

**Writing in CALL:  
A Pilot Study on How Online Journaling Can Be Effective in Language Learning**

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**Abstract**

This paper aims to find out whether using web log, usually referred to as “blog,” affects language learning, especially writing. The paper includes a pilot study in which two ESL students wrote journals in English, one student wrote on paper and the other on her blog page. Preliminary results show that blogging motivated the learner because it gave her a reason to write and the possibility of getting frequent and instant feedback from her audience. The pilot study also revealed that the two learners wrote differently online and on paper in terms of sentence complexity, lexical complexity, and level of personal involvement versus detachment. Further research is needed to examine whether the differences noted in this pilot study are general to other learners.

**Introduction**

About two year ago, I started to write blogs on my web page on the Social Networking Service (SNS). My blogs were mainly about being a graduate student in the MATESL program in Hawai'i. One day, I met a friend through the SNS. She read my blogs and commented on them constantly. She asked me many questions because she was interested in being enrolled in the program. I answered as many of her questions as I could, and we kept in touch through the SNS for about a year. She applied to the program later on, and now she is enrolled and studying with me.

My experience in the SNS made me realize that my blogs were actually helping someone. This means I had an authentic audience who was reading my blogs for some information, and it motivated me to write more about my life. Taking this notion to language teaching and learning, this paper explores whether writing journals online can motivate students to write more and better (in terms of both grammar and content) than writing on paper.

**Writing Online vs. Writing on Paper**

In this section, I will review the difference between writing online and writing on paper with respect to several key elements of writing: the advantages of the medium, the nature of student-student interaction, peer review, and the writing process and publication.

*The Advantages of Writing Online*

The SNS is one type of online communication. It is used specifically for building online social networks, and many social networking services such as MySpace ([www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com)), Facebook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)) and Friendster ([www.friendster.com](http://www.friendster.com)) are also blog hosting services. It provides people opportunities to meet and communicate with others through many different tools such as chatting, bulletin boards, and so on. However, the most useful and helpful tool in terms of teaching/ earning writing would be blogs.

There are many advantages of writing online over writing by hand. First, publishing their writing online gives students a purpose for writing since there is always an authentic audience. Furthermore, learners can have many opportunities for interaction in the target language by having an authentic audience (Eastment, 2005; Ward, 2004). A good deal of research in the field of ESL/EFL emphasizes the importance of interaction in the target language with an authentic audience. Writing online allows learners to interact with an authentic audience through commenting on each other's writings which creates meaningful context between the writer and the audience. Interaction will be discussed more in the next section.

Second, students tend to show fewer inhibitions when they are communicating online (Ward, 2004). In other words, learners can be more active when writing and giving feedback online. This can be a big

advantage in language learning because it reduces students' anxiety and helps them develop confidence. Especially for students who are not confident enough to speak up in class or give feedback face-to-face, blogging is a great chance to express their feelings, opinions, and thoughts.

Third, writing online motivates students. There are three aspects of CALL in writing that have effect on student motivation; that are, the opportunities of (a) working with a new medium, (b) learner control, and (c) receiving rapid and frequent feedback (Warschauer, 1996). As for the first aspect, students always enjoy using new technologies as mentioned in the previous section; it is just fun to use computers and technologies. The second aspect illustrates that students are more motivated when they can control their learning; in other words, student-centered learning is the key to increase student motivation. The third aspect shows that, as already mentioned in the previous section, peer feedback can also motivate students greatly because it gives them a reason to write. In addition, quick feedback from the teacher also motivates students. Warschauer (1996) did a research on the effects on student motivation of using computers for writing and communication, and his result showed that most students had a positive attitude towards using computers in language learning no matter how old and what level they were. In addition, he mentioned that student motivation greatly increases when the teacher carefully "integrates computer activities into the regular structure and goals of the course" (Warschauer, 1996, p. 42).

The most practical advantage of using blogs is that they are easy to create compared to websites, so students who are not familiar with computers and the Internet would not be stressed out from using blogs. In addition, it is free, and the students share their writings without using money on printing out their writing; it is the fastest, the easiest, and the most economical way to achieve the final stage of writing cycle: publishing.

Next, I would like to focus more on the differences between online social net-

work writing and paper writing with respect to peer feedback and factors that may motivate students in writing journals.

### *Interaction*

Since language is a living entity, the best way to learn languages is to use them; in other words, interaction is the key to successful language learning. Computer technologies, especially the Internet, are useful tools for increasing interaction and supporting language learning (Wang, 2005).

