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ABSTRACT

This study examined the writing profiles of three Japanese writers with distinctly different writing experiences, investigating participants' school writing experiences and attitudes toward writing, characteristics of the composing process, and teaching implications. The three Japanese participants included an experienced writer in both Japanese and English (Hana), an experienced writer in Japanese (Kiku), and an inexperienced writer in both Japanese and English (Ume). Profiles were based on participants writings in Japanese and in English. Participants also completed interviews. Results found that all three participants had gone through the Japanese education system, and all three had rarely practiced writing in Japanese classes. They all had positive attitudes toward writing in Japanese, but only Hana had a positive attitude toward writing in English. Though their composing processes in Japanese differed somewhat, all three also had some of the characteristics of good Japanese writers. Hana was the only one who continued to write in English. Her English composition was comparable to her Japanese composition except that she wrote an outline or list of ideas before writing in English and paid more attention to accuracy. Interview questions are attached. (Contains 34 references.) (SM)

Profiles of Japanese Writers in L1 and L2.

Toshiyuki Tahagaki

PROFILES OF JAPANESE WRITERS IN L1 AND L2

Introduction

by Toshiyuki Tahagaki

This study reports writing profiles of three Japanese writers with distinctively different writing experiences. In the past, through the interviews, Matsumoto (1995) documented how four Japanese professional writers compose in English, and found that these skilled EFL writers use similar strategies to those used by skilled native English and proficient ESL writers. However, no studies have documented, in a comprehensive manner, how individual Japanese writers develop their writing skills as well as how they compose in both L1 and L2, to date.

Composition research has mainly focused on English as L1 and English as a second language (ESL) in the North American context. Therefore, including these Japanese writers whose L1 is Japanese and whose L2 is English learned as a foreign language (EFL) is important to reach a sound understanding of the nature of L1 and L2 composition.

L1 process-oriented composition research is generally regarded to have begun with Emig's (1971) influential study. Following her, many researchers (e.g. Stallard, 1974; Perl, 1979; Sommers, 1980; Faigley & Witte, 1981) have investigated the L1 writing process, mainly in the English language, and found that composing is a "non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning" (Zamel, 1983, p. 165). This contrasts strongly with the notion that writing is a linear process, determined by writers before they start to write, as illustrated in the writing models of Rohman (1965), and Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLead, and Rosen (1975). Also, the process-oriented studies revealed that skilled and unskilled writers tend to compose differently in terms of pre-writing, planning, and revising. For instance, skilled writers revise both locally and globally while unskilled writers make only local revisions (Faigley & Witte, 1981). However, L1 composition studies have been criticized because they are "largely monolingual, monocultural, ethnocentric, and fixated on the writing of NES [native-English-speaking] undergraduates in North American colleges and universities" (Silva, 1993, p. 669).

This study documents L1 and L2 writing profiles of three Japanese writers with distinctively different writing experiences. Then, the following questions will be discussed:

1. What are the three participants' writing experiences in their school days?
2. What are their attitudes toward writing?

3. What are the characteristics of their composing processes?
4. What are the teaching implications?

Methodology

Data Collection

The profiles are based on interview sessions in which fifty questions were asked of the participants. The interview questions, which were adapted from Hall's (1987) study, focused around the participant' writing backgrounds and composing processes in L1 and L2 (see Appendix). The researcher met with each participant individually for one interview at a city college in the Western part of Japan in 1998. Each interview lasted for approximately an hour. All the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The following week, the participants were asked to read the transcripts and confirm the accuracy of their information. Within two months after the interview, each participant was asked to write and submit two two-page essays in Japanese on their literacy experiences. Two topics "Language instruction I had in Japanese and in English" and "Reading and writing in Japanese and English" were chosen because they may help reveal participants' experiences and beliefs about literacy (cf. Bogdan & Biklen, 1992), as well as help supplement the interview data.

