

Teaching English Textual Patterns to Japanese Students

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Do both parts (a) and (b) of the following assignment:

- a) Analyse Assessment text 1 (from an essay on theories of human evolution). Draw a diagrammatic representation of the text and comment upon the following:
- Which overall pattern best characterises the text: ‘problem-solution’, ‘general-specific’, or ‘claim- counterclaim’ pattern? What ‘signals’ help you to decide on this?
 - What subordinate patterns does the text display? How are they signalled and how do they relate to the overall pattern?
- b) Choose an authentic text (in English) which could be used in a language classroom to raise students’ awareness of textual patterns. Explain your choice and discuss how the text could be exploited.

1. Introduction

1.1 Insufficient teaching of English textual patterns in present Japanese classrooms

One of the most significant purposes to read and write English texts is to become able to understand writers' messages and to communicate one's own ideas or opinions. From this point of view, it is considered essential to teach Japanese students English textual patterns since they play a significant role in sending writers' messages (Holland and Lewis, 1997). However, it seems that English textual patterns are not treated sufficiently in Japan (Ootsu, 1993).

According to the Japanese Ministry of Education's guidelines (1989), one of the main objectives of English education in upper secondary school is to develop students' abilities to understand speakers' or writers' intentions, to express their own ideas in English, and to foster a positive attitude toward communicating in English. However, the existing ministry-authorised textbooks, which are supposed to be created according to the guidelines, do not appear to practice the objectives. The fact becomes clear when we examine exercises of the coursebooks based on which most teachers conduct their teaching.

A Japanese high school, where I had been teaching, has been using three English textbooks: Polestar (Ishiguro, 1998), Genius (Matsumura, 1998) and Unicorn (Matsunaga, 1998). Exercises in the coursebooks are mostly concerned with small units of pronunciation, lexis and grammar, and none of them are connected with activities that may raise students' awareness of textual patterns. In the exercises reading comprehension is demonstrated by answering true or false questions or filling blanks, and writing activities are conducted by translating disconnected Japanese sentences into English.

As Cook (1989) states, communication is such a complicated interaction, it can be confusing to try to deal with it at once, and "splitting communication into levels may sometimes help, but those separate levels will always need to be reintegrated" (p.83). In this sense textbooks can be modified to teach textual patterns, and at the same time teachers can devise their own activities to focus on textual patterns as some teachers have already been practising (e.g., Mochizuki and Yamada, 1996; Minai, 1993).

1.2 The aim of this paper

This paper first observes various theories regarding analysis of textual patterns and clarifies the importance of teaching patterns of written English. Second, it analyses the assessment text by drawing a diagrammatic representation and discussing its overall pattern and subordinate patterns as well as signalling vocabulary. Finally, the paper represents an authentic text that could be effectively used in high school English classrooms in Japan and discusses how the text could be exploited in order to raise students' awareness of textual patterns.

2. The importance of teaching textual patterns

2.1 Common patterns in English texts and their signals

As Coulthard (1994) states, “knowledge is not linear, but text is” (p.7). Consequently every writer has to solve the problem of how to organise and present his/her non-linear intention in an understandable linear manner. To find an answer to this difficulty English writing has several common rhetorical patterns, which “tend to occur with a regularity which cannot be entirely coincidental” (Holland and Lewis, 1997, p.12), including “problem-solution”, “general-specific”, “claim-counterclaim”, “narrative”, “hypotheses-real” and “question-answer”.

Each element of such patterns tends to be signalled by specific vocabulary (McCarthy, 1991). It is not sufficient for writers to organise their materials into textual patterns, but writers must “indicate or signal to the reader the status and/or discourse function of individual parts of the text” (Coulthard, 1994, p.7). For example, the writer may signal an assertion by “although” and a justification by “because”. Knowing these clues and signals helps readers follow intended messages as well as assists writers in guiding their readers.

2.2 Advantages for Japanese students of learning English textual patterns

As textual patterns have not been taught successfully in Japan, what problems do Japanese students actually have? What advantages could they have by learning English textual patterns?

2.2.1 Learning textual patterns for effective writing

It may be true that when Japanese students write English texts, the stress of

constructing texts while choosing appropriate grammar and lexis is very large and overall planning of textual patterns is abandoned. However, a great problem may also exist in the fact that Japanese students tend to write English texts only by translating from their original Japanese version, whose textual patterns appear to be different from English patterns. Kaplan (1966) states that English texts can be considered characteristically linear while Oriental texts have indirection as a characteristic, and Hinds (1983) indicates that in Japanese texts what seem to the English eye to be abrupt insertions of irrelevant matter are accepted.

This difference may be caused by what Nakajima (1987) calls a complete difference in ways of thinking between the “centrifugal” approach of English writers and the “centripetal” approach of Japanese writers (Ootsu, 1993). Ootsu suggests that English people tend to start focusing on one object and expand their visions from there, while Japanese people start from a broad visual field and then search for an object to focus on. This ambiguous Japanese way of thinking may be affecting Japanese writing, which has no clear concept of paragraphs. In Japanese a one-sentence paragraph is often preferred because it appears to give stability and importance, and people can start a new paragraph wherever they like or whenever they feel that the paragraph has become too long (Toyama, 1976).

