

APPENDIX I
MARKING SCHEME FOR WRITING

Score	Category	Content	Language	Effectiveness
21-25	Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Selects relevant example & details that are significant to the topic -Shows excellent organization of main themes& supporting details -Develops details on topic effectively -Clear, accurate presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Accurate & appropriate use of language with no slips: varied sentence structures, complete sentences, correct verb tense/word order/ number/articles -Impressive use of vocabulary: varied & accurate word choice/word forms; meaning clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Communicate effectively -Present idea in an organised, cohesive manner -No errors of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, paragraphing & format -Creative, talented writing which has impact
16-20	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects relevant example & details but has a little difficulty in making out the significance of the details to the topic -Develops details less effectively -Shows good organisation of main themes & supporting details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Accurate & appropriate use of language with occasional minor slips -Less impressive use of vocabulary: minor errors in word choice/word forms; meaning clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Communicate effectively -Has reasonable ability in presenting ideas -A few errors of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, paragraphing & format -Presentation can be read with little mental effort
11-15	Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Selects some relevant example & details but has some difficulty in making out the significance of the details to the topic -Has average ability in developing the details -Lacking in clarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mostly complete sentences; several errors in verb tense/word order/number/articles -Adequate vocabulary level: minor & relatively frequent errors in incorrect word choice/word forms; meaning not very clear y 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Average ability in presenting ideas -Some errors of spelling, capitalization, punctuation paragraphing & format -Brevity limits the appeal of the presentation -Sometimes awkward to read
6-10	Weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Attempts to select relevant details but reveals weaknesses in the content -Incomplete development of details/points -Some obvious direct translation from the native language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -About half the sentences are correct: several complete sentences; frequent errors in verb tense/word order/ number/articles -Limited level of vocabulary: major & frequent errors in incorrect word choice/word forms; meaning unclear: mostly translation from native language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Has difficulty in presenting ideas -Frequent errors of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, paragraphing & format -Requires quite a substantial amount of mental effort to read
0-5	Very weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Selects example & details that are hardly relevant -Fails to show significance of details to the topic -No development of points -Native language words/phrases appear frequently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Frequent language errors making comprehension difficult -Unable to use sentence rules -Many sentence errors: verb tense/word order/number/articles -Insufficient use of vocabulary making evaluation difficult -Lots of native language translation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Has very poor ability in presenting ideas -Many errors of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, paragraphing & format -Difficulty even with copying -May not recognise words from target language

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer all questions frankly. Your co-operation is much needed and appreciated for the teacher to help you learn and use English effectively.

Part 1

1.1 Name : YAP CHOON FAH

1.2 Gender: FEMALE

1.3 Course undertaking:

1.4 Primary school : S R J K (C) Kg Baru Ampang

1.5 Secondary school: CHONG Hwa Independent High School

1.6 Working experience:

1.7 English grade at SPM: 7 Year taken: 1997

1.8 English grade at UEC: 6 Year taken: 1997

1.9 Language/Dialect spoken at home: Mandarin, Hak-ka

1.10 Language/Dialect spoken with friends: Mandarin, English (few), Cantonese

1.11 Mother tongue: Hakka, Mandarin

Part 2

2.1 What motivates you to learn English?

- a. need English to get a job
 b. further studies
 c. interest
 d. increase social status
 e. other than the above (please specify): very smart if can speak fluent

2.2 Are you motivated to master English?

- a. a little motivated b. moderately motivated c. very motivated d. highly motivated

2.3 Do you like the English Language?

- a. Yes, very much b. Yes, a lot c. Not much d. No, not at all

2.4 Do you think English is important in the business world?

- a. Yes b. No

2.5 Do you think English is important in your working life later?

- a. Yes, very important b. Yes, quite important c. Not really important d. No

2.6 Do you want to be able to understand spoken English?

a. Yes b. No

2.7 Do you want to be able to speak good English?

a. Yes b. No

2.8 Do you want to be able to read and understand English texts?

a. Yes b. No

2.9 Do you want to be able to write good English?

a. Yes b. No

2.10 Do you think English is an interesting language?

a. Yes b. No

2.11 Do you think English is easier to learn if you are in an English speaking environment?

a. Yes b. No

APPENDIX IIISTUDENT'S FEEDBACK

1. Did you enjoy the lesson? Yes / No
2. Did you find this lesson useful? Yes / No
3. Do you think you have learned the lesson well? Yes / No
4. Did you like the activities? Yes / No
5. Do you find group work/discussion useful? Yes / No
6. Do you think this lesson is more effective than previous lessons? Yes / No
7. Do you have any comments on how to improve future teaching & learning sessions?