The methodological strength in this study should be emphasized. First, this study documented composing processes across languages with the same participants. Some studies (e.g. Zamel, 1982, 1983; Hall, 1987; Liebman, 1992; Spack, 1997) collected data through the participants' L2. However, the data collected through their L2 is not considered as valid as the data collected through their L1 because L2 learners usually understand and express themselves more accurately in L1 than in L2. Thus, using the participants' native language increased the quality of the data in this study, especially when the participants' L2 proficiency was not high. Third, I was able to take an insider perspective (Schwandt, 1997), being a Japanese bilingual writer myself. This helped me understand and interpret the data collected through the interviews and the essays.

Participants

Participants with considerably different writing experiences were selected through purposeful sampling in order to do cross-case comparisons concerning writing in L1 and L2. The purposeful sampling means the participants were chosen on the basis of the researcher's estimate of their typicality (Schwandt, 1997). The three participants in the study are Hana, an experienced writer both in Japanese and English, Kiku, an experienced writer in Japanese, but not in English, and Ume, an inexperienced writer

both in Japanese and English. Those names are pseudonyms. In order to control for "obvious intervening variables – such as learners' mother tongues, previous education, and cultural backgrounds" (Cumming, 1989, p. 86), all the participants are Japanese who were born and raised in Japan. Gender and time spent in English-speaking countries were also taken into account. It should be noted, however, that this study is exploratory in nature, and no generalization of the finding is appropriate because of the small number of participants.

Bara is a 34-year-old Japanese female who teaches English at a junior college in Japan. She has completed a doctoral program in English literature at a national university in Japan, but has minimal experience in English-speaking countries, having spent only two weeks total in Hawaii and Scotland. Bara's Japanese publications include five books and three academic articles. Her English publications include her MA thesis on English linguistics and one academic article on English literature. Also she has written numerous academic papers in both Japanese and English as a graduate student.

Kiku is a 31-year-old Japanese female who teaches Japanese literature at a junior college in Japan. She has completed a master's program in Japanese literature at a private university in Japan. Kiku has never been to an English-speaking country. Her Japanese publications include seven academic articles on classic Japanese literature and four short essays. She has no publications in English.

Ume is a 19-year-old Japanese female, who studies economics at a junior college in Japan. Ume has never been to an English-speaking country before, and she has no publications in either Japanese or English.

To better understand their writing profiles, I will start with a brief introduction to the Japanese education system and the Japanese writing system before presenting each case's profile.

The Japanese Education System and the Japanese Writing System

The Japanese Education System

Japanese education is comprised of six years of elementary school, three years of junior high school, and three years of senior high school. It is obligatory for school children to attend elementary school and junior high school. High school is not compulsory, but almost all junior high school graduates enter high school (Monbusho, 1999). The Ministry of Education, known as *Monbusho*, controls the curriculum and textbooks which "results in similarity of content and difficulty and, additionally, of teaching methods, owing to the teacher's guides that accompany the texts" (Carson, 1992, p. 39).

According to the Ministry of Education, nearly 50 percent of high school graduates attend university or junior college (Monbusho, 1999).

Besides this formal education, many school children and junior high school students go to *juku* or cram schools, which provide supplementary education after school. Nearly half of the secondary students attend *juku* in urban areas (Samimy & Adams, 1991).

The Japanese Writing System

The Japanese language has four writing systems. They are *kanji, hiragana, katakana* and *Romaji. Kanji* is a graphic symbol derived from a Chinese character; *hiragana* and *katakana* are two syllabaries; and *Romaji* is a Romanized script (Crystal, 1992).

The Japanese language can be written either horizontally like English, or vertically from top to bottom and right to left. Traditional writing is vertical, but some science books and other technical books are written horizontally as well (Carson, 1992).

A common organizational pattern in Japanese is known as *ki-sho-ten-ketsu. Ki* refers to beginning one's argument, *sho* refers to development of the argument, *ten* means turning the idea to subthemes, and *ketsu* corresponds to conclusion (Hinds, 1983). This organization pattern is often contrasted with English rhetoric which has a linear organization (Kaplan, 1966).

Writing Profiles

Hana's Writing in Japanese

Hana does not remember exactly when she began writing. Her parents or relatives never helped her with her writing. After entering elementary school, she began writing. In her elementary school, she was taught to write as she felt. She also had to write poems in elementary school, but she just wrote what she wanted. She learned *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* in junior and senior high school, but never followed the rhetorical patterns. She was not taught different forms of writing at school. She asks herself "I wonder if Japanese classes were helpful in writing, although it helped me to read to some extent."

