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The Evolving argument : negotiating improved academic writing skills and class cohesion

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The Evolving Argument: Negotiating Improved Academic Writing Skills and Class Cohesion

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ABSTRACT

It is often difficult for instructors to prompt Japanese students to negotiate their opinions. Negotiation, however, plays a central role in second language learning and is a key component of active learning. As the pedagogical prominence of active learning continues to gain attention in Japan, instructors may feel challenged balancing guidance with activity. This paper describes a semester-long activity designed to facilitate negotiation to produce better class cohesion, critical thinking, and persuasive writing skills. The results suggest stronger class cohesion and that the writing structure from the group activity transferred to individual work. Grammatical peer-feedback, however, appeared to be minimal.

Keywords: negotiation SLA writing peer-feedback critical thinking

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1. Introduction

Active learning is gaining attention in Japanese public universities. The importance of active learning was a focal point of Nagoya University's faculty development meetings for the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the start of 2017. Active learning often involves problem solving and critical thinking: "students must engage in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bonwell & Eison, 1991, p. 5). When students must confront ideas (both their own and others') and negotiate conclusions, they are more likely to be active members of the learning process.

Traditionally, Japanese classrooms are teacher-centered where students are accustomed to learning passively (Kimura, Nakata, & Okumura, 2001). English instruction has heavily focused on reading, writing, and grammar rules because, in part, these skills are necessary to obtain high scores on university entrance exams (see Butler & Iino, 2005). From this, students have become familiar with a style of learning that is dependent on prescribed, correct answers; consequently, the motivation these students have for learning English is often generic and ineffective. Personal anecdotal evidence suggests many Japanese university students do not see the value of learning more English since they have already passed the entrance exam. Others may have simply become demotivated (see Sampson, 2016). These students are willing to reduce many years of English instruction to a simple phrase: "no English."

Instead of lectures and tests, Japanese University instructors are being encouraged to

conduct English instruction more actively by making classes more interactive. While an interactive approach to second language acquisition (or one based on student centered learning) is hardly new or without problems, motivating Japanese students to be more actively engaged in the learning process is likely beneficial: active learning has produced better results than passive learning in a number of different fields (Michael, 2006).[1] With that said, instructors must still balance theoretical, individual needs with curriculum goals and Japan's education tradition (cf., Rohlen & LeTendre, 1998). Improved TOEFL and other standardized test scores still appear to dominate the perception of achievement. In addition, some University curriculums have focused almost exclusively on teaching academic English skills (i.e., presentation and research writing skills in English) as opposed to conversational or informal English. There is a long history of investigating EFL practices in Japan, resulting in a chorus of solutions, many ostensibly obvious, but little real change (see Seargeant, 2008). In this environment, negotiation is often required to appease other curricular goals while enhancing individual student involvement in the learning process.

Negotiation, albeit of a different type, plays a critical role in second language learning/acquisition (Long, 1981, 1985, 1996; Pica, 1994; Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2001). According to Long (1981), this kind of negotiation is defined as modification through interaction between native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) (i.e., modification that facilitates the matching of form and structure with meaning and use). Krashen's (1985) well-known position on second language learning (i.e., i + 1), where learning best occurs when novelty is mixed with a great deal of familiarity, inherently requires such interactional modification. That is, to achieve i + 1, participants must negotiate wording and structure to reach a satisfactory level of communication. This "modification … of interaction ... occurs when learners and their interlocutors anticipate, perceive, or experience difficulties in message comprehensibility" (Pica, 1994, p. 494). When there is a linguistic problem that requires resolution, the listener must signal this to the speaker and the speaker must recognize the importance of the signal to initiate a repair (Ellis et al., 2001; Foster & Ohta, 2005). The message cannot contain too much new or misunderstood information, but it may contain some new and potentially difficult information

[1] The findings, however, come from education studies within the United States.

requiring repair and modification. If the repair is successful, language acquisition/learning likely occurs as new information is scaffolded by a focused context and familiar vocabulary and structure.

While this type of negotiation occurs between NS and NS, it occurs more with NS and NNS and most often with NNS and NNS (Varonis & Gass, 1985). This suggests that since NNS and NNS interaction often involves signals of misunderstanding followed by responses of repair, NNS group work will foster more opportunities for negotiated, comprehensible input. Moreover, according to Schmidt and Frota (1986), this kind of negotiation is enhanced further by information gap activities, where one group member must explain missing information to another member. This creates many opportunities for negotiation and thus generates input helpful for language learning.

