Power and Reader-Writer Relationship :
EFL Writing Assessment
การตรวจงานเขียนภาษาอังกฤษที่เกี่ยวกับเกณฑ์ด้านพลัง
ในการเขียนและความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างผู้อ่านและผู้เขียน

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บทคัดย่อ

การตรวจงานเขียนภาษาอังกฤษในประเทศไทยจะเน้นความรวดเร็วและความเชื่อมั่น ดังนั้นเกณฑ์การ
ให้คะแนนส่วน ใหญ่จะเกี่ยวกับ ความคิด (ideas) การเรียบเรียงความ (organization) โครงสร้างประโยค (sentence
structure) ไวยากรณ์และกลไก (mechanics) การใช้คำ (wording) และ ความคล่อง (verbal facility) เกณฑ์
เหล่านี้มีลักษณะสอดคล้องกับภาระงานของผู้สอนและความสามารถของผู้เรียนในบริบทของการสอนภาษา
อังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ ในขณะเดียวกันก็ทำให้ผู้สอนลืมที่จะมองหาเกณฑ์วัดผลอื่นๆ ที่จะนำไปสู่การ
สอนที่ทำให้ผู้เรียนเรียนการเขียนและผลิตงานเขียนตรงตามหน้าที่และธรรมชาติของการเขียน สำหรับเกณฑ์ พลัง
(power) และ ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างผู้อ่านและผู้เขียน (reader-writer relationship) นั้น เป็นทางเลือกใหม่ การ
ใช้เกณฑ์สองเกณฑ์นี้จะนำไปสู่การพิจารณาเกณฑ์อื่นๆ อีก และเห็นแนวทางการวัดผลและประเมินผลทางการ
เขียนภาษาอังกฤษมากขึ้น สำหรับการดูงานเขียนว่ามีพลังและความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างผู้อ่านและผู้เขียนหรือไม่นั้น
สามารถ ดูประกอบกับสิ่งอื่นๆ เช่น การสร้างมโนทัศน์ (imagination) การใช้อุปมาอุปมัย (metaphor) แนวคิด
ทางสังคม (ideology) และการนำเสนอตัวเองและการสร้างความน่าเห็นใจ (ethos and pathos) เป็นต้น

คำสำคัญ : การวัดผลประเมินผล การวัดผลประเมินผลการเขียนภาษาอังกฤษ เกณฑ์การวัดผลทางการเขียน
พลังในการเขียน ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างผู้อ่านและผู้เขียน

Abstract

*EFL writing assessment in Thailand relies to a great extent on rapidity and reliability
in order to match teachers' workloads and students' English language competence. As a result,*

rubrics usually include criteria such as ideas, organization, sentence structure, mechanics, wording, and verbal facility, in other words, those that make grading quick and easily explainable. One important effect of this traditional method of assessment is that teachers pay less attention to other qualities that truly reflect the function and nature of writing. This paper presents power and reader-writer relationship as two possible criteria that may expand the current limited writing assessment method into other realms and give teachers more insight into how one should assess and research in the field of EFL writing. This paper suggests that other elements of writing such as imagination, metaphor, ideology, ethos, and pathos should also be taken into consideration along with the assessment of power or reader-writer relationship.

Key words : writing assessment, EFL writing assessment, grading criteria, power, reader-writer relationship

In 1961, Diederich, French, and Carton of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) seriously studied their evaluators' comments and finally arranged them under seven main headings, which included ideas, style, organization, paragraphing, sentence structure, mechanics, and verbal facility (Broad, 2003; Diederich, French; & Carlton. 1961). From those seven main headings, the ETS researchers eventually derived a list of five factors that seemed to capture readers' values in assessing writing. The five factors included ideas, form, flavor, mechanics, and wording. The seven headings and the five factors became the start of modern writing assessment in America, and many writing assessment researchers may have moved from those criteria. For example, studies about voice, tone, tightness, sincerity, etc. might have stemmed out from discussions about flavor.

