

# Accounts of school in Vietnam and Australia: An analysis of L2 writing development

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines two pieces of writing in English by a high school student from a Chinese–Vietnamese background. The texts were produced after approximately one, and then two, years' residence in Australia. An analysis was conducted following the meaning-based grammar of Halliday. A significant development of the student's second language (L2) writing from one text to the next was found, particularly in his representation of experience and in fulfilment of the task itself. There were some areas where the student's writing had not progressed, and others areas where avoidance of problematic grammatical forms was apparent.

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## Introduction

When evaluating students' writing, teachers conventionally consider both *form* and *content*. This is made explicit, for example, in standardised tests such as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), where indicators are grouped into three categories: task fulfilment, coherence and cohesion, and vocabulary and sentence structure (British Council 1992). The separation of form and content in this way is clearly of value to assessors, both in identifying a range of proficiency and in providing for some consistency of response.

The present study, however, offers an examination of how form *realises* content within student writing, and it does this by drawing on a grammar which is itself semantic, rather than purely formal. That is to say, if we view grammar as providing a set of resources from which a speaker/writer draws in order to make meaning (Halliday 1975), then an examination of grammatical choices will also reveal semantic choices. In this way, the present study seeks to build upon text analyses offered by, for example, Gerot and Wignell (1994), Er (2000) and Unsworth, Astorga and Paul (2002). The present study focuses on how an English as a Second Language (ESL) student is 'learning to mean' in a new language – his third, after

Chinese and Vietnamese. For this purpose, two written texts, which the student produced within his first three years of resettlement in Australia, were analysed. Because both texts were set on the same topic and created in similar conditions, it has been possible to trace the writer's L2 development over a period of time.

### Systemic functional grammar

The present study focuses on the use of systemic functional grammar to analyse learner writing at clause level. The systemic functional grammar of Michael Halliday (1985, 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen 2004) has been highly influential on Australian writing pedagogy through the 'Sydney School' and genre theory (eg Christie 1990; Macken-Horarik 1996; Rothery 1996; Martin 2000; Unsworth 2000).

Halliday's semantic grammar identifies three linguistic metafunctions that are realised in text: **experiential**, **interpersonal** and **textual**. Each of these metafunctions is in a two-way constitutive relationship with the respective register variables of *field*, *tenor* and *mode* (Painter 2000).

**Experiential** meanings serve to represent experience: through this function, what we recognise as the topic or content of our communication is created. In other words, when speaking/writing, we always have 'something to say'. Experiential choices construct the *field* of discourse.

**Interpersonal** meanings realise the social relations that are part of all communication. When we speak/write, we always have an 'audience' in mind, and so our language is shaped differently according to whether we address a friend, stranger, child and so on. Interpersonal choices construct the *tenor* of discourse.

**Textual** meanings are those through which language achieves cohesion and coherence. The textual function varies according to channel: whether communication is face-to-face or distant in physical space, whether it is written or spoken, and whether it is synchronous or asynchronous. Textual choices construct the *mode* of discourse.

Two learner texts are analysed here in terms of each of Halliday's three metafunctions. In this short analysis, only particular language features in relation to each metafunction will be considered, and at clause level only; logico-semantic relations beyond the clause will not be covered.

### Transfer from L1 to L2

A supplementary perspective on the learner's L2 development will draw upon first language (L1) influence. Studies across languages and cultures have been termed **cross-linguistic** (Kellerman and Smith 1986) or seen in terms of **transfer** (Odlin 1989); and associated studies of L2 writing have

been approached through **contrastive rhetoric** (Leki 1991; Grabe and Kaplan 1996). Support for L1 transfer – both positive and negative – at discourse level appears in studies of ESL learners from a number of different language backgrounds, including Chinese (Field 1994; Ramsey 2001) and Vietnamese (Söter 1988). At sentence level, the notion of contrastive analysis has lost ground as a predictive, and even explanatory, tool over the last 30 years (Richards 1971; Schachter 1974), but language teachers continue to find value in comparative studies of grammar and phonology (eg Swan and Smith 2001).

### **Research rationale**

The present study investigates the development, or lack thereof, of an immigrant student's L2 writing created at two points, approximately one year and then two years after resettlement in Australia. I wish to explore what has changed from one text to the next in terms of what the student writes about; the extent to which he adopts an 'objective' or 'personal' stance; his positioning of himself and his addressee in terms of his new country and old country; as well as his understanding and fulfilment of the writing task itself. I examine the student's control of parts of the grammar and areas in which there is no development but, rather, stabilisation or avoidance. In this analysis, an additional perspective is provided by language transfer theory, where the continuing influence of L1 may explain elements of the student's L2 writing.