In terms of negotiation and language learning, most studies have investigated spoken language or internet chatting (e.g., Bower & Kawaguchi, 2011), and not academic writing. The potential role of negotiation when learning to write in a second language is perhaps underemphasized. Peer feedback, however, which "requires students to engage in collaborative communication ... : arguing, explaining, clarifying, and justifying" (Rollinson, 2005, as cited in Sivaslian, 2016, p. 3) is very similar to negotiation in speech and likely results in more learning opportunities.

While students are less likely to argue with teacher feedback, peer feedback often appears less authoritative, "lead[ing] students to engage in higher metacognitive thinking skills" (Sivaslian, 2016). That is, peer response allows for negotiation between students. This negotiation promotes critical thinking and a richer analysis of ideas (both integral and peripheral) and then gives students the chance to describe their reactions to these new thoughts (Lockhart & Ng, 1995). Peer feedback activities also cause students to evaluate their own writing more critically (Furneaux, 2002; Rollinson, 2005). Accordingly, peer feedback and negotiated writing activities may help promote active learning within a culture of learning that has largely depended on authoritative, corrective feedback.

Academic writing (a common curricular focal point in many Japanese university English departments) arguably has more to do with thinking, logic, and organization

(i.e., concept sequencing) than style, vocabulary, or grammar. As discussed, tasks designed to facilitate the confrontation and negotiation of ideas through analysis, counterpoints, synthesis, and evaluation will likely result in more learning. It is unclear, however, whether group academic writing activities will result in the acquisition of the academic writing process itself (i.e., hypothesis, supporting and conflicting evidence, synthesis, and conclusion). It is also uncertain which skills (if any) demonstrated in group collaborative writing translate to individual writing or whether group activities centered on writing lead to greater active learning and class cohesion within the Japanese university classroom.

2. Materials and Methods

This study examined the results of two classes who were given similar, interactive group activities. The first class consisted of 33 first year undergraduate students of high English proficiency (as measured by TOEFL scores).[2] Students in this class came from a variety of study majors (i.e., Letters, Education, Economics, Medicine, Law, Informatics and Sciences). In the second class, there were 39 low-intermediate to intermediate Japanese Law students.

The activity for both classes spanned 12 to 13 lessons of a 15-lesson semester consisting of one 90-minute lesson per week. The results of the first class, in part, informed the activity design for the second class. Both classes were given directions for the activity after being divided into smaller groups.

2.1 Directions for class 1

Students formed a team of three and decided their positions within a simple flowchart (Figure 1). Students were instructed to exchange email addresses and to send their finished drafts to the next student on the chart.

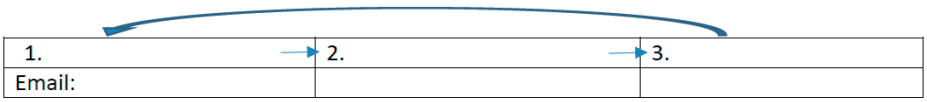

Figure 1. Student team flowchart

[2] Thirty-two of the students were Japanese and one student was from Israel. Exact TOEFL scores are not reported as a rule of privacy.

In this design, the students' positions did not change their assignment, only to whom they reported their work. Following this, individual members were instructed to choose an appropriate topic that interested them or to choose an example topic. Since this class consisted of students with different majors, a range of example topics were provided (Figure 2).

Example Topics		
Eastern Medicine	Stereotypes	Pesticides
Standardized Education	Western Medicine	Sustainable Energy
Population levels	Preservatives	Sustainable Fishing

Figure 2. Topics for selection

Each member picked a topic and made a claim about that topic (e.g., Pesticides cause many skin conditions in Japan). The intent of the provided examples in Figure 2 was to prime individual ideas so students would choose their own topics; however, some topics, such as the value of Eastern medicine, were selected by students for the activity.

Each student needed to support his or her claim with arguments and or citable facts (e.g., Several studies suggest the consumption of pesticides causes eczema) and offer a solution (e.g., Japan should implement more organic farming techniques). This solution would likely be the primary claim of an essay. After completing this stage, students were then instructed to send the draft to the next classmate. The activity then moved to the first evaluator stage.

After receiving the argument developed by the previous student, each student took the role of Evaluator 1. Evaluator 1 was instructed to look for assumptions and to argue against the original claim (e.g., Chemicals naturally produced by plants to defend against insects are more or just as harmful as pesticide residue). This counterpoint was then sent to the next person, Evaluator 2.