Writing assignments such as short compositions and personal impressions on materials read were given at school. Personally, she wrote mainly poems when she was in elementary school, then wrote short children's stories in her high school days, and began writing novels in her college days. She says, "The older I grew, the longer works I could write." She started submitting her writing to contests when she was in the fifth grade. After that, she submitted her works to writing contests almost every month. However, she never read books on how to write well. "I acquired my academic and

creative writing skills by myself through the experience." she says. In her essay, she wrote as follows:

Somehow I found they [letters] *could tell me a lot of things – sometimes instruct me and sometimes entertain me. I understand very well why using letters was, in the ancient days, the art for the magic and the magicians only. It is magical indeed. Thus, I found the charm of reading and writing quite early. and soon learned how to read and write myself.* (Translation from "Reading and writing in Japanese and English")

Hana writes because she feels she has to. According to her, when an idea comes to her mind, it says to her "Let me go. Let me be written." She writes everyday. She claims writing should be done with a sincere attitude. She sometimes writes for five to six hours. Her concentration does not last more than that. She also correspond by e-mail once every couple of days. For her, writing is self-expression. It is fun. Writing enables her to turn something vague in her mind into something clear. The following passage also shows her reason to write:

Through reading, I could go somewhere I have never been to, or I could go to the place I missed for a long time. And through writing, I could take someone to a new world. How fascinating! (Translation from "Reading and writing in Japanese and English")

She likes to write stories. Her attention, or "antenna" in her word, is tuned for stories. She regards herself as a "shrine maiden" who waits for something spiritual to fall from the sky.

People evaluate her writing in different ways. Some say that her poems are good, though technically not impressive; some say that the characters in her stories are lively; and some say her stories are humorous. She says "Although I characterizes myself as rather careless, I become very careful when it comes to writing, focusing on content and organization more than grammar and mechanics."

When Hana has a "seed" of an idea, she turns on a word processor. She said she has no writing rituals. She claims that clarity is important for academic papers. It is difficult for her to put an idea into proper organization. It takes time and effort to write, but the psychological burden is not so heavy. When she writes a paper, she spends the most time in thinking, followed by revising, writing a first rough draft, checking for mechanical and grammatical mistakes, and writing a final neat copy. However she points out that "It is hard to know when thinking starts, because there are ideas which have been carried around in my mind for years." She also thinks of writing while eating meals.

Hana feels uncomfortable when she has an idea but cannot turn it into writing. She also feels sympathy and pain when she has to put the characters in a difficult situation

in a story.

Hana never learned how to revise formally. Once she finishes writing, she revises. She revises a lot, but she thinks "there will never be a perfect finished product." She lets it sit for a certain period of time. She can tell she has finished writing when her story concludes. The purpose of revising is to make sure her message is understood clearly by readers. Rhythm is also an important factor considered by her. In addition, she thinks about whether *kanji* is used appropriately. Unlike in English, she does not pay much attention to accuracy when writing in Japanese. She writes as her "instincts" tell her. She revises starting with content, followed by organization, vocabulary, grammar, and *kanji*, because she knows she sometimes has to revise substantially after cleaning up the surface level mistakes. Editing is "easy, but nerve-racking and tedious." She also reads aloud to check expressions.

Hana does not think of a specific audience, but worries whether or not her intention is understood by her audience. She wants people to read and appreciate her writing, but cannot write to accommodate the audience's interests. She claims "I can write only by my standard, and I write only what I enjoy." For example, when she writes a children's story, she thinks of her childhood. She feels happy when she is satisfied with her work, and when someone praises it. Basically, she does not like her draft to be read by others because she feels embarrassed, but she occasionally lets her work be read by her friends to examine the flow of stories.