Whether or not the assessment of EFL writing in Thailand has been influenced by American modern writing assessment, EFL writing teachers here use criteria similar to those of the ETS researchers. For most of us, a score given to a piece of writing usually reflects our values in organization, content, ideas, and more importantly, grammar. Whatever criteria or values we apply, they can almost always be categorized under the seven headings or five factors. And our values are long-lasting. Many years ago, I graded papers based on grammar, organization, content, and ideas.

This semester, my main headings are organization, content, grammar, drafts, and comments for a friend. Again, these are similar criteria to those valued by the ETS researchers. Organization refers to form. Content encompasses not only the amount of writing but also flavor, ideas, and wording. Grammar is mechanics.

Recently, however, I have adopted process pedagogy, in which students need to develop drafts and do peer reviews. What I have found is that Thai students rely heavily on their knowledge of grammar when giving comments, and if not on grammar, their comments and advice do not go far from whether the writing is well-structured, whether some ideas are irrelevant, or whether some sentences are unclear or confusing. Thus it may be concluded that how we teach and evaluate writing, what our students think about their writings, and the textual qualities that we all value represent criteria similar to those offered by Diederich, French, and Carlton.

There are some reasons why we are stuck at the surface level, or at teaching language, content, and organization. First, during the 14-15 weeks of a writing course, the teaching of grammar, relevant and irrelevant ideas, and paragraph and essay organization, and the correction of errors already overwhelm us. Second, our students make too many simple errors such as *"I am go," *"We must to see," and *"I love you increase and increase." Such errors make us believe that students can't write well unless they have some syntactic competence. Thus, with large numbers of students and some additional workloads, grading already exhausts us. In this situation, our grading rubric needs to be, as Broad (2003) says, brief and clear, and this creates a cycle: we teach what we evaluate, and we evaluate what we teach.

Therefore, some of us may fail to consider other things, for example, the effects of audience and purpose, rhetorical situations, word power, tone, creativity, ethos, pathos, student subjectivity, and many others. In other words, apart from those values we have in grammaticality and organization, there is much more to research into the act of the EFL writer. While there has been considerable research on how the English-speaking writer composes, little has been said of the acts, the difficulties, and the situations of the EFL writer. The simple, traditional rubric may be thought to be appropriate for EFL students, given the number of students, the teacher's workloads, and the students' level of

language competence. However, digging further for more complicated criteria, for more insight and excitement out of our students' writing, should reflect better what exactly we look for or value. I believe that it is not the grammatically correct, immaculate writing that excites us, but the power it conveys.

This paper aims to explore power and reader-writer relationship, as new possible grading criteria. It is appropriate to talk about both of these simultaneously because they are closely related; power is always shared between the reader and the writer. In our society, power and reader- writer relationship are "new things" because few Thai teachers have specifically considered them.

While focusing mainly on power and reader-writer relationship, the paper will also, more or less, mention the philosophical perspectives involving the teaching and assessing of writing. Untrained teachers, thus, will get knowledge about assessing writing. It is hoped that this paper will serve as a site for reconsidering how we evaluate writing, and also as a site for sharing opinion and thinking of other ways for assessing writing. It is also hoped that the critical discussions about power and reader-writer relationship and other qualities, and some examples from Thai students in this article will give more insight as well as provide some background for those interested in doing research in writing assessment.

Power and Reader-Writer Relationship

1. Grammar, Mechanics, and Organization: Readability

Our traditional way of assessing writing, which stresses grammar and format, certainly values power. White (1994)'s sample holistic scoring guide at California State University for the highest rating ("superior") includes the following qualities:

Addresses the question fully and explores the issues thoughtfully

Shows substantial depth, fullness, and complexity of thought

Demonstrates clear, focused, unified, and coherent organization

Is fully developed and detailed

Evidences superior control of diction, syntactic variety, and

transition; may have a few minor flaws

As one can see from this guide, for a piece of writing to be considered good, to be powerful, it must manifest one or more of four important qualities: it must address the topic fully and thoughtfully, it must express deep and complex thoughts, it must be well-organized, unified, and coherent, and finally it must display good language.