LONGER BREAKS .

8. Name: Ray .
9. Course: FBS

APPENDIX IV

Student 2
Round 2.

Pre-test 1

Read the text about the weather in East Texas. Then complete the text using the words in brackets. (Hint: use the simple present tense.)

In East Texas, in the area of the Gulf of Mexico, the climate is (to be) generally hot and often very humid. Temperatures in summer range (range) from 30 to 40 degree Celsius; 25 degree Celsius is (to be) a normal winter temperature. It is (to be) sometimes cold, but only for two or three days at a time; it snows (snow) perhaps once every twenty years. It quite often rains (rain) heavily for two or three days or more, but most of the time the weather is (to be) sunny with bright blue skies. Occasionally there are (to be) droughts -- periods when there are (to be) no rain for a long time. It is (to be) not usually very windy, but there are (to be) hurricanes every few years, with wind speeds reaching over 150 kilometres an hour.

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Post-test 1

Student 2
Round 2.

Complete the text about the weather in Britain using the words in brackets. (Hint: use the simple present tense.)

In Britain, the weather is (to be) very changeable; it rains (rain) a lot, but the sun often shines (shine) too. Winters can be fairly cold and damp, with an average temperature of 5 degree Celsius in the south; it also snows (snow) often. Summers can be cool or warm, but the temperature is (to be) not usually over (go) above 30 degree Celsius. It is (to be) often cloudy, and there are (to be) sometimes grey skies for days or weeks at a time. Days are (to be) long in summer and short in winter. There are (to be) sometimes fog, especially in spring and autumn, but it is (to be) not so common as foreigners think (think). Thunderstorms are (to be) quite common in mountainous areas. British people never know (know) what tomorrow's weather will be like.

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APPENDIX V

Round 2.
Student 2.
Pre-test 2.

Write a short text about the weather / climate in your country (100-150 words).

Malaysia ^{has} tropical climate, that means ^{we} only ~~to~~ have two seasons. They are ^{the} dry season and ^{the} rainy season. Because Malaysia has tropical climate, therefore it ~~does not~~ have four seasons like Japan or China. ~~The~~ dry seasons and rainy season follow a certain ~~also~~ ^{time} in a year. ~~From~~ From January to August is ^{the} dry season. ^{During that} ~~time~~ ^{time} it rains a little. ~~but~~ From September to December is ^{the} rainy season. You can always see that many ^{places} are ~~the~~ flooded ^{during} the rainy season. Malaysia also ^{does not} have ~~the~~ hurricanes. ^{other natural} ~~disasters~~ ^{disasters} like earthquakes or ~~something~~ ^{other natural} ~~disasters~~ because it has tropical climate, so we are very ~~happy~~ living in Malaysia.

Because Malaysia is ^{near} the equator, ~~therefore~~ so its weather is ^{always} sunny ^{but} sometimes it is ^{hot} windy and ^{rainy} ^{the} temperatures are always between 27° to 30° ^C. ^{it} is not too hot or too cold. That's why ^{there} are many tourists from other countries travel to Malaysia because the weather is ^{perfect} ^{for} ^{everyone}.

Round 2.
Student 2.
Post-test 2.

Malaysia has two seasons; ~~there are~~ the dry season and the rainy season. ~~We do not have~~ ^{they} the four seasons like Japan and China in Malaysia because Malaysia has tropical climate. The dry season and rainy season ~~are~~ follow a certain timing in a year. From January to August is the dry season and from September to December is ^{the} rainy season. In the dry season, most of the time the weather is sunny with bright blue skies and it rains a lot in the rainy season. ~~During the rainy season, many trees died because there is no water for them for a long time. On the other hand, many places are not enough and got flooded during the rainy season. Our country also does not have hurricanes, earth quakes and the other natural disasters. So, it's very safe living in Malaysia.~~

Our country is always sunny but sometimes it is also windy because it is near ^{the seas} ~~equator~~. The temperature are always between 26°C to 34°C . It's not too ~~heat~~ ^{hot} or too cold. That's why there are many tourists travel to our country especially during the winter season ~~but~~ their countries ^{because} their people can not wear it during that season. That means the weather in Malaysia is suitable to all.