Hana likes to use a ball point pen. She uses a pencil, but she does not use it anymore because she is too lazy to sharpen it. She cannot use a mechanical pencil because its grip is made of metal, and sometimes it makes sound when she writes, which she does not like. She does not use a fountain pen either because she has sweaty palms and the grip of the pen becomes slick. She taught herself how to use a word processor. She started to use it when she was a college senior at college. For a little while, she had a belief that "I could pour my sprit and heart into writing only by had, especially when writing poems and letters." She calls it "spiritualism." Nevertheless, she now uses a word processor even for writing a letter. She found word processors considerably helped her to revise. She also points out that adjusting the length of writing is easy. Reading her own writing through a screen display and a hard copy gives a "third-person's eye." She does not have to print out to edit. She can edit on the screen, and print out her writing when she finishes. Word processors enable her to use more kanji and finish writing faster, although she believes the quality of paper stays the same as handwriting. She does not mind writing either horizontally or vertically.

Hana's Writing in English

In her essay, Hana recalls her first encounter with English as follows:

I found another magical tool when I came upon English in junior-high school. I found fascinating magical spells on T-shirts, pencil cases, signboards, etc. I tried to guess what they mean with my poor knowledge of English. (Translation from ""Reading and writing in Japanese and English")

About one month before starting junior high school, Hana began to study writing in English at juku. She studied English writing through translation at the sentence level in junior and senior high school. That is, she first wrote in Japanese, and then translated it into English sentence by sentence. Also, she copied English sentences from textbooks. "English essay writing was never given in class." she recalls. At home, she wrote a diary for a short period of time in her junior high school days. In her sophomore year at college, she started to write academic papers in English for English literature classes. She was influenced by Tolkien's *Lord of Rings* for her writing. Her English teacher did not say much about writing, but one Japanese professor of English told her not to translate Japanese into English because it would turn out to be unnatural, and instead suggested that she should list ideas in Japanese only when necessary.

Hana likes to write in English, but prefers reading to writing. She considers herself a good writer, and thinks "good writing should come from writer's sincere attitudes." In academic papers, clarity is important. She equates English with her profession. She feels happy when she comes up with sophisticated expressions while writing in English.

While composing, Hana first switches on her word processor. Then she writes an outline or a list of ideas in Japanese or English. She does not do this when in writing in Japanese. Although it sounds contradictory, she said "I worry most about accuracy in my writing, but I consider content as most important, followed by organization, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling." The most difficult thing for her is organizing her ideas. In addition to this, she finds it difficult to write accurately in English compared to Japanese. She avoids the Japanese way of thinking because she thinks it is unclear and implicit. So she tries to be explicit when she writes in English. Nevertheless, she does not expect native English speakers to read her writing. It is easier to write in English without translation, otherwise she thinks her English will be affected by "Japanese logic." That is, "Japanese writing is ambiguous and circular as characterized by *ki-sho-ten-ketsu*, and it does not fit to English rhetoric which is more linear." she says. Therefore, what she learned about writing in Japanese did not help her write better English. When she encounters an unfamiliar word, she first consults a dictionary, and if she cannot find one, she substitutes it with a synonym. She does not find it troublesome

to use a dictionary.

Hana has never been taught how to revise. She writes first, then revises. Her priority in revising proceeds from content and organization to grammar and mechanics. She comments that often, after revising at the surface level, she has to revise globally. Therefore, it makes more sense to begin with global revision. Compared with the Japanese language, it takes her more time to check for mechanical and grammatical mistakes in English. Like editing in Japanese, she feels it is not difficult, but tedious and boring.

Kiku's Writing in Japanese

Kiku started copying hiragana from a textbook before entering elementary school. She liked writing. When she was a grade school student, she kept a diary. She also remembered the time she practiced writing kanji and how difficult it was to learn how to write kanji with proper strokes. Compared to math assignments, she found it easier and learned kanji naturally, she recalls. The following passage also contains her early experience of learning Japanese:

My parents taught me some Japanese. And later, from elementary school to junior high school, I learned it through various assignments in the textbooks. Of course, I felt pain in studying Japanese, but I tried hard. It was actually a lot easier than mathematics.