Not only CSU's rubric but also most rubrics value good organization and mechanics. At Vincennes University, a paper qualifying the score of 4 (Excellent) must have a thoughtful thesis that is developed thoroughly and consistently and include a fully developed, interesting introduction and a strong conclusion. In addition, its body must develop the main idea in a sharply focused, coherent fashion that includes the use of appropriate transitions. The paper must also reflect the standards of written English and display almost no errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or mechanics. Another example is the current Internet-based TOEFL writing rubric. It states that a piece of writing for a score of 5 (highest) must be well organized and if there are occasional language errors, they must not result in inaccurate or imprecise presentation of content or connections.

Those rubrics show that readability is the primary requirement for powerful writing. In the Thai EFL writing classroom, this is especially true. Readability creates power for Thai EFL students, especially readability that is derived from grammatical sentences and easy movements among ideas. Trimble (2000) requires two things of an author. First, the writing must teach or amuse the reader, and second, it must not waste the reader's time to get what the writer has to say. Readability in our context refers to Trimble's second requirement.

However, because readability, a source of power, is achieved through both language (grammar or mechanics) and the placing of ideas (organization), we should consider these important components separately. They have unique characteristics performed by Thai students.

First, most students write understandably. They write, *"In USA found that," *"The time has been passed the culture has also been changed," and *"Home is my memorable box that full of happiness," all of which are ungrammatical but comprehensible. However, a lot of their sentences are hard to grasp. Some sentences are difficult by themselves, while others are incomprehensible when placed in a context, as in *"Second, people's life have about unexpected always happens," *"It

made me encouraged on the planet will continue to be happy," and *"Time passed very quickly and never come back. What will be done soon." In the last example, it is not clear what "What will be done soon" means. But whether or not such examples here are comprehensible, they obstruct reading, decrease the chance to impress the reader, and even worse, may cause the reader (the teacher) to feel that the student is unintelligent or irresponsible for studying. Too many an error prevents the teacher from seeing the power of the writing and may even create a negative image of the student that is hard to change from the beginning till the end of the semester. Readability or grammaticality is the first requirement of powerful writing in the EFL writing classroom.

In fact, writing in standard sentential patterns and in good grammar gives just certain level of power. Writing that is grammatical but plain and simple is not powerful. Unfortunately, students produce such a kind of writing. This is because when points are deducted because of errors, students avoid complex or stylistic sentences, thus losing the chance to impress the reader. In fact, a complex sentence is not necessarily confusing or ambiguous; instead, it can make something clear by combining together ideas that are otherwise choppy if written separately.   Also, when students are too careful about not making errors, it is unlikely that they think about how the reader will like or dislike the writing, or it is unlikely that they are deeply engaged in the writing. As a result, they do not produce writing that manifests, as White (1994) suggests, "substantial depth, fullness, and complexity of thought," a quality that draws readers better than a good grammar.

What can we do then with the threat of grammar? In fact, there are indefinite ways to achieve power through crafting sentences. Unfortunately, there is no rulebook that teaches kinds or structures of sentences for empowering writing. Complex sentences give more details, delete choppiness, and often improve clarity, but they can also cause ambiguity, or even boredom. Many short sentences put together one after another may cause choppiness, but a short sentence after two or three long sentences gives a rhythm or a pause that, if placed in a right place, makes reader think or rethink about something. Creating power through sentence structures, therefore, is a skill that cannot be taught, a skill that comes to one naturally, rather by chance. Only one suggestion to give, therefore, is that you must notice and practice the techniques you think powerful by yourself. As a reader, you

may suddenly feel that a sentence exerts power. For example, a student writes about a broken home, describing what the father and mother do and what difficulties the children have. Then, after several long sentences, the student may choose to end the whole story with a short sentence, such as "Home is not home anymore." A short sentence not only gives a rhythm but also arouses a feeling, sympathy, or anger. It calls attention just like you pat someone's shoulder. Such a short sentence can make the reader evaluate or rethink about the situation. Next, repeated words can emphasize a feeling, as in "The boy never gets love and warmth from his parents; they never hug him, never give him advice, and never speak good words to him." Most Thai students learn that "never" often placed before an action verb, but they tend to use it just once in a sentence. If they use it a few times, they will find that it can intensify an emotion. Similarly, phrases or clauses of the same structure can be used not only to create rhythms but also to strengthen an emotion, as in "They will cut the jackfruit tree, cut the last rope that can take me back to the old days" or "I left my home with tears on my cheeks, with emptiness in my heart, with no hope at all."