In sum, the study aims to provide a perspective on L2 writing that is holistic, takes into account sociocultural factors and acknowledges how form realises content, how interpretation of a task is culturally influenced, and how a comparison of written L2 texts over time enables us to trace a semantic journey.

### **The texts and their author**

The writer of the texts under discussion is a Vietnamese student whose first language is Chinese and whose second language is Vietnamese. He entered Australia as a refugee, after having missed one-and-a-half years' schooling in Vietnam. The student was motivated and conscientious and was regarded as having above-average ability by teachers at both his Intensive English Centre and at high school. Text 1 was written when the student was 17 and-a-half years old, and after 13 months' residence in Australia; Text 2 was written when the student was nearly 19 and had lived in Australia for 28 months. Thus, a period of 15 months separates the production of the two texts. Both are reproduced in the appendix.

The writing task was the same on both occasions:

Write a letter to your friend in your old country. Describe what your school is like and how it is different from your old school.

The task itself is a fairly open one in generic terms. It could be interpreted as a report, as in response to a question like: *tell me what happens in each country*, or a personal recount, as in response to: *tell me what happened to you*. It could draw upon narrative, if an anecdote enlivens the recount, or upon discussion if the relative merits of the two school systems are evaluated. Primarily, of course, the purpose of each text was to display the student's L2 writing proficiency for the purposes of assessment: thus, the first text was elicited for assessment purposes at the point of the student's move from an Intensive English Centre to mainstream high school, and the second in order to provide a comparison with the first.

The number of clauses that constitute Text 2 is approximately 10% greater than that of Text 1, and this should be borne in mind when comparing the numerical occurrence of items.

## Experiential metafunction

In creating experiential meanings, the category of *process* is a core resource, for, as Halliday puts it, 'Our most powerful conception of reality is that it consists of "goings-on": of doing, happening, feeling, being' (1985: 101). *Processes* are normally realised through verbs. 'Players' in the process are termed *participants*, normally realised by nouns or pronouns. Associated details of time, place and manner are grouped as *circumstance*, normally realised by adverbs, adverbial phrases or prepositional phrases. So it is possible, through an examination of the types and number of *processes*, *participants* and *circumstances* selected by the writer of a text, to investigate the choices made in the **representation of experience**. In the present paper, I look in some detail at selection of *processes*, but for reasons of space will deal only briefly with choice of *participants* and will not examine choice of *circumstances*.

### PROCESS TYPES

There are six types of processes through which a speaker/writer can express 'goings-on' (Halliday 1985):

- |   |                    |  |
|---|--------------------|--|
| 1 | <i>material</i>    | doings or happenings                     |
| 2 | <i>behavioural</i> | psychological or physiological behaviour |
| 3 | <i>mental</i>      | feelings, thoughts and perceptions       |

- 4 *verbal* 'saying', in the sense of 'telling' or 'symbolising'  
 5 *relational* relationships between people/things  
 6 *existential* indicating the existence of something.

The selection of processes in the two texts is summarised in Table 1, then briefly described and followed by a more detailed commentary.

**Table 1: Process types in Texts 1 and 2**

Process type	Text 1		Text 2	
	No of instances	%	No of instances	%
material	14	30	25	45
behavioural	3	6	2	4
mental	5	11	7	13
verbal	4	8	1	2
relational	21	45	20	36
existential	–	–	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100</b>

### Material and behavioural processes

Material processes represent actions: what participants do, or have happen. They are widely utilised in both texts, for example:

Text 1 I *received* your letter yesterday  
 They *came* from many different country

Text 2 I *left* you for about two and a half years  
 and *worked* six days a week

Behavioural processes function similarly to material processes in a number of ways, but specifically represent behaviours such as breathing, smiling and listening, which are confined to human (or humanised) agents. Their limited occurrence in these texts is:

Text 1 *am studying* (2), *talk* (1)

Text 2 *studying* (2)

### Mental processes

Mental processes represent the ways in which we think ('cognition'), feel ('affect') and see/hear ('perception'). They occur in these texts as follows:

Text 1 5 occurrences: *enjoy* (1), *learn* (4)