In English speaking countries it is essential for college students to learn how to construct paragraphs or texts logically. On the contrary, Japanese college teachers mainly present appreciation of literary works in classes of Japanese language. Manto (1991) introduces a textbook demonstrating study skills for university students, which we do not have in Japan, by translating from an English one. He considers that active ways to write texts are indispensable in schools and societies, but they are not sufficiently taught in Japanese secondary schools and universities.

Thus, in the first place, Japanese students need to recognise that English texts have more strict patterns than Japanese texts, so they cannot write English texts only by translating from Japanese texts. In addition, students need to be aware that a problem of comprehension may “arise from faulty or missing signalling” (Hoey, 1994, p.44). Students should be encouraged to write texts following textual patterns and to use appropriate discourse signalling vocabulary, which in turn can help them to effectively send their own messages.

2.2.2 Learning textual patterns for efficient reading

As for reading lessons, most Japanese teachers have been applying a bottom-up approach, leading students to decode texts by using knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Consequently, it often happens that even after a careful reading, students do not apprehend the writers' message (Ootsu, 1993). To improve the situation, as Brown (1994) suggests, teachers should include top-down techniques to raise consciousness of textual patterns. The top-down approach highlights the reconstruction of meaning rather than the decoding of meaning. "The interaction of the reader and the text" is dominant in the process (Nunan, 1991, p.65).

According to McCarthy (1991), reading has "a positive and active role for the receiver" (p169). McCarthy states that good readers are always attending to segmentation of the discourse and predicting not only content, but also questions that the author is likely to answer to further unfold the writer's message. Fairclough (1992) further considers that social relations and social reality are constructed in discourse and any text can be an instance of a social practice. Moreover, these kinds of writers' messages may be signalled at various stages in texts.

In Japanese, good writing does not say everything too clearly and leaves some parts of writers' ideas unsaid (Toyama, 1976). Asking intentions of writers can often become a question in Japanese language tests. As native Japanese speakers, students understand the entire vocabulary and grammar, but it is still often hard to understand the writers' unsaid and hidden message. Therefore, teachers may need a special effort to help Japanese students recognise that in English texts writers' messages are all explicitly written and if they carefully follow guidelines given by the writers, they will certainly be able to infer and reach the messages.

3. The analysis of the assessment text

This section analyses the assessment text and clarifies how an English text can be structured, how the patterns are guided by signalling vocabulary and how these patterns help readers understand the writer's message. An analysis of the text reveals that the overall pattern can be best described in terms of a "claim-counterclaim" structure, and the subordinate patterns, "question-answer" and "general-specific". These patterns are employed by an anthropologist to present a possible answer to "the missing link" between "man-like ape" to "ape-like man" in a stage of human evolution.

3.1 The overall “claim-counterclaim” pattern and its signals

The overall pattern of the text can best be characterised as “claim-counterclaim” (see diagrammatic representation in Appendix 1). In this pattern, three elements, “common ground”, “claim” and “counterclaim”, can be discerned (Holland and Lewis, 1997). First, the writer presents a common ground where agreement between the claims and the counterclaims is noted, which is concerning the developments human beings underwent from about 3.7 million years ago. Then, the writer points out there are disagreements on the developments preceding this period, on the transition from “man-like ape” to “ape-like man”. Next, the author presents the claim, “the savannah theory” and the counterclaim, “the aquatic hypothesis”. Finally, after the counterclaims disprove the claims on various points, the author concludes the writing by asserting the counterclaim, “the aquatic hypothesis” may be the answer to “the missing link”.

In order to persuade readers, the counterclaims refute the claims on three characteristics of homo sapiens: bipedalism, loss of hair and ventro-ventral sex. In the fourth paragraph, the savannah theory explains three evolutionary changes. In claim 1, “the proto-humans learned to stand on two legs in order to see further”. In claim 2, “they shed most of their body hair to prevent overheating” in hot plains. In claim 3, they do “ventro-ventral sex” to “cement the pair-bond”. In opposition to the claims, in the fifth paragraph the aquatic theory refutes all of the three points made by the savannah theory in turn, pointing out “numerous animals have survived on the African savannah” without developing bipedalism (counterclaim 1), shedding their fur (counterclaim 2) and copulating ventro-ventrally (counterclaim 3). Furthermore, in the seventh and eighth paragraphs the aquatic theory demonstrates that it can explain the backgrounds of the three evolutionary features: “a four-legged creature would naturally tend to stand upright in order to keep its head out of the water to breathe” (counterclaim 1); “fur, once wet, provides poor insulation” (counterclaim 2); and “the vast majority of marine mammals copulate ventro-ventrally” (counterclaim 3).