In **The Power of Grammar: Unconventional Approaches to the Conventions of Language,** Ehrenworth and Vinton (2005) state that fragments can "create a more rapid pace [of reading] and imply the fragmented observation and knowledge [of something]" (p. 64) and shifting tense can change the mood and "evoke a sudden shift in perspective or voice, from one that is contemplative or distant to one that is more animated, sometimes more dangerous or provocative" (p. 68). Next, according to Trimble (2000), a semicolon can connect two choppy sentences. Two sentences joined with a semicolon become "crispy" or "flowing," as in "A beauty is a woman you notice; a charmer is one who notices you" (p. 107). Trimble states further that semicolons change the rhythm and pace of sentences, create a variety of reading, help the writer condense and thus empower a thought, make a tighter contrast, and create a unity of ideas. Trimble also elaborates on the effects of other punctuation marks. For example, commas make a light pause, set different parts off to avoid a misread, or help the reader grasp how the parts relate. Without a comma between two clauses, there can be momentary confusion and thus a delay of reading.

Above are just a few of numerous ways of using sentence structures and grammar knowledge to empower writing. What one must know, however, is that sentences and punctuation marks do not give the same effect in different texts. A particular sentence may be very powerful in one paragraph but not at all in another. The power that emerges from sentence structures and punctuation marks gets to its momentum not only by the sentence structures and punctuation marks themselves but also by the other sentences and ideas in the text, that is, by the context of the text.

Organization also generates power. Paragraphs and essays become effective through the clear divisions of ideas, the good order of supporting details, and the appropriate use of cohesive and coherent devices inside them. A clear division of ideas helps the reader move through the text easily because it presents in the mind of the reader the outline of the text. Similarly, a good order of supporting details inside a paragraph presents the outline the paragraph and thus helps the reader move easily from the beginning till the end. A good order of supporting details also enhances logic and reduces the chance of confusing the reader. Finally, cohesive and coherent devices, such as "consequently" and "in other words," help the writer to enhance the unity of the text, tying ideas inside paragraphs and linking subtopics inside essays together, which in turn helps the reader to read the text effectively.

In "Cohesion and Coherence," Kolln (1999) states that cohesion refers to the categories of ties that connect sentences, whereas coherence means cohesion on a global scale, including all features other than sentence-level ties that work together to produce a unified text. Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify five categories of cohesion—reference, conjunction, lexical cohesion, ellipses, and substitution. The reference category is further divided into three subcategories: personal pronouns, comparative signals, and demonstratives. All these reduce redundancy. The lexical cohesion category, divided into reiteration (repetition of the same word; synonyms and near-synonyms) and collocation (words that generally co-occur), is useful in making a text unified, especially a paragraph. The conjunction category includes all transitional words and expressions for unified writing at both paragraph and essay levels.

Cohesive and coherent devices are like the lubricant of writing, easing the movements of the ideas, and thus helping to make a clear presentation of the point the writer wants to convey. An appropriate use as well as an appropriate number of cohesive words and expressions empowers writing. Witte and Faigley (1987)'s research revealed that cohesive ties constituted up to 31 percent of all the words in high-rated essays. Such a large percentage might have been because English itself is a highly cohesive language (Kolln. 1999). It is implied by Witte and Faigley (1987), then, that writings with fewer cohesive ties are less powerful.

One unwanted quality related to cohesion that is often produced by Thai students is redundancy. In Halliday and Hasan's categories of cohesion, three of them, that is, reference (e.g. pronouns), ellipses (words or parts that are left out or understood), and substitution (words that are substituted for other structures), have the function of reducing redundancy. Thai students do not use these effectively. For example, when they compare two things or two places, they overuse the full structure of comparison, in which the than...phrase can, at certain places, be omitted because some preceding ideas already imply it. Students also rarely use "that," "this," or "so" to refer a preceding idea, and as a result, they have to use more sentences to link preceding ideas with following ones.

