

日誌寫作對青少年英文寫作能力發展及寫作動機影響之個案研究

**Personal Journal Writing and Its Influence on an Adolescent Learner's
English Writing Development and Writing Motivation:
A Case Study**

by

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ABSTRACT

Since several decades ago, language researchers have confirmed the positive effects of journal writing on language learners' writing performance. Toby Fulwiler (1982) stated that personal journal writing records not only one's personal life but also writing development across time; it is thus "a vehicle to explore the writer's own belief system." Though the positive effects of journal writing on language learners has been studied by numerous prior researchers, little research featuring the context of Taiwan was based on a longitudinal observation. A longitudinal observation allows us to know how the development of a writing behavior changes the learner's writing motivation, process of sense of authorship and reader awareness, sentence complexity, vocabulary use, topical selection, article length and writing motivation across time. In light of this, this study observed a Taiwanese junior high school student's writing process of English personal journals for one year to understand how her development of English personal journal writing behavior affected her English writing performance and motivation at the aforementioned aspects. The study followed the case study research and collected the following sources of data: the participant's writing samples; semi-structured and unstructured interviews with the participant and writing conferences. The data were analyzed qualitatively. It attempted to answer the question about what changes could be found on the participant's English writing performance and motivation after she developed English personal journal writing behavior.

The results of the study showed that the participant improved her writing skills at the aspects of sentence complexity, article length, theme selection, sense of

authorship and read awareness. Furthermore, the participant's English writing motivation was heightened by the improvement of these writing skills, which again proves the finding of prior research that a language learner's development of journal writing behavior may work effectively in his/her enhancement of writing motivation. The study concludes that a language learner's development of journal writing behavior is positively related to her writing motivation.

Key words: journal writing, writing development, writing motivation

日誌寫作對青少年英文寫作能力發展及寫作動機影響之個案研究

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摘要

語言研究學者從幾十年前開始，就已經證實日誌寫作對語言學習者寫作表現的正面影響。Toby Fulwiler (1982)指出日誌寫作不僅記錄個人生活也包含寫作能力發展的歷程；日誌寫作就是探索寫作者個人看法的媒介。雖然日誌寫作已被廣泛研究，但對於長時間的觀測較缺乏，長時間的觀察能讓我們了解在這期間寫作發展是如何改變學習者的寫作動機、作者身份及讀者意識的建立、句子複雜度、生詞使用度、主題揀選和文長改變。有鑒於此，此個案研究觀察臺灣中部某所公立中學之一名國一學生，時間維持一年，從而了解此名學生的英文寫作歷程是如何從上述的項目中影響她的英文寫作能力發展及其學習動機。本研究採用個案方式，研究者蒐取以下的資料：參與對象的日誌文稿、半結構化訪談和寫作會談。此個案研究採用質性研究方法，旨在探討參與對象的英文日誌寫作行為是如何影響其英文寫作表現和其動機。

本研究結果顯示個案本身在寫作技巧上的能力有提升，像是句子複雜度、文章長度、主題揀選和作者身份及讀者意識的建立寫作動機；個案也因寫作技巧提升進而影響其寫作動機的提升；此研究結果和其它學者的先前研究結果相呼應。本研究最末總結：語言學習者的日誌寫作習慣發展和其寫作動機的提升相關。

關鍵字：日誌寫作、英文寫作能力發展、英文寫作動機

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Journal writing has been used in teaching for several decades. However, the emphasis was almost placed on reflective journals instead of personal journals. Toby Fulwiler (1982) stated the benefits of personal journal that it records not only one's personal life but also writing development across time; it is thus "a vehicle to explore the writer's own belief system" (p.25). Though the positive effects of journal writing on language learners have been studied by a number of researchers, little research featuring the context of Taiwan was based on a longitudinal observation.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

This study explores the relationship underlying an adolescent EFL learner's English personal journal writing behavior, her development of English writing proficiency, and her heightening of English writing motivation. More specifically, this study investigated how English personal journal writing affected the participant's development of English writing proficiency and writing motivation across time (i.e., one-year-long).

In view of the preceding research purpose, three research questions to be addressed in this study were as follows: (1) What changes can be found on the

participant's English writing performance across time after she develops English personal journal writing behavior? (2) How does the participant's development of journal writing behavior affect her writing motivation? (3) How does the participant's case shed light on the relationship between journal writing and English writing motivation?

Significance of the Study

Given the observational nature of this study, the study is important because it allows us to better understand young adolescent EFL learners' writing behavior and writing development at an applied level: we can learn from this study how the use of an effective writing strategy can benefit a learner's learning outcome. Curriculum designers and course planners for Taiwan's junior high school English instruction may get some instructional tips out of the findings of this study.

Definition of Terms

1. Journal Writing: Journal writing is a record of event and a style of self-expression; it can be a merger of both (Boud, 2001). In this study, journal writing refers to one's personal journal records.

2. Diary as a Type of Journal Writing: The term 'diary' and 'personal journal' are used interchangeably. In first and second language acquisition research, 'diary' is "a routinely

kept journal” (Richards & Schmidt, 1992). In the present study, the participant recorded her life chores and thoughts every week via ‘weekly English diary writing.’ Nonetheless, to bring to readers more awareness of how ‘diary writing’ works educationally on an EFL learner’s learning of English writing, this study adopts the term ‘personal journal writing.’ According to Richards and Schmidt (1992), the term ‘diary’ and ‘personal journal’ can be used interchangeably due to the similar natures shared by both.

3. Writing Development: According to McCarthy, Guo, and Cummins (2005), one’s writing development can be shown on his/her use of grammar and punctuation, sentence complexity, rhetorical style and voice. This study, based on the data collected, holds that the participant’s writing development can be seen on her sentence complexity, article length, topical selection, sense of authorship and reader awareness.

4. Writing Motivation: According to Oldfather and Shanahan C. H. (2007), a learner’s motivation to write emerges when he/she is given opportunity for meaningful self-expression connecting to his/her identity construction, to what he/she cares about, and to his/her empowering of experiences. Given that writing is about thinking and is bound up with other literate activities such as reading, speaking, and thought development, one’s writing motivation can be enhanced through the learning of idea-developing strategies and through meaningful collaboration (Bakhtin, 1981; Gee, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). In the present study, one’s writing motivation reflects the

writer's expression about self and the growth of his/her writing performance across
time.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews previous studies relevant to journal writing and the influence on English writing development and English writing motivation. It begins with the introduction of journal writing, diary and English writing development, followed by a review of literature on journal writing, diary as a type of journal writing, English development via journal writing, motivation and writing, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, and developing writing motivation via journal writing.

Journal Writing

According to Fulwiler (1982), journal writing is divided into five types: students' academic journals, journal assignments, personal journals, teacher journals, and reading and evaluating student journals. Boud (2001) held that journal writing is a writer's recording of lived events and experiences - an extract of his/her memories. Journal writing can be viewed from different perspectives: it's a record of events; a styles of self-expression and it can be a combination of both (Boud, 2001).

Diary as a Type of Journal Writing

According to Mahadzir *et al.* (2007), the terms "journal" and "diary" appear often in language studies research. In the first and the second language acquisition research,

Richards *et al.* (1992) stated that “diary” is ‘a routinely kept journal’. The term “diary” often refers to the writer as the only reader of his/her written pieces. Nonetheless, many language researchers are interested in studying language learners’ diaries. In light of this, some diarists may revise their pieces as drafts for language researchers’ use (Mahadzir, Ismail, & Ramakrishnan, 2007). This may explain why diary is also known as “a public version of the diary” (Bailey & Ochsner, 1983). In short, though diary writing is a private and confidential writing activity, it falls into the category of journal writing and is also understood as personal journal writing.

