efforts to integrate English academic writing education into their institutional policies and strategies. This trend has been observed particularly against the background where, with the increased internationalization of higher education, the imperative for universities globally to focus on maintaining or improving their international reputation and rankings has grown significantly. Indeed, such prestige tends to be assessed largely in terms of publications in English. With this in mind, we are concerned with how higher education institutions address these efforts toward promoting English academic writing in a specific non-English L1 context, namely Japan. English academic writing in university contexts where English is an additional language exists where the fields of language education, higher education administration, research methodology, and cultural socialization converge. Therefore, this volume brings together scholarship that aims to examine the different ways in which academic writing education shapes and is shaped by students, faculty and other stakeholders in Japanese universities. This volume's eight chapters, by authors with diverse backgrounds, ranging from administrators to researchers, and from humanities and social sciences to medical studies, explore the opportunities and challenges of English academic writing education in Japanese universities by looking at related topics, including writing centers, faculty members, genre-specific education, and technology development. Together, the discussions in the individual chapters can contribute profoundly to theory, policy, and practice in the domains of curriculum, research, and administration in university contexts.

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# 日本の大学における英語アカデミックライティング教育の可能性と課題

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