Writing Tools on the Net

By Adam Turner

Writing instructors are generally familiar with a number of web sites that are useful sources for grammar, quizzes, and writing tips. However, there are also an increasing number of useful, free web sites that can enhance how you and your students write, collaborate, and share the product of your writing. Many of these sites will also be of interest to those currently doing an online master's degree. I can only provide a brief sketch of the possibilities here. To get a fuller explanation of each service, please go to the web pages mentioned below.

Many students have difficulty selecting reliable information on the Internet. The severity of this problem can be reduced by using "Google Scholar" (http://scholar.google.com/). It is a search engine from Google that only searches academic sources in its search and omits personal web sites and other less reliable sources of information.

Web 2.0 is a buzzword used these days to describe how many software applications are moving online allowing users to collaborate, share resources, and learn from each other. *Social bookmarking* is a process that allows users to collect their "favorites," or "bookmarks," of web sites from their browser and share them online with others through networks. You can select multiple keywords or "tags" to organize your information. The most popular one, which I have just started using, is del.icio.us (http://del.icio.us/), but there are many others. If you want to browse hundreds of links on writing, add me to your network once you have an account. My del.icio.us ID is "ifli" (http://del.icio.us/ifli). A more scholarly one, CiteULike, can be found at http://www.citeulike.org/.

Colleagues working on curriculum projects could collaborate in the collection of online resources, students could use the service to do group research for major presentations, and graduate students could share their research links on the same page. Members of KOTESOL SIGs could share networks of links on a topic of similar interest, instead of just emailing them where they often get buried in a receiver's inbox. You can also annotate the links so you can find them more easily. Those working on a specific project could share the same ID and password for an individual account to facilitate the collection of materials in one place.

Working in teams is increasingly becoming the norm in many organizations. Our students will probably collaborate online in their work life in ways we cannot imagine now. To support this trend, there is an increasing number of free tools that allow us to work together more effectively. Most readers will agree how

difficult it is to keep track of multiple revisions of a document online when working with a team. Now, using "writeboards" (http://www.writeboard.com/tour/), the document can be stored online and shows all revisions as well as the latest version of a basic text document. Students could use it for collaboration and peer editing, while KOTESOL could use it for editing and planning.

If you work with colleagues in different buildings and on multiple projects, you might consider putting all your information into your backpack - your online backpack, www.backpackit.com. This web service allows you to create pages for notes, put up "to-do" lists, and give yourself reminders, all organized on an individual project basis. Rather than having all your data on

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individual computer drives, anyone in the project can view it online. Students could use it together for project-based learning and dividing up group tasks.

Some teachers have asked their students to make their own home pages for class projects. However, the learning curve for making web pages was often a bit high and could take away from generating the content. Google, in a new project still under development, has made this probably as simple as it can get. Not only does it generate web pages that don't require any programming, but the service also hosts the pages, making web page work instant. You will find the web page creator and other projects at Google Labs (http://labs.google.com/). A Google account, however, is required.

Finally, Colorado State University has created a writing studio environment where you can organize your writing and get access to resources for writing, and especially, teaching writing (http://writing.colostate .edu/). You might also ask your students if there are any Korean versions of similar online services they find useful.

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Hobgoblin Handmaidens of Exposition

By Jack Large

When one has reached a comfortable and confident level of personal writing skill, some practical disdain for some of the rules is not always a bad thing if one's writing is to be fresh and interesting. But "fresh" and "interesting" are not always the first adjectives springing to mind when listing necessary qualities of work outside the lumped genre tagged "creative writing."

Emerson's oft-quoted aphorism, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen, philosophers and divines" seems readymade for us, who are generally satisfied by student writings that are compliant with the instructions we give them. This is a defense of a teacher's impulse to compel compliance with written guidelines from students; it is likely that the student who cannot will have difficulty complying with any complex written instructions, and not just those for writing.

Consistency winds the armature of formal grammar. Grammar is structure, and structure requires nothing, if not coherence. Grammar has been used as a metaphor for the structure of an array of human behavior well beyond the defining one of language. There is more to justify language teaching than that subjects become capable of its use, and this is our motivation to practice, fueled at least in part by the satisfaction we gain from observing students grow to more completely understand themselves and their world.

Thus great harvest of benefit can be cultivated by making clear to writing students certain patterns that are present in effective writing, i.e., writing that achieves a desired (instructed) effect. We prepare the ground for this almost without thinking when we talk about such important elements as "agreement" of number, tense, gender, subject-verb, etc. in building sentences. Likewise, when we explain to NNS students such notions as parallelism (consistency) of form in repetitive series of words or phrases or clauses or labels of this or that sort, we reify the subliminal recognition and cultivation of meaning each of us nurtures in ourselves that, coupled with memory and recognition, enables us to communicate confidently. Confident communication is our paramount goal, for ourselves, and for those we teach.

A good place to begin, after our students have achieved reasonable progress at elementary levels of vocabulary and comprehension and after we have established an interpersonal basis for more complex interactions, is

with simple writing exercises that elicit compliance with a written instruction. It helps to include some vocabulary, without defining specific terms. For Korean students, a popular project has been to tell them to "describe the Korean national flag, *taegukki*, for a person who wants to create one with paint or markers. Use these words in your description: *side, top, bottom, left, right, diagonal, horizontal, length, width, black, red, blue, white, circle, bar, short, long, curved, spiral, center, middle, above, below*."