English Writing Development via Journal Writing

Journal writing is a developmental activity that motivates the writers to write routinely and seriously (Fulwiler, 1982). Davies (1995) found that students shifted from passive learners to active ones in the process of journal writing. In writing the diary, different diarists use varied writing techniques like describing, illustrating, expressing, sorting, opposing, clarifying, selecting, inferring and selecting (Wilcox, 1998). These writing techniques are very useful for EFL students’ development of writing proficiency (Fulwiler, 1999). In another study conducted by Castellanos (2008), she found that journal writing had a great impact on EFL learners of upper intermediate levels. By having nine students submit weekly journals for a semester long, these students learned

to treat journal writing as a tool for their development of language proficiency. In particular, since journal writing provides students with the chance of free writing, they are more likely to develop interest in writing. Wilcox (1998) also confirmed the effects of using journal writing as a means of language learning tool in that a journal writer's sharing of ideas and reflection of personal opinions lead to his/her development of thinking and learning. No matter how journal writing is used in or outside the classroom, it enhances students' critical thinking and creativity (Boud, 2001; Callister; 1993; Dymont & O'Connell, 2003; Fulwiler, 1982; Moon, 1999; Walker, 2006; Wilcox, 1998).

Motivation and Writing

Motivation refers to an individual's inner process, which can be shown on his/her overt behavior. It is broadly defined as "the attribute that moves writer to do or not to do something" (Gredler, Broussard, & Garrison, 2004, p. 106). Dörnyei (2005) stated that "motivation is as a concept to account for factors within the organism which arouse, maintain, and channel behavior toward a goal" (p. 303). Motivation influences one's second language learning (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 2001; Engin, 2006; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Qin, 2002) since it enables one's learning behavior to be stimulated and directed (Hilgard, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 1979).

As for the foreign language learners, their motivation for language learning

appears when they find the target language meaningful and feel it a need to learn it “continuously and autonomously” (Vohs, Baumeister, Schmeichel, Twenge, Nelson, & Tice, 2008, p. 885). Studying second language learners’ motivation is to know the learners’ reasons of learning the language, the efforts they make in learning that language, and the time they engage in the learning of it. One’s learning motivation starts with his/her decision to take the action of learning. After the decision has been made, he/she needs to make efforts and to persist. Without the persistence, the learning motivation is terminated and makes no contribution to the learning outcomes. In short, the efforts and the persistence are necessary components in a learner’s learning motivation.

Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation

Motivation is often classified into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The intrinsic motivation refers to the action to be taken with no apparent reward; instead, the reward may come from individual pleasure, knowledge, satisfaction, or challenge. In contrast, the extrinsic motivation results from the desire to be praised or to get high score, or the avoidance of punishment (Fulkerson & Wang, 1997). The emergence of intrinsic motivation is internal while the emergence of extrinsic motivation is related to external outcomes. From an instructional perspective, it is important that the teachers find ways

to help students develop intrinsic motivation to cultivate long-term learning strategies and the drive to succeed in school and life. The motivation that does not focus on external rewards is intrinsic motivation (Brown, 2007). In other words, intrinsic motivation originates internally (i.e., within a person), but extrinsic motivation derives externally (i.e., external benefits). When a learner's purpose of learning is to get a satisfactory grade, to avoid the punishment, or to please the teacher, his/her motivation is extrinsic. Learners with such motivation often expect rewards such as the prizes, grades, or the money (Brown, 2007). Intrinsic motivation is animated by personal enjoyment, interest, or pleasure. "Intrinsic motivation energizes and sustains activities through the spontaneous satisfactions inherent in effective volitional action. It is manifest in behaviors such as play, exploration, and challenge seeking that people often do for external rewards" (Deci et al, 1999, p. 658). Intrinsic motivation has several advantages over extrinsic motivation. First, learners with intrinsic motivation prefer challenging tasks. Second, they are more likely to acquire more knowledge compared with extrinsic ones since they consider their learning materials intrinsically interesting. Third, intrinsic motivation allows their creativity to be boosted. Last, they can have more pleasure in the learning process and participate more actively in the learning activities (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987; Stipek, 1996, 2002). According to Abraham Maslow (1970), intrinsic motivation is better than extrinsic motivation for learners since learners

with intrinsic motivation can neglect the extrinsic rewards. They pursue self-esteem and self-achievement instead (Brown, 2007) and are more likely to achieve satisfactory learning outcomes (Deci et al., 1999).

Developing Writing Motivation via Journal writing

In developing writing motivation, according to Wigfield and Eccles (2002b), writing motivation can be divided into the following constructs. The first construct is about the motives, which refers to the goal orientation, needs, values, or interests that activate a student's writing behavior. It can be exemplified by a middle school student's interest in expressing his/her ideas on a relevant topic in the written form, or a novelist's intention to narrate an involving story. Although the novelist's lack of motivation to write is probably different from a middle school student's anxious attitude toward the composition assignment, both have writing orientation. The second construct is about the writer's perceptions of his/her ability to write in relation to the task's difficulty level and the context's resource availability. Take the example of the novelist and the student writer, a novelist's concern about critics' comments and audience's response to his/her work is probably different from a student's concern about his/her teacher's grading and comments. Both have representations of themselves as writers regardless of positive or negative ones. Such representations include self-efficacy, self-concept, and

self-perceptions of competence. Finally, when both the novelist and the student writer deal with a demanding task, they may manage it by developing varied strategies, which is an operation of their cognition for the achievement of task objective. As motivational researchers have often pointed (Hidi, Berndorff, & Ainley, 2002; Pajares, Britner, & Valiante, 2000; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1999), the “will” to write is closely connected to a writer’s self-perception of ability as well as the ways/tools he/she adopts. Studying one’s writing motivation (from his/her held beliefs to his/her ability to compose a good text) is thus an issue that deserved to be investigated (Pajares & Johnson, 1994, 1996; Schunk & Schwartz, 1993a, b; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). There is another example about how learners develop their writing motivation through journal writing. In Fargher’s (2012) study, 77 sixteen-year-old girls submitted a single-page-journal at least once a week for an entire ten-week term in their literature class. Interestingly, most of the students seemed to enjoy their journal writing activity and paid little attention to the requirements of journal length and submission frequency: they wrote longer and more frequently. This study allows us to learn that journal writing offers a safe place for the writer to express his/her feelings, to explore his/her identity or even trauma, and to heighten his/her writing motivation eventually.

CHAPTER 3 METHOD

The Study

This study was based on one-year-long observation of the research participant's personal journal writing process and experiences. Drawing on the naturalistic nature of this study, the researcher followed purposeful sampling to recruit an information-rich case to be research participant for this study. This researcher also adopted a qualitative research method for data collection and analysis. During the course of study, the following sources of data were collected: the participant's personal journal writing samples, semi-structured interviews with the participant and the researcher's one-on-one writing conferences with her. The interviews were conducted in Chinese but were translated into English. The writing conferences were also conducted in Chinese; this part of data was either audio-recorded or documented into the observation fieldnotes.

The Participant

Amy (pseudonym) studied the 7th grade in a public junior high school in central Taiwan during the course of study. Though Amy is a native Chinese speaker, she has learned English as a foreign language since entering the elementary school. During the course of study, she had five forty-five minutes English class taught by a Taiwanese teacher at school each week. When she was in the fifth grade, she had three-hour

English class every week in a private language learning institution; however, she never studied in a bilingual school.

Amy's writing behavior has a lot to do with her personal qualities. She is outgoing, friendly, and has many friends at school. Her hobbies include singing songs, drawing pictures (particularly drawing comics) and reading picture books. Her favorite subjects are Chinese and English; she has less interest in science and math. She has started writing Chinese personal journals in her fifth grade because she wanted to keep a record of interesting events in her life. She said that personal journals were "like time capsule" in her life. In addition to writing about interesting events, she also wrote about her feelings/thought and would like to add drawings to each piece.

