

Level
4

Writing



teacher guide

by Lynn DeRose
City University, Bratislava, Slovakia
1st edition (2007)

Introduction to Level 4 Writing

By the end of Level 4 Writing, students will know how to edit their work and write focused, well-developed essays. The Level 4 Writing guides were developed to help students do this so that Writing 4 scaffolds more effectively into the upper-level writing curriculum developed in Slovakia. Thanks to Di Chenoweth and Anne Whitaker for their input, materials and support with the teacher guide.

Level 4 Writing emphasizes the importance of the writing process, editing, and understanding and meeting the basic requirements of an academic essay. While a standard 5-paragraph academic essay is often used in the model essays, it is not the required form. Be sure that students understand that full paragraph development is more important than the number of paragraphs. Students should also learn that an essay question will determine a specific essay style. Students will need explicit instruction on how to use editing techniques to help them find errors in the messy world of their own writing. Their ability to recognize errors may be limited by their language level, but if they have a sound understanding of all of the editing techniques, this will grow as their language ability expands.

A sound technique to use with most assignments in Level 4 is to elicit as much from the students as possible before introducing something. At this level, returning students should have a solid foundation in writing. By asking questions which lead them through the thinking process and build on their existing knowledge and understanding, “teaching” often can become more expansion and confirmation than presenting everything as new material.

Returning IEP students, as graduates of level 3, should be able to write a well-developed paragraph; however, these paragraphs tend to be “mini-essays.” This quality can be utilized in a “relating the paragraph elements to essay elements” lesson.

You may find that some students have tested into this level and will need help with basic paragraphs. Rather than working extensively with the paragraph form in isolation at the beginning of the term, give more time to developing specific paragraphs within the essay form, since this reinforces the goals of the course.

Learning goals

- Express in writing your own opinions and the opinions of others through standard academic English structures;
- Use all of the simple tenses to write logical essay paragraphs;
- Integrate clauses, connectors, and infinitives into combined sentences;
- Begin to revise and edit your own and other students’ writing;
- Apply skills in the writing process to prepare a final written copy of an expository essay, a compare-and-contrast essay, a classification essay, a process essay and a cause-and-effect essay using a personal computer-based word processing program.

Core concepts

- Writing process
- Standard essay structure.
- Peer and self editing of composition and academic writing
- Punctuation

Writing 4 Resources

Before you start teaching, make sure you have the syllabus, *Student Guide*, ***Teacher Guide***, and ***Handouts for Teachers to Modify***.

You can get the syllabus from your manager, and eventually it will be available on the City University online portal at <http://my.cityu.edu>

The Teacher Guide (this guide) was written so that a teacher with little experience could successfully teach this class in Slovakia. It has an explanation of assignments and grading, a week by week guide, lists of possible essay topics, and appendices on editing.

It probably contains more material than can be covered in a 10-week term. Choose the most suitable material and do whatever is best to get the students to meet the course objectives (*using the writing process to write a well-developed essay, understanding punctuation, and having control over the techniques for peer and self editing*) and complete the course assignments (*expository, compare/contrast, classification, cause/effect, and process essays and the final.*)

Teachers with more experience, more resources and/or a different location should not feel obligated to follow the weekly guide, but should read the explanations of the assignments.

The *Student Guide* can be purchased by students (for the price of photocopying) in the Library.

The *Handouts* should be available on a disc that comes with the ***Teacher Guide***, and on the network. The file contains:

- All possible handouts for the course, divided by Weeks (as they appear in the weekly guide), *to adapt to mirror content covered in class and/or to suit a classes needs:*
 - Basic Editing Techniques
 - Peer Review form for each essay each requiring one
 - Peer Editing form for each style of essay requiring one
 - Proofreading form for each essay requiring one
 - Grade sheets for all essay assignments
 - A “Collected Errors” file of student writing for editing and grammar lessons.

Explanation of Assignments

The assignments in this course include Class Contribution, Editing, three essays, two in-class essays, and a final exam. The syllabus gives students a basic explanation and grading criteria of each; the real details can be found here, in the *Student Guide* (journal and essays), and in the *Handouts* (editing).

Class Contribution

The Class Contribution grade is higher than it is in other courses because it also includes homework. 50% of the class contribution grade is based on “journal and other homework.” The other 50% of the grade should be based on “contribution to discussion and activities” and “demonstration of active listening skills,” however you interpret this.

Journal and Other Homework

Preparation for a specific class (doing the reading or any homework assignment) and keeping a journal are the basic homework expected of students for this class. The weekly guide does not always specify due dates, but any class preparation should be done for the next. Journals should be collected regularly.

The Journal assignment can be found in the *Student Guide*. Students are asked to write in their journals for a minimum of 20 minutes four times a week. They can write whatever they want, but the assignment also gives them some possible topics. The regular writing helps students think and write more fluently in English. This type of consistent free writing reinforces the initial stages of the writing process and helps develop individual English style and voice. Students gain confidence in their English and are usually led to discover on their own that thinking in English makes for better writing in English. Without specifically assigned topics that require them to talk about abstract ideas, students tend to use words and structures that they have control over instead of thinking about the topic in their mother tongue then translating. Help them “*discover*” this at every possible juncture.