In addition, students prefer working in groups on computer activities (Wang, 2005). Computer activities surely give students many opportunities to collaborate with others; therefore, they can benefit greatly from group work. Computers and the Internet also provide a world-wide environment; students can communicate quickly and easily even though they live far from each other. This makes cross-cultural communication affordable.

In blog-based activity, students have a lot of interaction through writing journals and commenting on each other's journals. There is also a lot of negotiation for meaning; for example, if a student does not understand what another student says in his/her journal, the student always can comment and ask, "What do you mean by...?" or "I don't understand when you said..." This negotiation of meaning is an important element in interaction, and it helps students to communicate more smoothly; in other words, it teaches them communicative competence.

This brings us to another important part of writing: peer review. In the next section, I will review the differences in peer review between online and face-to-face interaction.

### *Online Peer Review vs. Face-to-Face Peer Review*

As mentioned above, one of the benefits of online journal writing is that students can get immediate feedback from peers. DiGiovanni and Nagaswami (2001) conducted research on whether online peer review (OLPR) can be an alternative to face-to-face peer review (FFPR). The study revealed that

in general, most students think peer review (both OLPR and FFPR) is essential and useful, and one third of the students felt more comfortable in OLPR while some of them preferred FFPR. The study also included a questionnaire asking, “Why do you prefer PLPR/FFPR?” Students who found OLPR more useful answered that they had more time to think and comment. Some said they could also practice writing by commenting on others’ journals. Some felt they could be more honest online than face-to-face. And of course, some thought it was easy and fun.

From the study, several advantages to OLPR were found: first, OLPR helps students continue to focus on their tasks (DiGiovanni and Nagaswami, 2001). Another advantage is that teachers can monitor their interaction in OLPR more easily and closely than FFPR (DiGiovanni and Nagaswami, 2001). In FFPR, it is most likely impossible to monitor all of the students’ comments and interaction; however, OLPR allows the teacher to do so. They also add one more advantage; that is, students can always refer back to written peer reviews in OLPR while in FFPR, they have to depend on their memory when revising the journals or starting a new journal because peer feedback is often done orally.

This research reveals that even though FFPR is a popular and worthwhile way of peer feedback in teaching/learning writing, OLPR can also be a useful tool for both teachers and learners. Online journal writing is a good way for students to practice writing since it provides them a chance to do OLPR, which helps them improve their writing skills and be motivated towards writing.

#### *The Writing Process and Publication*

The writing process basically includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, proofreading, getting feedback, and publishing, and computers can play important roles in every step of the writing process (Raimes, 1983). For example, before students start writing, there should be some pre-writing activities. Pre-writing activities give students schema or background knowledge about what they are

writing. If students have access to computers, they can get a lot of information on the internet and use it as resources. It can also be good reading practice; the point is, students should get enough input (reading) before output (writing). Computers help them get ready for writing.

Publication is the last step of the writing process, which is sometimes easily forgotten or ignored in teaching writing. When students have done with writing, they should have a chance to “publish” their writing for other people, usually their peers (Raimes, 1983). It does not have to be an official publication; it could be a class publication or newspaper. Students can also put their journals in their portfolios and keep them on a shelf in a classroom so that everyone can read them. They even can put their journals on the wall of the classroom or outside of the classroom; this can be a good way to publish their writings too.

Writing journals online makes publication easier because everyone can read online writings easily. After getting feedback from others, students can revise their journals and put them on their own web page. This can greatly motivate students to write.

#### **Research Questions**

Based on the literature review, I would like to raise the following four questions:

RQ1: What aspects of using blogs for writing do ESL/ESL students find motivating? This question examines how much and why students would be motivated when writing online. I assume that interactional aspect and emotion/attitude would dominate over the other two aspects for two reasons: one is because there is research which shows students in general like to work in groups on computer activities (Wang, 2005), and the other is because using SNS is just fun. However, we have to remember that “enjoying” does not always mean “helping students’ language learning.” It might affect their language learning in a good way, and it might not.

RQ2: How much more do students write in online journals compared to writing by hands? The second question refers to the length of students’ journals when writing

online. Do students tend to write longer/shorter in online journals? I assume that students will write more online because they can use a word processor. Using a word processor makes the process much easier than handwriting – if students find errors, they can easily fix them. It also makes organizing paragraphs easier. Students can delete and add paragraphs or move paragraphs to different places.

