

Centre for English Language Studies
Postgraduate programmes, Open Distance Learning

ESSAY COVER SHEET AND DECLARATION

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TITLE

WD/06/01

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

- a) Find a text of 100 – 500 words, produced by one of your students, which you have had difficulty in processing. Analyse the problems you had in processing the text. (In doing the analysis you may use one or more of the theoretical frameworks discussed in this course, and you may of course supplement this with any additional relevant reading you have done and experience you have had.) Go on to rewrite the text in a more acceptable form. This may require a radical rewrite rather than simply offering a ‘corrected’ version of the original.
- b) Discuss the pedagogical implications of your analysis/rewrite.

A photocopy of the original version of your student’s text should be included as an appendix.

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1. Introduction

Traditionally language study and teaching has concentrated on bottom-up approaches, which divide communication into discrete levels dealt with separately, with the main emphasis being on the sentence and its grammar. However, communication is a complex interaction and such *atomistic* (Cook, 1989) approaches seem to ignore issues such as coherence across sentences and discourse organisation. A more *holistic* way of language teaching suggests a top-down approach whereby all the levels of communication are integrated. This so called ‘discourse analysis’ has shifted the focus ‘suprasententially’, looking at how sentences combine to form coherent texts, in other words, texts that ‘make sense’ (Halliday, 2001). However, ‘coherence is created by factors outside language’ (Cook, 1989:9) and this means that its analysis should also account for the social and cultural context in which such discourse is produced. For, as Fairclough (1992, cited in Jaworski and Coupland, 1992:2) claims ‘discourse is ... more than just language in use: it is language use, ... seen as a type of social practice’.

This essay will begin with the analysis of a Chinese student’s English text drawing from the theoretical perspectives of discourse analysis, in particular, genre analysis, patterning in texts, cohesion and clause relations. A discussion of the problems encountered and a rewritten version of the text will follow. Finally, the pedagogical implications for EFL in general and in China in particular will be discussed.

2. The text and its analysis

2.1 Background Information

In the beginning of every term I ask my students to write a composition on a topic chosen by me, as a means of evaluating the level of the new students and the progress of the old ones. In September 2007, for my first-year University students in China, the topic was ‘Beijing 2008. What will the Olympics mean for China?’ Out of the 120 papers submitted, one -written by a female student- was randomly selected to be presented and analysed here (Appendix A). Throughout this essay, this will be referred to as ‘the text’ or ‘our text’ and its writer as ‘the writer’ or ‘the student’. The text has been clearly divided into paragraphs and its sentences have been numbered (S=sentence) for convenience (Appendix B).

2.2 Genre

Texts that follow the same conventions and structural elements belong to the same genre. Function is what distinguishes genre from registry or format when it comes to students’ writing. Two main approaches have established a clear pedagogic framework for genre, the Functional Systemic School (FS, also known as ‘Sydney’ or ‘Australian’ School), and the ESP (English for Specific Purposes) or EAP (English for Academic Purposes) School, which concentrates on academic writing in tertiary education with work on the research article and dissertations, by Swales (1990) and Dudley-Evans (1986) respectively (cited in Johnson, 2001).

Martin (1997, cited in Coffin, 2001:109) -one of the proponents of the FS school- defines genre as a ‘staged, goal-oriented social process through which social subjects in a given

culture live their lives’. Martin distinguishes between ‘story genres’ (narrative, recount) and ‘factual genre’ (report, discussion, exposition) in education. He asserts that all these texts have different function and goals and ‘in order to achieve these different goals, the structure of the texts themselves must differ’ (ibid: 162). Figure 1 below shows Martin’s (1985), definitions of each genre and their stages as adapted from Johnson (2001:78).

<u>Recount</u> ‘something that the narrator has personally experienced. It deals with a series of events’	Orientation [^] {Events ⁿ } [^] (Reorientation)
<u>Narrative</u> ‘similar to recounts but events are selected in terms of their story appeal’	Orientation [^] {Complication [^] Evaluation} [^] Resolution [^] (Reorientation or Coda)
<u>Report</u> ‘to store information’	{General Classification [^] Description ⁿ }
<u>Exposition/Discussion</u> ‘often involves explanation’	Thesis [^] Argument ⁿ [^] Conclusion e.g. Introduction: Thesis for/against) Body: Argument ⁿ (for/against) Conclusion: Restate and qualify thesis.
Notes ⁿ a number of [^] one stage follows the other () optional { } may be recursive	

Figure 1. Genres (Martin, 1985)

Both schools of genre analysis offer similar methods of textual analysis, and they both emphasise the social context of genre. Genres are not ‘fixed, monolithic, discrete and unchanging’ (Hyland, 2005:65), for texts are created, interpreted and accordingly adapted within particular contexts of culture.

At first glance, our text seems to match the conventions of ‘discussion or exposition’ genre. The text begins with the writer’s opinion ‘*In my view, the Olympic games mean opportunities and challenges for China*’ leading the reader to believe that a discussion of the two areas will follow. However, the writer seems to ‘change her mind’ towards the end of the text and adopts a favourable stance. Her main thesis seems to be that China will only benefit from the Olympic games and although the shortcomings are acknowledged in paragraph three; they are completely ignored in the conclusion. A statement of the writer’s position in the introduction or the mention of the disadvantages in the conclusion could remedy this so that the text matches Martin’s (1989, cited in Painter 2001:169) ‘analytical exposition’, as seeking to explain some aspect of the world and persuade the reader to adopt the writer’s view, so that it abides with the three main stages Martin (1989, adapted from Painter, 2001: 170) suggests, as seen below.

Martin’s stages

General position –thesis
Arguments (body)
Outcome of the argument-thesis

Our Text

Introduction-personal opinion
Arguments for; Arguments against
Conclusion-thesis

2.3 Discourse Patterns

Texts are usually organised in certain ways. Specific patterns tend to recur and a variety of vocabulary items are used in order to signal the chosen discourse patterns. Some of these patterns are, Question-Answer, Claim-Counter-claim, General-specific and Problem-Solution. The first look at the text indicates that the main pattern is Question-Answer, a closer look brings out a Claim-Counter-claim pattern but an even more detailed analysis shows that there are other patterns embedded in it. This is in accord with McCarthy's (1991:159) statement that 'any given text may contain more than one of the common patterns'. We will look at all these patterns and their signalling in detail below.

2.3.1 Question-Answer (QA)

According to McCarthy (1991) the Question-Answer pattern is one of the common ones. Its main aim is to answer the question posed in the beginning by offering a number of arguments and evidence in support. Our text begins with a question, in this case repeating the title 'What will the Olympics mean for China?' which is initially answered by stating the writer's view. A number of answers and arguments follow and the text concludes with more answers/arguments as for the meaning of the Olympics for China.