Though Amy began personal journal writing in Chinese language, she found herself enjoying this composing process more after her journal entries were read by her peers. Her classmates once saw and read her personal journals. After they finished reading, they told Amy that they had much fun reading her journals. Their compliments motivated her development of personal journal writing habit: she wrote personal journals continuously and liked to share them with others. To make her readers enjoy reading her journals, she started to draw comics and to add some English words in her Chinese journals. After her classmates saw these, they told her that it was very cool.

Peer's compliments made her feel pleased. She also gained more confident in journal writing.

The joy of sharing and her classmates' complements eventually made Amy want to try English diary writing. In her sixth grade, after she wrote English journals for one month, she approached to the researcher who was working as an English tutor in the cram school where Amy attended. She asked the researcher to correct her English writing errors.

The case of Amy aroused the researcher's interest as she exhibited the following characteristics that made the researcher thought that Amy could be an information-rich case for this study: (1) she enjoyed personal writing and had developed the habit of personal journal writing for an amount of time, (2) she enjoyed having others read her journals, (3) she considered journal writing an effective learning tool for the improvement of her English. After getting consent from Amy, the researcher met Amy weekly for a collection of her personal journals. The researcher corrected Amy's English writing mistakes as a way to return Amy's volunteer help in participating in this study.

Data Collection Procedures

This study collected the following data from Amy: (1) her personal journal writing samples; (2) semi-structured interviews; (3) recorded writing conferences. Thanks to the ethnographic nature of this study, the data were analyzed qualitatively and were used to answer the research question about how Amy's developments of personal journal writing behavior facilitated her English writing proficiency and writing motivation.

Personal Journal Writing Samples. Journal writing is a unique vehicle for understanding one's composing process since every journal writer develops ownership in deciding what and how to write (Genesse & Upshur, 1999). In case of Amy, she wrote personal journals once a week; the researcher collected her journal entries for one year. Fifty-two journal entries were collected eventually. The journal writing samples were used to illustrate and explain Amy's writing development.

Interviews. The interviews were held once a week. The interviews were conducted because they allow the researcher to know how Amy interpreted her textual production and how her composing process was affected by her situated writing environment. During the course of study, fifty-two semi-structured interviews were conducted; each interview lasted between five to ten minutes. The semi-structured interview guides are listed in Appendix A. The questions revolved around the following

topics: First, could you talk about the content of this personal journal? Second, what difficulties do you encounter before/when you write this personal journal? Third, how do you solve the problems? Fourth, how do you feel before/when/ after you write this personal journal? Fifth, do you enjoy the composing process, at what aspects? These interview questions help to clarify Amy's writing plans and also allow us to know her writing challenges and perception about her writing behavior. The interviews were conducted in Chinese because Amy expressed herself in Chinese better if compared with her use of English language. However, all the interviews were transcribed and then translated from Chinese into English.

Writing conferences. The writing conference talk was not an intended source of data in the researcher's original plan. However, upon the time that Amy volunteered to participate in this study, she had expressed her need of receiving instructional help from the researcher: she hoped that the researcher not only collected her writing samples but also corrected her writing errors and provided her with additional instruction about her errors. This has made the researcher feel that their writing conferences might be another resourceful data source. After getting the consent from Amy, the researcher recorded the writing conferences.

The writing conferences were held once a week. Fifty-two writing conferences were conducted in total. The researcher pointed to Amy her writing errors and asked her

related questions to help her make sense of her errors. The length of each writing conference lasted between five to ten minutes. The writing conference data feature both predetermined and spontaneous questions related to Amy's misuse of vocabulary, tenses, or punctuation marks. The researcher also asked Amy to clarify the meaning of her sentences when the researcher failed to fully understand what Amy writes. The semi-structured conferences questions are listed in Appendix B.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data of this study were analyzed qualitatively by following the procedures below. First, the researcher read Amy's writing samples, writing conference data, and interview data, then she developed a number of codes for each piece of collected data such as "author's voice code," "daily routines code," "interesting events code," "meaningful things code," "exclamation marks code," "quotation marks code," "dialogue code," "key words code," "subject omission code," "drawing code," "Chinese translation code," etc. Developing codes allowed the data to be presented in an organized way as they reflect Amy's development of writing plans and strategies. After all the data were coded, the researcher compared and contrasted them for a development of specific themes that can be used for answering the research questions. To analyze Amy's writing development, this study employed McCarthy, Guo and Cummins's study (2005) as a

theoretical model. They investigated five elementary Mandarin-speaking students' English and Chinese writing development through the use of journal writing over two-year periods in America's classrooms. They divided a student's writing into the following five parts for a reflection of his/her growth of writing proficiency: (1) grammar and punctuation, (2) sentence complexity, (3) rhetorical style, (4) voice, and (5) linguistic transfer from Chinese. This study drew on the framework and coded categories developed by McCarthy, Guo, and Cummins, but slight revised their developed categories to fit in the case of Amy.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

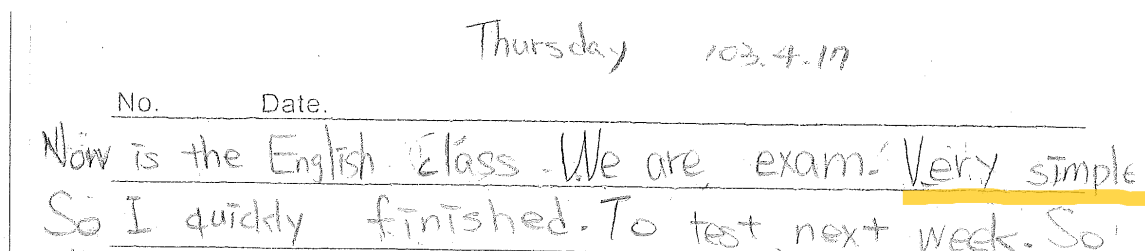
Results of the Data Analysis

After Amy developed the habit of writing English personal journals for one year, she improved her writing skills at the following aspects: (a) sentence complexity, (b) article length, (c) theme selection, and (d) sense of authorship and reader awareness.

The following provides a detailed discussion illustrating these points.

Sentence complexity

One distinctive feature of Amy's growth of sentence complexity was found on her use of subject in the sentence. In the first few weeks' journal entries, she tended to omit the subject in most of her sentences, but the omission of subject had an apparent change after she developed the journal writing habit for 53 weeks. The following example was written by her in the second week. In this piece, she wrote the sentence "Very simple" instead of "It is very simple." The subject "it" was omitted by her.



Thursday 103.4.17

No. _____ Date _____

Now is the English class. We are exam. Very simple
So I quickly finished. To test next week. So'

Figure 1.

In the 22nd week, she had changed the error of subject omission in writing. She added the subject to almost every sentence. As shown in the Figure 2, she wrote in the 6th line that “I went to daycare time; there is a day care teacher out the door to greet me.” The addition of subject became common to her.