RQ3: How long do students spend on writing online journals compared to writing on papers? This question refers to the speed of writing online. Do they spend more/less time on writing online than writing on papers? I assume that students can write faster when writing online journals for the same reason as RQ2. Typing sometimes gets students to start writing effectively. They can start writing about something they are confident in writing about, leave it and re-think it or add other ideas later. They do not always have to write in order – they can write conclusions first, and introductions last.

RQ4: Does the quality of writing online differ from writing on paper? This question focuses on the quality of the online and hand-written journals; that is, given the difference in audience design in online writing versus paper writing, do students write differently online and on paper? In other words, does the quality of their writing differ from online to on paper? This question will be discussed based on the following criteria: sentence complexity, lexical complexity, and level of personal involvement versus distancing. Sentence complexity refers to mostly grammar in writing and will be measured by the ratio of complex sentences to all sentences, passive voice sentences, and overall Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level. Lexical complexity will be determined by the percentage of words that belong to the Academic Word List developed by Coxhead. I will use The Complete Lexical Tutor's ([http://www.er.uqam.ca/nobel/r21270/texttools/web\\_vp.html](http://www.er.uqam.ca/nobel/r21270/texttools/web_vp.html)) vocabulary tool which automatically analyzes the level of vocabulary in a text. Finally, the

students' level of personal involvement or distancing will be determined by the students' use of the first person pronoun *I*.

In an attempt to explore the answers to these questions, I carried out a pilot study, which is reported below.

## **Pilot Study**

### *Methodology*

In this pilot study, I used Mixi (<http://mixi.jp>). Mixi is the first and the most famous SNS in Japan. In Mixi, people can have their own website and write a blog, and everyone can read and comment. They also can create their own communities, which can be about anything, and discuss online. It can be a good tool for language learning since it provides a lot of online interaction, especially peer feedback on journal writing (see Figure 1).

The subjects of this pilot study are two Japanese students who are currently studying English in the English Foundations Program (EFP) at Hawaii Pacific University. Their English level is from high-intermediate to advanced, and they have no trouble with communicating in English in daily life. They are both planning to participate in a graduate program after finishing the EFP; therefore they are willing to learn how to write an academic paper. They have been studying English for more than ten years, mostly through grammar-focused education; therefore, their grammar is pretty good. However, they have not had enough experience in writing in a second language; therefore, writing journals in English is a big challenge for them. I chose them as subjects for two reasons: first, they were already familiar with computers and the website because they both have been using Mixi for about a year. Second, they write blogs constantly (about once a week) in their native language, which is Japanese; therefore, they would not be overwhelmed by being assigned to keep writing journals for several weeks.

Figure 1. A personal Mixi page.



I asked one student (Student A) to write four journals on her Mixi page (Appendix A). The topics were (a) how to make (something), (b) marriage, and (c) two essays on social problems. I chose these topics because they were focusing on three different writing styles; the first topic required the student to explain steps in making something, the second topic required her to give some opinions about a given topic, and the third topic required her to write her own opinions on social issues. She had about two weeks to write four journals. She was also required to comment on other people's blogs in English. In addition, I asked other people who were on her "friends list" to comment on her journals. They wrote either in English or Japanese (English would have been better, but since they were not official participants of the study, I did not force them to write in English).

The other student (Student B) was asked to write four journals on the same topics, but on a piece of paper (Appendix B). She also had two weeks to write her journals. She received feedback only from

me. I did not tell the students how many pages or how many words they had to write, so they could write as long as they wanted. They were also required to note how long they spent on their each journal.

### Analysis

After the study, I gave Student A a survey (see Appendix C) on how motivated they were towards writing journals in order to find the answer for the first research question (What aspects of using blogs for writing do ESL/ESL students find motivating?). The questions are categorized into four sections: interactional aspect, linguistic aspect, richness of content, and emotion/attitude towards online journal writing. The first three questions (Q1-Q3) are related to interactional aspect, the second three questions (Q4-Q6) are related to linguistic aspects, the third three questions (Q7-Q9) focus on content richness, and the last three questions (Q10-Q12) focus on students' emotion and mental attitude towards online journal writings. The result is reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Student A's answers on the questionnaire about her motivation (writing online)