Evaluator 2 was tasked with synthesizing the two points of view. That is, they were instructed to integrate the best points from the previous arguments and send the paper back to the original writer for final evaluation (e.g., While chemicals produced as a natural defence against stress inducing predation are also unwanted, organic farming

techniques can naturally protect plants to reduce this effect without using clearly harmful pesticides). The final evaluator reviewed the text and made revisions for cohesion and clarity. They were also allowed to make further content changes if they thought something was simply untrue. Meanwhile, everyone was instructed to focus on grammar, sentence structure, capitalization and punctuation through the course of the activity.

2.1.1 Evaluation of class 1

Class 1 served as a test run for the functionality of this activity for Japanese students over the course of regular semester. Students were asked within their groups to give their opinion of the benefits of the activity at the end of the semester. Activity texts were examined for signs of interaction and negotiation. Final essays were examined for signs of learned academic writing skills.

2.1.2 Class 1 results

Out of the 33 students, 24 reported that they felt the activity was beneficial for their learning after the final lesson. 7 students did not give their opinion and 2 were not sure if the activity had benefited them. Several students reported that the activity was too repetitive and did not permit enough time for the development of a single argument.

Students who are absent 5 or more classes do not receive credit for the course. There were 15 absences out of 132 possible free absences (i.e., absences not resulting in a student's failure) over the first 13 regularly scheduled lessons (i.e., 33 students x 4 free absences). Accordingly, the class had an unforced attendance rate of 88.63%. No students withdrew from this course or failed due to absences. A previous writing class, which was not tasked with a group interactive project, had 25 absences out of 136 possible free absences (34 students x 4 free absences). This class had an 81.61% unforced attendance rate. Outside of this rate, two students also withdrew and or failed due to absences.

There was evidence that students were learning vocabulary and structure from other students. There were several cases where less common words/phrases introduced by one student were used by other members of the group (Figure 3).

- Writer 1
- Animal experimentation in medical research are performed in a **cruel** way.

- Writer 2
- Some cosmetic company in the U.S.A try not to do animal experiments because they are **cruel**.

- Writer 3
- In short, using cultured cells, skin models and experiments performed by computer simulation instead of live animals is desirable to reduce the **cruel** animal experiments.

Figure 3. Vocabulary spread among students

When comparing texts written before the activity with texts generated by the activity, there appeared to be more coherence and unity (Figure 4).

WRITING BEFORE ACTIVITY

- I'm (name). I am studying medical science. I was born in Japan, but I lived in Switzerland for two years. My favorite subject is Biology.
- I also like English, but I'm not good at speaking English.
- I would like to be a great doctor in the future. I think that a great doctor is a person who can think from different viewpoints.
- And I hope to speaking English well by learning in this class. Because, I want to go abroad in the furture to meet many people from different countries.

WRITING FROM ACTIVITY MORE COHESION AND COHERENCE

I think that Eastern medicine should be rated higher than now. Nowadays, Western medicine is widely used in the world, especially in developed countries. Some Western medical doctors regard Eastern medicine as inferior to Western medicine. However, Eastern medicine has some good points.

First, Eastern medicine is effective for chronic diseases, for example chronic headache, chronic gastroenteritis or after effect of injuries. Acupuncture and moxibustion or traditional Chinese medicine have an effect on restoring to healthy balance. By this, chronic diseases can be recovered.

Second, Eastern medicine does not cause serious side effect. This is because Eastern medical doctors try to draw out the healing power of nature without using synthetic drugs.

So I think that Western medical doctors should adopt Eastern medicine positively.

Figure 4. Pre-and post-activity writing samples

2.2 Directions for class 2

The instructions for the second class were modified in several ways. Whereas in the first class each member performed every role by the end of the activity, this time the position students chose in the flowchart determined their role in the activity (see Figure 5).

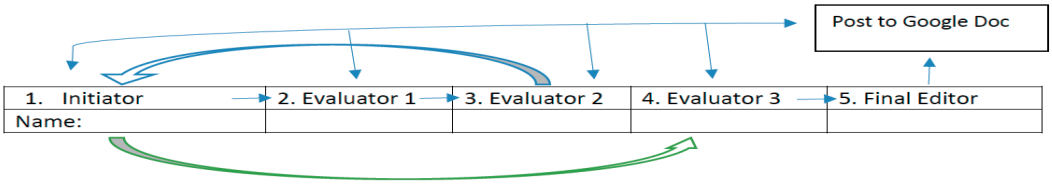

Figure 5. Flow chart of roles in class 2

The first person in the flowchart demonstrated the existence of a problem on an academic topic as done in the first stage of the previous class. Students in this class, however, all majored in Law; thus, the example topics were all legal in nature (see Figure 6).