2.3.2 Claim-Counter-claim (CCc)

Another common pattern, especially in 'Compare and Contrast' essays is that of Claim-Counter-claim (McCarthy 1991, cited in Holland & Johnson, 2001). This can take the form of:

OPTION 1	OPTION 2
Claim 1	Claim 1
↓	↓
Claim 2	Counterclaim 1
↓	↓
Claim 3	Claim 2
↓	↓
Counterclaim 1	Counterclaim 2
↓	↓
Counterclaim 2	Claim 3
↓	↓
Counterclaim 3	Counterclaim 3

Figure 2. Claim-Counter-claim discourse pattern (Holland and Johnson, 2001:24)

The latter is more common in long texts and in both patterns there is a 'common ground', which comes at the beginning, the end or both the beginning and the end of the text. Some specific lexical items used as signals in this pattern are (Holland and Johnson, 2001:26):

'**Common ground**': accept, admit, agree, etc.

'**Claim**': argue, assert, claim, propose, view, etc.

'**Counter-claim**': counter, dispute, reject, etc.

'**Constructive discourse markers**': but, however, on the other hand, etc

Our text is structured in terms of: Introduction, Arguments for, Arguments against, and Conclusion. An outline, of the four-paragraphs with reference to the CCc pattern looks as follows:

Introduction: (Common Ground)

The Olympics in China will bring both advantages/opportunities and disadvantages/challenges.

Section 1: (Claims)

Advantages/Opportunities

Section 2: (Counterclaims)

Disadvantages/Challenges

Conclusion

Excluding Conclusion (where more claims are made), this could be visually represented as follows:

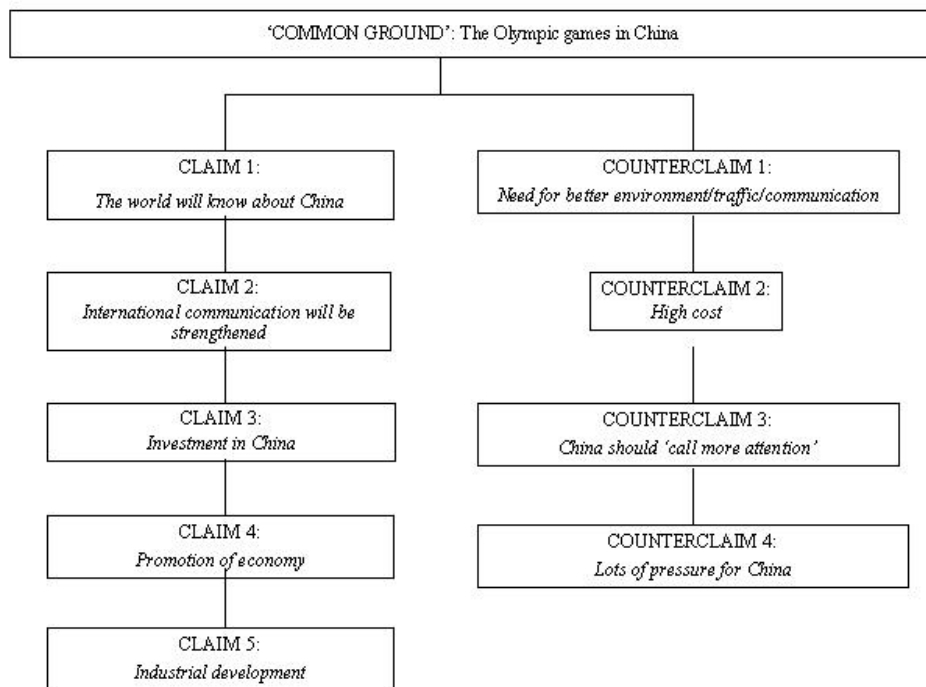


Table 1. Claim-Counter-Claim Pattern

Some signals such as contrastive discourse markers ‘on the one hand’ ‘on the other hand’ (S10) and specific lexis such as ‘different opinions’, ‘view’ ‘opportunity’, ‘challenge’, ‘believe’ can be found in the text to signal the claim-counter-claim pattern components.

2.3.3 General Specific (GS)

Another common pattern in English texts is the General-Specific. This begins and ends with a general statement, but in between one or more specific statements are presented. McCarthy (1991:158) depicts it as seen below.

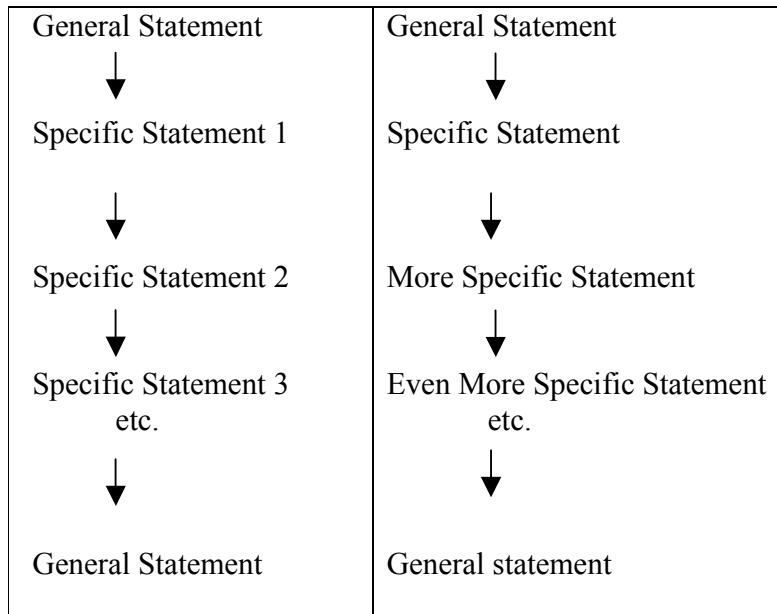


Figure 3. General-Specific Pattern (McCarthy, 1991)

Such patterns can be found in either short or longer texts, but clear-cut patterns as above are not always apparent; a combination of the two is also common (Holland & Johnson, 2001:23). The relationships between the general and specific statements are signaled by cohesive lexical ties, two major ones being, ‘enumerables’ (Tadros, 1985, cited in Coulthard, 1994:7) and ‘matching relations’ (Winter 1986, *ibid*), which will be discussed later on.

It can be said that our text is also organised in a General-Specific pattern, with the introduction as a general statement and sentences S4-S9 (advantages) being the specific ones, whereas sentences S10 to S14 (disadvantages) giving more specific information. The text closes with a general statement (S15) but then loses track and returns to giving two more specific new pieces of information (S16-18), as seen in Figure 6 below.