| Questions  | score | mean |
|--|-------|------|
| 1. Writing blogs gave me more chances to practice English with my friends. | 4     |      |
| 2. I enjoyed receiving comments from my friends.                           | 5     | 4.33 |
| 3. I enjoyed giving comments to my friends' blogs.                         | 4     |      |
| 4. I could write more when I was writing online.                           | 5     |      |
| 5. I could write faster when I was writing online.                         | 2     | 3.33 |
| 6. I tried to use sophisticated language in my writings.                   | 3     |      |
| 7. I could be more creative when I was writing online.                     | 3     |      |
| 8. I tried to write about something interesting to other people.           | 3     | 3    |
| 9. I could write better journals when I was writing online.                | 3     |      |
| 10. I could be more relaxed when I was writing online.                     | 2     |      |
| 11. I was more careful about my mistakes when I was writing online.        | 5     | 3.66 |
| 12. I enjoyed writing my journals on my blog more than by hand.            | 4     |      |

This student seems to find that interacting with others online motivates her a lot (mean score = 4.33). The most surprising result was that the student thought her writing speed was slower when she was writing journals online – this result is different from what I expected. Since she answered that she was more careful about her writings (Q11), I assume that she was more careful about her grammar and the content when writing since her journals were public; everyone (including her friends who were not participating in the study) could read them.

This could have made her more nervous and careful about her writing; therefore, she ended up spending more time on writing.

In the next step, I compared her journals with the journals of Student B in order to answer the second research question (How much more do students write in online journals compared to paper-based journals?), and the third question (How long do students spend on writing online journals compared to writing on paper?). Looking at the mean, student A's journals were overall longer than Student B's (see Table 2).

Table 2

Numbers of Words in Students' Journals

|           | Journal #1 | Journal #2 | Journal #3 | Journal #4 | Mean   |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|
| Student A | 183        | 457        | 355        | 408        | 350.75 |
| Student B | 234        | 263        | 403        | 287        | 296.75 |

In order to see if the difference is significant or not, I performed a t-test. The result shows that the difference is not significant ( $p= 0.476$ ). I believe that further research is needed to find out if students tend to write longer in online journals.

The fourth research question focuses on the quality rather than the quantity of the writing (Do students write differently online and on paper, that is, does the quality of their writing differ from online to on paper?). I will report on the students' writing quality with respect to sentence complexity,

lexical complexity, and personal involvement.

#### Sentence Complexity

As mentioned above, sentence complexity refers to mostly grammar in writings. I counted how many sentences and how many complex sentences there are in both Student A's and Student B's journals. For example, in Student A's Journal #1, there are a total of 13 sentences, of which, 8 were complex sentences (61.5% of all sentences). In Student B's Journal #2, there are 19 sentences totally, of which only 4 were com-

plex sentences (20% of all sentences). The result for the percentage of complex sen-

tences in all the journals by both students is shown in Table 3.

Table 3  
Percentage of Complex Sentences in Students' Journals

|           | Journal #1 | Journal #2 | Journal #3 | Journal #4 | Mean |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------|
| Student A | 61%        | 54%        | 43%        | 30%        | 68%  |
| Student B | 20%        | 35%        | 26%        | 7%         | 21%  |

There is a clear difference between their journals regarding sentence complexity; Student A wrote more complex sentences whereas Student B wrote many simple/compound sentences. In addition, I checked the readability of their journals (using the readability statistical calculation in Microsoft Word). The result shows that Student B's journals have only 3% of passive sentences whereas Student A's journals have 9%. Also, according to the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level test (also calculated by Microsoft Word), Student A's journals' readability is 8.9 whereas Student B's is 6.8. All these indicators show that Student A wrote more complex sentences compared to Student B.

#### Lexical Complexity

The results show that 3.20% of the words in student A's journals belong to the Academic Word List. On the other hand, only 2.97% of student B's journals belong to the Academic Word List. This result may suggest that learners tend to use difficult vocabulary when writing online and having an authentic audience, but further research is definitely needed to confirm this.

#### Level of Personal Involvement vs. Distancing

Student B's journals seems to be more personal. For example, her first journal entitled "I Like Cooking" mostly talks about her personal experience in cooking and why she likes it. In other words, she writes it in writer-based prose, where the writer writes whatever he/she thinks without organizing for the reader, and uses expressions such as *I did/I think/I felt*. On the other hand, Student A writes with reader-based prose, which (a) focuses on readers, (b) uses strategies to tell the writer's opinion to the

reader effectively, and (c) sees from third-person perspectives in order to communicate with the reader (Flower, 1984). Student B uses the first person pronoun *I* 28 times in all of her journals whereas Student A uses it as a subject only 3 times in her journals. Usually, writing in reader-based prose appears to be better than writing in writer-base prose in English conventions (Flower, 1984).