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A day in my town



3A, Jalan Manis 3,

5000 Tomati Segar,
Kuala Lumpur.
Cheras, Selangor.

11 June 1998

Dear Shuciyaki,

Thank you for your letter telling me what time your train is due to arrive in ~~two weeks' time~~. I'll be there to meet you.

I'm looking forward to showing you where I live.

As soon as you arrive we will go to have our breakfast. After that, I will ~~bring~~ ^{take} you to my house in Cheras and we will take a rest.

When we've done that we will go around ~~at~~ my housing area. ~~At~~ ^{there is} nearby my house, ~~have~~ a ~~supermarket~~ ^{shopping complex} called Leisure Mall, so we can walk around there.

When we're hungry we will have our lunch at the market stall. It is the stall that the indians manage. I'm sure you ~~never~~ ^{have} ~~often~~ ^{never} eaten the roti canai before.

After we've had lunch we will go ~~to~~ around ~~the~~ Kuala Lumpur's city centre. The places I will ~~bring~~ ^{take} you to is like Petaling Street, Central Market and ~~the~~ shopping centres.

In the evening we ~~will~~ ^{will} have our dinner ~~at~~ ⁱⁿ Jalan Alor. There are many kinds of local food. I think you ~~can~~ ^{will} enjoy ~~yourself~~ ^{it} ~~with~~ ^{the} so many delicious food.

I hope you'll enjoy your day - see you soon.

Love, ~~Shuciyaki~~

$$\begin{array}{r} 14\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} \\ \hline 15 \end{array}$$

(15/25)

PS The weather is likely to be hot and the air is dirty, so you'd better wear ~~a~~ T-shirt and ~~a~~ jeans.

A day in my town



58, Jalan Manis 3,
56100 Taman Segar,
Cheras, Kuala Lumpur.
22 - 6 - 19 98.

Dear Honey,

Thank you for your letter telling me what time your train is due to arrive in Kuala Lumpur Railway Station. I'll be there to meet you.

I'm looking forward to showing you where I live.

As soon as you arrive we'll go back to my house and show you my room. You can put down your luggage and change ^{to more} ~~your~~ comfortable clothes.

When we've done that we are going to see the famous K.L. Tower as well as the fascinating Twin Towers. I'm going to show you the shopping centre in here and we can do some window shopping.

When we're hungry we'll have our lunch at The Ship Restaurant. You must know, that it is a famous restaurant and the food is quite delicious.

After we've had lunch we'll go to see ^a ~~the~~ movie. After ^{we have seen} ~~the~~ movie, maybe we can chat at the coffee house. I'm going to ^{take} ~~bring~~ you to the Coffee Bean - ^a ~~the~~ famous coffee house in K.L.

In the evening we'll have ~~the~~ buffet dinner at Renaissance Hotel. After the dinner, we'll go back to my house to bathe and rest. At ~~the~~ night, I'm going to ^{take} ~~bring~~ you ^{for} ~~to~~ have the supper at the mamak stall.

I hope you'll enjoy your day - see you soon.

Love, Hokan Leng

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PS The weather is likely to be ~~hot and dry~~ ^{humid},
so you'd better wear T-shirt ~~with~~ jeans.

Excerpts of Teacher's Journal.

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Dialect(s)/Language(s) Spoken at home: Cantonese, Mandarin, Hakka & Ho
Location of the college that I teach: is in a Chinese-dol
 area in K.L.

Ss are in Semester 2.

Problem identified: Ss mixed up ^{verb} tenses in essay writing.

Reflection: Is it my fault that they are weak in gram-
 & plans mar? Or is it the teachers in secondary
 schools who did not teach them well? KBSM
 curriculum does not encourage explicit teaching
 of grammar. In fact it is supposed to be
 taught & learned in context, implicitly (see
 KBSM Curriculum Specifications, sect= 5: gr.)