There are many signals to help readers follow the “claim-counterclaim” pattern (see Appendix 2). First, readers know there is an area of consensus because of the phrases, “generally agreed”, but there are points of disagreement from the expression, “there are major disagreements”. Second, they know that the claim is given from the

phrases, “The most widely accepted theory”, “According to” and “claims that”. Third, they recognise that the counterclaim is presented by reading the phrases, “the ‘Aquatic Hypothesis’...does not reject the savannah theory as such”, “the theory takes as its starting point the contention that” and “stress the fact that”. In order to clearly indicate which counterclaim is refuting which claim, the writer uses discourse signals such as “In their account of bipedalism”, “With regard to the loss of body hair” and “As for our odd predilection for ventro-ventral sex”. In addition, contrastive discourse markers such as “However”, “but” and “indeed” are effectively used in the text.

3.2 The subordinate patterns, “question-answer” and “general-specific” and their signals

In addition to the overall “claim-counterclaim” pattern, as one subordinate pattern, the text demonstrates a “question-answer” structure, “whose primary motivation is the pursuit of a satisfactory answer to a question explicitly posed (usually) at the beginning” (McCarthy, 1991, p.157). A question is raised in the beginning and an answer is given in the end (see Appendix 1). In the first paragraph a question is signalled in the phrase, “what happened in the period immediately preceding this...”. In the second paragraph the question is repeated more specifically in the sentences, “The problem centres around...” and “But there is a gap... serious – and often bitter -- disputes persist...”. Finally readers know that an answer is given in the last paragraph by reading the phrases, “It is thus proposed that ...”, “are in fact evidence for...” and “The ‘missing link’ is, from this point of view, best characterised as...”.

As the other subordinate structure, the “general-specific” pattern is found in many places (see Appendix 1). First, on the paragraph level, the “general-specific” structure is seen in several places. For example, in the first paragraph the writer only generally states that there are disagreements in the period preceding 3 million years B. P, and in the second paragraph the writer, signalling by the expression, “The problem centres around”, gives more specific description of this period, referring to a gap in the fossil records. Also, the fourth paragraph is explaining specifically the claims of the savannah theory generally introduced in the third paragraph, presenting three significant features of human development (Claim 1, 2 and 3), which is signalled by the phrase, “According to the ‘Savannah Hypothesis’”. Further, after the fifth paragraph introduces the aquatic

theory generally, the sixth paragraph describes the hypotheses more specifically, and the seventh and the eighth paragraphs expand the theory with even more specifics and details (counterclaim 1, 2 and 3). The specific paragraphs are clearly signalled by the phrases at the beginning of each paragraph, such as “Simply stated, the aquatic hypothesis is ” of the sixth paragraph and “In their account of bipedalism” of the seventh paragraph.

There are also “general-specific” patterns on the sentence level in each paragraph. For instance, in the second paragraph the first sentence contains a general statement: “the problem centres around what is popularly known as the ‘missing link’”. The final sentence also presents a general statement and reads as a restatement of the first: there is a gap “in the fossil record for the intervening 5million years” and “serious – often bitter -- disputes persist between competing theories of human evolution”. What comes between is a set of more specific statements which expand on the generalisation. For example, the second sentence states that there is “fossil evidence of man-like apes” around 9 million years ago; the third sentence shows that there are “plentiful fossilised remains” of ape-like man “from 3.7 million years B.P. onwards”. The fourth sentence explains that these later anthropoids “exhibited many of the features which typify modern man”. Thus the three specific sentences are exemplifying, explaining and justifying the general proposition. The relationships between general statement and specific explanation are signalled by cohesive lexical ties. For instance, “the ‘missing link’” is restated by expressions such as “a gap”, “the ‘yawning void’” and “the absence of hard evidence”. Moreover, there are clear bonds between “link” in “the ‘missing link’”, “fossil evidence”, “fossilised remains”, “bones”, “fossil record”, “intervening” and “hard evidence”.

Finally, we can further break the sentences down into their constituent clauses since the relations between the clauses are not random and ultimately matter to the message (Winter, 1994). The fourth sentence of the second paragraph, the clause beginning “they were, for example, bipedal” can be seen as more specific than the previous part of the same sentence: “Analysis of bones from these later anthropoids suggests that they already exhibited many of the features which typify modern man”. The clear general-specific relationship between the two clauses is signalled by “for example”. In addition, in the third sentence of the fourth paragraph, the clause beginning “since they could

now run after prey and carry weapons at the same time” can be seen as a specific statement of the first part of the same sentence and explaining the reason why “bipedalism had further advantages”. The general-specific relationship is explicitly signalled by the marker, “since”. Thus, this material displays the “general-specific” pattern within a text, a paragraph and a sentence on various levels of generality/specifity.