Another, more advanced, exercise is to describe tabular data, items ordinarily found in daily newspapers

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describing the movements of stock prices, weather forecasts, or television schedules. Any kind of schedule, train and plane schedules, for example, are very adaptable for this. A big part of their usefulness is for practicing the inclusion of time-sequenced or other ordered, sequential information.

One group of intermediate-level students became quickly engrossed in an effort to write a listing for an English teaching job at their school, following a model readily available on Dave's ESL Cafe web site. This was the assignment after an initial list-writing exercise requiring them to itemize the qualifications a teacher should have and a discussion in English and Korean of why they picked certain characteristics.

When we remember that our students measure teacher success in terms of how much we contribute to their future job fitness, we can justify coaching compliance and, yes, that old hobgoblin consistency in our students. Those, especially, who go on to attain professional-level workplace status will do so in direct proportion to their ability to correctly interpret various requirements set out in writing along the way, and to comply with those written requirements as precisely as they can.

The Author

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Writing Role-Plays

By Tasha M. Troy

Besides occasional study for the Test of Written English on the TOEFL, writing is largely a neglected skill in Korea. English learners are so concerned with studying the grammar and reading skills they need to score high on school exams and TOEIC and TOEFL that they overlook production skills such as writing. This is a great shame because through writing, students can practice several aspects of language, including grammar, vocabulary, and general communication skills.

These days email has become one of the most common forms of written communication. By using email writing, students can be encouraged to use English writing in realistic situations. In my business writing classes, I have used what I call "writing role-plays," activities which I have used in a variety of situations. I originally designed them to be used over a 10-week business writing course, with writing partners being assigned permanently, but I have also adapted them to

Through writing, students can practice several aspects of language.

four-week email writing courses with temporary or rotating writing partners.

Activity: First, I created several imaginary companies: a restaurant, a travel agency, a photography studio, etc. I divided the class into pairs and designated each pair as a different company. Each "company" then interacted with the other "companies" in the class to accomplish a variety of writing tasks based on my curriculum, for example, requesting or providing information, inviting and arranging meetings, or complaining and apologizing. For example, the restaurant might want to create promotional photos, so they contact the photography studio. By creating realistic communicative writing tasks, the students become engaged in the activity.

Management: As you can imagine, an activity of this sort creates a lot of emails. I have found three ways to manage such a class. First, you can have the students email each other directly, having the students "cc" you in all of their emails. This is functional, but in my experience, it often seemed that my class materials were scattered over a dozen email boxes. Second, you can use Yahoo Groups, which is the option I am currently using. Each time I start a new course, I set up a new group to be a focus point of the course. This

makes running the course much more efficient. However, every time I start a new course, I have to create and organize the group site as well as upload all of my materials. Third, you can use a course management system such as Moodle or Blackboard, which allows you to create a new course without much trouble.

Evaluation: Evaluation is another area that can become unmanageable if it is not well organized. Generally, before class or during peer review time, I read through the emails and select sentences or sections of emails that may

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be confusing, especially to native English speakers. I copy and paste these into a separate document, then go over each point of misunderstanding or unnatural wording with the class as a whole. That way, the whole class can benefit from the explanations. If you need to give a score to each student, you could assign one email task for more in-depth evaluation. My evaluations focus more on how successfully the students completed the task and if they communicated clearly, rather than focusing on grammatical errors.

The concept of writing role-plays may sound interesting to you, but if you don't teach business email writing, what can you do? There are still many reasons why people send and receive emails outside of a strictly business context. You could have students set up meetings or arrange reunions among their classmates; give news to friends, family, or classmates; or ask companies or universities for information. Another idea is to set up an online discussion where students can respond to each other in writing instead of orally, choosing one student each day or each week to start the discussion. Hopefully, you can find a way that will suit your individual situation and your students' needs, and at the same time, encourage them to write more.

The Author

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Teach Backwards, Let Students Fail

Teach backwards and let your students fail. It sounds like a recipe for losing your job, but it just might produce more effective results!

Give the Final Exam First

Rather than teaching students step-by-step, consider teaching backwards by having them produce a sample essay or paragraph, before giving instruction, right at the beginning of the course. If you grade grammar as a major component of your course, consider starting the semester with a test or "final" exam to see where your students are at. You can also do this with specific skills like paraphrasing and referencing assignments or correctly formatting business emails.