(Translation from "Reading and writing in Japanese and English")

"I learned writing in Japanese class at junior and senior high school, but I did not write much at school." Kiku said. She wrote personal impressions on materials read and reflections of each semester. For pleasure, she wrote poems when she was in junior high school. She practiced writing an essay for the college entrance examination. Her high school teacher told her to follow *ki-sho-ten-ketsu*. When she was a freshman at college, she took a course called *Japanese Writing Expressions* from which she learned not to write wordily, and she learned to use expressions appropriately through literary works. At home, she started keeping a diary again after entering college. She learned academic writing personally from her thesis adviser when she was working on her graduation thesis. She also bought a book on how to write well. She did not receive many positive comments from readers, but her professor once said that her paper was well-organized. From her thesis advisor and other scholars in her field she learned how to organize a paper.

Kiku writes because she wants to. She wants to share her thinking with others. "Writing requires more energy than reading because I am not talented in writing." She says. She likes to write letters most. When she writes letters, she is concerned whether

or not her handwriting is beautiful. She writes academic papers because she feels responsible for contributing to her field. She rarely lets others read her writing. However, when she used to write poems, she let her friends read them and give some comments. "Writing helps develop my thoughts. It also helps me grow." She comments. Writing is basically painful, thought she feels pleased when she reaches the *ten* stages in *ki-sho-ten-ketsu.* She feels uncomfortable when she cannot find appropriate words or expressions in finishing up her paper. She says her vocabulary is not good enough. She thinks she is a poor writer, especially when she writes a long paper. To her, a good writer does not write lengthily. So she does not like writers who explain too much. According to her, "Good writing is concise, has expressions which I cannot use, has a unique idea, and has a good rhythm if read aloud."

In composing, Kiku first tidies up her desk. Then she lists ideas to be included in the paper. She tries not to be conscious of her audience, but she becomes aware of the audience as she writes. "My desire to write comes first before my audience." She claims. However, she also wants to convey her message accurately to the audience. She pays attention to organization the most, followed by grammar and vocabulary. She concerns herself with content when she finishes writing. She also pays attention to footnotes in which she can further explain her position. She knows her paper is finished if she cannot add new ideas any more.

Kiku has never been taught how to revise. She revises as she writes. However, when she was working on her graduation thesis, she thought it was better to write first and then revise. As for revising, she pays attention to organization the most, and then expressions. She is also willing to revise substantially whenever necessary. For organization, she checks if she has placed references in a proper chronological order. She also checks mechanical mistakes and *ki-sho-ten-ketsu.* Then she examines if she included everything that she had planned. When she is concerned with her punctuation, she reads aloud to examine it.

Kiku has been using a word processor since she was a graduate student because editing is easy. Thanks to word processors, she does not have to worry about kanji much because the word processors help choose the right kanji for her. She usually does not print-out until she finishes writing. She also likes to use pencils, but does not like to use a ball point pen as it requires the grip pressure. She cannot write neatly with a pen, especially when she writes a long paper. She uses a pen when she writes a letter because she can write characters in running style easily. She prefers writing vertically rather than horizontally. "When I write horizontally, I occasionally forget indention." she says.

Kiku's Writing in English

Kiku wanted to learn English when she was a grade school student, and her parents asked her home room teacher for advice about this matter. However her home room teacher said that it was not advisable for Kiku because she was studying *Romaji* in class, which could confuse her with the English alphabet.

In junior and senior high school, she wrote English through translation. She was taught to pay attention to words, spelling, and grammar. At *juku*, Kiku wrote English and found it fun. She wrote one page in English about her daily life, but her writing was never corrected by the *juku* teacher. She sometimes wrote English without translation, and sometimes through translation. She preferred writing without translation to writing through translation because it was less cumbersome.