Paragraph 1 (S1-S3)	General Statement Olympics in China and personal view
Paragraph 2 (S4-S9)	Specific 1 Specific statements on the advantages of the Olympics
Paragraph 3 (S10-14)	Specific 2 Specific statements on the disadvantages of the Olympics in China
Paragraph 4 (S15)	General Statement General statement as a concluding remark
Paragraph 4 (S16-18)	Specific 3 More specific advantages of the Olympics

Table 2. General-Specific Pattern in the text

The first paragraph begins with the general statement that *'different people have different opinions'* and culminates with the writer's view that *'the Olympic games mean opportunities and challenges for China'*. The following two paragraphs discuss these in a more specific way, by giving examples, justifications and explanations. Paragraph two, begins and finishes with the notion that the world will get to know China more because of the Olympics. In between, investment, industrial development and employment prospects are discussed. The third paragraph puts forward the negative effects the Olympics will have on the government. The issues of environment, traffic and communication are brought up as financially demanding. The concluding paragraph opens up with a general statement of the writer's opinion. However, what follows is problematic as the writer goes back to giving three more specific statements on the topic, making a new General-Specific pattern all over again in the last paragraph. This seems to contradict any known G-Sc pattern and causes cohesion problems, which will be discussed below. Some links between the paragraphs, through lexical ties and repetition of ideas signal the relationships between the general and specific statements in our text, for example:

[S6] *Then, as following*

[S7] *Such as, and so on*

[S8] *All of these*

[S9] *Also*

[S15] *In a word*

[S16] *This*

[S17] *Also*

2.3.4 Problem-Solution (PS)

According to Hoey (1994, cited in Holland & Johnson, 2001:14) the Problem-Solution structure "consists of five categories":

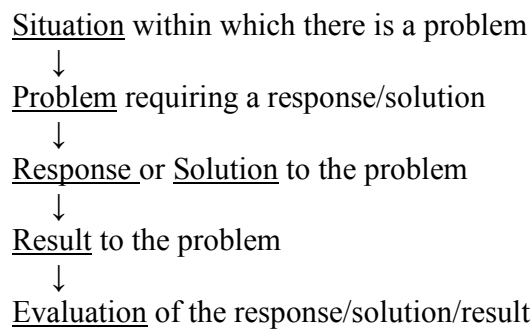


Figure 4. Problem-Solution pattern (Hoey, 1994)

Evaluation may be positive or negative and it is common for texts to have only four categories: Situation/Problem/Solution/Evaluation (Holland & Johnson, 2001:14-19). McCarthy (1991:79) lists some of the words that often signal this pattern.

- **Problem:** *concern, difficulty, problem, drawback ...*
- **Response:** *change, develop, find, respond, measure ...*
- **Solution/Result:** *answer, effect, outcome, result, solution ...*
- **Evaluation:** *manage, overcome, succeed, work ...*

However, according to Hoey (1994, cited in Holland & Johnson, 2001) a linguistic problem is not always a real world problem, nor is a linguistic solution a real-world solution. Problems are identified as such because the writer views them as such. A more careful analysis of the text also reveals an embedded P-S pattern in paragraph 3 as shown in figure 7 below:

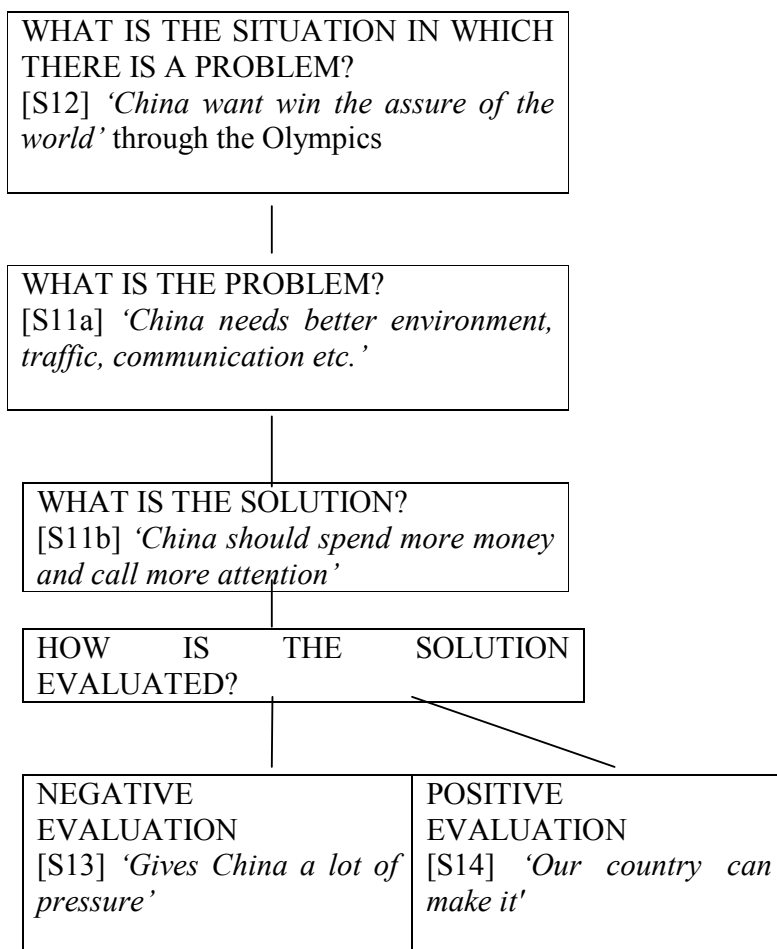


Table 3. Problem-Solution Pattern in Paragraph 3

Lexical and grammatical links used in the text to signal the P-S pattern are summarised below.

	LEXICAL LINKS	GRAMMATICAL LINKS
SITUATION		verb tense: present <i>'want'</i> (S12)
PROBLEM	<i>'Challenge'</i> (S10), <i>'success ... requires'</i> (S11)	Conditional: <i>'if China wants'</i>
RESPONSE/SOLUTION	<i>'more money', 'more attention', 'satisfied'</i> (S12)	<i>'Should'</i> (S12)
EVALUATION OF SOLUTION	Negative <i>'that's truly a challenge'</i> (S13) [it will cause] <i>'lots of pressure'</i> [13] Positive <i>'Our country can make it'</i> (S14)	

Table 4. Problem-Solution Pattern links in the text

2.3.5 Other Rhetoric Patterns

Different languages employ different discourse organisation patterns. According to Kaplan (1966, cited in McCarthy, 1991) Chinese or rather Asian is circular and indirect, whilst English is more linear and direct. Although later research (for example Mohan and Lo, 1985, cited in McCarthy, *ibid*) found no difference between Chinese and English texts, there are still today claims that Chinese learners of English tend to use circular thinking patterns when writing in English and tend to place the ‘main point’ at the end of an expository discourse, suggesting cultural interference and first language transfer (for example: Gonzalez, Chen and Sanchez, 2001 (on writing); Yang, 2007 (on listening)). In our text, this might be reflected in the fact that the student chooses to state her thesis in the conclusion rather than in the beginning of the text. Expressing openly one’s opinion is considered inappropriate in student writing in the Chinese language (one of the many influences of Confucian tradition).