I guess in a way I was wrong too, b/c I just
 assumed ^{that} at this level they should know all
 the basic gr. rules already. So I just em-
 phasized content whenever I taught comprehen-
 sion and/or writing in semester 1.

Q: How to get ss to write better essay in terms
 of fewer verb tense errors? If only they
 can grasp & apply gr. rules correctly,

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I am sure their writing will improve a lot. The college
 composition marking scheme does show that gr. is
 important. Hence, I need to think of a way to inter-
 vene. I must try a new strategy to teach gr. &
 link it to writing. I tried reading some research
 articles on explicit grammar teaching & form-
 focused instruction in MU library, some say it's effective
 but some say no. Which one should I follow?
 I must test it out first.

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7-5-98

First Round:

I administered a pre-test (on simple present tense) during normal E class. 16 ss present today b/c one didn't come due to flu.

After the test, ss ex'd their paper and marked as I discussed the answers with them.

10 ss did fairly well. } I took down the ss-scores
6 ss did not do well. } respectively.

I singled out the 6 ss who didn't do well to attend tutorial class in the afternoon. Then I carried out my planned lesson as usual with the whole class.

Intervention/ActionTutorial Class (session 1)

All 6 ss turned up on time.

- Set induction: Q & A.
- T & L of simple present tense using materials & h/o: that I have prepared by hand.
- Half way through, I realized th ss did not even v/s subject-verb agreement ^{as well as} singular &

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plural nouns. ∴ I ~~also~~ had to digress to teach these 2 gr. items, at the same time I also ^{had to} remem-bered to focus ^{back} on simple present tense.

if they have $\#/s$ and know how to use s.p.t. verbs. Subj-Verb agreement rules were also grasped. I then went on to inform ss some essay topics w require them to write in s.p.t.

Reflection: I think form-focused instruction is effective in helping ss to produce better writing. At least, in this round of "experiment" it is. From the completed feedback forms, I was very pleased that ss found the instruction helpful.

I think I should try out this method on another class (Foundation in Business - Class 2) next week. They are in their first semester and some of them are also very weak in E, esp. grammar.

Since I have prepared the materials, why not try it one more round?

* I must remember to rectify the mistake I made in Round 1, i.e. I must remember to give ss a pre-writing test so that I can

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off the results \bar{c} post-writing test later.

I want to test if "this method" (explicit gr. teaching) works on another class of ss. Of course, my purpose is not to make big claims; just want to improve my own practice & help ss write better essays. You know, I can teach & teach & teach, but my ss are ^{still} not learning. I should be more conscious of this. T & L must go hand-in-hand. I can't blame ss for being lazy/lackadaisical/dragging their feet/too weak, etc, etc. I need to look at myself, too, i.e. is my teaching practice effective?

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Plans: Teach simple present tense & link it to writing task meaningfully.

Procedures: ① Pre-tests
 $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{1. fill in the blanks.} \\ \text{2. writing task.} \end{array} \right.$
 } whole class.

② Questionnaire

③ Form-focused instruction

④ Practices

⑤ Sample texts (pair work / discussion in groups)

⑥ T-fronted discussion / consolidation / sum up / T's feedback

⑦ Post-test 1: fill in the blanks...

Post-test 2: writing task.

⑧ Feedback from ss.

⑨ T's feedback.

⑩ Analyse results, cft results, record data, interpret findings.

was not as much as the previous gps. Maybe it's due to their weak foundation in the lg. c/f to Round 1, Round 2 ss obtained worse results in SPIN than ss in Round 1. Another reason may be b/c Round 1 ss are already in Semester 2, ∴ they are more exposed to English than ss in Round 2 who are only in their Semester 1. (Analysis of Q^{ns} shows these).

Further reflection & plans.

If "this method" is effective in teaching simple present tense, it may be effective for other tenses as well! Since ss are also weak in other tenses, eg. future tense, maybe I should try it out on the ss in the next round.

Next round: teach future tense & link it to writing task. To be implemented on 11-6-98 as Third Round. Test on FBS Class 1 again.