In the sciences, there is a trend towards knowledge surveys. Students self-report their skills or level of knowledge about a subject, and the results allow the instructor to adjust the course or unit to focus more on problem areas before starting to teach it. Ambitious teachers could give students different assignments based on their weak areas. This approach can also help to teach mixed-level classes more effectively.
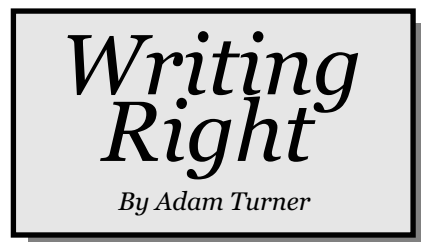
Let the Students Fail Often

Anyone who has ever played a video game knows that part of the reason it is interesting is due to the desire to finally succeed, after many failed attempts, in accomplishing a challenging goal. Schrank (2002) argues that students should be able to fail without consequences, just like in a game. In the traditional writing class, correcting students' papers is really more about assigning grades than making sure the students have learned what was taught. I no longer grade assignments with percentage grades during the semester, but only grade the final essay that incorporates all the skills (assignments) that were taught during the term. Using a mastery approach, you can create more difficult and challenging assignments and allow the students to redo the assignment until the objectives are achieved, which then gives them a full score. No percentage grades are assigned. This raises standards, and increases student interest and attention. Of course, you need to create an environment that does not point out to the rest of class an individual student's failure to solve a task, and student learning must be supported like with any other approach.

For example, rather than teach web search skills first, I had an Internet treasure hunt for information from websites that the students would need for their essay assignments. I was able to help students individually who were unable to find some items themselves, while more proficient students were not held back, but allowed to complete the hunt. I knew that the class had varying levels of computer literacy, so that slowly teaching each skill step-by-step would have been wasting some of the time for half of the class.

Stress Your Students a Bit

It is always interesting to me to observe how much better most migrant workers from developing countries speak Korean than do most English teachers in Korea - including myself! Is this result due to fun, scaffolded learning in a safe, supportive, stress-free classroom environment with kind and compassionate teaching; or is it more of a case of sink-or-swim learning in a real immersion situation with clear needs and goals?

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We should create a supportive environment for our students, and we can't create a real immersion environment in a writing class, but we can create more authentic tasks. For example, I assign a business email that students have to really send to a person or company. If you are teaching how to write a resume in a writing class, you could simply not accept any resumes that did not meet the minimum format and spelling expectations you set. This would simulate how an inadequate resume would be rejected outright by an international company. Students take writing more seriously when there is a real, or even a perceived, "audience." One of the best teaching moments that I have ever had was when a student came up to me and said, "Thank you for pushing me." This was after I had rejected her resume assignment twice but helped her with the third version, which was very well written and formatted.

Reference

Schrank, R.C. (2002). *Designing world-class e-learning.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

The Author

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Poetry in the Classroom

By Jack Large

Poetry is a receptacle for all that is primal in language. Poetic archetypes mirror, or signal, primal elements which are familiar in nature. Speculation about the origins of language use in human evolution has not often included musings about the extent of influence that measured linguistic phenomena like rhyming and timing have exerted early in the evolution of speech, yet it seems that it must have been considerable. After all, nature and environmental and behavioral phenomena, prehistorically, must have been the driving force behind the process of language building, with people first imitating sounds, and then morphing the sounds in subtle, but increasingly sophisticated, ways to communicate the facts of life as experienced by the speakers.

In biology, the theory of recapitulation suggests that, as an organism embryo develops, its developing structural forms hint of its evolutionary origins, eventually leading to the modern version. I regard poetry with a similar sense of deep time in the presence of patterned formal features that are repeated from oldest to most modern, with examples to be taken from the most durable of poems through all the time in between. The patterned "feel" and "taste" and "smell" and "ring" of meaning-beyond-fact that one detects while reading a poem suggest that, by focusing language learners on and facilitating their exercise with these archetypal forms, we might help them move more rapidly from the stunting sense of "study" to a more natural and interesting process that is closer to the organic acquisition process of the native speaker. There is no better place to begin than at the nexus of rhyming and timing.

There is little question that the language of prehistoric people was replete with examples of sounds repeated, or rhymed as it were, and that the rhythmic expression of these matched sounds first appeared in, and was subsequently reified by, generation after generation in the form of chanting and singing in all the many

Children learn verses before they learn to read.

ceremonial contexts that provided the glue that bound societies together. The excitement and spectacle of such occasions would exert a mnemonic influence on the young, and their playtime would consist to some degree in imitating the forms discovered in the celebrations. Likewise, the gentler forms would have been employed to calm the babies, to share insights

into the forces of nature, and to supplicate the gods that held sway over those forces.

Later, with the advent of writing and its application to the goals and motives of the various classes of civil society, the rulers and merchants and priestly elites who held sway over the productive energies of the community,

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graphic representations of the patterned sounds became necessary in order to preserve and spread their thoughts and ways beyond the bounds of the central place. Viewed in this way, it appears that an early connection between the spoken and written word must have been an expression of the forms that today are universally recognized as art. In fact, one might argue that the only form that might have developed earlier would be connected to the material dimensions of daily activity: counting, pricing, contracting, inventorying, etc.

Children learn verses before they learn to read (e.g., "Liar, liar, pants on fire, nose as long as a telephone wire" for jumping rope, and Mother Goose standards like Jack Sprat and Hickory Dickory Dock.) Songs with repeated phrases, like "Here we go round the mulberry bush...," remain with us long after the ideas and texts we learn much later will have been long forgotten. There are riddles, limericks, tongue-twisters, palindromes... all of these provide an opportunity to teach and learn speaking and writing in ways that yield the most durable results.