2.4 Cohesion

Halliday and Hassan (1976, cited in Moon, 2001) define cohesion as:

‘part of the text-forming component in the linguistic system. It is the means whereby elements that are structurally unrelated to one another are linked together, through the dependence of one on the other for its interpretation’.

It is achieved by these ‘structurally unrelated elements’ which occur across written texts creating links and chaining together items that are related by what they define as ‘cohesive ties’ or devices so that they can create ‘texture’, that is, cohesive, meaningful texts (Moon, 2001). In their view, cohesion in English can be **Grammatical** (grammatical words and structures: reference, conjunction, ellipsis and substitution) and **Lexical** (nouns and content words). Reference marks a semantic relationship and it occurs when an item is introduced in the text, which is taken as a point of reference for something that follows, or as a basis for comparison. It can be ‘personal’ through personal pronouns, ‘demonstrative’ and ‘comparative’ (examples in Figure 5). Reference can be *exophoric* referring to the world outside the text, or *endophoric*, found within the text. The latter can refer to what has previously been mentioned *anaphoric*, or to what follows *cataphoric*. Substitution and ellipsis both mark grammatical relations. In the first one some words already appeared in the text are substituted by others whereas, in ellipsis whole words or phrases are omitted. Conjunction, which consists of adverbial groups and prepositional phrases, signifies an important semantic recourse for maintaining text cohesion. It can be ‘additive’, ‘adversative’, ‘causal’ or ‘temporal’. **Lexical** cohesion, finally, is achieved by Halliday and Hassan’s ‘collocation’ (the regular co-occurrence of particular words) and ‘reiteration’ which includes, synonyms, near-synonyms and superordinates (general nouns), Winter’s ‘Vocabulary 3’ list of nouns, adjectives, and verbs (with grammatical functions though), Francis’s ‘anaphoric nouns’ such as theory, argument, facts, etc. and Tadros’s ‘cataphoric enumerators’, e.g. features, reasons, etc. (Moon, 2001:61-70). They all give quite comprehensive lists of cohesive lexical items, some of them in Figure 5 below.

Grammatical Cohesion	
Reference* Semantic relationship	Conjunction Semantic relationship
<u>Personal</u> <i>I, me, mine, it, its, she, her ...</i>	<u>Additive</u> <i>And, also, or, furthermore, for example ...</i>
<u>Demonstrative</u> <i>The, these, this, that, here, there ...</i>	<u>Adversative</u> <i>But, yet, however ...</i>
<u>Comparative</u> <i>Same, other, more, so, better ...</i>	<u>Causal</u> <i>So, therefore, because ...</i>
	<u>Temporal</u> <i>Finally, meanwhile, to sum up, as, in short...</i>

Figure 5. Grammatical Cohesion

A first comment that can be made regarding cohesion in our text is that both grammatically and lexically the text seems to be quite simple. From grammatical point of view the text is elementary. The only tense used throughout—with the exception of S12b is simple present. Only six out of the 18 sentences have subordinate clauses, all in the end position. In the use of cohesive devices the passage is quite rich, the only problem being that the same ‘elementary level’ words are repeated. What is also striking is the lack of substitution and ellipsis devices, with the exception of S8 and S16. Although the text uses ‘reference’ in almost every sentence, the most common demonstrative used is ‘the’. Thirty one times in eighteen sentences with some sentences containing the same word four times. Conjunction is also poorly represented, with the most common additive being ‘and’ (repeated nine times), adversatives and causals are limited. Table 5 below summarises the reference and conjunction cohesive devices used in our text.

S	REFERENCE			CONJUNCTION			
	PERS/AL	DEMO/VE	COM/VE	ADDITIVE	ADVERS	CAUS	TEMP
1		the					
2			different (x2)				
3	my	the		and			
4		the (x4)		and			
5		the					
6				as following			then
7				and so no, such as			
8	the[y]	these, the		and			
9	it	the (x4)	more, clearer	Also, and			
10		the (x2)			On the other hand		
11		the (x2)	better	and so on			
12		the (x3)	more (x2)	and			
13		that,					
14	We, our, it				but		
15		the (X3)					In a word
16		This, the (x3)					
17		The (x3)		Also, and			
18	our	The (x2)		and			

Table 5. Grammatical Cohesion devices in the text

However, a number of lexical items are used in the text, which can be grouped under the following headings.

Cohesion through reiteration

The most striking are: the word ‘China’ which is repeated eleven times, ‘the Olympic Games’ five times and ‘the world’ six times. Other instances of reiteration include, the definite article ‘the’ 31 times plus one in the title, the verb ‘promote’ three and a number of other words twice, e.g. challenge, opportunity

Cohesion through Synonymy and near-synonymy:

Opinion – view

The world-international-overseas

Jobs-employment

Olympic Games, games, PE, sports

Country-state

Money, economic (*economy*), investor

Assure-satisfied

Holding the Olympics, success of bidding for the Olympics

Promote, advances, roused, strength, develop, encourage, provide, make it possible, make it, ensure

Call more attention, satisfied

Cohesion through antonymy:

International – nationality spirit (antonym)

The world (superordinate) -our country, China (subordinate); Our country- China, state, nationality spirit (antonym).

Overall, considering the level of the student, the text is simplistic in its use of cohesive and other linking devices both grammatically and lexically and therefore lacks cohesion in the development of ideas.

2.5 Clause Relations

The study and analysis of cohesion of written discourse should also include the study of the clause in the sentence and its relation to the other clauses, because ‘the clause is the significant semantic unit of sentence function’, and clause relationships bear ‘important types of meaning’. (Winter, 1994:48). Winter gives two kinds of clause relations ‘**matching relations**’ and ‘**logical sequence relations**’. Matching relations are concerned with the compatibility or incompatibility of the grammar or the lexical choice of the clauses. The focus is on similarities and differences of the clauses and they are characterised by repetition, comparisons, (compatible or incompatible) alternatives, general-particular, appositions (compatible) and contrasts, contradictions and denial and correction (incompatible). When the clauses’ sequence is logically valid, they come under the heading of ‘logical sequence relations’, which according to Winter (1986, cited in Coulthard and Johnson, 2001:31-32) can be cause/consequence, instrument/achievement, condition/sequence, denial/correction, basis/conclusion, concession and cause. McCarthy (1991, *ibid*: 32) adds phenomenon/reason and phenomenon/example to the above list. According to Winter (1994) there is a small number of clause relations but a large number of ways of lexically signalling these relations, which he labels Vocabulary 1 (subordinators) Vocabulary 2 (co-ordinators) and Vocabulary 3 (lexical items of connection). Employing these lists to our text, table 6 below shows that there seem to be a number of such items in the text, yet limited. Although Winter (1994) argues that signalling is optional and clausal relations can sometimes be inferred instead of clearly signalled, a better explanation for our text would be that the student seems to lack understanding and mastering of such lexical signals.