#### Discussion

This study of course has many limitations since I only had one subject for each group. However, it still reveals that writing online journals may be more complex than writing on paper and thus may have more positive effects on language learning. This, perhaps, is mostly caused by motivation towards interacting with others. In addition, I can tentatively conclude that writing online requires students to think deeply, although further research is needed to find out whether this has positive or negative effects. As for the third research question, which concerns how motivated students would be in online journal writing, further research will also be needed. The last research question revealed that in online journals, the student tends to write more complex sentences with higher lexical complexity and with reader-based prose. The reason might have been that since the student had an authentic audience, she knew that her journals would be read by many people, which made her think about her audience while writing. The study has partially proven that when learners are given different types of audience, they write differently. However, again, further research is needed to see whether the differences noted in this pilot study are actually general to many learners.

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## Appendix A Student A's journals

### **Journal #1: How to grow potatoes**

There are a lot of food used potatoes, for instance, mashed potatoes, curry and rice, French fries, stew and so forth. I also often use potatoes to cook and like them, so that I would like to explain how to grow potatoes.

Before you grow potatoes, please prepare fertile soil, water, seed potatoes, a knife, work gloves and a shovel.

First of all, cut the seed potatoes into four equal parts. Weight of each part should be 30~40g. Then put them into the soil. At this time, please place the seed potatoes' sections bottom up and 30cm apart from each other because they put down their roots in the soil. Make sure that water the soil everyday. Besides, you may need to exterminate noxious insects sometimes. When you want to do that, please try to pull up weeds without using a pesticide, because it is better for your health.

Three months later, you will be able to harvest potatoes. When you dig the potatoes with a shovel, please be careful not to damage them. Finally, you will enjoy having your delicious handmade potatoes. (183 words)

### **Journal #2: A Marriage Course**

Marriage is a great event in human lives. Generally, people picture a lot of things about a happy marriage. Even junior high or high school students like talking about marriage. Most people believe that they should get married just once in a lifetime. On the other hand, some people marry more than once. There must be a lot of problems to get divorce from their spouses. If they have children, they must be deeply hurt their children. Before it is too late, couples should take a marriage course before they apply for a marriage license.

Couples need to make some plans for their futures before they get married. For example, they should think about where they should live, how much it costs to rent or buy a house, how many children they want, and how much it costs to rear their children. If they do not think about such things before marriage, some of them might be troubled with money. Accordingly, it is helpful for couples to take a marriage course, because some advisers think together about how they should make plans and spend money appropriately.

Since it is important for couples to help each other, both of them need to learn how to do housework in the course. Housekeeping is usually women's role. However some women complain about housekeeping to their spouses. In addition, with women have got jobs, men also have needed to do household tasks. Not only women but also men should learn basic housework, such as how to cook, wash dishes and clothes, and clean their rooms. It is easier and more helpful for couples to learn how to do housework first hand in the class than learning by themselves with textbooks. If both of them are able to do housework, they will maintain a good relationship.

Couples should make some rules in order to live together throughout their lives. For example, they have to talk at least one hour everyday, to celebrate their birthdays every year, to go out together every weekend, and so forth. If they take a marriage course, they can share a lot of ideas with other couples. In addition, if they swear their rules in front of their classmates, they would not be able to break their promises easily. Even though they often quarrel each other, they will be able to live together happily for a long time if they can keep their promises.

Couples have a lot of opportunities to receive advice about marriage and solve some problems before they get married if they take the marriage course. Furthermore, if large numbers of people attend the marriage classes, the divorce rate might decrease. Therefore, couples should be required to take a marriage course before they get married. (457 words)

### **Journal #3: The Aging Society**

Japan is famous as a nation of long-lived people, and the number of the aged is increasing. At the same time, the declining birthrate is getting more serious. As a result, we face a lot of problems.

The most serious problem is a pension. In Japan, people who over 20 years old are obligated to pay 13,860 yen (approximately 130 USD) as a pension every month. Generally, people who over 65 years old receive a pension. The amount of a pension is different among individuals. As the number of the elderly is much higher than the young, there is every possibility of increasing the price of a pension which young people have to pay in the near future. On the other hand, the price of a pension which the aged receive may decrease. Since a lot of young people doubt whether they will be able to get a pension when they become old, some of them refuse to pay a pension.