Poetry is about writing the poem, of course, but poems are written to be read silently and out loud, and listened to in the poets own voice, if possible. Start by brainstorming a subject for the poem, and then try to write a catchy title. Often, the first line of the poem is the title, and may display starkly poetic imagery all by itself, as with, for example, Dylan Thomas' "The force that through the green fuse drives the flower."

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Writing Homework That Works

By Jack Large

At my age, a good writing homework assignment is one that I can remember without reference to my notes. Its best feature, aside from a fundamental simplicity, is that it interests the students who must perform it. It must also be impossible to plagiarize. Something of the experience of completing it should also remain indelibly in the students' minds. Finally, it should be impossible to get it all wrong if the basic requirements are met. If a genuine effort is made to accurately complete the assignment, the result must be regarded as acceptable (and graded accordingly), even when the English is imperfect. Best for this is an authentic, unique, first-time experience in which the writers can recognize themselves.

This project was tailored for 2nd- and 3rd-year travel business majors within easy travel of Seoul, but it could work as a general writing assignment in other contexts. The Korean National Tourism Organization produces a slick, free English-language guidebook. In it is a list of all the international consular offices in Seoul. Each of 40 students had to approach a consular office and try to interview a representative of a specific country. The final task was to write a thorough description of the steps taken, what they encountered in the process, and the most interesting facts they learned about their subject country as a result of their efforts.

Some groundwork was necessary to prepare the students. A discussion of the kinds of things that make Korea a tourist destination helped students to formulate a list of questions to ask about a country's prominent features. Questions were evaluated for

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grammar and word choice. After a week of research, the students practiced by interviewing each other and role-playing the country representative. Three features of the assignment helped to subvert Internet plagiarism and made the task more challenging and more interesting. Three items: a photo of the student at the entrance of the consulate, an audio recording of the interview, and print items provided to visitors had to accompany the submitted reports.

Support and preparation for the students to complete the assignment served a number of key objectives. The first was to make the assignment relevant to the students' interests, i.e., it was about their field. Related to relevance, it set clear use-based parameters for vocabulary expansion: terms of description, place, nation and nationality, geography, climate, currency and cost, etc. A key component of vocabulary to include was that of reported speech. I used a task sheet to illustrate this and to familiarize the students with the process of selecting alternate forms for *speak* (e.g., say, state, report, suggest, add, mention) and ask (e.g., request, beg, inquire, question, query, quiz, invite) in an effort to defeat redundancy.

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To illustrate precise, descriptive method, an interim exercise completed in one class session was the description of the national flag of each student's respective country. This helped to orient somewhat the use of prepositions and terms of placement on a field, as well as shapes and colors, and to the extent that they were aware of it, elements of symbolism in the flag design. Several students, on their own initiative, went on to complete the additional exercise of describing their own flag, *taegukki*.

The resulting reports were the best possible evidence that the assignment was a success. Part of the evidence was the surprising number of positive comments about the experience at the end of the individual reports. The best part of the experience, from my perspective, was the clear shift in student reaction from the all-too-familiar "It is too difficult!" to "I think this is very fun and interesting." A brief survey at the beginning of the process revealed that less than one-tenth of the class had traveled outside Korea, and so, had no experience of the sort that always precedes it, namely, communicating and interacting with real people. I concluded that this project had as much as it could have of the elements that I have cited as required for success from the perspective of both the student and the instructor.

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Lessons Learned

While recently reviewing lesson materials, I was struck by how differently I teach writing class now than when I started out. In this column I would like to question some common teaching practices and suggest some alternatives.

Don't Confuse Teaching With Learning

I am struck by how often teachers complain that they don't have enough time to cover everything in class. However, I don't see why we have to. Most learning, as opposed to teaching, takes place outside of the classroom, anyway. People get entire degrees online without attending a "class." I now spend more time making materials on topics like formal email style that can be effectively learned through self-instructional handouts or webpages rather than on materials designed to be used and explained as class handouts. In addition, self-instructional materials can be distributed to individual students to reflect their specific writing problems. If, on the other hand, many students have difficulty with the same writing problem, then I may teach to those specific problems. This way, feedback can be more effective, individualized, and focused on student needs.

Let Students Choose Their Own Topic

Many writing textbooks have interesting essay topics and readings on current issues written by established writers. Some textbook series are even supported by CNN videos, for example, to create rich learning resources for students. However, for most kinds of writing, essential writing skills include the ability to choose an interesting topic, narrow it down, find sources, and come up with an original or interesting thesis statement. I suggest that teachers create the objectives and evaluation criteria, but let the students choose a topic that interests them for almost every

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assignment. Many students have little experience choosing their own topics and find this task very difficult, yet rewarding. For example, I assigned a short process writing assignment but did not set a specific topic. One student wrote a recipe to make her version of "super ramen" while another wrote instructions for calibrating a laser range finder. Both met the assignment's objectives, and they were much more engaged because they had ownership of their topic.