	VOCABULARY 1 SUBORDINATORS	VOCABULARY 2 CO-ORDINATORS	VOCABULARY 3 LEXICAL ITEMS
S1			Mean
S2			
S3		and	
S4		and	
S5			
S6		then	
S7			
S8		and	
S9	which	also	
S10		On the other hand	
S11			Require
S12	if	and	
S13	that/ which		
S14		but	
S15*			
S16			
S17		also	
S18			

Table 6. 'Vocabulary'

*S15 '*that*' is a personal demonstrative. Here it is grammatical and not referential.

Logical sequence relations on the other hand are not always explicitly stated and in order to locate them in our text we have to add some information or even rewrite certain sentences for them to be apparent. Some of the logical sequence relations in our text can be seen in the table below.

Cause Consequence	<p>S4b Holding the Olympic games <i>strengthen the international communication</i></p> <p>S4a Holding the Olympic games <i>promotes the world to know about China</i></p> <p>S6 Because of many overseas investors coming to China <i>numerous of industrial develop</i></p> <p>S17a the Olympic games encourage the PE undertaking</p> <p>S17b the Olympic games <i>heighten the skills of sports</i></p> <p>S18a the Olympic games <i>will arise the nationality spirit.</i></p>
Instrument Achievement	<p>S5a During the Olympic Games <i>many overseas investor come to China.</i></p>
Condition Sequence	<p>S5b Investors will come to China in order <i>to promote the economic</i></p> <p>S9b If the world gets to know China <i>the world [will] ensure China</i></p> <p>S11 If we want to succeed in hosting the Olympic Games, we must have <i>better environment, traffic, communication.</i></p> <p>S12a <i>If China want win the assure of the world, China should spent money</i></p> <p>S12b <i>If China want win the assure of the world, China should call more attention to satisfied the world</i></p> <p>S13b <i>If China spends a lot of money and call more attention [this] will give China lots of pressure</i></p>
Basis Conclusion	<p>S9a <i>Olympic [will] make it possible for the world to know China</i></p> <p>S13a <i>That's truly a challenge</i></p> <p>S14 <i>But despite the problems and the pressure, China can make it.</i></p>
Phenomenon Reason	<p>S8b Lots of new jobs will result in <i>the relieve the pressure of employment.</i></p>
Phenomenon Example	<p>S7 For example <i>real estate development, tourism, electronic information and so on.</i></p>

Table 7 Logical Sequence relations

The text can be characterised as having what Winter (1994:53) calls ‘weak logical sequence’ meaning that it lacks adequate conjunctive signalling (e.g. because, although, consequently etc).

3. Rewrite

In order to come up with the message the writer conveys a few readings were necessary. This is a typical Chinese student writing of Lower-Intermediate level. Merely editing the text is not enough. The first step in the rewrite process was to rearrange the ‘problematic’ paragraph in the conclusion. In particular, S16, S17, S18 had to be rearranged and moved into the first paragraph. A number of corrections and alterations regarding clauses followed. Some conjunctive signals were added to enhance the weak logical sequence relations (e.g. as a result, although). Repetition was eliminated. Editing of grammatical, lexical and word order misuse followed. However, major changes were avoided in order to sustain the meaning and style of the writer. The complete rewritten text is appended (Appendix C).

4. Implications

4.1 Teaching Genre

Despite claims that teaching genres constrains individual creativity (for a discussion see Painter, 2001; Bhatia, 2001), it can be argued that only after the learner is fully aware of the conventions of a particular genre can he or she deviate from them, alter, manipulate and adapt them into a text accordingly and therefore be creative, for as Bakhtin (1986, cited in Bhatia, 2001:75) claims, ‘genres must be fully mastered to be used creatively’. Most importantly, genres are culturally determined and although it is possible to be recognised and mastered in one’s first language, when it comes to a foreign language, genres must be learned.

Genre analysis can be a valuable tool for English language teachers especially in EFL context. For students in China the greatest challenge lies beyond the sentence. If we want students to produce coherent and cohesive texts a genre based course might be relevant. Students still have problems in the sentence level but because secondary education in China concentrates on grammar within the sentence, students have little experience in producing coherent texts such as essays and reports as expected in tertiary education. So far the pedagogic emphasis has been to raise students’ awareness of different genres and text features to meet the conventions of a particular community. In the classroom an introductory exercise would be a ‘match the text to its genre’ one, whereas learners are presented with a number of extracts or whole authentic texts and the equivalent ‘genre titles’ (e.g. report, shopping list, narrative, postcard, university lecture, procedure, etc) in jumbled order and they have to do the matching, preferable working in pairs or small groups. After feedback, students are asked to locate and comment on specific lexical and grammatical (e.g. verb tenses, passive voice) structures used in each genre while the teacher should provide explanations of how such structures relate to the context and purpose of each text. Ideally, in the discussion that will follow reference and comparisons should be made to the genre conventions inherent in the students’ linguistic and sociocultural background.

The analyses and methods provided by the ESP school can be effectively applied in classrooms of more advanced English learners to introduce academic genres and/or to show students how their writing can be improved. For example, the research article can

be studied using the following steps as adapted from Swales (1990, cited in Johnson, 2001:77).

1. **Isolate the broad features of a research article** (e.g. Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusion). This might have more impact with the use of a diagrammatic representation.
2. **Examine in detail each section and its features.** Depending on the level of the students and their familiarity with research articles, this stage could be modified so that a whole session is devoted to each section. For example, for the Introduction, Swales' (1990, cited in Johnson, 2001:84) 'three-move model', or Dudley-Evans' (1986, cited in Johnson, 2001:85) 'six-move model' can be introduced and explored further.
3. [a] (For novice writers) **Present the students with a model of the conventions used by the particular community.**
[b] (For more experienced writers) **Relate those features to the conventions in the corresponding academic community.**

A fourth stage can be added to the above where students have to **produce their own research paper** either as homework or in class depending on time constraints.