Text 2 7 (single) occurrences: *mean*, *forget*, *understood*, *think*, *remember*, *know*, *hope*

### Verbal processes

Verbal processes represent ways of saying, both literally and symbolically. They occur in these texts as follows:

Text 1 *was asking, to answer, told, tell*

Text 2 *tell*

### Relational and existential processes

Relational processes represent states of being. Some of the many occurrences in these texts include:

Text 1 we still *are* good friends  
this *is* the goodness way to learning english

Text 2 I *have* time to sent you this letter  
and the sport time *took* just about an hour

Existential processes are a subset of relational processes, which serve to signify the existence of something and which are accompanied by the dummy subject 'there', as in, for example, 'there *are* three points to discuss' or 'there *were* two objections'. No existential processes occur in either of these two texts.

### COMMENTARY

An examination of the choices made by the writer in relation to process type may contribute to an analysis of both the experiences he opted to document and his capacity to do so in the written mode of his second language.

### Material and relational processes

As indicated above, material (and behavioural) processes may be said to represent *action*, and relational (and existential) processes represent *state*. In these texts, to what extent is the focus on action – what participants do or have happen – and to what extent is it on their states of being? There are a number of points of interest here.

It is clear that the construction of an appropriate balance between action and state would be necessary for the success of the present writing task. In the first text, there is a relative preponderance of relational processes, which has served to focus on states at the expense of actions, thereby creating a certain 'flatness' in the writing. In the second text, however, the proportion of relational processes has reduced from 45% to 36%; the proportion of material processes has increased by half, from 30% to 45%; and a significant widening of range has occurred – all factors that have contributed to

enlivening the representation of experience. In other words, there is more happening in the second text.

### **Behavioural and existential processes**

Next, if we look more closely at the subsidiary process types – the behavioural and then the existential – we may note that, in the case of the former, while their occurrence is minor in these texts (as may be expected, given such processes' limited semantic scope), what behavioural processes can contribute to text is a dimension of 'human interest' which is under-represented in the writing examined here. As noted above, no instances of existential processes occur in either text. This absence is significant because, in a writing task of this nature, the starting-point must be to indicate the existence of things. This absence will now be discussed from the perspective of L1 transfer.

Li and Thompson (1976) and Schachter and Rutherford (1977) have shown how topic–comment languages such as Chinese – the first language of the writer – differ from subject–predicate languages, such as English, in a number of respects. Most relevant here is the different way in which Chinese and English construct the existential clause. English draws on the verb 'to be', together with the dummy subject 'there', to form the existential clause: Chinese uses the verb 'to have', without a dummy subject.

Semantically, the nearest process-type in English is the Relational, in particular of the possessive or intensive type. In Text 1 there are no existential processes, but six relational processes, which would be realised by existential processes in standard English, and one 'borderline' existential/relational instance (indicated by an asterisk). Text 2 also contains no existential processes, and there is one relational-type substitute.

Instances of substitutions are set out below. In determining how to interpret and 'correct' these conflicts between form and function in the student's texts, I looked for the apparently intended function within the writing, and ascribed what I perceived to be the most appropriate form. And so, for example, the phrase 'sometime still has a small fighting', I interpreted as 'sometimes, there are still some small fights'.

#### Text 1

- 1 Every school *has* 5 days of lessons
- 2 On Wednesday *has* only 4 periods
- 3 at old school of our country ... which only *has* 2 terms per year\*
  
- 4 and after first term *has* 3 months holiday
- 5 After last term *has* half month holiday
- 6 Either *has* 5 days ...
- 7 each week *has* only, 1 or 2 periods for sport

## Text 2

Sometime still *has* a small fight

Given the identical task parameters set for Texts 1 and 2, and the similar writing contexts, it seems that by the time of the latter text the student has developed strategies to avoid both the existential process itself and the earlier mistaken transfer of that function to the relational process. Thus, we may say that the absence of the existential process type in the texts can be attributed to a lack of L2 grammatical resource on the part of the writer, which has been produced by the absence of that resource in his L1.

### Mental processes

Mental processes, as indicated earlier, are concerned with human 'sensing'. In fulfilling a written task of this type, the number and range of mental processes selected will depend on how far the writer desires, considers appropriate and is able, linguistically, to move from outer experience (doing, happening, being) to inner reality – 'sensing' (thinking, perceiving and feeling). While the total number of occurrences of mental processes is similar in Text 1 and Text 2, it is significant that the range of mental processes in Text 2 has significantly broadened from two to seven distinct lexical items.