Another problem is the medical and nursing-care insurance system. In Japan, elderly people are able to take medical and nursing care at little expense. However, this expense may be raised because it is also supported by younger people.

The other problem is to decrease the employment opportunities for old people. Since expense of a pension is usually not enough to live, many old people look for a job after retirement. Mostly, you can find old workers at parking lots and bicycle parking areas. However, it is difficult for the elderly to get a job under the present circumstances.

It is expected that there will be much bigger difference between the number of old people and children in the near future. To stop increasing the low birth rate, we must create more obvious methods. One of the good methods is to make more comfortable environment for workers, both men and women, before and after they have a baby. Now in Japan, a lot of workwomen lose their job or are reduced their salary after they take maternity leave. Before the problems will get more serious, we should change some systems which bring us bad results. (355 words)

### **Journal #4: The Possible Causes of ADHD**

Recently, we often watch the news, and read the article about ADHD. ADHD is an important subject not only in the United States but also in Japan and other countries.

ADHD is the abbreviation of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, and mostly children show the symptoms of ADHD. Generally, the symptoms are divided into three groups. One of them is carelessness. Children cannot keep taking their seat and concentrating on their study or work. Another is hyper-activeness. They often leave their seat, or talk too much. The other is impulse. They cannot control their impulse to do something. I often heard from my parents about ADHD because my father is a principal, and my mother was a teacher for handicapped children at junior high school. So far, they have seen a lot of ADHD students. They said that sometimes ADHD students run away from a classroom, and hit their friends suddenly. At the same time, they said that some ADHD students show tremendous concentration on something which they are really interested in.

Most parents tend to blame themselves when they know their children are ADHD because they think one of the main causes is the method of their upbringing. However, there is no connection between the cause of ADHD and way of child rearing. In fact, exact causes are not known, but there are several possible causes. One of them is a frontal lobe disorder. The frontal lobe which is one of the sections of brain works when we solve questions and problems, plan something, control our action, and so forth. Some ADHD children have trouble with their brain. Another is pregnant women' smoking and drinking. If women smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol during pregnancy, their children risk the possibility that they would be ADHD. The other is heredity. It is said that ADHD children have at least one close relative who also has ADHD. The other one is toxin which is found mostly in paint and water pipes. Toxin is related to disruptive or violent behavior and to a short attention span. Consequently, if children go to the old building's school, the possibility to be ADHD is increased.

Generally, ADHD is a serious issue at school, so that a lot of teachers and parents face the problems and struggle with them. Even if there is no exact cause, we are able to learn how to treat them. To support ADHD children and their parents, our understanding is essential. (408 words)

Appendix B  
Student B's journals

**Journal #1: I like cooking**

I like cooking and eating. My mother taught to cook various meals when I was child. I like it from then on. I like to cook and to eat with my family. My parents always said "so delicious your dishes" and smiled when I cooked meals even if it was so bad. I enjoyed cooking and I glad to hear it from them. Now, I like cooking too. I cook my meals almost every day because I live by myself in Hawaii. I am alone when I eat meals. I am sad because I like to eat with my family and friends. However, I find that cooking helps me reduce stress. I didn't think about that before but I have thought that lately. Therefore I invited my friends to my house and ate together. I cooked a lot of meals. I had a good time with my friends. This weekend, I am going to invite my friends to my house. I'll cook something. Let's try to cook this menu. This is very easy and delicious.

<Tomato Garlic with Chicken>

Material: Tomato (fresh and can), garlic, chicken (leg meat), onions, mushrooms, and french beans

First, cut chickens into smaller pieces and mince garlic

Second, stir-fry mince garlic by fly pan and put cutting chickens into it and grilled and add a pinch of salt and pepper

Third, chop fresh tomato, onions, mushrooms, and french beans

Forth, put all vegetables (exclude french beans) into same fly pan and simmer it

Finally, put french beans into it and little boiled

Let's eat with bread or pasta. (263 words)