Feedback: Separate Higher-Order / Lower-Order Concerns

Why do so many writing teachers correct every grammar mistake (lower order) on a student's paper in addition to giving general comments on organization (higher order) at the same time? I am not sure, apart from the fact that so many students (and teachers) equate "writing" with "grammar." The only reason to check every grammar mistake on a paper is to get a piece of writing ready for publication. In contrast, the purpose of a writing assignment is to make sure that students have met the objective of the assignment. In fact, there is no conclusive evidence in our field that grammar

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correction without extensive revision has any effect at all on writing improvement! This finding, I think, is an intuitively reasonable conclusion for most experienced writing teachers.

The more I teach writing, the less grammar feedback I seem to give. However, I have been giving more frequent feedback at a higher order of concern. For example, for major assignments, I comment on the students' outlines, and they must submit a working thesis statement to show they are on the right track before continuing. Feedback on the first draft doesn't include any grammar correction unless it interferes with communicating meaning. Indeed, most of the feedback I give occurs before the final assignment is due, not after. This approach helps to eliminate common problems in the early stages of the essay, thereby saving time and increasing learning.

Take a Mastery Approach

I may have fewer writing objectives in my classes than some other writing teachers, but I expect the students to meet each of them. In other words, students must resubmit assignments until they have achieved the objectives, such as having a clear thesis statement or using APA reference style correctly. I see assigning a grade, for example, 70 percent as an almost useless activity. What happened to the other "30 percent" is what should interest us. Either the student has achieved the objective we have set for the assignment or they have not. If they have not, they should do the task again until they have achieved what is expected of them. Admittedly, setting clear objectives is not always easy to do, but it is definitely worthwhile. I take a cumulative portfolio approach to grading to enable the process of revision, while also satisfying departmental demands for traditional grades. With this approach, students have an incentive to do a thorough job from the start; otherwise they will quickly find out that they just create more homework for themselves! This may seem like more work, and admittedly, sometimes it is; however, I have achieved better results using this approach.

Avoiding Plagiarism

In the last issue, the first part of this topic discussed the general problem of plagiarism in the Korean context. This part discusses practical strategies for dealing with plagiarism in the classroom. As a reminder, the term *paraphrase* will be used to mean "to rewrite another author's text acceptably *with* citations." *Citation* is used to refer to "giving sources for direct quotations, a paraphrase, or a summary." *Plagiarism* refers to "unacceptable use of sources ranging from outright copying to improper paraphrasing, even with citation."

Think Positive
Explain why students need to cite sources rather than demand that they cite. A colleague of mine recently wondered why so few books explain the whys and whens of quoting. Although quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing strategies can go beyond the simple use of sources to provide evidence for arguments, the range of reasons for quotes and paraphrase goes well beyond what most writing textbooks describe. (Readers can email me for a handout on this topic for advanced students at ifli@hotmail.com.)

Teach How to Choose Quotations Explicitly
Surprisingly, some students do not have a clear idea of the criteria for choosing citations. You may want to read a selected text together and have the students discuss why the author chose a particular direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. It may not be as clear to them as you may assume. One WE-SIG member gives her students a useful rule of thumb: limit quotations to no more than 10 percent of your paper.

Rethink Citing Paraphrases
I have found that students have greater difficulty with paraphrasing skills than with direct quotations. One solution is to ask students to give page references for their paraphrases and summaries, as well as for direct quotations. In fact, I think all paraphrases should have page numbers! It can be unclear how many sentences the reader is including in a given citation. A citation may unclearly refer only to the sentence it is a part of, or elements of the entire paragraph. Taking a process approach, you may also ask students for their research notes or a photocopy or printout of the page they got their quotation or paraphrase from. You can then check the original source to see if they got it right. Unfortunately, I have found that doing practice examples in class has been much less effective than having the students select and paraphrase or quote real sources in context.

Help Students Manage Their Time
Cases of outright copying are just as likely to be caused by lack of time management skills as by a lack of citation knowledge. Some students know what plagiarism is, but, being short of time to complete their essays, they copy to shorten the writing process. Lecturing on plagiarism does not help much. If the students are doing a substantial piece of writing, ask for outlines and a rough draft before the final writing is due. I have a first draft deadline as well as a final deadline for all assigned research.

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Remove the Temptation
It is easy to copy and paste from the Internet. Consider not accepting general or personal website information for sources and restricting intermediate students to a list of well-known online sources such as newspapers and encyclopedias. Many younger students who have grown up with the Internet often rely too much on Internet sources of dubious quality and general search engines. See if your library subscribes to quality information services such as http://www.lexisnexis.com/. Also, print out a typical plagiarism policy from a western university. Students, especially those who want to study abroad, will often be surprised and concerned about the consequences.

Have Students Watch You Actually Paraphrase a Sentence
Using a computer room so students could see me write, I took a paragraph that I was working on and integrated a paraphrase into it. The original source was visible on the screen while I was reworking the sentence. I took them through all of the choices from unacceptable paraphrase (simply substituting a few nouns) to acceptable paraphrase. Actually demonstrating the differences in real-time benefited the students. While writing the acceptable paraphrase, I verbalized what I was thinking, how I made word choices, how I changed the structure, etc.