Both the SFL and ESP schools have produced materials for genre teaching, for example, Swales and Feak's (1994, cited in Coffin, 2001:114) 'self-help' book aiming at non-English native postgraduate students, Paltridge's (1995, *ibid*) 'prototype' or Rothery's (1985, cited in Hyland, 2005:18) 'Thesis-Argument-Conclusion', to name but a few. However, as Bhatia (2001:76) concludes, genre knowledge should not be used as 'a blueprint for replication', but rather as a guiding resource to respond to rhetorical situations of certain discourse communities.

4.2 Teaching Discourse Patterns

Similarly to Genre, discourse patterns are culturally determined, 'deeply ingrained as part of our cultural knowledge (McCarthy, 1990, in Holland, 2001:150) and most non-native beginners' writings in English exhibit problems at the level of textual patterning (*ibid.*). In the Chinese context in particular, it can be argued that first year undergraduates exhibit particular problems of discourse patterning when it comes to English writing (personal experience). Writing is not part of the curriculum for first and second year University courses. A small informal survey on my students showed that knowledge on patterns in English writing comes from Middle School teaching and personal study. Kaplan (1966, cited in McCarthy, 1991) was the first to suggest that people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds organize discourse differently, reflecting their native language and culture. More recently, Yang's (2007) study found that Chinese discourse organisation affects Chinese learners' listening comprehension of an English text. A case study by Gonzalez, Chen and Sanchez (2001) also found that Chinese EFL learners exhibit linguistic problems, which are connected with underlying cultural thinking and discourse organizational patterns.

Despite the fact that evidence is inconclusive whether such problems are due to 'interference' from the learner's cultural-linguistic background or other reasons, it is suggested that some focus on common patterns of texts in English seems desirable as an

activity for teachers. Holland (2001:153) suggests diagrammatic representations of texts with the aid of ‘prefabricated’ diagrams as a way of teaching discourse patterns and McCarthy (1991) proposes a useful activity called a ‘text frame’ for drawing attention to the macro-structure of a particular text. An example of an activity/lesson for Intermediate level students on discourse patterns is given in Appendix D.

4.3 Teaching Cohesion

Discourse patterning, however, cannot be explained without considering cohesion (McCarthy, 1991). By cohesion we mean the way a text ‘hangs together’ and makes sense (Moon, 2001), which is achieved with the aid of grammatical and lexical devices. While discourse patterns can be improved or taught (McCarthy, 1991) clause and sentence level problems in EFL students’ writing demand closer attention. This can be achieved by addressing discourse signalling vocabulary, the use of conjunctions and other linking words and focusing on reference, ellipsis and substitution (McCarthy, 1991). Such activities are abundant in English language textbooks and teachers should be encouraged to use them in class. Indeed EFL/ESL teaching has long been focusing on the sentence and the clause and despite the fact that English teaching in China has not been different it seems from our text and from personal experience with Chinese students that there is still need for emphasis on the use and practice of conjunction and lexical cohesion. Initially, students can be asked to identify lexical chains (i.e. repetitions, the use of synonyms and hyponyms, ellipsis, etc) in authentic texts. A further activity would be to provide the students with stripes of sentences forming short texts in a jumbled order and ask them to order them identifying the linking words and phrases that helped them in their decision. Comparing authentic texts with the students’ own writing and ask them to identify differences in grammatical and lexical cohesive devices would also be a good way to draw students attention on the importance and use of such devices. More advanced learners may also be asked to provide the missing conjunctions in short texts themselves.

4.4 Teaching Clause Relations

The moment you put together any two sentences for a purpose, your ... reader looks for a sensible connection between their topics, and if they make sense ..., it will be because [the reader] can *relate the two sentences* in the same way as they relate the constituents of the clause in *expected ways*.(Winter, 1994:52)

Apart from teaching conjunctions in order to achieve cohesion in writing, teachers should also focus on helping students produce coherent texts by teaching them how to make a ‘sensible connection’ of their ideas and help them understand the typical clause relations in English texts. After Winter’s (1994) and McCarthy’s (1991) main types of Logical Sequence Relations have been introduced to students and examples have been given, an elementary activity would be to give them two sentences and a conjunctive and ask students to combine them into one and identify the relation.

Logical Sequence Relation	Answer
a. Mexico shares a wide border with the United States. (BECAUSE) b. It is the leading source of immigrants to North America.	Because Mexico shares a wide border with the United States, it is the leading source of immigrants to North America. (Cause-Consequence)
a. Francois-Marie Arouet did not want his real name to be listed as the author of his books. b. He used the pen name Voltaire. (SO)	Francois-Marie Arouet did not want his real name to be listed as the author of his books., so he used the pen name Voltaire. (Condition- Consequence)

Table 8 Logical Sequence Relations Example 1(from Bander 1980:41)

For more advanced learners this can be achieved with the use of short texts. Students are asked to read the text and comment on how its parts are related to each other. For example:

[1] Working people sometimes think that college students live a very easy life. [2] To them it appears that students have little to do: They sleep late, talk for hours over coffee, and go to parties every night. [3] They never seem to be working. [4] The truth is, though, that most students spend as many hours in class or at their studies as workers do at their jobs. [5] It seems to workers that students lead easy lives only because students work and relax at different times from workers.
(Bander 1980:150)

Table 9 Logical Sequence Relations Example 2

With questions such as ‘What do working people think of students’ life?’ (S1), ‘What is the truth? (S4), and ‘What is the relation between these two sentences? the relationship ‘hypothetical-real’ is established. In a similar way other relations in the text are also highlighted and discussed. (e.g. S1&S2: Phenomenon-Example; S5: Cause-Consequence, etc). The fact that related ideas can still be inferred despite the limited use of conjunctions in the text is also pointed out. Alternatively, the text can be given in a jumbled order, students will have to reorder it and then identify the relations.

5. Conclusion

‘There is more to producing and understanding meaningful language-to communicating- than knowing how to make or recognise correct sentences’. (Cook, 1989:6)

Although the study of sentences and their grammar should not be underestimated, there is need to move beyond the sentence in discourse analysis if, as teachers, we want our students to be able to produce cohesive and coherent written texts. This essay has argued that this can be achieved by introducing genre analysis, discourse patterning, clause relations and cohesive devices in a writing class. Indeed, the text that was analysed here included a few grammatically correct sentences on their own right. However, overall, it

lacked cohesion and logical sequence. In the Chinese EFL context in particular emphasis on the difference of discourse organization of English and Chinese is needed as well as extensive practice in the use of cohesive ties and logical sequence relations. The tendency of Chinese students to adopt rules and ‘translate’ from their native language should also be addressed if EFL learners are to produce spoken and written discourse of ‘native’ standard rather than Chinese-English (‘Chinglish’) understood only by their fellow country people.