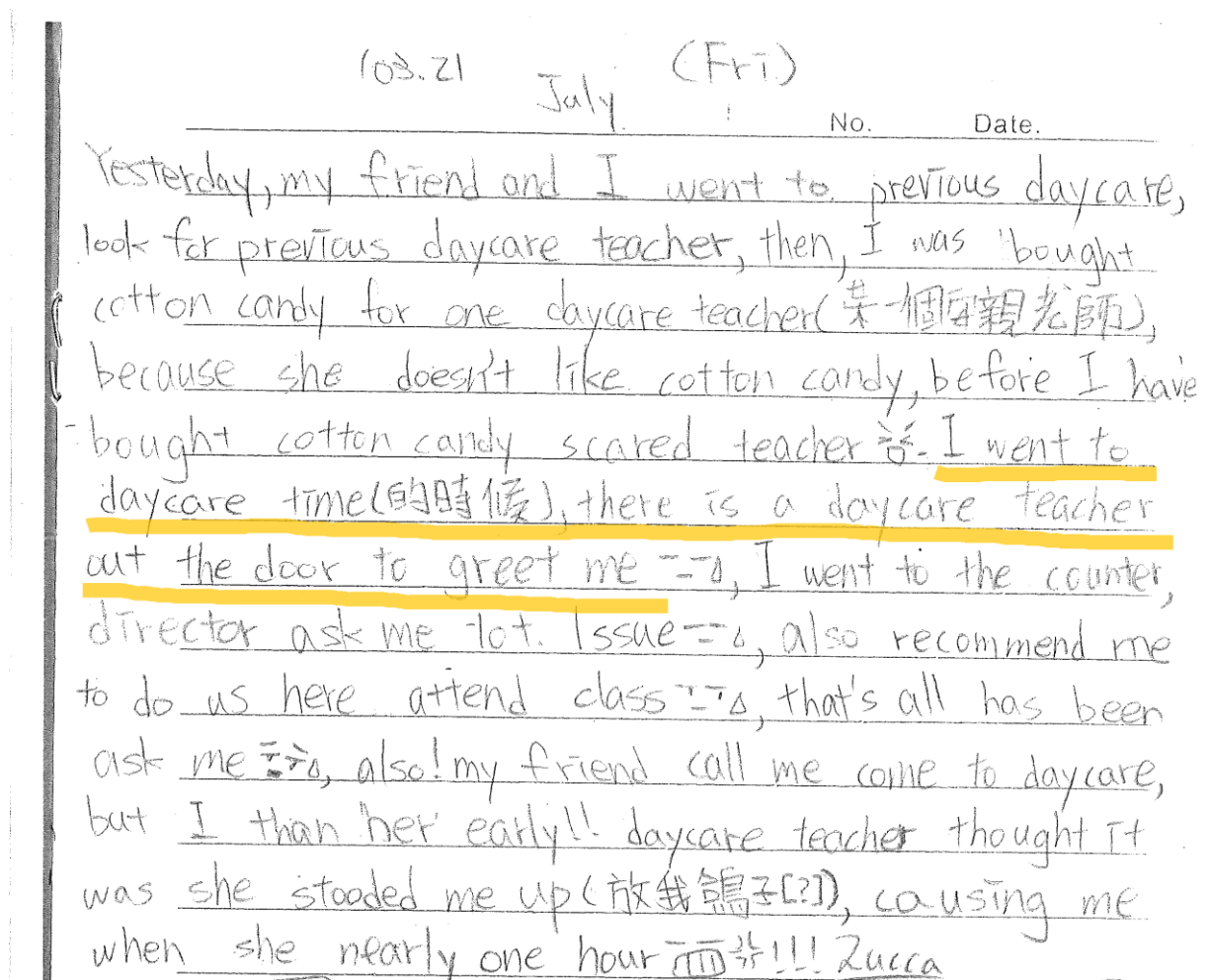


Figure 2.

Another feature of her growth of sentence complexity can be found on her use of new words, implying the vocabulary development. As time went by, she was able to use new words such as “daycare,” “swimwear,” “fierce,” “scold” more correctly. The

following example was excerpted from her 2nd week journal entry, in which she wrote the sentence “I am go to daycare strengthening exercise.”

Thursday 103.4.17

No. _____ Date. _____

Now is the English class. We are exam. Very simple.
 So I quickly finished. To test next week. So
 I am go to daycare strengthening exercise.

Figure 3.

However, 5 weeks later, she showed an improved use of the word “daycare.” As shown below, she wrote “I bought cotton candy for one daycare teacher.” Compared with her inaccurate use of “daycare” in the 2nd week, her use of the same word in the 7th week has shown accuracy in its meaning: more sentence components (i.e., the subject, verb, object, and the time expression) were included in her sentences for contextual completeness.

103.21 July (Fri)

No. _____ Date. _____

Yesterday, my friend and I went to previous daycare,
 look for previous daycare teacher, then, I was bought
 cotton candy for one daycare teacher (某個母親老師).

Figure 4.

Other features related to her improvement of sentence complexity also include her increased use of exclamation marks and quotation marks. The occurrence of this situation implies that she developed awareness of the rhetorical function of more punctuation marks. With respect to her favored use of exclamation mark, she knew that exclamation mark was often used for showing the writer's strong feelings. She thus used it as an emphasis to arouse readers' attention. In her 2nd week of journal writing (shown below in Figure 5), she used two exclamation marks. However, in the 24th week, she has shown a frequent use of exclamation mark in journal writing (shown below in Figure 6). She explained the reason of such use in the interview as follows,

When I wrote the diary, I imagined I am talking to someone and I want to express my emotions in my diary. The exclamation marks help me to show how exciting and how nervous I was in that situation at that day. The quotation marks make the words I want to emphasize stand out. I feel like those marks can totally show my feelings (10.10).

Thursday 10.3.4.17

No. Date.

Now is the English class. We are exam. Very simple. So I quickly finished. To test next week. So I am go to daycare strengthening exercise. My father was sitting on the sofa with TV. My teacher invite me participate "mom awards competition." because the teacher said I draw great. (teacher)

Figure 5.

10.3.10 (Fri)

10.3.10 (Fri)

October

No.

Date.

No! no! no! no! no! duankao!!!!!! life the first duankao!!!!!! OMG!!! very terrible!!! <stop>... Yay ~ national day ~, three days holiday yay ~ but - - - Saturday - - - tuition! - - - duankao!!! holiday "oii" - - - duankao!!! holiday "oii" - - - duankao!!! holiday "oii" - - - ah!! very annoying ah!!! very hate ah!!! hah? - - - wow!!! I forget also outdoor education!!!

Figure 6.

Article length

With the development of weekly journal writing habit, another noticeable change found on Amy was her increase of article length and decrease of writing time. As time went by, she wrote more in her journal entries and yet spent less time drafting: from forty minutes of writing time in the beginning to 30 minutes of writing time in the 23rd week and 15 minutes of writing time in the 28th week. What was more; her 15-minute-writing-time included not only English journal writing but also Chinese translation and the drawing.

Despite of her decrease of writing time, the length of her writing increased. In the first three weeks, the length of Amy's journals entries were between thirty to seventy words. She gradually changed to write more than one hundred words: in the 16th week, her journal entry has become 142-word-long. The following examples showed the growth of her article length. The excerpted text shown in Figure 7 was written by her in the third week. In this piece, she wrote 36 words in total.

Thursday 103.4.24

No. Date.

I tomorrow must shooting graduation CD
We this group to show singing. song be
"this summer". a graduation song. We also
self makeing the board. Midterm also ping
past MY achievement also not bad. hahaha

Figure 7.

Compared with the previous example, the example shown below (Figure 8) was written by her in the 16th week. In this piece, she wrote 142 words. According to the interview, the reason that Amy increased her article was that she wanted to add more details to make her personal journals more vivid and information-specific. By doing so, she felt more confident and happier both in the process of journal writing and in sharing her lives. Amy said:

Writing personal journal is interesting. The more I write, the more fun I feel. I feel the rhythm when I write it. I feel I am able to write more words and more fluently. I want to share more details in my journals therefore I gradually write more details in my journals. When I write my journal, I am happy and I would like to share my lives with my classmates and other people and also you (1.10).

103.20 July (Thur)

No. _____ Date. _____

Yesterday, my small country, elementary students and I, together went ate, I was very happy, morning I accompar my students haircut, she saw me been laughing, because I had been track a pigeon "!", pigeon have been hiding grass inside "!", then I've been chasing it "!" that's all being laughed "!". To the restaurant (牛排館) my classmates and I together to ate a pork chop quite cheap "!", after eating, teacher first home, but I want my students mortar stores "!", after the stroll to the students home played "!", played a few minutes, I w going home, but I can not find the bus, had to go home student, because her home in my neighborhood, we took a long time, at last have to each home "!", this is my life first and students mortar stores and walked home with student "!", what a great day!!

ha // (smiley) //

Figure 8.