The verbs that realise mental processes in these texts are high-frequency items in English, identified by Halliday and James as amongst the 50 most common in written English (1993). Moreover, they are early-acquired, forming a part of beginner ESL programs. Further, these verb constructions do not, in the researcher's experience, present special difficulty to learners from a Chinese language background. The limited range of mental process verbs made in Text 1, then, cannot be fairly attributed to a lack of grammatical resource on the writer's part. It represents a semantic move, signifying the writer's minimisation of his 'human interest' choices in representing experience.

### Verbal processes

We may note that one function of the verbal process type is to allow a writer to step back from the text and to draw the audience's attention to this remove: to present a frame within a frame, as it were. It is possible that the more frequent occurrences of verbal processes in Text 1 compared to Text 2 represent a more self-conscious approach to the writing task; that is, at the earlier stage, the writer may have wished to distance himself from the task in hand by calling attention to it.

## PARTICIPANTS

At the most general level, we may distinguish between participants in these texts as human (eg *you, teachers*) or non-human (eg *school, lessons*). Table 2 summarises the participant choices made in Texts 1 and 2.

**Table 2: Distribution of participant types**

	Text 1		Text 2	
Human	18	28%	42	55%
Non-human	42	72%	38	45%

There is a significant difference in the representation of participants in these texts. In Text 1 there are over twice as many non-human participants as there are human participants; in Text 2 there are more human participants than non-human. Moreover, of the human participants represented in Text 1, 39% are generalised (eg *students, teachers*) and 61% are specific (eg *I, you*); in the later text, 20% are generalised and 80% are specific. Clearly, there has been a shift of focus between Texts 1 and 2 from the non-human to the human, and from the generalised to the specific.

## Interpersonal metafunction

The interpersonal organisation of the clause is concerned with the interaction of the speaker/writer and audience. Here we can examine the communication roles that are being enacted through the clause in its function of exchange. Halliday (1994) builds upon the traditional grammatical categories of mood and modality in analysing this interpersonal function. The mood of the clause consists of subject and finite elements, both of which serve to ground the exchange in the here and now. Modality expresses the speaker's judgment of the probabilities and obligations involved in the proposition.

We will look briefly at two aspects of interpersonal meanings as construed in the texts under discussion: *verb tense* and *modality*.

## TENSE

Primary tenses, by and large, function and are formed correctly in both texts. That is, the writer succeeds in locating the exchange in time and space: for example, in addressing his recipient, 'When I write this letter to you, I also thing [*sic*] about ...'. There is no use of the future tense, nor does the task in hand particularly call for it. The past form 'used to' does not appear. While these texts are too short to generalise about non-use of certain structures, it is worth noting that the 'used to' form would provide a shade

of meaning particularly appropriate to that aspect of these texts which seeks to compare habitual past and present.

Although the second text is 10% longer than the first in its number of clauses, all the secondary tense forms and the passive occur less frequently in the later text: the primary tense forms occur correspondingly *more* often. It seems reasonable to hypothesise that, as discussed earlier with regard to existential processes, by the time of the second text, the writer has found ways of avoiding some structures of English that cause him problems. On the occasions when the writer does attempt to use the forms in question, there is little evidence of increased proficiency.

### MODALITY

*Modal operators* express a range of obligation and of probability. Only one, 'must', occurs in Text 1, and none in Text 2. The writer has chosen not to indicate his judgment along these axes and, while the writing task does not require wide use of such features, their absence does indicate a reduction in 'exploratory talk' – of ruminating and reflecting.

*Modal adjuncts* have two types, mood and comment. None of the comment type appear in these texts. Mood adjuncts are as detailed in Table 3 and, predictably for this task, are concerned largely with usability.

**Table 3: Occurrence of mood adjuncts**

	Text 1	Text 2
usuality	usually, always, sometimes, never	always, sometimes, never
time	still	still, just
intensity	only	–

Once again, there is not a wide range of resources being used by the student; nor does there appear to be expansion from the earlier to the later text. However, usage is both correct and appropriate on all occasions.

### Textual metafunction

The clause functions at a 'textual' or 'message' level through the organisation of the thematic structure. The theme represents 'what the clause is going to be about' (Halliday 1975: 64) and is realised by initial position in the clause. The theme may be said to represent the point of departure of the message, while the rheme serves to develop that message.