When we teach organization, we should not teach only how to begin a paragraph or essay, how to write a topic sentence or thesis statement, how to use transitional words, or how to write an introductory or concluding paragraph. We should also teach students to think precisely and economically. One may think that this goes back to grammar, but a lot of examples from our students show it is more about thinking than about grammar ability. One example to give here is this—*"The city is attractive me by several things that make it lively while there are only basic amenities in the countryside." This sentence is understandable, but it shows a fuse of many ideas; in fact, its overall idea could be written in just one short sentence, for instance, "I prefer the city to the countryside because it offers better amenities." Paragraph contains many imprecise sentences are hard to follow. Finally, in regard to organization, another thing that teachers should teach students is reading the mind of the reader. This is basically about what to and what not to include. In order to keep the

audience, students must know what their readers already know and what they don't. Discussions about discourse community by Porter (1992), Bartholomae (1985), Bizzell (1982), and Ong (1975) reveal three elements affecting the writing: the writer himself, the context of the writing, and other members of the community. The theorists point out that the more the writer understands these elements, the more successful the writing will probably become.

Coming from a different direction, Hirsch (1977) identifies two kinds of code shared by the writer and the reader that we may adopt in assessing writing. Simply defined, a restricted code refers to the idea already known by both parties, while an elaborated code refers to the idea only the writer knows. Based on these two kinds of code, we can think of reasons why a text is or is not powerful. To illustrate, while grading writing, we sometimes feel that something is missing, something that connects one idea with others, something that makes it clear. Sometimes, we feel that an idea or a pronoun comes up so suddenly that we cannot connect it with any preceding idea. However, there are many times when we feel that we are reading what we already know, for example, that homegrown vegetables are safe because they are pesticide-free, or that cigarette contains nicotine and so is dangerous. In brief, in order to be powerful, the writer must understand the reader, know what details to include and exclude, and know where to be short or long.

2. Quality of Thinking: Seriousness and Interestingness

Writing power also comes from the quality of thinking. This is where a requirement for good writing in White (1994)'s rating above—that the writing must express deep, critical, and complex thoughts, or that it must exhibit seriousness—comes into play. By showing "cool" thoughts, the writer is capable of making the reader think, rethink, evaluate something, and thus makes himself appreciated. How then can one think "cool"? There is no specific teaching, no examples or techniques, for a beginner writer. A particular word or phrase has different effects in different contexts. It is not predictable what effect a word, phrase, or idea may bring to a particular text. Only when the text is finished can the writer notice its effect. Thus, only one suggestion is "Think deep and think more."

One suggestion to give is that you must think differently, critically, and analytically. Barnet and Bedau (1993) suggest some ways to think critically. First, you must look at the topic from all sides, conduct an argument, ask questions, think of ways to say for and against the topic, etc. For example, if you were a smoker, you might write that it is unfair for you that the general people seriously support laws forbidding smoking while they ignore laws prohibiting throwing rubbish or discarding chemicals in rivers, activities that destroy the world much more than smoking. Another example is about watching soap operas during television prime times; you may say that it causes people to be inactive about politics, and that in a country where there are political disputes, soap operas ideologically help to calm down a big number of people. These two examples may strike some readers as thinking differently, critically, and as a result, powerfully.

Next, individual sentences or a whole text, holistically viewed, can exhibit critical or analytical thinking. In fact, even the topic sentence of a paragraph can demonstrate a level of critical thinking. Between "Loneliness may cause three problems for a person" and "In loneliness, one may be able to find an answer to one's life," the first denotes discrete thinking, point by point supporting, and also linking the points with the use of numbering transitions such as "first" and "second." On the other hand, the latter signifies thinking that is more abstract, thinking that leads to more possibilities, which is the true nature of writing. While abstractness may be hard to follow, it can be the source of creativity, or it can make the reader think more carefully. In other words, abstractness attracts the reader better. What is "an answer to one's life"? How does one define it? And how can one find it? The second topic sentence clearly exhibits a higher level of critical or serious thinking, and as a result, is more interesting.