Theme-based

One more explicit development of Amy's journal writing was shown on her change of writing topics, which was a change from non-theme based writing to theme-based writing. Originally, her journal writing revolved around daily chores, without a specific topic. She gradually changed to self-assigned topics as her writing topics. The following example was written by her in the 4th week, in which she only

wrote about her daily routines. During this early stage, her journal entries were mainly about sentences like “I eat breakfast. I went to Kojen. I eat lunch. I was my homework. I’m go home. I go home of the first thing is play phone. haha. eat dinner after I am paint a picture....” As seen in Figure 9, she mainly followed chronological order in her journals with the content of the daily chores.

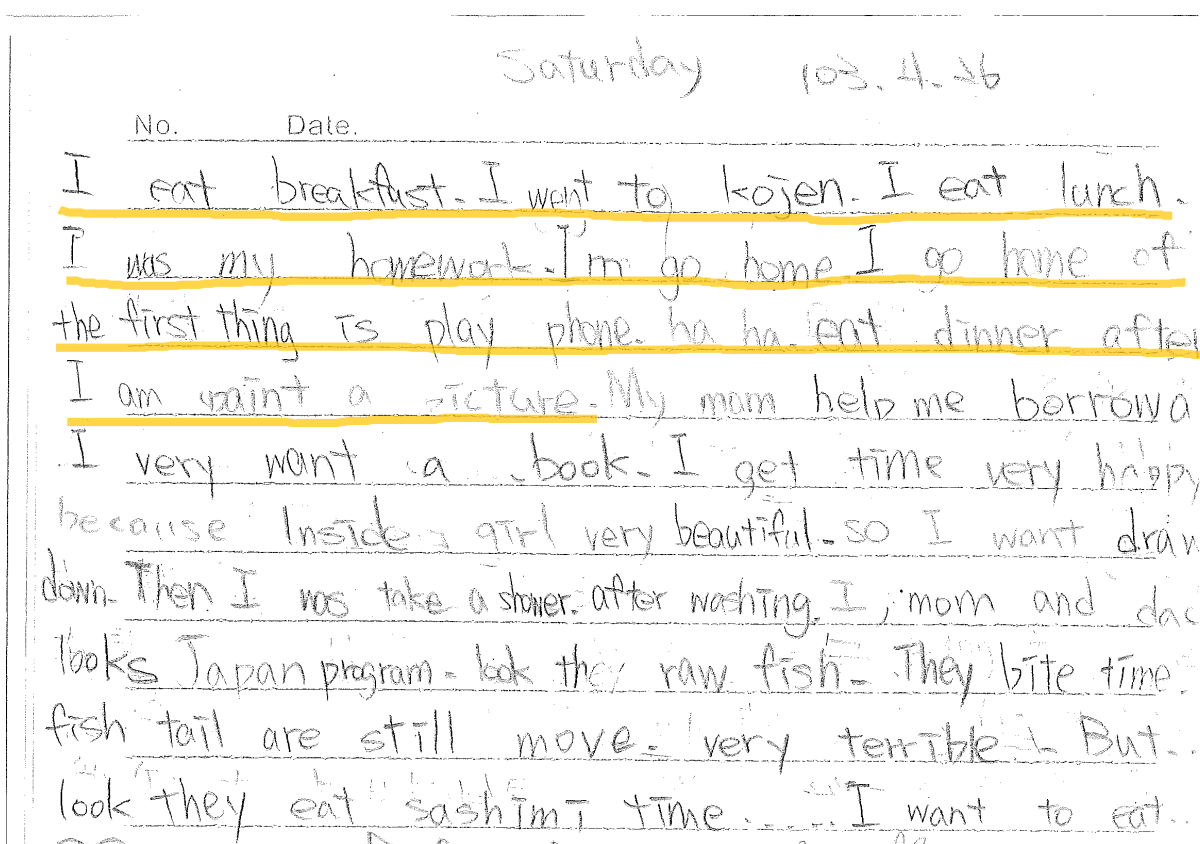


Figure 9.

However, she changed to theme-based writing 25 weeks later. The following example (shown in Figure 10) was written by her in the 26th week, in which she described how happy she was after finishing the school’s exam. In this example, she even developed a topic sentence (i.e., “I am very happy!! midterm exam ended!!”).

Compared with her early stage of journal writing where her pieces contained non-specific topics nor the description of personal attitude/opinion, Amy eventually changed to theme-based writing with the inclusion of personal attitude/opinions.

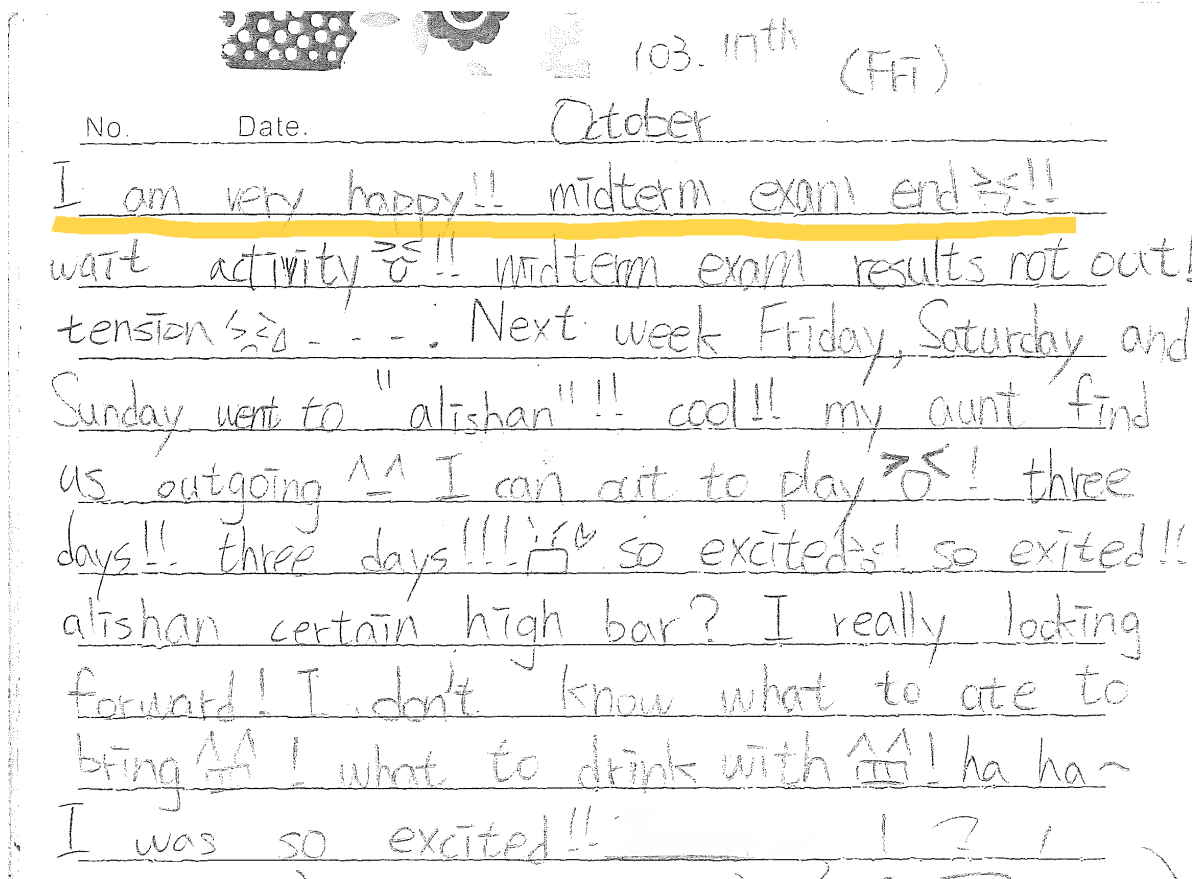


Figure 10.