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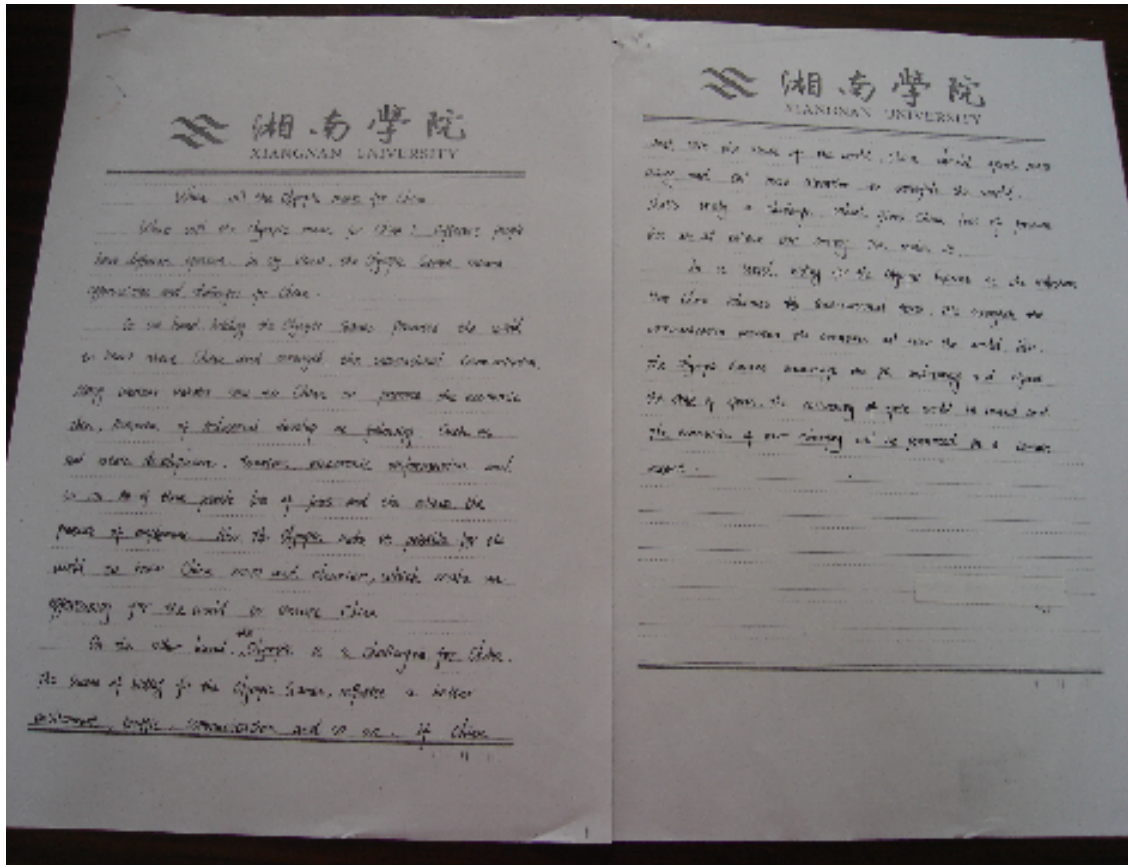
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APPENDIX A – The text



APPENDIX B

What will the Olympic mean for China

P1

[S1] What will the Olympic mean for China?

[S2] Different people have different opinions.

[S3] In my view, the Olympic games mean opportunities and challenges for China.

P2

[S4] On the one hand, holding the Olympic Games promotes the world to know about China and strength the international communication.

[S5] Many overseas investor come to China to promote the economic.

[S6] Then, numerous of industrial develop as following.

[S7] Such as real estate development, tourism, electronic information and so on.

[S8] All of these provide lots of jobs and the relieve the pressure of employment.

[S9a] Also, the Olympic make it possible for the world to know China, more and clearer,

[S9b] which make an opportunity for the world to ensure China.

P3

[S10] On the other hand, the Olympic is a challenge for China.

[S11] The success of bidding for the Olympic Games, requires a better environment, traffic, communication and so on.

[S12a] If China want win the assure of the world, [S12b] China should spent more money and call more attention to satisfied the world.

[S13a] That's truly a challenge, [S13b] which gives China lots of pressure.

[S14] But we all believe our country can make it.

P4

[S15] In a word, bidding for the Olympic games is the milestone that China advances the international state.

[S16] This strength the communication between the countries all over the world.

[S17] Also, the Olympic Games encourage the PE undertaking and highten the skills of sports.

[S18] The nationality spirit would be roused and the economic of our country will be promoted in a certain extent.

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APPENDIX C- REWRITE

What will the Olympics mean for China?

What will the Olympics mean for China? Different people have different opinions. In my view, the Olympic games will mean both opportunities and challenges for China.

On the one hand, by holding the Olympic games the world will know more about China. This will strengthen international communication and as a result nationality spirit will be raised. What is more, many investors will come to China and this will boost the economy. Consequently numerous industries will develop, for example, real estate, tourism, information technology and the electronics industry. All these will open up new jobs for the people, unemployment will decrease and this will relieve the government's pressure. Furthermore, holding the Olympic games will encourage more people to consider PE and put sports in the forefront.

On the other hand, the Olympics can be a challenge for China. Success in holding the Olympic games also requires improved environment conditions, traffic control and better communication. If China wants to win the reassurance of the world, it should spend more money on all the above areas and call for more attention in order to satisfy the world. Although this is a real challenge, which gives China and its government great pressure, we all believe that our country will succeed.

In conclusion, although holding the Olympics games will pose some challenges for the Chinese government, overall, it is a sign that China has advanced into an international state and this will improve its communication with the rest of the world.

APPENDIX D

Teaching Patterns Lesson Plan

Original Text adapted from Fowler, 1998:34

Too many people, not enough earth

Matt Taylor looks at the biggest problem facing the world-population growth.

A. [S1] Of all the problems the human race is responsible for that threaten life on earth, population growth is the most serious. [S2] The world's population has more than doubled since 1950 and the United Nations predict that it will grow a further 50% by 2050 to nine billion. [S3] All these additional people will require more food, more land to grow it on and more houses to live in, and will consume more raw materials to provide the basic requirements of everyday life. [S4] The world's resources cannot support such an increase indefinitely.

B. [S5] At first sight, the solution seems simple. [S6] Experts in developed countries argue that we should impose birth control worldwide. [S7] If parents only had the children they really wanted, they say, population growth would be manageable, as it is in Europe. [S8] People should be educated in reliable methods of birth control, and where necessary, these should be supplied. [S9] If a birth is not desired, the pregnancy should be terminated.