Another technique is using metaphor. Metaphor makes the reader think. In fact, all languages are heavily embedded with metaphor. When people say, "Love is oxygen," "Education is the foundation of life," or "George is a gravel in my shoe," they are using metaphor. We can create millions of metaphor using the construction "Subject + Be + Subject Complement," but it is just one of uncountable constructions to create metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) point out numerous metaphorical concepts. Study the concepts and examples below:

LOVE IS WAR I love you; I will fight for you. Tony finally fled from Nancy.

ARGUMENT IS WAR He shot down all my arguments. He attacked all my points.

HAPPY IS UP; SAD IS DOWN You're in high spirits. I fell into a depression.

LIFE IS A CONTAINER Life is empty for him now. I'll try to get the most out of my life.

Most metaphors are associated with power. Metaphors contain words that describe a feeling or explain a situation better. "I will work as hard as possible for you" does not give the same seriousness as "I will fight for you." Metaphors allow you to be brief but clear because they are a natural and cultural use of language. Metaphors are creative, come to the mind easily, and are easily understood by others. Note, however, that Thai students do not exploit metaphors very much. They say, "I got depressed" instead of "I fell into a depression," and "I will do my best for my life" instead of "I'll try to get the most out of my life." Therefore, it would strike the teacher or reader as mature, natural, and competent in language use if a Thai student used such metaphors as those. The writing then exerts its power. Next, metaphors make the reader think or evaluate something. "Love is oxygen," for example, implies that love is crucial and indispensable, so important that one may die if without it. The reader reevaluates the word "love" and decides whether to agree or disagree. The power of metaphor lies in its power to make the reader think.

When considering power in writing again, we find that it is a mix of thinking deeply, critically, differently, and analytically, and also culturally, which is mostly metaphorical. The following examples from my students contain ideas manifesting those qualities.

...I do not think that humans need just clean, fresh weather, good environment, and peacefulness. Other than those things, there are still other things that we want, such as enjoyment, comfort, and convenience. The city is better than the countryside in that it gives many colors of life, many excitements. ...

...All of his mission that can define meaning of the word respect. Person that should be respected is not a rich person. Person that should be respected is not a nobleman. But it is the person that make a good things for his society. ...

...Why does the story show the reader that stealing is a bad habit through the giant that takes away all Jack's father's treasures, but finally shows that Jack is also a thief. I never noticed this point when I was young, but now I grow up and Jack doesn't seem to be a hero anymore....

3.　**Word Power and Imagination**

Another characteristic of metaphor is creating images in the mind of the reader. Words that create clear pictures in the mind of the reader exert power. Many single words can, by themselves, represent iconographies, or pictures that result from associating the words with other things. This use of words is metaphorical and cultural. An iconography refers to "[a] way that a particular people or political group represents ideas in pictures or images" (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English: The Complete Guide to Written and Spoken English. 1995). For example, a football club may use an arsenal to present its strength. Crocodiles are a symbol of evil in Egypt; thus, an actor described as acting like a crocodile in an Egyptian novel is seen by Egyptians as wicked. Bosmajian (1983) discusses words in many functional categories. Metaphorical words or expressions such as "contamination of our people," "blood poisoning," and "black parasites" are put under the category of language of hatred that can be used to arouse anger. Words such as "chick" and "babe" make the reader think of a weak person and are put in the language of sexism that is used to insult others.

However, mental pictures are not created through metaphorical words only. When you write that three brown leaves are falling down from a tree, the reader can imagine the picture. When you say that a tree walked across a mountain, your listener imagines that a tree has two legs and walks. Personification is metaphorical (Lakoff; & Johnson. 2003) and a technique used to create pictures. Thus, a tree can walk, death can speak, love can wither, a river can hug, and so on.