We will look at theme choices in these texts in order to examine what the writer wishes to foreground in the information structure. Only the

choice of topical theme will be considered here: a summary appears in Table 4.

**Table 4: Summary of topical themes**

Topical themes	Text 1	Text 2
• writer of the letters	5 } 20%	14 } 48%
• recipient of the letters	3 }	4 }
• both writer and recipient	–	6 }
• notions relating to Vietnam	16 39%	6 12%
• notions relating to Australia	16 } 41%	1 } 40%
• writer and Australian peers	1 }	7 }

In Text 1, the majority of themes are clustered equally around Vietnam and Australia. In Text 2, however, while thematised experiences relating to Australia are of similar frequency, references to Vietnam have diminished by more than half, and references to writer and recipient have doubled. This notable shift of theme corresponds with the earlier discussion of experiential meaning, where it was found that in Text 2 the writer's participant choices produced both a distancing from his former country and a greater readiness to bring himself and his friend into the present picture.

Equally interesting here is the thematisation of 'we'. In Text 1, 'we' in the inclusive sense of addressee and writer does not occur; in Text 2 it occurs six times. The effect of this drawing on shared experience is to reduce the psychological distance between the two parties.

## Discussion

The writing task as given requires the student to communicate to a distant friend a description and comparison of the school environments of two countries. The degree of objectivity/subjectivity is not specified; it could lie somewhere on a continuum from thing-based to person-based. In other words, the writer could focus on the reporting of the 'facts' of the situation, or he could present a more personal voice. Of course, a 'real' letter to a friend in Vietnam would have been written in Chinese rather than in English, and would have been for a friend's eyes and not those of his English teacher. We might anticipate that such a letter would be more reflective, or critical or anecdotal – but it would certainly be of a quite different tenor.

However, this was a school assessment task, and its primary purpose was to display the student's proficiency in the written mode of L2. The current syllabus for English (ESL) at Year 12 Higher School Certificate (HSC) level

in New South Wales (NSW), which is paralleled in other Australian states, includes as objectives the development of students' capacity for 'interpretive, critical and imaginative' writing, as well as their awareness of 'context, audience, purpose' (NSW Board of Studies 2004). An interesting example of a somewhat similar writing task appeared in the 2003 NSW HSC paper, where students were required to write two personal letters in the form of applications for employment and study scholarships. While these tasks differ from the personal letter of the current study in that they were more instrumental in nature, it was notable that examiners, in their published report, asserted that 'the best responses' to these questions 'combined pertinent and persuasive information *with an authentic and engaging voice*', and that the 'better responses showed *imagination* and flair in expression' (NSW Board of Studies 2003: 11 – my emphases).

As an ESL teacher, I would judge a successful response to the task set in this study to be one which not only informed but which brought the student's voice to bear upon the topic, in this case through 'evaluation' rather than 'persuasion'. That is to say, in the present task, while the presentation of information about schools such as study hours, holidays and so on would be appropriate, of greater impact upon a reader would be the communication of the writer's personal response, whether this be analytical or anecdotal in nature.

Actually, the task instruction itself does not specify any of the expectations which have been elucidated above and which would, I believe, be commonly held by English teachers. That is, as indicated earlier, the writer had been directed neither to focus upon 'the facts' of the situation nor to construct 'a personal response'. In Text 1, he clearly favoured the former perspective. The preponderance of relational processes in Text 1, and its more limited range of material and mental processes, together with the large number of non-human participants, contribute to the construction of this relatively 'objective' description. In Text 2, however, the writer makes choices which more closely reflect his personal experience of the world. He is more ready to convey thoughts and feelings, and to bring specific people into the picture. The resulting text is more personal, more successful in engaging the reader, and more appropriate to the writing task as conceived within the Australian school system.

There are two ways in which we may interpret these changes in the writer's response to the tasks. First, the earlier writing task was presented 'unseen', that is without teacher modelling or scaffolding and under test conditions, and the generic expectations had not been made explicit to the student. However, by the time of the second text, the writer had spent over a year in an Australian high school, where the HSC English curriculum

requires proficiency in a range of written genres, and where students are guided to be able to manipulate tenor in order to vary relations of power, affect and solidarity. Accordingly, the writer may have become more comfortable with the dual purpose and audience of the task as given and, hence, more ready to acknowledge and to convey a personal account through the medium of his new language.