Kiku does not write English much. She thinks grammar is the most important in writing, because she is not good at English grammar. She says "I feel it is strange and difficult that English verbs come right after the subject whereas Japanese verbs come last in the sentence." She consults a dictionary when she cannot find a correct or right word if she writes English. She does not find it troublesome to use a dictionary. She recalls her struggle when she was trying to write a fan letter to a Hollywood star:

I wrote a fan letter to Paul Newman. In English! I first thought what to write in Japanese and then looked up a bilingual dictionary many times so that I could make English sentences. (Translation from "Reading and writing in Japanese and English")

Ume's Writing in Japanese

Ume learned to write her name when she was a kindergartner. She started to write more after entering elementary school. Her parents helped her to write hiragana as well as her name and address. She remembers her Japanese learning experience in her essay as follows:

The most important thing to learn Japanese is listening, followed by reading, and writing. In my case, there were children's story books around me at home when I was little. I liked to be read those books aloud, and also liked to read them. (Translation from "Reading and writing in Japanese and English")

Ume kept a diary from elementary school through senior high school, and exchanged her diary with her friends. The purpose of keeping a diary was to remember her feelings. She does not remember what she wrote in junior and senior high school, but she learned *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* in junior high school. She also read a book on how to write a paper for a philosophy course at college.

Ume thinks she is an average writer. She likes to write letters. She often wrote

letters to her relatives because her family moved many times. She believes "My writing is childish, and I need more knowledge on the Japanese language as well as some specialized knowledge." Writing is important for her because it makes ideas in her mind clearer. Good writing for her is logical, well-organized, and easy to understand.

As Ume takes notes, she writes a draft, then, then revises. She was told to make sentences shorter by her fourth grade teacher. Except for that, she was never formally taught how to revise. She pays attention to organization the most. She is concerned whether or not her writing is well-organized because she comes up with different ideas and changes her mind as she writes. Punctuation comes second. It is difficult to turn her ideas into right expressions. She re-reads many times, and revises wherever she notices errors. Unlike English, she does not worry about grammar in Japanese. When Ume writes a letter about herself, she does not think of an audience; but when she writes a letter about her friend, she thinks of her friend. Concerning a paper, she does not care about readers. She does not read her writing to others, nor does she let her friends read her writing. "In a paper, I want to include my opinions as much as possible." she says. She is happy when she comes up with good expressions while she writes a paper.

Ume writes fast by hand. She is more used to writing horizontally than writing vertically. She cannot use a word processor though she took a word processor course at college. She uses a mechanical pencil. The feel of the pencil and its design are important, as she thinks it is related to the neatness of handwriting.

Ume's Writing in English

Ume did not write much in junior and senior high school. "I did mainly translation from English into Japanese in class." she recalls. She was taught that grammar was most important, both for writing and reading in English.

Ume hardly writes in English, and does not know how to write an English sentence correctly. She considers herself an average or a poor writer. She believes that using English in our daily life is important to improve writing:

Like Japanese, if we use English frequently, reading and writing in English will improve. As we improve English, we will find it more fun to study and will want to study it more. (Translation from "Reading and Writing in Japanese and English")

Ume writes slowly because she has to translate from Japanese to English at the word level, phrase level, and sentence level. She does not find it cumbersome to use a dictionary. For her, good writing in English is easy to understand. She worries about grammar because English word order is different from Japanese word order. Vocabulary is the most crucial factor in writing. Without knowing it, she believes she cannot write

anything. According to her, "Those who are not experts in translation cannot correctly translate Japanese into English."

Discussion

Although the writing profiles are not at all complete, some discussion is made regarding school days, attitudes, and composing processes under which revising, audience, and writing medium are covered. Also teaching implications are considered.

School Days

All the participants went through the Japanese education system. That is, they had six years of elementary school, three years of junior high school, and three years of senior high school. Although there is an age gap among the writers, their formal writing experiences were more or less the same.

In Japanese classes, they rarely practiced writing. It was interesting to find that none of the participants mentioned their writing experiences in the first essay on "Language instruction I had in Japanese and in English." Their essays were focused on reading instead. However, they were taught *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* at either junior or senior high school or both. This means that even though they knew about the Japanese rhetorical pattern, they were not given opportunities to improve their writing except for some occasional writing assignments outside of classes. This fact leads Hana to think "I wonder if Japanese classes were helpful in writing, although it helped me read to some extent." In addition to it, they were hardly encouraged to do such activities as pre-writing, planning, and revising. This agrees with Liebman's survey (1992) which I found that most teaching in Japan was product-oriented. At home, however, they all wrote for pleasure. Hanna wrote poems and short stories; Kiku wrote diaries and poems; Ume wrote diaries and letters.