For the most part, however, the power of a text is accumulative; that is, all details weave together to produce power. It is true that single words can exert power and make an impression of some sort. That chance is rare, though. In addition, a metaphorical word works best in its context, not by itself alone. It is the feeling described, the words used, and also the plot, that work together to create power. Descriptive sentences knit together to give a larger scene and to form a feeling.

Metaphorical words, the pictures they build, descriptive details, and the plot are all the sources of power. In the paragraph below, which I wrote when I was a student, those elements work together; the plot conceals some details and that makes the reader want to know who the girl is and what happens to her.

> It was a late, silent Sunday evening. A young woman was walking to a stone bench under a hookwang tree in front of a library. She sat down and looked at the far west in front of her. Far away, the sun was going down behind the bushes beyond a smooth river. A wind blew and the hookwang leaves rattled. A few leaves were falling down, and when one reached the ground beside her foot, she slowly turned to look at it, her eyes sad. Above her, a bird was chirping, as if waiting for its mate. Tears flowed down on her cheeks. She looked at her watch several times. The sun disappeared and darkness came. The woman walked slowly into the dark behind the library. "I won't come here again," said the young woman, sobbing.

4. Self, Ideology, Ethos, and Pathos

The latest movement in composition teaching is post-process pedagogy. There have been three main camps in the field of composition—current-traditional, process, and post-process. Current-traditional emphasizes correctness, arrangement, and style (Kaewnuch. 2009; Crowley. 1998). Because it emphasizes correctness, current-traditional pedagogy, Huot (2002) points out, has a punitive and pervasive nature. In contrast, process credits student agency more than anything. In process teaching, the student "finds his own subject" and "uses his own language" (Murray.1997: 5). Post-process is an extension of process, incorporating the social aspect of writing. According to McComiskey (2000), post-process could be seen as an extension of process into "the social world of discourse" (p. 47).

As elaborated in section 1 above, arrangement and style are certainly the source of power. A good organization makes reading easy and effective. However, if we carefully consider writing power in the light of process and post-process methodologies, we find that it emerges more from the ability to combine the writer's self and the society (the audience). The writer's self is his agency, or his ethos. Ethos is understood as a self-representation; the writer's ethos helps him to

gain trust from the reader. The writer's agency is expressed as his feeling, belief, emotion, opinion, desire, pride, etc. (Kaewnuch. 2008). The writer's power, thus, comes from the image he makes of himself, from his presentation of himself as a person in this world. Whether or not the reader sees the writer's power depends on how the reader views the writer as a person. In most cases, we believe or have trust in the person who holds the same ideologies as ours. There is no definite definition of the term ideology. Eagleton (1991) defines this term as "the process of production of meanings, signs, values, in social life," "ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power," "false ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power," "systemically distorted communication," "forms of thought motivated by social interests," and "action-oriented sets of beliefs" (pp.1-2). From these broad definitions, we understand that an ideology is anything from a clear idea—easily understood, widely accepted, or even socially unacceptable—to a hidden one that drives an action or policy.

It is difficult to decide whether someone's action has been driven by an ideology. But from Eagleton's definitions, we can understand that ideologies are purposive. If the government's opposition hires men to commit crimes to cause unrest in order that the government is weakened, the opposition's action is ideological. If the government doesn't want young people to be involved with politics so that they are not against them, it may support, advertise, or import foreign fashions for young people to be obsessed with them. Such a governmental action is ideological.

Although such ideologies above are deep and hard to detect, when a student writes, "The government should," he automatically forces the reader to think critically as well as ideologically, and the reader will decide later whether to agree or disagree. In most cases, however, ideologies are not deep or tricky, and are the common ideas, beliefs, and values that society accepts or rejects. Actions contain ideas, beliefs, and values, so an action can arouse a feeling, emotion, hatred, or sympathy related to an ideology. For example, society will sympathize with a man whose wife left him and his children because he is poor. Society will consider the man to be right and his wife to be wrong. Such a decision is based on moral ideology or code that people gradually absorbed as they grew up and socialized with others. Thus, the principle is that one must learn to be "a good man speaking well."