In the interview, Amy explained that when she started personal journal writing, she regarded it a routine activity so that she only jotted down what had happen in a day. However, as time went by she found that she wanted to share her journal entries with the researcher, a real reader who read and collected her written pieces. This eventually

motivated her not to limit her writing to the recording of daily routine. Instead, she wanted to share important or interesting events happening on her with her reader.

Sense of authorship and readership

With more rapport being developed across time between the researcher and Amy, Amy seemed to care more about the researcher as a reader of her journal entries. This showed her growth of authorship and readership. One noticeable change of her growing sense of authorship and readership was found on her indication of writing date: she changed from using numeral numbers to English letters. From week one to week nine, she used numeral numbers to show her writing date (shown in figure 11); however, she changed to the use of English letters from week ten (shown in figure 12). According to her, such a change was caused by her intention to show readers that she could use more English in journal writing.

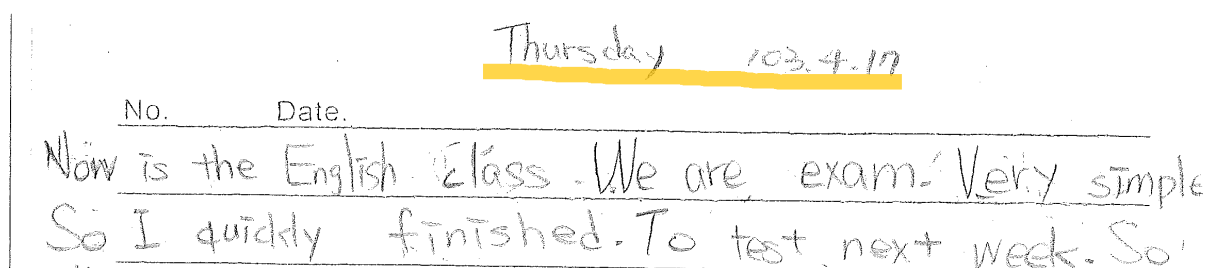


Figure 11.

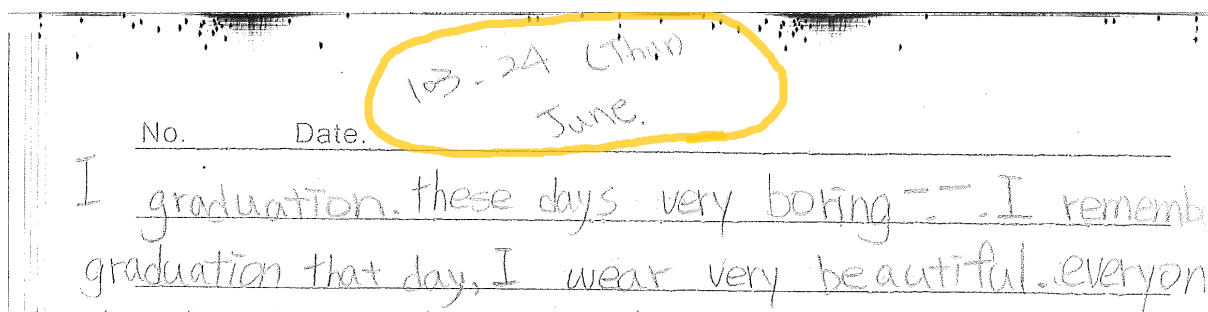


Figure 12.

Providing Chinese translation and drawing was another proof of her growth of authorship and readership. She added Chinese translation in her journal entries because she held that doing so allowed her to express ideas more accurately. Figure 13 is an example of her Chinese translation. Amy explained how functional Chinese translation was for her completion of journal writing, “It is easier for me to talk about my writing ideas when Chinese translation is included. Chinese translation helped me to recall my memory. In addition, with Chinese translation, I spend less time finish my journal writing task (10.17).”

In addition to Chinese translation, Amy also drew pictures in her journals. However, there was a noticeable change of the size change of her drawing over time: in the beginning of the study, larger size of drawing was added to make her little word description look more information-rich. As time went by, she reduced the drawing size in order to add more word description in her journal entries. With the size of drawing being reduced and more writing space being created, Amy added more details in the

written parts. The following examples show her growth about this. Figure 14 was

Amy's 3rd week journal entry and Figure 15 was her 23rd week journal entry. As shown,

the drawing took more than half page in Figure 14, which made her writing shorter than

the one written in a later time as shown in Figure 15.

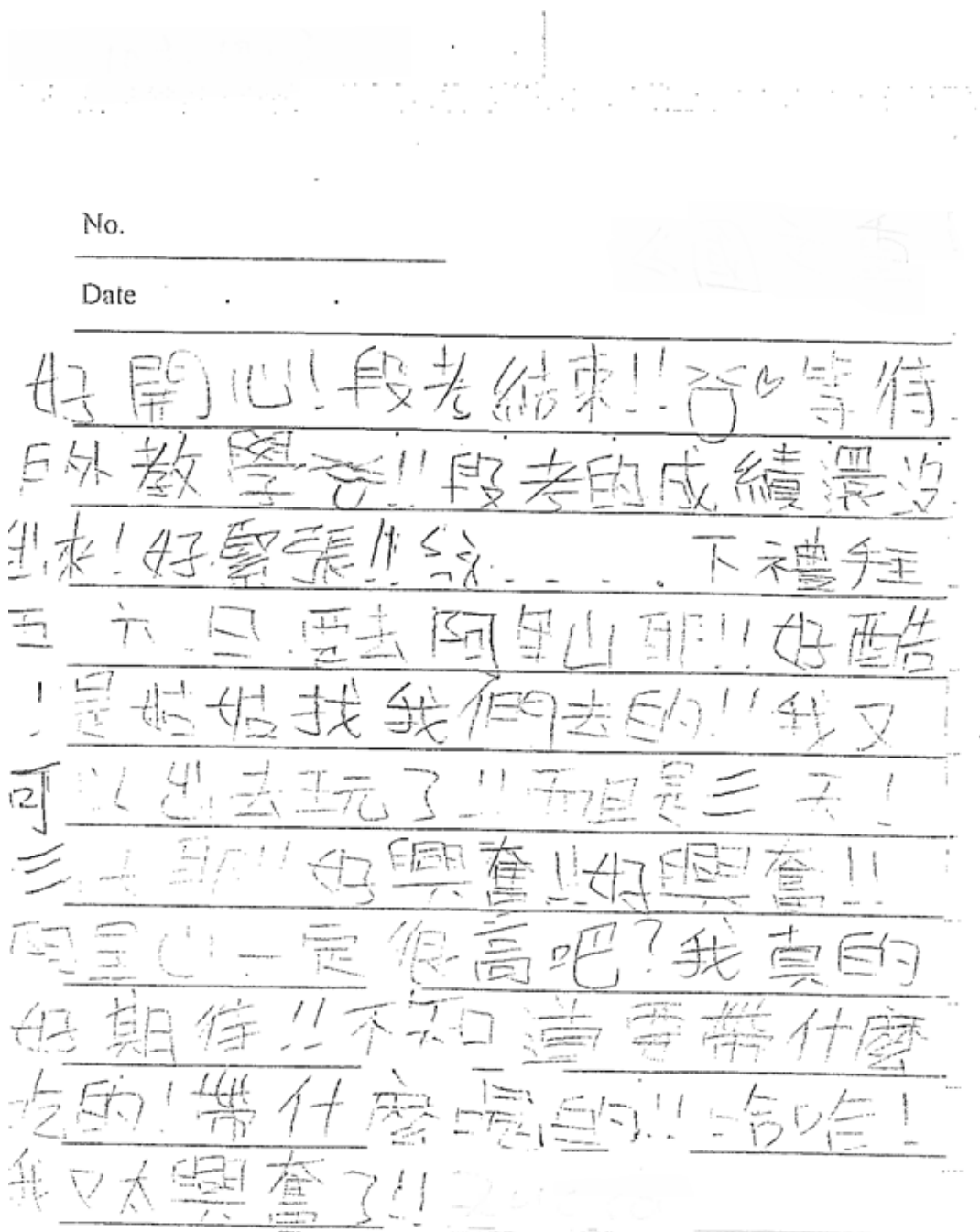


Figure 13.