A Final Note
There has been a great deal of discussion in journals about awareness of cross-cultural differences in notions of plagiarism and using sources. Some have advocated a more flexible and understanding response to differences in notions of ownership of ideas in an era of English as an International Language. However, I find these discussions somewhat irrelevant. There are currently no acceptable standards for changing the criteria for acceptable paraphrase in English. Our students will have to communicate in professional or academic environments in the future, and Korean faculty members have assured me that they want their students to adapt to international English norms when writing in English, especially for publication as future graduate students. I do not see that an alternative is appropriate to meet their needs.

Recommended Sources on Sources
http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources/contents.html
http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/electric/trainingmods/plagiarism_test/main.html
http://www.plagiarism.org/

Writing and Editing Special Interest Group
Any KOTESOL member can join our online discussions by requesting to join the site
http://groups.msn.com/KOTESOLWESIG/

Citation Skills and Avoiding Plagiarism *(Part 1)*

This is the first part of a two-part column describing what the intermediate or advanced writing class teacher in Korea needs to know about their teaching environment, especially regarding referencing and plagiarism.

First, a definition of terms: Plagiarism is the use of other sources unacceptably ranging from copying without citation to excessive borrowing of the words of another author but with citation. Paraphrase is the rewording of a short piece of text written by another author with a citation.

Know Your Audience
In North America, the standard undergraduate "term paper" common in the social sciences and humanities develops a thesis and properly cites scholarly sources according to a style guide such as APA. In Korea, this is rare in undergraduate education, as no particular style of referencing is usually required.

While this does not excuse the prevalence of plagiarism, we must try to understand that some of our students really, honestly, do not know how to write a research paper using Western criteria. This can even apply up to the graduate level. According to my students, a Masters Degree program, either here or abroad, is often the first time that many Korean students learn how to properly cite and use scholarly references.

Note Cultural Differences
Claiming the existence of cultural differences in misusing sources is valid. However, it does not mean that we cannot insist on the appropriate use of writing standards. Since
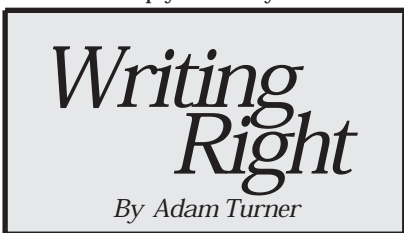
"We should try to understand the environment we work in."

most Korean students know that the overt forms of cheating are unacceptable, focus on paraphrasing skills first. It could be said that an unacceptably high number of Korean students - right up to the doctoral level and even some faculty - believe that it is acceptable to copy either an entire sentence, or most of it, and then paste it into an essay without quotation marks as long as the citation is clearly given. This is simply not ethical from a Western perspective. However, in Korean writing, it is generally acceptable to paraphrase liberally or use larger chunks of other's writing as long as the citation is clearly given. Many Korean writers do not fully understand that the words themselves, not just the ideas they contain, are the "property" of the author, and must be acknowledged. This is a particularly Western concept.

Take One Step Back
In order to teach citation skills, it is a good idea to take one step back and discuss why we use citations. Students may not fully understand that citations are used as evidence and/or support for the thesis of the paper. They may see citations simply as a way to show that they have done the research and know the topic. Finally, complex historical reasons might help to explain the cause of plagiarism. In traditional forms of East Asian writing, the key point was to show mastery of the classical literature rather than develop an original thesis. This factor may still be influencing our students' writing.

Writing Right

By Adam Turner

Know Your University Policies
Most universities in Korea do not have a plagiarism policy or a clear process for dealing with plagiarism. And according to some foreign teachers and Korean professors, if you have a serious problem with plagiarism, you may have to solve it privately with the student instead of relying on established policies for guidance and support. Students whose essays have sections obviously copied are usually given lower grades. The answer to the question of why there is so much plagiarism in Korean universities may, in fact, be very simple: the students are not punished severely.

Know Thyself
Native English speaking teachers, especially with an English or English Literature background, may be relying too much on MLA or APA styles as their frame of reference for teaching advanced composition. It is also important for teachers to get a better sense of the types of writing students really need; for example, why isn't formal email writing taught more often as an essential writing skill? What about in-text citations or the choice of reporting verbs such as "suggests" and "claims," etc.? What about the use of direct quotations? In the hundreds of engineering papers I have read, I have only seen two cases of direct quotation!

To be more effective EFL teachers, we should try to understand the environment we work in. Also, it should be noted that plagiarism has gone global. Some foreign teachers who have been teaching in Korea for many years tend to underestimate how prevalent plagiarism has become in Western countries. To combat plagiarism, many North American universities now subscribe to services such as http://www.turnitin.com/, an Internet search tool, to catch students who are plagiarizing.

In my next column I will outline specific strategies and activities that can be used in class. In the meantime, go to http://www.ohiou.edu/esl/help/plagiarism.html for a good, general resource on plagiarism.

Online Resources for Writing Teachers

Many writing teachers are increasingly using online resources and software to improve the correction and feedback they give to students. This article will give an overview of some of the resources and techniques available to writing teachers for giving feedback online. A full explanation of exactly how all of the software mentioned in this article is used is not possible here so feel free to contact me with any questions you have.