Examples of the signalling vocabulary of the subordinate patterns are also summarised in Appendix 2. We notice that the markers sometimes overlap the markers of the overall pattern. For example, the signals of the “claim-counterclaim” pattern, “According to”, “in their account of”, “with regard to” and “as for” are also the markers of the “general-specific” pattern (see Appendix 2). This shows the subordinate patterns are significantly supporting the overall pattern in the text.

3.3 The role of the patterns in the text

The patterns used in the text seem to assist readers in unfolding the writer’s message positively and actively. The audience envisaged by the writer may be people who now believe or would believe the savannah theory since the theory is, as the writer proclaims, the most widely accepted. The overall “claim-counterclaim” pattern is thus advantageous to the author, since it allows him/her to show the defects of the savannah theory and the advantageous points of the aquatic theory. Guided by this pattern, readers can notice in the early stage that the writer’s intention is to propose the aquatic theory against the savannah theory. Readers can anticipate writers will present counterclaims 1, 2 and 3 in turn, and carefully follow and critically check the grounds on which the writer stands.

The subordinate “question-answer” pattern assists the overall pattern in helping readers to recognise clearly from the start what is going to be discussed in the text. Readers can follow the text, looking for an answer, and in the last part the answer is clearly given by the writer. The “general-specific” pattern also assists the overall pattern in expanding the claims and the counterclaims on various level of generality/specifity. The “general-specific” pattern helps readers follow the writer’s intention easily by first understanding the general idea and then following the more specific and detailed examples, explanation and justification. Signalled by markers,

readers can anticipate more specific examples will come next, and be ready to change their viewpoints from a general one to a specific one.

4. Conducting activities to raise Japanese students' awareness of textual patterns

Considering their importance, how could textual patterns be taught in classrooms effectively, especially to Japanese students, so as to raise students' awareness of textual patterning? Teachers should be expected to provide them with activities which "encourage them to think about samples of language and to draw their own conclusions about how the language works" (Willis and Willis, 1996, p.63).

4.1 How to choose appropriate authentic texts for teaching textual patterns

To begin with, what kind of text is appropriate to teach textual patterns? The writer chose for advanced-level high school or college students an article from Newsweek (Gupte, 1999), which discusses the problem of world water scarcity (shown in Appendix 3). This text was selected because it satisfies the several elements essential to assist students in becoming aware of written discourse patterns.

First, the text has several clear patterns which assist readers in understanding the intended message. The overall pattern can be characterised as "problem-solution". At the beginning of the text the writer states clearly a "situation" and a "problem": "Nearly a billion in 50 countries live with severe shortage of water. What can the world do?" Then, he "evaluates" the current "responses" to the problem, the responses of the United Nations which he considers unsatisfactory, and tries to seek the "solution". The writer, using the pattern, effectively leads readers to his message: "a more coherent strategy for economic and social development is urgently needed." Also, in the text subordinate patterns are present, such as the "narrative" pattern in the first paragraph and the "general-specific" patterns in many places, which assist the overall pattern in guiding readers to the message. Second, the text has plenty of discourse markers, such as "lack", "crisis" and suffer" signalling "problem", and "unfortunately", "not sufficient" and "terrifying" signalling "evaluation". Third, the topic is familiar enough for students, which helps them read the text by predicting not only the content but also the message, rather than only decoding meaning. Content familiarity is considered significant to compensate for learners' limited linguistic knowledge (Nunan, 1991).

The topic “water scarcity” is well known by Japanese students since we experienced severe water scarcity several years ago in Japan. Last, other articles are written on the same topic in Japanese, which can be used to discuss the differences of textual patterns between the two languages.

4.2 Activities to raise students’ consciousness of textual patterns

4.2.1 Comparing English textual patterns with Japanese structures

Students may be encouraged to find differences in textual patterns between English and their native language, which is expected to result in an increased awareness of and sensitivity to structures of written discourse. Teachers can lead students to compare two essays written on the similar topic. For comparison with the text of the Newsweek article, a Japanese essay written by a Japanese doctor (Fujita, 1996) on the same topic was prepared (English translation presented in Appendix 4). Though there are some differences between the two writings, as the English text is a journalistic report and the Japanese text is one part of a scientific book, the two articles show a good contrast in terms of textual patterns between Japanese and English.

Teachers can encourage students to read and compare the two texts. By discussing in pairs or groups, students may find the following differences, which are discussed in section 2.2.1. The English article has a clear “problem-solution” pattern while the Japanese text does not have any clear structure. The English article shows its theme, “water scarcity”, very clearly from the start by the use of the “centrifugal” approach. On the other hand, the Japanese one uses the “centripetal” approach and starts by talking about four seasons in Japan, and only in the third paragraph do readers know that the writing is discussing the water scarcity issue. In terms of paragraph structure, in the English article the logic is unified around one point in each paragraph, while in the Japanese text the concept of paragraph in the sense of English writing does not seem to exist, and the last paragraph consists of only one sentence.