**Journal #2: Marriage Preparation Class**

Japan has been suffering from an escalating divorce rate for recently. We have 5.7 new marriages per 1,000 people and 2.15 divorces per 1,000 in 2004, in Japan. In fact, half couples will divorces for new marriages. All of couples hope that they will get a happy life forever. What happen between man and woman? The divorce rate is increasing now, some of couple thinks what we should do to stop the divorce. There is no marriage preparation class in Japan. If there is the class in Japan, couples should go there before their wedding. One of the reasons, the couple does not have enough communication each other. Marriage class focuses on communication skill. This class teaches them that their mind change from romance to marriage life during engagement term. They think about their future plane and make a relationship for family because they have spent a different life before engagement. The couple needs to know their habit, thinking, sense of value, using money, and to plane for their future, such as children, work, and house. They have many chances in this marriage class to talk with about these things and built a strong relationship each other. If they have a different opinion in the future, they already know haw to communicate together. As a result, they should be avoided some of problems because they took the marriage preparation class before they get marriage. (234 words)

**Journal #3: Divorce**

The cause of divorce has many reasons. One in three marriages ends in divorce. Divorce rate in Japan has been increasing recently. Why did they divorce? I think that divorce has three major causes; personal clash, domestic violence, and love affair.

First, one of the causes is personal clash. When they met at first, they did not find their bad points. They always had a fun time and felt comfortable for a short while each other. I think this situation is "Love is blind." They thought that I find a perfect person about character, sense of

value, and appearance. And they married. When they lived together, they could find some bad points by little and little each other.

The second of cause is domestic violence. The number of couple who divorce has been increasing by domestic violence in Japan. I heard that another person, especially girlfriend, wife, and his parents, is very difficult to find it because he looks like a charming young man. He always behave violently to her that he has no reasons. However, wife who has such husband think I can change his mind because he loves me. So, she does not want to divorce him and is continued his violence in house by husband. Ultimately she find that I will be killed my husband by his violence. And then, she wants to divorce from him.

The third of cause is love affair. A person who cheat say love affair is by mere chance or by mood. Even though such person who has a serious relationship with the other woman sooner or later. And he dose not go back his home and pay the coast of living to his wife. Or he makes pregnant the other woman and gets a baby. His family or this couple is unraveled by his affair. There are many opposite case, wife cheat the other man, now. They think that there is no meaning to live together. And then, they decide to divorce each other.

Finally, there are some of causes about divorce. They have a lot of things in their life. This mean is a conflict between each other. And wife overborne by his force and arms. She always has many spots on her body and feels a fear of death from her husband. And a marriage person loves the other woman or the other man. Three of them become the cause of divorce. (403 words)

#### **Journal #4: Bullying**

The bullying issues have very serious situations now. There days is rife at school, especially junior high school, in Japan. It is not only at school has bullying. There is at office, community, preschool, so on. As a result, the bullying begets to refuse to go to school, to commit suicide, and to commit crimes.

The number of absentees' cause of bullying has been increasing rapidly in recent year. They bullied in school as follows. For example, they are thoroughly ignored and ostracized by their classmate. The classmate speak ill of their deliberately in hearing any time. The classmate has been such things every day. Unfortunately, lots of teachers don't find those situations in class. They can't stand the day-to-day bullying. Therefore, they refused to go to school ever after.

The students of suicide caused by bullying has been increasing quickly too. The other day, there was just the case in Fukuoka. This case was homeroom teacher pick on him in class too. He had nowhere to run. No sooner did the student got home he hung himself to escape from bullying.

The influence of the bullying triggers crimes. A lot of crimes are murder cases. They work over someone smaller and weaker than themselves, because they can't control their emotion and stress for bullying. Such crimes is lacking in all feeling except hate for bullying. Therefore, they end in emotional outburst and then they injure or kill someone.

The numbers of school are not reluctant to admit that bullying at school. The victims' parents urge teachers to stop someone from begin bullying at school. We have to address the bullying problems, otherwise those incidents continue to increase. (287 words)

Appendix C  
Survey Questions

1. (5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree)
2. Writing blogs gave me more chances to practice English with my friends. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
3. I enjoyed receiving comments from my friends. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
4. I enjoyed giving comments to my friends' blogs. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
5. I could write more when I was writing online. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
6. I could write faster when I was writing online. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
7. I could learn some new vocabulary from others' journals. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
8. I could be more creative when I was writing online. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
9. I tried to write about something interesting to other people. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
10. I could write better journals when I was writing online. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
11. I could be more relaxed when I was writing online. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
12. I was more careful about my mistakes when I was writing online. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
13. Overall, I enjoyed writing my journals on my blog more than by hand. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)