Procedures for Round 3:

- ① Pre-test (writing task, use h/o) (whole class).
- ② Form-focused instruction:
 - T & L of future tense.
 - Lg activity/game for practices.
- ③ Controlled ss for more practice.
- ④ Sample texts for discussion (pair/gp work).
- ⑤ Teacher-Class discussion (sum up).
- ⑥ Post-test (writing task, use h/o).
- ⑦ Teacher's feedback.
- ⑧ Students' feedback.
- ⑨ Analysis of results, record data & interpret findings.

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of "experiment", too. A comparison of ss' pre and post tests show a very clear improvement in ss' written pieces.

Conclusions

I ~~was~~^{think} relaxed atmosphere aids T & L.

Lg game is fun & enjoyable.

Inputs are vital, esp. in the forms of sample texts.

Future tense forms - grasped by ss finally.

Reflection

23-6-98

After marking ss' post-test scripts, I noticed a marked difference in ss' improvement in terms of future tense used. Adjectives, too, seemed to have improved a lot. Maybe it's due to the 4 descriptive sample texts used in gp discussion on 22/6/98. That means, or it seems, ss were influenced by reading / background knowledge / prior knowledge in their writing. And they made much fewer errors as far as future tense is concerned.

exams as grammar is also included as part of the assessment criteria in the composition marking scheme (not only this college, other colleges/schools also practise the same thing, eg UKM, Mara, ^{over} IELTS & SPM exams include grammar as part of the assessment criteria). *Must find some proof to justify.

At least now I know that I have to teach grammar in an explicit way & link it to writing meaningfully so that SS can apply what they have learned in their writing.

I must start reading more on form-focused or explicit instruction or explicit gr. teaching to get some insights from ^{other} teachers' experiences. The study has helped me to be a teacher researcher ^{in my own small way (in my own class)}. As a result of reading others' findings & implications to lg teaching I have gained some insights myself regarding form-focused instruction, both theory & practice.

I have interviewed some of my M.Ed (TESL) coursemates to find out their opinion on explicit grammar teaching and reasons why they do not focus on form in classroom purposes. Below are the outcomes. (It was only coincidence that all 8 teachers were trained in Uni. of Malaya).

T 1: A college English T in KL. She has 3 years' teaching experience to Diploma AS. She is of the opinion that grammar is important in writing but she does not have the time to teach grammar explicitly in class due to tight syllabus schedule. She is not a trained teacher for English but Science.

T 2: An English T in ITM Shah Alam. She has 2 years' teaching experience. She says she has no time for grammar teaching in her lg class. She was trained to teach KBSM 3 yrs ago.

T 3: A college English T in UKM. She has 5 yrs'

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experience in teaching Year 1 undergraduates. She normally does not focus on form b/c of syllabus constraints and pressure of exams. She was trained to teach KBSM 6 yrs ago.

T4: A college English T teaching SS in Business Studies programme in PJ. She realises her ss' poor grammar in writing but does not teach grammar explicitly in class either due to lack of time. She has 15 yrs' teaching experience. She was trained to teach the Communicative Syllabus 16 yrs ago.

T5: A college English T teaching SS in a Pre-U programme in the Klang valley. She does not focus on form as she thinks finishing the syllabus is more important although she thinks grammar is more important in writing. She has 6 yrs' teaching experience. She was trained to teach KBSM 7 yrs ago.

T6: A secondary school English teacher in the Klang

valley for 8 years. She realises the importance of grammar in writing but was told to teach grammar in context. She was trained to teach KBSM 9 yrs ago. Another reason she gave was lack of time.

T7: A colleague of mine who is a product of Uni. of Malaya also. She has 3 years' teaching experience-teaching Foundation & Diploma SS. She thinks grammar is not important but content is. Although she realises the ss' weaknesses in grammar, she does not have the time to focus on form due to syllabus constraints & lack of time. She was trained to teach KBSM 4 yrs ago.

T8: Another colleague of mine who is a fresh graduate fr. Mill. She has only 3 months' teaching experience. She thinks grammar tarnishes student writing but does not focus on form for classroom purposes due to syllabus constraints & lack of time. She was also trained to teach KBSM before she joined the college.