When conducting this activity one of the most important things is to tell students that this comparison is only one example, and students can look for other examples outside the classroom for themselves. Teachers can encourage students to examine articles in newspapers, magazines and advertisements both in Japanese and English. One good suggestion could be to compare articles in two daily newspapers, Asahi

Shinbun [the Asahi Newspaper] and its English version, Asahi Evening News. For example, the editorial article on January 21, 1999 in the Japanese version, which comments on Clinton's State of the Union address, finishes its article with three one-sentence "paragraphs" (see Appendix 5). On the other hand, in the English translated version of the same article the three sentences are combined into one paragraph. Students may be encouraged to search for the same kind of other examples and report their findings in class.

Through this activity, students can become aware of the differences between the written patterns of the two languages. Students can be expected to recognise it is important to be conscious of textual patterns when they write in English, because otherwise their texts may not be accepted as a logical writing. In addition, they may realise that knowing English textual patterns make it possible for them to read texts by way of top-down processing, which, according to Richards, Platt and Platt (1992), makes "uses of the reader's previous knowledge, his or her expectations, experience, scripts and schemes" (p.384).

4.2.2 Recombining English texts

The next activity is to actually lead students to engage in structuring English texts. Students are given sentences or paragraphs cut up into stripe and encouraged to reorder the parts. This activity is known as "recombination" and can alert students to paragraph structure (Cook, 1989). Appendix 6 shows an example of materials that could be used in this activity. The first paragraph, which has the "narrative" pattern, is cut into sentences and presented to students to reorder them. After they make up the paragraph on their own, teachers can ask why they have decided to order it that way. Students may notice the importance of the signalling vocabulary of the pattern, such as "sure enough", "several months later", "but...still" and "then", which they have utilised unconsciously in conducting this activity. Also, students may recognise the significant features of cohesive lexical ties, and notice that "an earnest Swede", "he", "the expert" and "the developmentalist" are pointing to the same person.

A learner tried this activity and made an almost correct paragraph. The only mistake he made was the position of the sentence 1, that is, "Sure enough, the gleaming pumps had been installed exactly where he'd recommended". He put the sentence right after the first introductory sentence. He said he was not paying attention to the meaning

of the phrase, “sure enough” and to who “he” in the phrases “he’d recommended” is indicating. After knowing the above points, he succeeded in recombining the paragraph, and realised important roles the discourse markers were playing in texts, and he will likely pay more attention to signalling factors in future.

4.2.3 Focusing on signalling elements

Since a clear understanding of discourse markers can greatly enhance learners’ reading efficiency (Brown, 1994), teachers can devise several activities which focus on signalling factors. Appendix 7 shows the deleted version of the sixth paragraph of the text. Students are first guided to read the paragraph without signals, and then with signals. Students may recognise that without the markers it is difficult to read the text predicting what is to come and to grasp the author’s intentions.

Also, students are encouraged to look for vocabulary that signals textual patterns in the other parts of the text, and make a list of such signals. Appendix 8 is one example list of signalling vocabulary from the material. Students may be led to observe authentic texts consciously and make a list of textually based lexicon for those texts. Teachers can also help students look for signalling vocabulary in Fujita’s Japanese text (Appendix 4), and find that Fujita uses only a few markers, such as “However” and “Thus”. It may be interesting to ask students to check other Japanese writings and report to class what kinds of signalling vocabulary they could find. The constructed lists of English discourse markers will not only help them in reading but also in writing their own texts.

4.2.4 Making a diagram to analyse texts

. Finally, students may be encouraged to make a diagram to analyse the text. Because the activity may impose a great burden on some students, teachers can provide a pre-fabricated diagram. Appendix 9 is a sample of a pre-fabricated diagram to analyse the “problem-solution” structure of the sixth paragraph, into which students may insert details. Students are expected to realise even in one paragraph the elements of the pattern, “situation”, “problem”, “solution” and “evaluation” are present, which are signalled by lexis such as “indeed”, “more effectively” and “must be considered”. What seems important is to tell students that it will be often possible to analyse a text in more

than one way, so it is not a matter of finding only one correct answer (McCarthy, 1991); therefore they can alter the diagram or make a new diagram if they wish. Teachers need to make students aware that the most essential aim of this activity is to unfold the writer's message and to know how the writer guides readers by use of patterns to communicate his intention.

When students become more aware of discourse patterns, they may be encouraged to create their own diagrammatic representation of other paragraphs of the text as well as other authentic texts. Students can be expected to remember that finding patterns, which often are likely to be combinations of some of the common patterns, is an essential and challenging task of interpretation by the reader. In future they can be encouraged to make diagrams of their own writings, possibly of writings in both Japanese and English.

5. Conclusion

One of the most effective ways for Japanese students to acquire writing and reading skills in English is to help them learn textual patterns. Teachers can raise awareness of English textual patterns, through activities such as comparing features of authentic English texts with those of Japanese texts, analysing texts or focusing on signalling vocabulary.