C. [S10] However, the failure of countries to reach agreement on problems like global warming indicates that there would be even stronger resistance if a plan like that were to put into practice. [S11] In this case the opposition would be due not merely to selfish national interests but to individual wishes and conviction, family or tribal tradition and the powerful influence of religious authorities. [S12] In some parts of the world, large families are considered desirable and a son is regarded as essential. [S13] In China where the government has pursued a policy of limiting families to one child, population growth has only been controlled at the cost of considerable personal suffering.

D. [S14] Politicians in many developing countries, where the population is growing much faster than in Europe, refuse to accept that it is the main cause of environmental problems. [S15] They point out that countries like the United States consume far more than their fair share of the world's resources. [S16] Developed countries should reduce their consumption, but even if they did, this would not prevent disaster unless population growth was brought under control. [S17] We should put pressure on governments to find a viable solution. [S18] Otherwise the painful alternative will become unavoidable; the population will eventually be decimated by war, famine and disease.

APPENDIX D (Cont.)

Activity 1

Put the following paragraphs in the right order to form the original text.

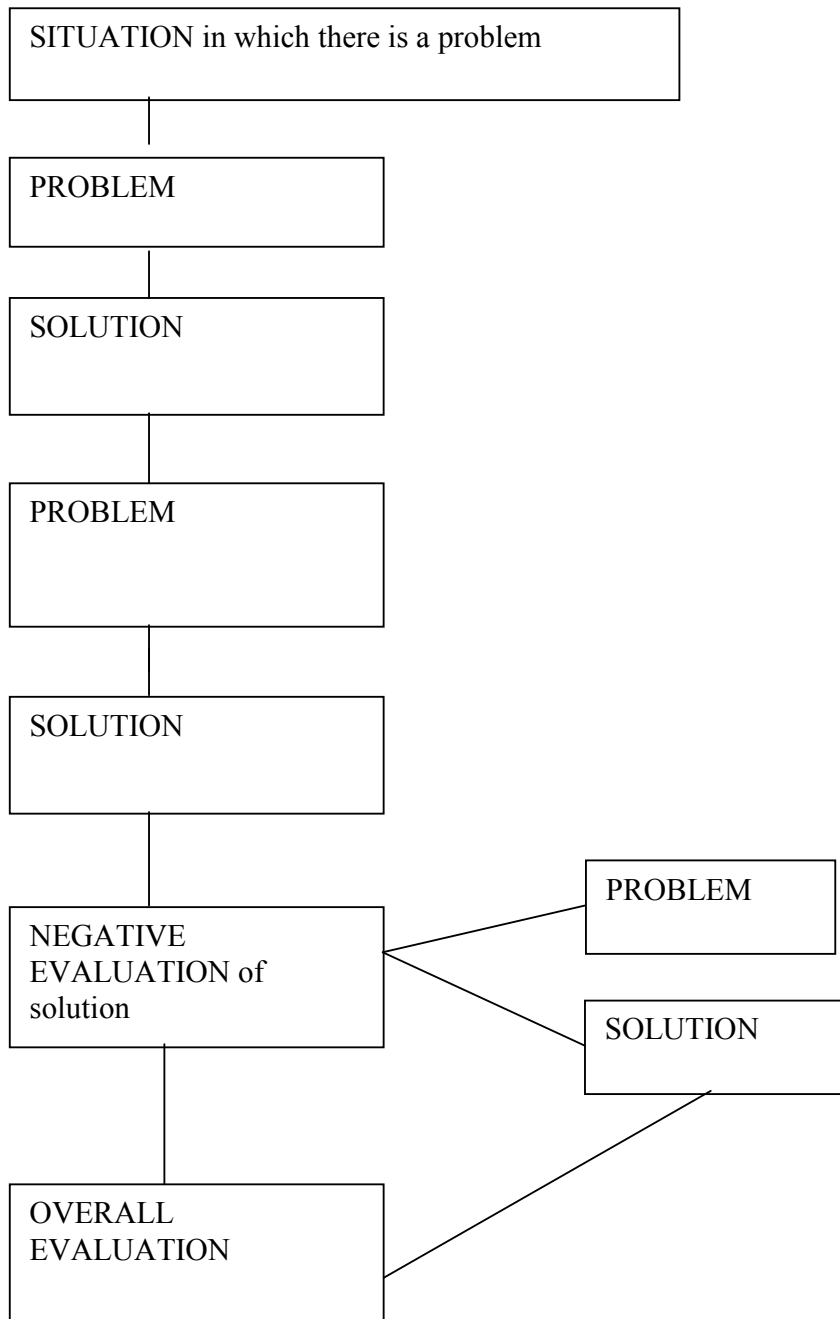
1. However, the failure of countries to reach agreement on problems like global warming indicates that there would be even stronger resistance if a plan like that were to put into practice. In this case the opposition would be due not merely to selfish national interests but to individual wishes and conviction, family or tribal tradition and the powerful influence of religious authorities. In some parts of the world, large families are considered desirable and a son is regarded as essential. In China where the government has pursued a policy of limiting families to one child, population growth has only been controlled at the cost of considerable personal suffering.
2. At first sight, the solution seems simple. Experts in developed countries argue that we should impose birth control worldwide. If parents only had the children they really wanted, they say, population growth would be manageable, as it is in Europe. People should be educated in reliable methods of birth control, and where necessary, these should be supplied. If a birth is not desired, the pregnancy should be terminated.
3. Of all the problems the human race is responsible for that threaten life on earth, population growth is the most serious. The world's population has more than doubled since 1950 and the United Nations predict that it will grow a further 50% by 2050 to nine billion. All these additional people will require more food, more land to grow it on and more houses to live in, and will consume more raw materials to provide the basic requirements of everyday life. The world's resources cannot support such an increase indefinitely.
4. Politicians in many developing countries, where the population is growing much faster than in Europe, refuse to accept that it is the main cause of environmental problems. They point out that countries like the United States consume far more than their fair share of the world's resources. Developed countries should reduce their consumption, but even if they did, this would not prevent disaster unless population growth was brought under control. We should put pressure on governments to find a viable solution. Otherwise the painful alternative will become unavoidable; the population will eventually be decimated by war, famine and disease.

(Answer: 1-C; 2-B; 3-A; 4-D)

APPENDIX D (Cont. 2)

Activity 2. Diagrammatic representation. For each paragraph indicate whether its content refers to: Situation, Problem, Solution, Evaluation (positive or negative).

After the answers have been discussed the students are presented with the following diagram and have to fill it in.



APPENDIX D (Cont.3)

KEY

Paragraph A. Situation/Problem (*population growth*)

Paragraph B. Solution (*birth control*)

Paragraph C. Further Problem

Paragraph C. Solution (*China example*)

Paragraph C. Evaluation of solution (negative)

Paragraph D. Further Problem

Paragraph D. Solution (*put pressure on governments*)

Paragraph D. Overall evaluation of problem/solutions