Thursday 103.4.24

No. Date.

I tomorrow must shooting graduation CD
We this group to show singing. song be
"this summer". a graduation song. We also
self making the board. Midterm also ping
past my achievement also not bad. hahaha

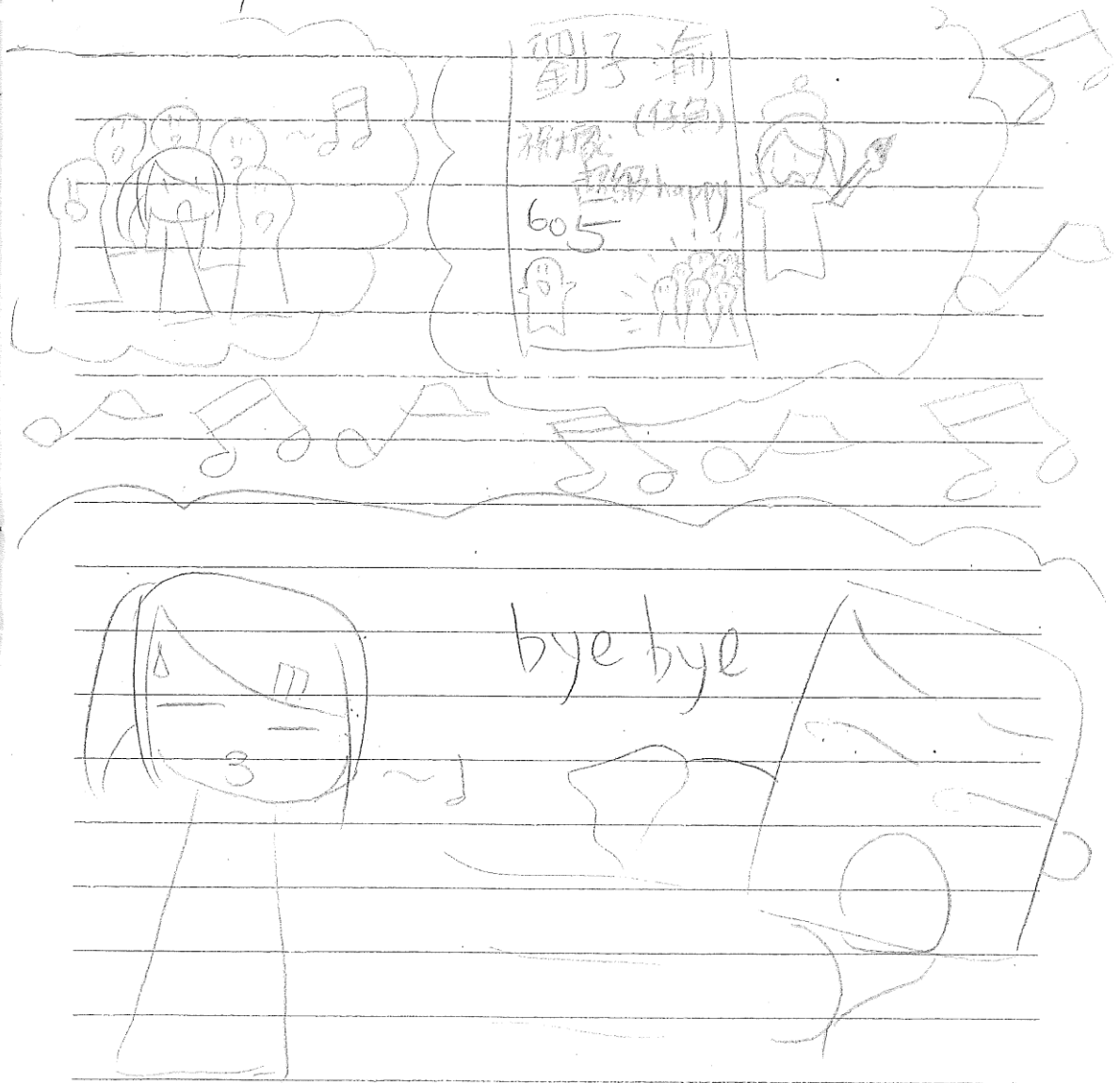


Figure 14.

103.3 (Fri)

No. Date.

October

OMG!! outdoor education!! I am very happy!! but... outdoor education in November rest assured! (as long as out to play) a blink of an eye [-轉眼] on to it!

Distance November still some times, I am now began in looking forward ~ still said what to eat to bring "to", to play what ~ "to" ... "to"!! I said so long! forgot to said where to go! we places to go in the "九族文化村", there are so many rides! good looking outdoor education coming

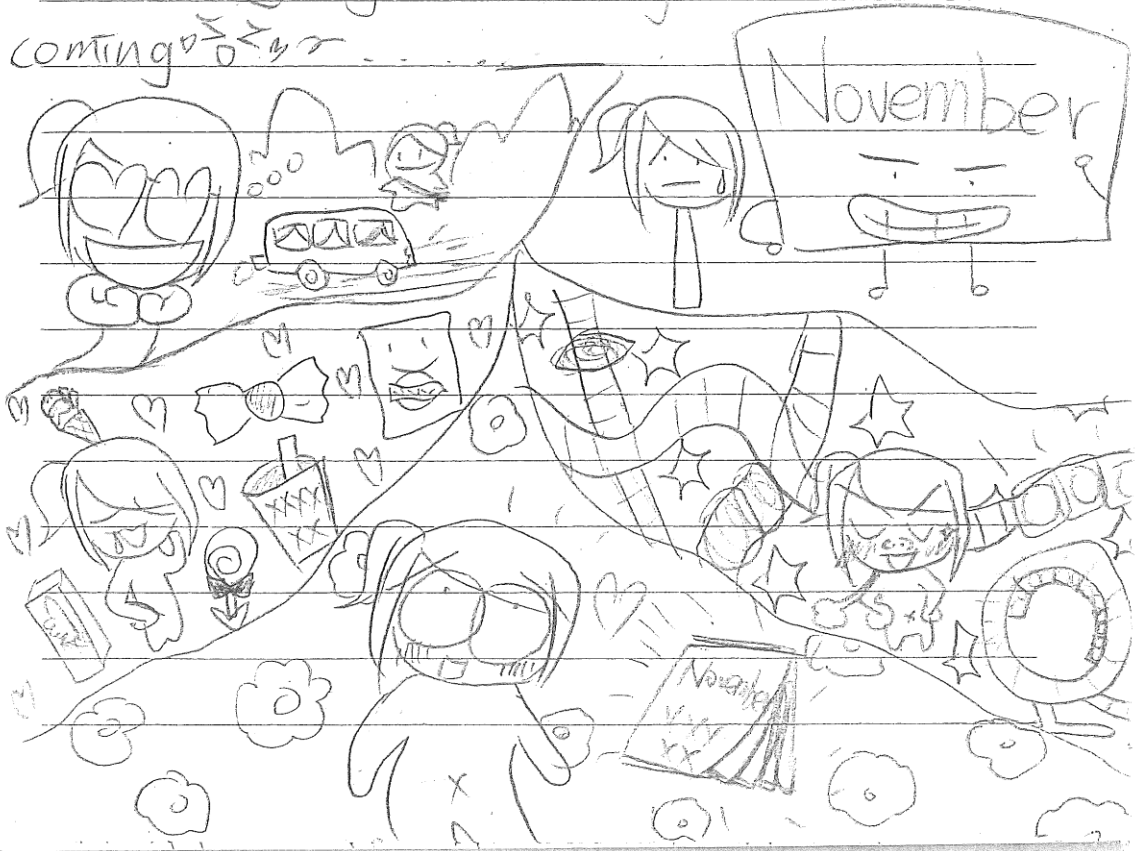


Figure 15.