Establishing a Community
As the amount and quality of Internet resources has improved, teachers are increasingly using webpage support for their traditional writing classes. See KOTESOL member David Kim's website for an example http://kkucc.konkuk. ac.kr/~engteacher/course7.html.
Many commercial services exist to help teachers organize their courses online such as www.webct.com or www.blackboard.com. These services allow the creation of course sites with content, quizzes, and bulletin boards for online interaction with and between students. However, these services can be expensive for individual teachers. An excellent alternative used by KOTESOL Special Interest Groups (SIG) is free "Groups" sites from http://groups.yahoo.com/ or http://groups.msn. com/. I favor MSN Groups because it can be used to create webpage content without any programming to give feedback for problems that come up in class. The Writing and Editing SIG site is an example of how this function can be used: http://groups.msn.com/KOTESOLWESIG/.
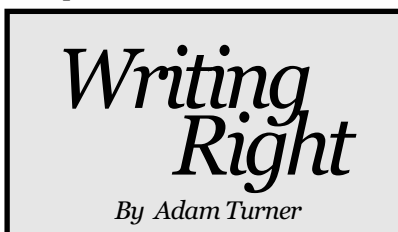
Getting to Know Your Software
There are a couple of essential functions of Microsoft Word that not enough KOTESOL teachers are aware of. The first is the "Track Changes" function. You can search "Track Changes" in Microsoft Word Help to see how this is done. This setting allows the student or colleague to see the changes that have been made to a Word file on the screen in a different color. It can also show the changes in different colors that each editor has made to a collaborative effort as well. This option allows the student or colleague to see the changes as well as the original text and allows the user to accept or reject the changes.

The other essential function that many teachers and students should know more about is adding "comments." This function allows you to add comments on the side or bottom of the text, depending on the version of Word you have, in much the same way that you would normally add comments in the margins while correcting student essays on paper. To find out how this works, search "comments" in the Word Help function.

Better, More Efficient Feedback
Many of the comments that writing teachers make on student essays concerning paragraph organization or sentence grammar errors come up again and again. To make the process of correction more efficient, I have a Word file of some of the most common comments I make when correcting. I simply copy and paste the text into the Comment function of MS Word and modify it as necessary to reflect the individual student's paper.

For common grammar errors or writing problems, you can also paste active links into the Comment boxes which allows the student to go directly to more extensive explanations, resources, or quizzes online than you could possibly write in

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the margins on a student's paper copy. To find useful links to a number of sites for these purposes you can view the KOTESOL Writing SIG website at http://groups.msn.com/ KOTESOLWESIG/ or my homepage at www.adamturner. net.

Another tool that can be used is macros. Macros are functions that allow you to automatically program a sequence of keyboard or mouse commands by assigning the steps to a single key or word. It can save a great deal of time with repetitive tasks such as correcting essays. With a single key you can open up a comment and paste in pre-assigned text. It is an incredible timesaver. For more information have a look at http://www.macros.com or search "macros" in the Word Help function.

Quiz Creation
One of the most effective ways to give feedback is to make quizzes from common student errors. Quiz generation software can now allow you to create online quizzes without any programming skills whatsoever! Hot Potatoes http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/hotpot/ and www.quia.com are the leading services. Here is a sample of how I have helped guide my students through the problems of names and titles in English in formal email using these programs: http://hanyangwriting.tripod.com/email/.

Sound Advice
James Trotta, facilitator of the Computer-Assisted Language Learning SIG has given audio feedback to students by recording sound files of comments on their

Microsoft Macros to the Rescue

Web Wheres
By Jake Kimball

Microsoft Word is the ubiquitous word-processing software included in Microsoft Office. As a word-processor, Word is convenient for producing routine documents. Most of us probably use it regularly for typing and spell-checking documents. But what you might not know is that Word is actually a powerful tool for busy, creative teachers.

If you use MS Word to do more complicated tasks such as making tests, tables, and puzzles, Word can become time-consuming and frustrating. Excessive mouse maneuvering and clicking may someday lead to a bad case of carpel tunnel syndrome. Luckily, there is a tool available to shortcut the clicking - a macro. A macro is like a mini-program within Word that automatically performs these complicated tasks quickly and easily so you don't have to. Since writing mini-programs for making macros may be beyond the technical grasp of many of us, there are a number of websites that offer unique macros for downloading - many of which are free and cater to the needs of teachers or researchers.

To give you a better sense of the handy-dandy macro, consider your needs as a teacher. Are you interested in materials development? Do you often create student worksheets? Do you lack the technical prowess and time to design flashcards, gap-fills, multiple-choice questions, word scrambles, sentence jumbles, pronunciation exercises, and much more? Look no further than Teachers-Pet at http://www.teachers-pet.org/index.html. This website provides free software to help with all of the above tasks and more. A similar tool, also free but with fewer options, is available from Web-Enhanced Language Learning at http://www.well.ac.uk/wellproj/workshp1/macros.htm. After downloading the free software and enabling macros in your "Tools" menu bar, customized icons are conveniently loaded onto your MS Word toolbar!

Macros are also useful for writers and researchers. Those of you who write research papers may need your references to conform to (APA) American Psychological Association format or style. Macros can even automate this task of APA referencing. A freebie can be had at http://www.myzips.com /download/APA-Referencing-Macros.phtml and a shareware version at http://www.gold-software.com/ download 213.html.