Although the Japanese Ministry of Education aims at developing students' abilities to understand writers' intentions and to express their own ideas in English, it seems that the present teaching of English textual patterns, which is indispensable to achieve this aim, is not being done satisfactorily. How the existing textbooks can be modified and how the present bottom-up way of teaching can be combined with the top-down approach in Japanese classrooms need to be further researched.

In addition, in this paper the effects of learning textual patterns only on writing and reading abilities have been discussed. The effects of learning textual patterns on listening and speaking proficiency, which appear to have a lot in common with reading and writing skills (Brown, 1994; Shinoda and Shizaki, 1992), can be investigated further. Also, relationships between textual patterns and genres need to be considered further.

What seems important is not only to teach and show every pattern of written

English, but to raise students' consciousness of patterns and lead them to realise that patterns are not rules that students must follow, but tools which help them write more logical and easy-to-read texts, as well as read and understand writers' messages efficiently. It is unlikely that students will immediately utilise the textual patterns they learned in the activities, but once their consciousness is raised, they should notice these features in future texts. Students can be encouraged to observe and analyse texts for themselves in order to acquire real competence to communicate through written English.

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Appendix 1 A diagrammatic representation of the assessment text's structure

Note: this diagram has been removed so as not to give undue help to current students answering this assessment task.

Appendix 2 Examples of signalling vocabulary in the assessment text

Note: this diagram has been removed so as not to give undue help to current students answering this assessment task.

Appendix 3 A sample text for activities to raise students' awareness of textual patterns

Newsweek, March 29, 1999

WATER: NOT A DROP TO DRINK

**Nearly a billion people in 50 countries live with severe shortage.
What can the world do?**

By Pranay Gupte

[1] An earnest Swede, armed with his freshly minted graduate degree in development studies and a nice consultancy from a U.N. agency, traveled to a drought-afflicted African country to help villagers install water pumps. In a “model” village, he was feted at a colorful ceremony during which water pumps – manufactured in Sweden – were turned over to the local headman. Then the developmentalist went home. Several months later he returned to the village to check up on his mission’s success. Sure enough, the gleaming pumps had been installed exactly where he’d recommended. But the villagers were still drawing their water from a distant well, and women were still fetching it in leaky tin buckets. “What’s the problem?” the expert asked. The headman shrugged and said, “Many pumps, no water.”

[2] That may be an apocryphal story, but it captures the essence of the donor community’s failed efforts to provide the most basic of provisions to poor societies. Last week – when the U.N.-sponsored World Water Day was observed – there were startling reminders that despite more than \$3 trillion in development expenditure over the past five decades, nearly a billion people in 50 countries live with severe water shortage every day of their lives. Germany’s Klaus Toepfer, head of the U.N. Environment Program, told Newsweek last week that women and girls in developing countries spend more than 10 million person-years in the aggregate each year fetching water from distant, and frequently polluted, sources.

[3] The World Bank calculates that 3.3 billion people in the 127 countries of the developing world suffer from water-related diseases, among them diarrhea, schistosomiasis, dengue fever, infection by intestinal worms, malaria, river blindness (onchocerciasis) and trachoma (which alone causes almost 6 million cases of blindness annually). And the deaths from water-related diseases? Almost 6 million each year. Here are more statistics – compiled by the United Nations University in Tokyo – about the gathering global water crisis:

- Every 8 seconds, a child dies from a water-related disease.
- More than 50 percent of people in developing countries suffer from one or more water-related diseases.
- 80 percent of diseases in the developing world are caused by contaminated water.
- 50 percent of people on earth lack adequate sanitation.
- 20 percent of freshwater fish species have been pushed to the edge of extinction from contaminated water.

[4] Unfortunately, such statistics don’t seem to be persuasive enough for world leaders to act expeditiously, or meaningfully, on water-management issues. “Everyone

lives downstream,” was last week’s catchy slogan marking World Water Day, but few in the tightly knit world of development aid actually do much about the state of the stream itself in poor nations.

[5] The glaring lack of attention to water issues seem especially puzzling in light of the fact that the estimated cost to provide safe water in rural areas is \$50 per person per year and about \$100 per person in cities, according to U.N. estimates. In a report released last week, the United Nations estimates the overall price to bring low-cost safe water and sanitation to all those who need it at around \$25 billion annually over the next decade. Current world investment in water-related development projects is \$8 billion per year, or a shortfall of \$17 billion – an amount roughly equal to annual pet food purchases in Europe and the United States, notes Toepfer.

[6] The hapless Swedish developmentalist who neglected to ascertain whether there was indeed water available in his African village may not have been entirely naïve. Developing countries do indeed need low-cost technologies such as hand pumps, gravity-fed rainwater collection systems. But these devices can hardly work effectively unless aid agencies coordinate their efforts better (the Swede had neglected to consult local hydrologists). Sophisticated indoor pumping may not be practical for existing hovels in poverty-stricken neighborhoods; resources could be more effectively channeled into building new homes for growing populations. That is why, as development mandarins fashion their strategies for the new millennium, water-management issues must be considered in tandem with housing, health and social development.