Example Topics		
Lawsuits Good or Bad	Activist Judges	Death Penalty in Japan
Japanese Bar Association	Police Created Laws	Land Rights
Confined Number of Lawyers	Discrimination in Japan	Fishing Rights

Figure 6. Topic choices

Initiators were asked to justify the importance of their claimed problem and offer a solution. Following completion of this, they sent this information to person 2 (Evaluator 1).[3] Evaluator 1 took the opposite point of view and located any unsupported assumptions. They were instructed to ask if any of the assumption were potentially important. They wrote the counterpoint or antithesis to the original claim and supported this counter-claim with a logical argument before sending it to the next person. Evaluator 2 then synthesized the two points of view, integrating the best points from the previous arguments (e.g., While the use of plastics is immensely useful, elimination of non-biodegradable plastics for everyday use appears to be necessary if we are to preserve our home.) Evaluator 2 then sent the paper back to the original writer for thesis revision. Person 1, the original writer, reviewed the comments and revised his or her thesis by writing a conclusion. This was then sent to person 4 (Evaluator 3) who was tasked with reviewing the cohesion and coherence of the writing. This student examined if the topics of the paragraphs were cohesive, and if appropriate pronouns, determiners (i.e., a, the, his, her, its, [Ø] …), and

[3] Students were instructed to Cc the course instructor at each completed stage of the assignment.

conjunctions were used. They also had to explain why the order of the arguments flowed logically toward the conclusion and make changes for improvement. After this review, the text was sent to the Final Editor (FE). The job of the FE was to focus on grammar, sentence structure, capitalization and punctuation. They verified if the text consisted of several sentence types and made sure colons and or semi-colon were used correctly. They also needed to improve the vocabulary and clarity of the text. Finally, FEs posted the document to Google Docs for the whole group to do final comments and checking. At this point, the group was given a week to make comments, revise and add content, and or correct any mistakes / errors.

2.2.1 Evaluation of class 2

Class 2's group texts and individual end-of-the-semester essays were rated on a Likert based scale by the instructor with whole integers representing the degree of quality for each rated objective.

Table 1. Group and Individual Essay Rating Scale

Meets Objective					
Very Strong	Strong	Sufficient	Weak	Very Weak	Absent
5	4	3	2	1	0

Each text was rated for its effectiveness in completing the following objectives.

Table 2. Rated Objectives

Demonstrating a Problem	&	Claiming a Solution
Considering Counter Points		Addressing Counterpoints and Creating a Synthesis
Coherence and Unity of Ideas		Grammar and Sentence Structure

The evaluation of each point considered structure as well as the development, support, and sophistication of ideas. That is, a text with a solution proposed in the introduction was rated higher than one that only offered a solution in the body or conclusion. Students may have included opposing points of view in the body but then failed to adequately address or synthesize the contrasting positions resulting in a low synthesis score. The instructor rated each text twice for better consistency.

2.2.2 Class 2 results

There were 25 absences out of 156 possible free absences over the first 13 regularly scheduled lessons (i.e., 39 students x 4 free absences). The class had an attendance rate of 83.97%. Only one student withdrew from the course.

2.2.3 Class 2 activity ratings

Table 3. Class 2 Group Work

	Stage 1		Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	**Mode**	**Median**	**Mean**
Objective	Problem	Solution	Counter	Synthesis	Coherence	Grammar			
Group 1	2	3	3	1	3	2	**3**	**2.5**	**2.33**
Group 2	1	3	4	3	1	4	**1**	**3**	**2.66**
Group 3	2	4	4	4	3	4	**4**	**4**	**3.5**
Group 4	3	4	4	3	4	5	**4**	**4**	**3.83**
Group 5	5	4	5	5	3	5	**5**	**5**	**4.5**
Group 6	4	4	4	4	4	4	**4**	**4**	**4**
Group 7	3	3	4	5	4	5	**3**	**4**	**4**
Group 8	2	4	3	3	2	3	**3**	**3**	**2.83**
Mode	**2**	**4**	**4**	**3**	**3**	**4**			
Median	**2.5**	**4**	**4**	**3.5**	**3**	**4**			
Mean	**2.75**	**3.62**	**3.87**	**3.5**	**3**	**4**			

Table 3 gives the rating scores for each objective for each group along with each group's overall performance and the class's overall performance for each objective (described by the mean, median and mode). The mode may be the most appropriate measure as ratings could only be whole numbers.