One point to make here, however, is that moral ideology, ethos, and pathos are interrelated. Pathos is a quality or a situation that makes one feel sad or sorry for a person. Ethos is one's self-presentation to society. A person presenting him or herself as being treated badly or unfairly, therefore, creates pathos for him or herself, and it is moral ideology that people culturally absorb that helps them judge whether one presents oneself well or in standard social values, or whether one deserves sympathy. In writing, the writer, consequently, must consider whether he presents himself well enough based on moral ideology, or in a way that helps him earn sympathy or compassion from readers.

5. Other Qualities

Apart from those ways for empowering writing explained above, there are in fact many other ways and techniques, as well as numerous details, that writers may have to think about or adopt. Due to space limit, this paper can't elaborate on all those ways or techniques.

Some of those ways may be mentioned briefly here, however. First, think about the use of language. The use of some words may have certain effect. Moorman (1985) advises that writers should not overuse the construction "make + sb + adj./ v1," as in "He made me cry" because it may sound that the writer does not have power. Moorman discusses many kinds of language, for example, language of confidence and language of acceptance. Writers can apply words or expressions of such kinds. Next, Oshima and Hogue (2006) explain that synonyms, consistent pronouns, and repeated key words can unify writing, helping the writer to stick to the topic. Finally, collocations help make writing unified and smooth, and colloquial words make writing lively and powerful in some genres.

Now, think about what writers can do and should not do. For an interesting start of an essay, there are certain ways a writer may use to capture readers. Even academic writing, a genre of serious writing, may apply a lively story at the beginning. Next, writers are advised to use examples and specific details. The use of examples and specific details is usually creative and unpredictable; that is, the writer can't predict what examples and details to use before the writing takes place. To illustrate, if a writer starts with the idea that, for example, Tharamus Hells have the best Internet LAN

connected with all Internet LANs on the earth, he may suddenly come with an idea that he can chat with someone on the earth, which is a creative detail. Lastly, there are qualities of writers that I did not mention above about the writer's ethos. Readers don't like writers who sound pretentious, or who exaggerate. They like writers who sound sincere.

Finally, with the advent of post-process pedagogy comes an attention in writing as a mix of different discourses. Critical linguistics tries to explain how graphics, symbols, colors, etc. affect the quality of writing, or what differences the pronouns "I," "you", "we," and "they" make in a particular piece of writing. In a television advertisement today, there is a European guy who uses a sword deftly, like that in old traditional Chinese movies, advertising a Thai product. It is powerful. In writing too, there is such power of mixed discourses (Kennedy. 1998; Faigley. 1992).

Conclusion

There is no forum for EFL writing teachers specifically in our society now in which we who teach writing can discuss what writing qualities exactly we want our students to produce. We seem to share one universal criterion, "Good grammar and good organization." By imposing this criterion on our students, we automatically exclude many valuable qualities from our profession. In order to be accepted into our profession, students must do "this" and "this" and not "that" and "that." "Don't write fragments." "Don't use colloquial terms." "Don't use 'I.'" "Don't be emotional in academic writing." "Don't start a sentence with 'But' and 'And.'" "'Moreover' is obsolete." "Don't use 'may' and 'tend to' to show indeterminacy." "Don't use 'like' because it is informal, use 'such as.'" "Use transitional words." "Write a clear thesis." Many more.

Not only do such preferences as those place our students as "the other," but they also reflect that we do not have a shared understanding of how we should assess writing. Those dos and don'ts are just personal preferences that cannot be explained convincingly by any theories. If you flip through some academic books of these days, or in some research reports, you can spot "I," not just "the researcher." You can also see that many authors start sentences with "But" and "And." Thus, there is only one explanation to give for those dos and don'ts, "Because the paper needs to be in good

language and organization." With that simple explanation, an A paper can't be anything but an A paper. Grading depends so much on personal preferences.

Sticking to such preferences on language and organization, we leave out many other writing qualities. Unfortunately the qualities that we leave out reflect the true reasons why we teach writing. Evaluating writer-reader relationship and power will help reflect our belief that language is social, and that writing is a tool of communication involved with sharing powers and relationships.

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