For writing in English at school, all the participants wrote English through the use of translation. That is, writing was done by translating Japanese into English sentence by sentence. This translation method has been criticized by such researchers as Kamimura (1993) because it ignores the writing process of generating ideas, planning, and revising, and does not take the discourse level into consideration. In their essay on "Language instruction I had in Japanese and in English," their focus was on reading and pronunciation, but not on writing.

Attitudes

It was found that all the participants showed positive attitudes toward writing in

Japanese. Nevertheless, we also see some differences in terms of the degree of positiveness. Hana's attitude toward Japanese writing seems to come from their strong drive to write. She sincerely listens to her ideas when they say "Let me go. Let me be written." This function may be described as "expressive." Kiku's positive attitude toward Japanese writing is based on a strong sense of professionalism. She wants to share her thinking with others, and writes in order to contribute to her specialized field. This function may be described as "intellectual." Compared with the two experienced writers, Ume's attitude toward Japanese writing seems to derive from rather weak favorable feelings.

As for writing in English, only Hana indicated a positive attitude while Kiku and Ume did not. This is reasonable in that only Hana writes in English, while Kiku and Ume do not write much.

Composing Processes

Good native English-speaking writers are often found to spend more time pre-writing and writing, engage more in self-initiated writing, and show more flexibility in planning than poor writers (cf. Raimes, 1985; Skibniewski, 1985). Matsumoto (1995) and Sasaki (2000) also found the similar features among skilled Japanese EFL writers. Concerning Japanese writers in L1, Sasaki and Hirose (1996) identified four differences between good and poor writers: good writers' previous writing experiences beyond paragraph level, their attention to overall organization and their fluency, and their confidence in L2 academic writing.

Concerning L1 writing, Hana shows some of these features above. First, she spends much time on pre-writing and writing in that she has ideas which have been carried around in her mind for years and, in her view, "There will never be a finished product." Secondly, she engages in self-initiated writing. She writes for self-expression and has been submitting her works to a number of writing contests. Finally, she is flexible in planning. She is aware that she sometimes has to change the text substantially after tidying-up the surface level.

Kiku also has some of the good writers' features. First, she engages in pre-writing activities by listing ideas to be included in the paper. Second, she does self-initiated writing. She writes for self-expression as well as for contributing to her field. Lastly, she pays attention to organization as well as grammar and vocabulary.

Though she is an inexperienced writer in Japanese, Ume has some features of good writers, too. She is flexible in planning in that she recognizes the fact that she comes up with different ideas and changes her mind as she writes. She pays attention to

organization as well as punctuation. This shows that although Hana and Kiku were chosen as experienced writers while Ume was chosen as an inexperienced writer, it does not necessarily mean that experienced writers and inexperienced writers have totally different composing processes.

Hana is the only person who continue to write in English. Her composing in English is comparable to her composing in Japanese except that she writes an outline or a list of ideas beforehand, and pays more attention to accuracy.

Revising. In Japanese, Hana and Kiku revise from content and organization, to grammar and punctuation. They are also willing to revise substantially when necessary. This means that both Hana and Kiku revise in the way good writers revise as reported in the previous studies (e. g. Faigley & Witte, 1981; Flower, Hayes, Carey, Schriver, & Stratman, 1986). In contrast, Ume only re-reads, and revises wherever she notices something wrong.

Hana is the only one who writes and revises in English. She says that though she revises as she does in Japanese, she has to focus more on mechanical and grammatical mistakes. It is interesting that even an experienced writer like Hana revises with more emphasis on local revisions compared with her revisions in Japanese. Hall (1987, 1990) also reports that grammatical and mechanical revision were found more in L2 than in L1.

Audience. Hana does not have a specific audience in mind when she writes in Japanese because she cannot accommodate her audience's interests. Kiku tries not to be conscious of her audience in the early stages. Both Hana and Kiku want their audience to understand their messages, but they put the priority on their desire to write over their audience. These two writers, however, should not be considered what Flower (1979) terms "writer-based." The term means that writers are too busy translating their own thoughts into language to consider audience. However, these two writers know what they are doing in relation to their audience. Therefore, they are more along the same line with Elbow's position (1987) of writing as a discovery process in which audience is seen as an inhibiting factor. Ume simply does not consider her audience except when writing letters, thus she is assumed to write "writer-based prose" (Flower, 1979).