[7] As much of the developing world becomes urbanized, its water crises will deepen. Large cities already bursting at the seams – Mexico City, Lagos, Dhaka and Cairo – rely largely on ground water, but aquifers take decades to recharge while the population growth in such cities is exponential. By next year, 20 cities in the developing world will have populations exceeding 10 million. And as urban demands for water increase, supply for the developing world’s already water-starved agricultural areas will be further affected, thereby creating a potentially monumental food-security crisis.

[8] All of this suggests that in an increasingly globalized world, a more coherent strategy for economic and social development is urgently needed. Hydrologists say that the world’s water supply is finite – less than a million cubic kilometers that, according to the United Nations, is not sufficient for today’s global population, which is growing at the unsustainable rate of 100 million people annually. UNEP’s Toepfer wasn’t engaging in hyperbole last week when he told Newsweek: “My fear is that we’re headed for a period of water wars between nations. Can we afford that in a world of globalization and tribalization where conflicts over natural resources and the numbers of environmental refugees are already growing?” Chilling words, scary scenario, terrifying prospect.

**Appendix 4 A Sample Japanese text extracted from Iyasu Mizu,
Mushibamu Mizu [Curing Water, Spoiling Water]
written by Fujita (1996, p.68-69)**

Water Drying Up

[1] Japan, where we live, has four seasons; spring, summer, autumn and winter. We usually take it for granted. When we look at countries in the world, we notice that Japan is rather a unique country.

[2] In winter we can see plenty of snow, and from spring to summer we have a long rainy season. In summer the Japanese islands are hit by a heat wave. Sometimes a summer afternoon shower washes over the land, and a refreshing cool breeze blows. In autumn typhoons always come along, bringing heavy rain and flood. Thus, our country has plenty of water and people do not seem to appreciate water.

[3] However, now the world lacks drinking water of good quality and is having a severe water crisis. In industrialised countries there is not a big enough supply of drinking water, and in developing countries infectious disease caused by drinking water are killing more than 30 thousand people every day. The United Nations started a project called “Ten Years of Water” in 1990 and set out to supply clean water and to spread sanitary facilities. The project has not been working as expected.

[4] The drought that caused damage all over North Africa along the Sahara Desert several years ago is still affecting that area. Water used to be considered to exist infinitely on the earth, but now it is seen as a finite resource that needs to be controlled soundly. In many places in the world a “world water conference” is being held to clarify the shocking fact that 3.5 billion people, which is 70% of the world total population of 5 billion people, are now living with difficulty to get drinking water easily.

[5] This water scarcity is considered most severe in the Southeast Asian countries, where 1 billion people are suffering from scarcity of drinking water, which is far more than the 200 million suffering people in Africa and the East Mediterranean region.

Note: The text is translated from Japanese into English by the writer of this paper.

Appendix 5 Sample articles of The Asahi (Japanese version) and The Asahi Evening News (English version) January 21, 1999

The Asahi (Japanese version)

It is said that one of the politicians Clinton respects is President Theodore Roosevelt, who took office in 1901, nearly a century ago.

Clinton probably finds some affinity with Roosevelt, who conducted his administration with strong popular support.

Will Clinton, whose term will end with the end of the 20th century, receive the same evaluation from future generations?

The Asahi Evening News (English version)

Clinton is said to respect the statesmanship of President Theodore Roosevelt, who took office in 1901, nearly a century ago. Does Clinton find some affinity with Roosevelt, who conducted his administration with strong popular support? How will future generations evaluate Clinton, whose term will end with the end of the 20th century?

Note: The text of the Asahi is translated from Japanese into English by the writer of this paper.

Appendix 6 A example task for recombination

Reorder the following sentences 1 to 6 and construct an appropriate paragraph. The first sentence and the last sentence are already shown below. After you finish reordering, consider why you ordered the sentences in the way you have done.

An earnest Swede, armed with his freshly minted graduate degree in development studies and a nice consultancy from a U.N. agency, traveled to a drought-afflicted African country to help villagers install water pumps.

1. Sure enough, the gleaming pumps had been installed exactly where he'd recommended.
2. "What's the problem?" the expert asked.
3. In a "model" village, he was feted at a colorful ceremony during which water pumps – manufactured in Sweden – were turned over to the local headman.
4. Several months later he returned to the village to check up on his mission's success.
5. But the villagers were still drawing their water from a distant well, and women were still fetching it in leaky tin buckets.
6. Then the developmentalist went home.

The headman shrugged and said, "Many pumps, no water."

Appendix 7 A sample text in which signalling vocabulary is deleted

The hapless Swedish developmentalist who neglected to ascertain whether there was indeed water available in his African village may not have been entirely naïve. Developing countries do indeed need low-cost technologies such as hand pumps, gravity-fed rainwater collection systems. But these devices can hardly work effectively unless aid agencies coordinate their efforts better (the Swede had neglected to consult local hydrologists). Sophisticated indoor pumping may not be practical for existing hovels in poverty-stricken neighborhoods; resources could be more effectively channeled into building new homes for growing populations. That is why, as development mandarins fashion their strategies for the new millennium, water-management issues must be considered in tandem with housing, health and social development.