Second, there is a broader reading of the student's development suggested by the shift of semantic focus from the 'factual' account of Vietnam in Text 1, to the construction of Vietnam as a 'shared experience' in Text 2. That is, Vietnam memories are now represented in more human form, with a greater focus on people, shared activities and feelings. This move suggests a confidence of position which has enabled the writer to recall and re-present his home country in a more personal voice. And so, if we accept the purpose of the texts at face value, that is as two letters to a friend, then the messages they contain signal not only linguistic development but some degree of successful adaptation to the target culture, or 'acculturation' in Schumann's term (1986). Moreover, if we regard the texts as being written for their 'true' audience of an Australian teacher, it may also be significant that the student chooses to signal this adaptation to a member of that new culture.

## Conclusion

The analysis of this student's writing through two texts produced at approximately one year and then two years after resettlement in Australia revealed a significant degree of L2 development. In particular, the student's representation of experience was found to have developed in depth and breadth over this 15 month period, as indicated by his selection of processes and participants, and his development of texture through thematic choices. At the sociocultural level, the student's response towards school-based writing tasks suggests a significant acculturation to the Australian school system.

Alongside the writer's significant degree of progress in L2 development, the analysis also highlighted the erroneous construction of the existential clause in English, which was apparently being avoided by the time of the second text and which was probably the result of influence of the first language. Moreover, it was found that the student's control of systems of verb tense and modality had progressed little from one text to the next. In these respects, it appears that the student's L2 had either stabilised or that, as his knowledge of the L2 system had expanded, he had found means of avoiding problematical language structures.

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## Appendix

### ORIGINAL TEXTS

#### Text I

Dear Mr John

How are you? I recieved your letter yesterday, your letter was asking about my school I am studying, and how difference are they between foriegn school and old school in our country? I am very happy to answer this question to you.

A school I am studying is Intensive Language and Reception Centre”, this school is usualy has new students come very 3 weeks to learn english. They came from many difference country and talk many difference language. However, we still are good friends, this is the goodness way to learning english.

Almost all of school in Australia are divede in 3 terms a year, and one term is 14 weeks. After one term, all students have 2 weeks holiday, but when the last term if finished, all students have 6 weeks holiday result of the weather heat.

Every school has 5 days of lessons per week are from Monday to Friday. On Wednesday has only 4 periods and the other 4 are sport. The lessons are always begin at 9 o'clock morning and finish at 3.15 noon. Sometimes school has excursion by school organize as go to visit factories, farmers, some famous place as museum, picnic and camping etc ...

Every subject of periods are always changing, and all of the subjects of students have learned are choice by themselves. But at old school of our country is different, which only has 2 terms per year, and after first term has 3 months holiday, it is summer. After last term has half month holiday for new year. Either has 5 days of lessons for weekly, but each week has only, 1 or 2 periods for sport. Where school has not organize for excursion, and every student must learn all of subjects by the teachers taught and never change classroom in subject.

Those things I am told you to be I enjoyable. How about old school at our Country today. Did it has something change or still like before, please tell me.

## Text 2

Dear John

How are you? I left you for about two and a half years and I have no letter to you, I am very sorry. I didn't mean I forget you because I'm busy on the lessons. And now the school is on holiday, I have time to sent you this letter and tell you about this school I'm studying.

This school is named Dulwich High, it is big and beautiful, from my house to school about five minutes by feet. The school is worked five days a week and from nine o'clock in the morning until ten pass three at noon. The lessons is divided into seven periods a day. The first three periods is from nine to a quarter pass eleven and then the recess for twenty minutes then next two periods, after that we have lunch time from five pass one to forty pass one and then the two last lessons.

The teachers are very nice at here, they teach very clearly until the student understood. They have never hit student. However, they also organized the excursion to visit some places which help the students on studying and to picnic or camping after each term. I have three terms a year. Every one at here is very friendfully, but sometime still has a small fighting, afterward they are refriends.

When I write this letter to you, I also thing about the old school in our country, where the school time is really longer than here, and worked six days a week, and the sport time just took about an hour, instead for the lessons. And do you remember we were beated when we had not the work to sent to the teacher, and always stayed after school to finished the assignment. How about the farm, I hope it is still good, where is the good place to stay while on the holiday, we stayed there for about three months then returned to school, we had two times a year to stay there, but I don't know who do you stay with now or alone.

If the school has something change please letter to me, I am waiting for your sound.

Hope you succeed on the way of studying and happy New Year.

Yours Sincerely