2.2.4 Class 2 individual results

Table 4 gives the individual writing scores for each objective for each student from each group of the class.[4] It shows in bold the overall individual ratings (mean, median and mode) for the objectives by students who had performed the same objective during the group activity.

[4] Group 4 lost member 5 as this student withdrew and is marked by (N).

Table 4. Individual Essay Rankings by Writing Objective, Group, and Group Member Task

	Member 1						Member 2						Member 3						Member 4						Member 5					
G1	**3**	**4**	2	4	3	2	2	3	**3**	3	2	4	2	3	1	**2**	3	4	4	2	4	3	**4**	4	5	4	3	3	4	**3**
G2	**4**	**3**	2	2	3	4	5	3	**4**	4	5	5	5	4	3	**4**	4	5	3	5	5	5	**4**	4	4	4	3	3	3	**4**
G3	**4**	**4**	4	4	4	3	5	4	**4**	5	4	2	2	3	3	**4**	3	2	3	3	3	4	**2**	3	4	3	4	5	3	**3**
G4	**3**	**5**	5	4	3	4	3	4	**1**	2	4	4	1	4	3	**1**	2	2	4	3	1	2	**3**	3	N	N	N	N	N	**N**
G5	**4**	**4**	3	5	3	4	3	3	**3**	4	3	4	3	3	4	**4**	4	4	4	4	4	4	**3**	4	3	4	4	4	5	**5**
G6	**4**	**5**	4	2	4	5	3	4	**2**	4	3	4	5	5	4	**4**	5	4	4	3	1	1	**4**	3	5	5	1	2	5	**5**
G7	**2**	**2**	3	4	3	4	2	3	**3**	4	3	4	2	4	2	**2**	3	3	3	5	3	2	**4**	3	3	5	1	2	4	**4**
G8	**3**	**2**	3	3	2	1	2	3	**3**	2	3	3	3	4	5	**3**	4	5	5	4	4	4	**3**	4	3	4	4	3	3	**4**
Mode	**4**			**4**			**3**						**4**						**4**						**4**					
Median	**3.5**			**4**			**3**						**3.5**						**3.5**						**4**					
Mean	**3.37**			**3.62**			**2.87**						**3**						**3.75**						**4**					

Table 5. Group Work Compared to Individual Work from Same Group Members

	Collective Group Work				Individual Work		
	Mode	Median	Mean		Mode	Median	Mean
Group 1	3	2.5	2.33		3	3	3.1
Group 2	1	3	2.66		4	4	3.86
Group 3	4	4	3.5		4	3.5	3.46
Group 4	4	4	3.83		3	3	2.95
Group 5	5	5	4.5		4	4	3.76
Group 6	4	4	4		4	4	3.66
Group 7	3	4	4		3	3	3.06
Group 8	3	3	2.83		3	3	3.3
Variance	1.23	0.55	0.51		0.25	0.21	0.1

Values in red indicate a higher general rating. Comparing the performance of the same participants as a group and as individuals reveals a few differences. The formal significance of these differences (as derived from inferential statistics) is not examined in this study, however.[5] Individuals from groups that had performed

[5] Because the values merely reflect the instructor's judgment and it is difficult to ensure an equal difference between a rating of 4 and 5 and 1 and 2 (i.e., a difference

relatively poorly (i.e., mean rating < 3), performed better on their individual work.

Table 6. Individual Work Compared with Group Work by Assigned Objective

		Problem	Solution	Counter	Synthesis	Coherence	Grammar
Group Results by Objective	Mode	2	4	4	3	3	4
	Median	2.5	4	4	3.5	3	4
	Average	2.75	3.62	3.87	3.5	3	4
Individual Results by Objective	Mode	4	4	3	4	4	4
	Median	3.5	4	3	3.5	3.5	4
	Average	3.37	3.62	2.87	3	3.75	4

Table 6 compares the group and individual objective ratings for each objective. Scores from students assigned an objective in group work are compared to individual ratings of the same objective. From this, students appeared to perform better with making counter arguments within groups. On the other hand, individuals were rated higher for clarifying a problem and for writing coherence.