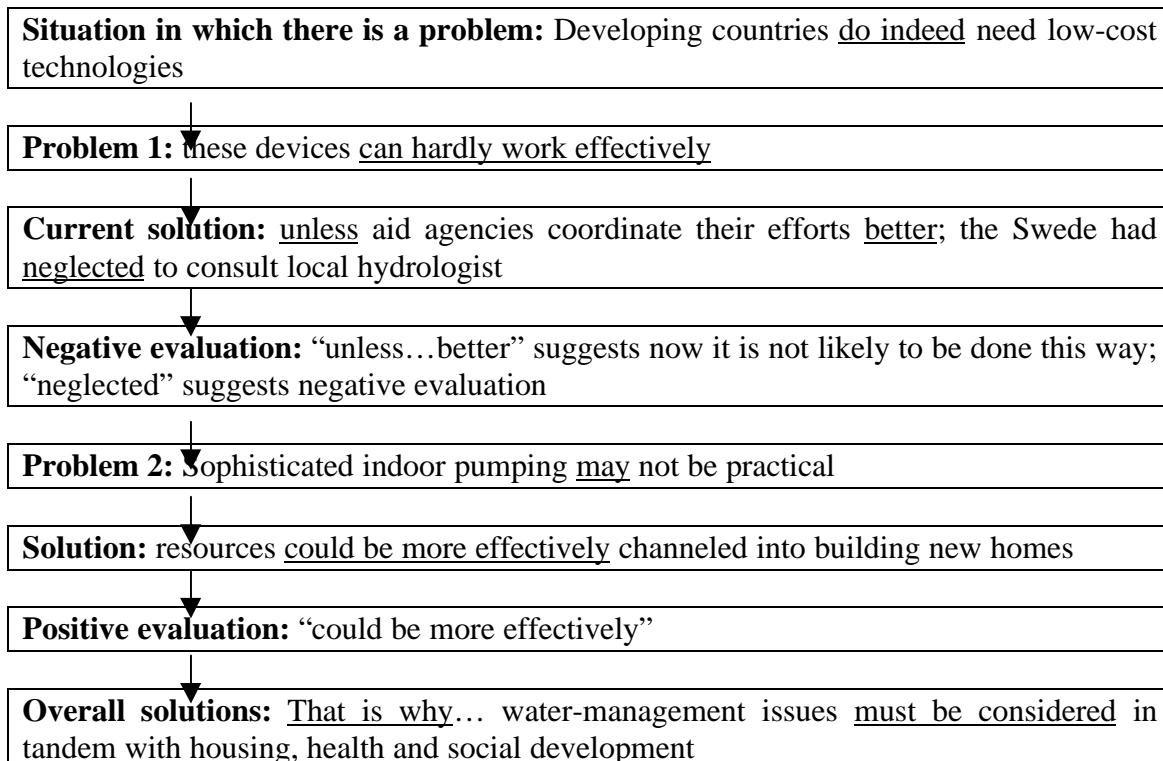
Note: Words underlined will be deleted in the first material for students. After they finish reading it, they will be given the text with the words re-inserted and encouraged to compare the impressions they have had from two versions of the text.

Appendix 8 An example list of signalling vocabulary in the text

Patterns	Discourse Signals
Problem-solution	<p>Problem: problem, but, failed efforts to, despite, the glaring lack of attention, crisis will deepen, startling remainders, severe shortage, suffer from, caused by, fear, do indeed need, further affected, water wars, conflicts</p> <p>Response: development, act on, aid, provide, investment, projects, neglected, act expeditiously or meaningfully, catchy slogan</p> <p>Solution: must be considered, suggest that, That is why, a more coherent strategy, coordinate better, could be more effectively channeled to, is urgently needed, All this suggests that</p> <p>Evaluation: unfortunately, few...actually do much, shortfall, better, can hardly work, effectively, especially puzzling, may not be practical, a potentially monumental crisis, not sufficient, chilling words, scary scenario, terrifying prospect</p>
Narrative	<p>Narrative: sure enough, several months later, but, then, still</p>
General-specific	<p>General: it captures the essence of, That is why, thereby, All this suggests that</p> <p>Specific: among, and, here are more statistics, compiled by, in the light of, in a report, according to, notes, such as</p>

Note: Students are given this table without discourse markers and encouraged to look for as many signalling vocabulary as possible for the elements of the patterns shown in the table.

Appendix 9 A sample pre-fabricated diagram analysing the text's sixth paragraph



Note: Students are handed a pre-fabricated diagram only with bold-faced words. Underlined words are signalling vocabulary, which teachers can help students to focus on. Since this activity is difficult, they can be encouraged to work in pairs or groups. Also, students are also allowed to alter the diagram or create their own diagram.