And finally, if you make online tests and quizzes for your students, read http://iteslj.org/Articles/Tuzi-Tests/ for further information and ideas.

These are just a few websites that may be of interest to teachers. Googling "macros for teachers" will likely bring up many more.

writing that the students can store and listen to. MS Word also allows you to insert sound files in WORD documents and newer versions also have a Voice Comment function that allows teachers to give audio feedback to students. The only drawback is the large file size.

Building a Corpus
Finally, by having students submit their writing via email, you can build up a rich source of authentic material to mine for example sentences and common writing problems. For research purposes these files can be searched for patterns with software such as concordance programs. For more information see http://www.iei.uiuc.edu/structure/structure1 /conc.html.

Adam Turner is the facilitator of the KOTESOL Writing and Editing Special Interest Group (WESIG) and the Director of the Hanyang University Writing Center. KOTESOL Members can join WESIG online at http://groups.msn.com/KOTESOLWESIG/ or contact Adam Turner at ifli@hotmail.com for more information.

Teaching Writing Classes

This is the first installment of a regular column on tips and suggestions for teaching writing. Unfortunately, many English teachers in Korea are first introduced to "Teaching Writing" by simply being told that it is their turn to teach the writing class!

Most writing teachers would also agree that the workload can be significantly higher than teaching a conversation class. The challenges are great, but the KOTESOL Writing and Editing Special Interest group (WESIG) is here to help. The topics and content in this column will be taken from our online bulletin board, face-to-face discussions and WESIG events. The first column will focus on pen and paper approaches to correcting while the next one will show you how to take full advantage of online techniques for correcting and giving feedback.

Choose Your Battles

One of the most common mistakes teachers make when they first start teaching writing classes is to think that doing a good job necessarily means correcting "all" student errors. Research has shown and experienced writing teachers know that this type of correcting is not only incredibly time-consuming, but also ineffective.

KOTESOL member David Kim, in his presentation on teaching composition, even argues that once the students have enough basic knowledge of English sentence structure to write, grammar should be taught separately from writing class. Probably the best thing you can do for yourself in terms of saving time, and for your students in terms of focusing their learning, is to choose the skill or key point that is the objective of the lesson and correct only that part. If students are graded only on a specific area, they are much more likely to pay attention to it.

Rather than directing your students to write a comparative paragraph, you might tell them that the assignment will be marked only on how well they use comparative transition phrases in context, for example. Watch the difference in the motivation and attention of the students to the point of your lesson.

Editing vs Correcting

It is also a good idea to try to separate the "editing" process from the "correcting" process. In the first pass, I sometimes mark all of the papers only on the basis of the content or logic of the argument, and then when that is done I come back to the first paper and look for the grammatical or sentence structure point of the assignment and correct that. Separating higher order editing from lower order correcting can improve the feedback you give. It can be distracting and difficult to try to do both well at the same time.

Underlining Reveals All

I have never used most proofreading marks, such as "agr." for subject-verb agreement, when correcting. I simply underline the grammatical mistakes, and let the students correct the mistakes themselves. This method has a number of advantages. It can often enable you to see the difference between what the students do not understand and what mistakes are simply the result of carelessness and within the student's ability to correct on their own. However, students find "wrong word choice" or "awkward" phrasing proofreading comments frustrating because they often have difficulty correcting these types of errors for themselves. In this case, simply providing a better word choice or phrasing is more effective. Heidi Vande Voort suggests correcting the first instance of a given error and then only underlining the subsequent examples of the error for the rest of the paper.

A Dictionary of One's Own

Teaching writing can sometimes be frustrating because many students make the same errors over and over again. Students should collect their recurrent errors in their own customized dictionary of common errors. They can then refer to it in the future, and it helps them to review and fix their mistakes. Teachers could also collect the notebooks and create quizzes from these common errors.

It is also handy to type out a sheet of common comments in a numbered list including textbook page numbers or online sources for student reference. When correcting, you can include the sheet and just write the number of the comment on the student's paper instead of writing the same comments again and again. The time saved allows you more time to write comments specific to the content of an individual student's paper.

Writing Right

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The Colorful Pen

One of the low technology tools that I like to use is the multicolored pen. Seeing a page filled with red can be a bit traumatic for some students. Green ink is a little easier on the eyes. I use blue ink for praise and red ink for careless errors or mistakes that a student is making repeatedly. The colorful result actually creates more interest in the corrections!

Correction Confusion

During my first year in Korea, I almost gave a poor student a heart attack by not understanding the Korean conventions for correcting papers. She mistook 90% for 10%! In Korean, a check mark indicates an incorrect answer and circling the number of a question indicates that it is correct. In English, it is the opposite. Proofreading marks to insert text or letters can be above as well as below the text in Korea.

The Author

Adam Turner is the facilitator for the KOTESOL Writing and Editing SIG and has recently been appointed the Director of the English Writing Center at Hanyang University.

Send your questions about teaching writing to ifli@hotmail.com

Join WESIG at http://groups.msn.com/KOTESOLWESIG/