3. Discussion

The purpose of this paper was to examine if skills practiced and negotiated in group, collaborative writing transferred to individual writing and to see if semester long group writing projects produce a more active learning environment, resulting in more class cohesion.

Examining the group rankings in comparison to individual rankings for Class 2 suggests a synergetic effect with groups containing stronger members while groups with weaker members tend to perform at a level below their combined individual ability or better as individual writers (Table 5). Regarding grammar (tense/number agreement and consistency and correct preposition use), the investigator witnessed little correction/engagement and the ratings were similar before and after the activity, suggesting that there was little learning in this area. Nevertheless, the results suggest that students learned to describe and clarify the importance of a problem from the

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of 1), the author wishes to avoid the appearance of a more certain conclusion given the technique used.

group activity as they performed much better on this task after the group activity (Table 6). While it is not surprising that coherence ratings improved on the individual assignments (i.e., it is easier for a single author to compose a coherent text), it was surprising that individuals performed similarly with synthesizing at the group and individual level. Since student-writers are not usually accustomed to arguing with themselves (the counter argument scores were better within the group activity), the author expected the group scores to be higher than the individual ones for synthesizing viewpoints. Given that the ratings were similar, the author interprets this to mean that students transferred this approach from the group activity to their individual writing.

Likewise, the author believes the counterargument scores would not have been as high without the preceding group activity. Accordingly, in agreement with the positive results of active learning in general (Michael, 2006), the results of this study suggest that active, group learning is an effective way to teach certain academic writing skills to Japanese university students (i.e., establishing a problem, synthesizing conflict, and maintaining coherence). Weaker students may have benefited more individually by being forced to communicate their ideas in an academic manner within a peer group. This activity may have caused them to notice the significant gaps in their knowledge (perhaps with some embarrassment), prompting a real desire to improve. This realization is, in part, the basis for why information gap activities are so successful (cf., Schmidt & Frota, 1986).

It is unclear, however, why members from stronger groups did not perform even better on their individual assignments. The lack of improvement from group to individual work for strong groups may suggest a ceiling effect. Members from stronger groups did not have as much room to improve individually when compared to individuals from weaker groups, meaning that if learning occurred from the activity, the learning was simply more salient for weaker students (i.e., the performance differences could reflect inconsistencies in the rater's judgement rather than a true quantitative difference). It also may be that students from stronger groups would have been motivated to perform better individually if their groups had performed worse. More research is necessary, however, as these conclusions contain some circular logic.

Supporting the claim of Bonwell and Eison (1991), the findings for class cohesion suggest the activity caused or contributed to more activity and productivity during class. That is, a large majority of participating students reported that the activity benefited them and students were more active in their approach to the class. From the perspective of the instructor, students appeared quicker to engage in group discussion (in both the same and novel groups) and were more willing to answer teacher directed questions in front of the whole class when compared with students from previous writing classes not employing semester-long group writing projects.

Students were also more talkative before and after class. In short, the activity appeared to foster better class cohesion. Given the scope of demotivation as discussed in Sampson (2016), it is possible this assignment helped re-motivate some students. Assuming, the instructor did notice a real behavioural difference, this suggests this type of activity results in more active learning in Japanese undergraduate English writing classes.

4. Limitations and Future Study

Perception of more class engagement could have resulted from simple bias. The instructor believed the activity would be beneficial. There may have been no real difference between class engagement during group discussion and elsewhere. Attendance rates, however, do indicate a slight objective difference. The student attendance rate was higher and the attrition rate lower for writing classes utilizing this activity, although this outcome may have been merely coincidental. The two classes in which the activity was employed may have been more engaged regardless of the activity.

Future study could compare classes of similar English proficiency with and without the activity (where the same material is taught) and employ independent raters to gauge improvement more consistently using inferential statistical analyses. Likewise, students could be given a formal questionnaire to measure and compare their perceptions of learning. Such steps would better validate the conclusions taken from this study.

5. Conclusion

The negotiation used in interactive group writing activities as described in this

research likely improves Japanese undergraduate students' academic writing skills. After explicit practice during an interactional group academic writing activity, the ability to articulate an academic problem, solution, and synthesis in a coherent manner appeared as strong or stronger in a subsequent individually written academic text. This task may provide improvement that is more salient for weaker students. The activity also appeared to generate more class cohesion and engagement. The activity, however, seemed to have no effect on grammatical aspects such as tense and number agreement and did not clearly improve the individual performance of members from groups that had performed strongly.

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