Writing Medium. Hana and Kiku use word processors, which make revising and editing easy. However, Hana further comments that the quality of writing does not change whether she uses word processors or handwriting. This comment can be interpreted to mean that, with the word processor, she may revise frequently at

text-preserving levels, but not at text-changing levels, resulting in the same writing quality. This agrees with the finding by Randsdell and Levy (1994). Other than word processors, Hana likes ball point pen, Kiku likes a pencil, and Ume likes a mechanical pencil. This confirms Smith's (1982) idea that "Taste in writing equipment can be as varied and as individually significant as taste in clothes." (p. 135).

Teaching Implications. For those who teach English to Japanese students, the following implications can be drawn as far as the three participants are concerned. First, it is important for English teachers to let Japanese students know that writing is a process of discovery of meaning. The three participants had little formal writing experience in school. This means they did not have a sound idea about writing. That is, writing includes processes of generating ideas, planning and revising.

Second, it is necessary to teach Japanese students to see writing at the discourse level, not sentence level. All they did in their school days was to translate a predetermined Japanese sentence into an English sentence. So they may lack the idea of cohesion and coherence in writing in English.

Lastly, Japanese students should be encouraged to write without being afraid of making grammatical mistakes, at least at the early stage of writing, so that they could focus on the content and organization more. In this study, all the participants paid attention to accuracy in writing in English regardless of their writing experiences.

Conclusion

In this article, participants' profiles were made based on Writing in Japanese and Writing in English. It was found that all the participants had relatively similar literacy background in terms of their public school education. Their composing processes in Japanese are somewhat different from each other, but all of them had some features of experienced writers.

As seen in these profiles, I could not obtain enough data from the inexperienced writers in English, Kiku and Ume, as they hardly write. For example, Kiku and Ume had little idea about how they would revise in English, or whether they would consider the audience. Even concerning Japanese writing, Ume, an inexperienced writer, responded in a rather brief way to the interview questions. As a result, Ume's data was not as rich as Hana and Kiku's.

It is impossible and inappropriate to draw any robust conclusions about the literacy acquisition and writing process in L1 and L2 on the basis three cases. It should be also recognized that there is a wide age gap between the two experienced writers and the

inexperienced writer, although the three participants from similar backgrounds were chosen to focus on their writing experiences.

For the future research, larger number of participants should be considered to make a sound generalization. Also, it is important to incorporate naturalistic studies to see if what they said in the interviews and essays matches with what they actually do in writing.

Lastly, the future research should include writers from other language backgrounds to balance the studies which have predominantly concerned English as L1 and ESL in the North American context.

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Appendix

Interview Questions (First 20 questions)

1. When and where did you first learn to write Japanese?
2. Do you like to write?
3. Did you take formal courses in writing in your junior/senior high school or college? If so, what did you study?
4. Did you learn different forms of writing in your junior/senior high school or college such as essay, reports, summaries, and/or others?
5. What did your Japanese language teacher tell you was the most important thing to remember about writing?
6. Can you briefly describe the types of topics you wrote about in your junior/senior high school or college? Their purposes?
7. How frequently did you write in your junior/senior high school or college? Once a day? Once a week? Less frequently?
8. What have teachers, friends or acquaintances told you is the best thing about your writing?
9. What do you think if the most important reason to learn to write?
10. What types of writing do you like best?
11. How do you know when a paper is finished? That is, what criteria do you use to decide you have written enough?
12. Who or what has influenced you the most in your writing?
13. What do you think makes a good writer?
14. When you write, do you try to think of a person or group of person to write to?
15. Which medium do you use for writing? Why?
16. Do you read your writing to another person?
17. In Japanese, did your parents or some other relative ever help you with your writing?

18. What is your earliest memory of some teacher giving your explicit instruction on how to write/read something?
19. Do you let your friends read your writing and give you advice on how to improve your writing?
20. Did your parents take an active part in helping you to learn to write?

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