As a matter of fact, one reason about such change was her awareness of the researcher's presence as a reader of her journal entries. According to Amy, since the researcher collected her weekly journal entries, read them, and interviewed her about her journal writing activities, she gradually felt a need to satisfy her reader by 'reshaping' her journal entries into more readable ones, therefore she tried to minimize the size of her drawing so that she could add more written details.

Interpretation and Discussion of the Results in Nontechnical Terms

In viewing Amy's writing journey, answers to the second and the third research questions are clear: her development of English journal writing habit enhanced his/her writing motivation in English. Journal writing as a learning tool is positively related to one's development of writing motivation. Part of the aforementioned findings accord with McCarthy, Guo and Cummins's (2005) results that Mandarin students demonstrated clear development in their use of grammar, sentence complexity and rhetorical styles. Besides these improvements, Amy's growth in the length of English writing also accords with Fargher's (2012) earlier finding that teenager girls might ignore the page-limit by writing more pages on their journals or by increasing their frequency of writing since their writing motivation has been triggered. This improvement implies that journal writing offers a safe place for the students to express

their emotions, to explore their self-identity, and to cure their trauma. This study also agrees to Castellano's (2005b) finding that journal writing could be treated by the students as kind of learning tool: Amy's development in sentence complexity, article length, and topical selection has shown that she treated journal writing as a learning tool for the heightening of writing interest and writing proficiency.

Findings generated from this study also confirm Mettaningrum, Dantes and Suarnajaya's (2013) claim out that there is a difference on students' writing progression between the use of journal writing and conventional writing. Students taught by means of journal writing strategies tend to have higher motivation than the ones taught by conventional writing strategies. In other words, students who are asked to write journals periodically, compared with those who are not asked to do journal writing, can be found the following writing differences: including content development, organization, grammar and structure, vocabulary and style, and mechanics. Additionally, journal writing also inspires a student's recording of lived experiences, thoughts, feelings, opinions, experiences, values and beliefs. It is thus a safe place for the writer (Farrah, 2011) to allow himself/herself to engage in learning (Spaventa & Spaventa, 2000).

Overall, by means of observing Amy's writing journey, this study has proved that journal writing enhances one's writing motivation. Heckhausen and Heckhausen (2008) said that "motivation is a product of person and situation." Once the motivation has

been heightened, the students are willing to write more and develop more ideas since they feel less pressured in expressing personal feeling and opinions; they also show more interest in sharing their journals with others and reading others' journals. In addition, since lots of journal writing activities are done at the home contexts, the students worry less about making mistakes at grammar, mechanics, organization, topical selection and the content; this provides them with a safe writing environment (Heckhausen & Heckhausen, 2008) and an opportunity of independent learning (Mettaningrum, Dantes, & Suarnajaya, 2013).

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

Summary of Major Findings

This study observed longitudinally an adolescent learner's writing developed by personal journal writing behaviors. The principal findings suggested that the participant, Amy, made progress in her sentence complexity, sense of authorship, reader awareness, article length and topical selection. Furthermore, the improvement of these writing skills motivated Amy's journal writing interest. The findings are consistent with Davies's (1995) finding that students change from passive learners to active ones in the process of journal writing. Another study (Sidhu et al., 2010) on students' reflective journal writing also found that reflective journal writing allows the students to generate more reflections and build more self-confidence. These findings seem to imply us that journal writing, regardless of personal journals or reflective journals, can be treated as an effective learning tool for students' learning-to-write.

Pedagogical Implications

Personal journal writing records not only one's personal life but also writing development across time (Fulwiler, 1982). The present study found that a longitudinal observation on the learner's writing progression allows us to better understand how one's development of journal writing habit changes his/her writing motivation, sense of

authorship and reader awareness, sentence complexity, vocabulary use, topical selection, and article length across time. To promote students' English writing progression and motivation, integrating journal writing into language teaching may seem to be a sound idea.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

There are some limitations of this study. First, Amy's writing changes could possibly be affected by the rapport developed between with the researcher and Amy over time. Though the researcher originally did not attempt to conduct writing conferences and to correct writing errors for Amy, Amy expected the researcher to do these jobs as a return of her volunteered help in this study. With more rapport being developed over time, Amy gradually regarded the researcher as her desired reader of personal journals. Though the researcher's presence motivated Amy to write personal journals consistently, this may blur the result of Amy's self-motivated factor. Second, not every student has the habit of writing personal journals or enjoys writing personal journals. Amy was originally a motivated writer, which had made her an information-rich case; however, not every student likes to write personal journals or expected their personal journals to be read. Future studies should be alerted to the limitation of this study and why these writing skills improved in personal writing

research. Last, the researcher suggests future researchers investigate introspection learners' use of journal writing as a learning tool for the understanding of their development of feelings, thought, and value (Fogarty & Stoehr, 2008).

To sum up, findings unraveled in this study allow us to better understand the role of personal journals in students' learning-to-write. It is hoped that curriculum designers in Taiwan can consider the use of personal journals in their teaching.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Semi-Structured Interview Guides

<p><i>Questions related to experiences in English personal journal writing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ What was your first time to write personal journal writing? ✚ How do you describe the experience?
<p><i>Questions related to the content of English personal journal writing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Could you talk about this personal journal? What did you do? /Where did you go? /Who did you go with? When did you go? /Why did you go there? /Why did you do that? ✚ What difficulties do you encounter before you write this personal journal? ✚ How do you feel before you write this personal journal? ✚ How do you feel when you write this personal journal? ✚ How do you feel after you write this personal journal? ✚ Do you enjoy the composing process, at what aspects?

Appendix B: Semi-Structured Writing Conference Questions

<p><i>Questions related to difficulties/problems in English personal journal writing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✚ What difficulties do you encounter when you write this personal journal?✚ How do you solve the problems?✚ What kinds of tool do you use when you look up for new words?
<p><i>Questions related to grammar and vocabulary use in English personal journal writing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✚ Are there any changes in the grammar or vocabulary use in your personal journal writing? What are they?

Appendix C: Consent Letter

You are cordially invited to participate in a research project conducted by Yi-Tsen Wu on personal journal writing and its influence on an adolescent learner's writing development. I am investigating this because this study can help educators and researchers gain a better understanding about Taiwanese adolescents' English composing strategies, problems, processes, and development in academic context.

Your participation is voluntary. Taking part in this project is entirely up to you, and no one will hold it against you. Basically, you will be asked to (1) provide all the English writing journal you had written for this study and (2) participate in several interviews. The interviews, depending on your preference and convenience, can be conducted either in English or Chinese. The interviews will be conducted in face-to-face or on-line contexts, depending on your preference. The interview data will be recorded/saved and transcribed.

To ensure the confidentiality of your personal information, your name will not be disclosed. A pseudonym will be created for you. The data will also be kept in a secure place and will only be used for this study. The ultimate goal of this research is to publish research results in international or domestic academic journals. Should you have any concern or questions regarding this research project, please feel free to contact me at

Sincerely,

Yi-Tsen Wu

Foreign Languages and Literature Department

Tunghai University

B. Consent Statement(s)

_____ I agree to participate in this project.

Signature _____

Date _____