Grading is based on 50% for following the directions and 50% for handing in work on time. Here are some tips and logistics for grading:

- Collecting only half of the journals every week offers an easy marking rhythm that allows full attention to student work without being overwhelmed with reading every week. Assign the first week; collect *all* journals the second week. Then divide the group into two groups balancing them for length of entry and ease of understanding. Group A will have only one week before journals are due again but thereafter, they only need hand them in every two weeks. Depending on marking load, collect all journals week 9; this time Group B will have only 1 week of entries.
- Some students will prefer to write on a computer, but ask everyone to write by hand until you know you can read their writing or make sure they know to be careful on the final.
- Respond to the content when you have something to say and it is appropriate, e.g. *I haven't seen this movie yet but it sounds interesting*, or *What would you do if you spent the day as a tiger?* You can use these comments to push students to think of specific examples. I write many *how?* and *why?* comments. Students often answer these comments and questions so journals become conversations.
- Do not mark for grammar or accuracy since the purpose is to develop students' writing fluency.

- Make a general “corrections” comment at the end of a set of entries such as, “When editing watch out for sentence structure, SVO/C.” This reinforces that writing is a process and all drafts need not be perfect.
- Offer to correct journals if specifically requested to do so, as some students become frustrated if they do not have this type of feedback. An easy way to do this, while reinforcing the idea of self-editing and keeping marking time down, is to highlight errors and let the student figure it out. Highlight a single word to indicate something about that word (verb tense, spelling etc.), or highlight a phrase or sentence to indicate structural problems.
- It may be difficult to assess how much can be written in 20 minutes. I’ve questioned students about this. Some wrote more, but others said they really did write 20 minutes and explained why they were slow. Use your common sense and knowledge of individual students to assess effort; most students will earn full marks.

Editing

Learning and using the editing steps as part of the writing process is an important part of this course; the editing component – two equally-weighted editing quizzes and preparedness for peer editing sessions – is 15% of a student’s final grade.

Grading

Preparedness (75% of the editing grade) is especially important. Preparedness means students must actually write the second, third and fourth drafts of their essays incorporating changes suggested at each stage of the process and then bring the freshly printed new drafts to the next session. It needs to be very clear to them that they cannot submit papers that have not been rewritten for peer review, editing, and proofreading. Until they learn otherwise, students will try to submit an earlier draft for a subsequent feedback session, i.e. a student will just bring his first draft with the revising comments on it to the editing session. Every paper, except in-class essays, should have been rewritten at least four times by the time the fifth and final copy is uploaded. I collect all work produced for an essay on the day the paper is due. This allows me to confirm the number of drafts and to track where a major mistake may have occurred if necessary.

Two Editing Quizzes are 25% of the editing grade. How to do them is your choice; the weekly guide contains suggestions that have been effective for me.

Teaching the Editing Process

Revising, editing, and proof-reading should be reviewed (or explained, as many will be learning about them for the first time) when discussing the writing process in Week 1. Even then, students will tend to focus primarily on what is most familiar to them, i.e. they will want to consider grammar elements when revising and meaning when proof-reading. Pre-teaching and reminding them of the purpose for revising, editing, and proof-reading every time will help keep them on task. By the time the first essay is revised, students should have command of the basic essay elements, but I briefly review essay basics before the first session.

To help students become aware of the types of errors they can find in their essays, the weekly guide has a regular “common errors” editing session, and these can be found in the *Student Guide*. These are based on punctuation and grammar points peculiar to writing. The trick is helping students transfer information from focused exercises to being able to **edit** their own writing.

When students do peer editing, choose one or two techniques from **Basic Editing Techniques** for each peer editing session according to your students' needs and the material covered in the common errors. One editing technique should predominate which you then grade very strictly. Put students in groups of 2-3 and have them swap papers, so they can *discuss possible solutions with each other*. Negotiating for meaning rather than merely for what is correct is an occasion for "demonstrating active listening skills." They should discover that using these in combination as needed makes for the strongest writing.

After the first essay, students should know their weaknesses and I make sure to ask them where they are weak. Then it is helpful to have them alert their peer editors to their specific weaknesses at each step. The most common answer is paragraph specifics and good concluding sentences.

Some of the techniques are quite simple and can be introduced on the day of peer editing; others may be explicitly taught in an introduction to the editing technique. The **Collected Errors** have worksheets with sentences and paragraphs taken from student work you can use to teach students how to edit their own papers. The *Appendices* in this guide also have various activities for editing.

The six possible tasks to give to students for peer editing sessions, as stated on the handout, are

- *General Editing* – Instructions are self-explanatory. This is one of the most powerful tools for second language learners and should be one of the first techniques they learn. The majority of students will prefer this method. When in doubt, get students to ask, "who did/is what why where (SVO/C)?" Once this is clear, other aspects of grammar and meaning are easier to correct.
- *Clarity* – Thinking in and then translating from the mother tongue to English usually creates a clarity issue. This is often the second technique I teach. I have usually introduced the concept when helping students in the first General Editing session.
- *Sentence Structure* – Self explanatory. This is usually the third technique I introduce. Once the structure is sorted, other elements become easier to edit. This idea has often been introduced as part of helping students with Clarity issues in the previous two editing techniques.
- *Cohesion, connection between ideas* – Introduce this technique after links and connections have been introduced.

The following three tasks may be combined into one or two lessons, which also offers an excellent occasion for a lesson with a thesaurus and a dictionary.

- *Repetition, lack of variety* – Students in this level still have limited vocabulary. Encourage them to use what they have control over and to learn how to extend themselves.
- *Wordiness* – This includes eliminating "empty" phrases not appropriate to academic writing but that most language learners have been taught to use, i.e. "In my opinion, I think that, I have just shown..." This is also an excellent occasion to remind student that their job is to answer their questions, not write them in this form.
- *Word choice* – This includes both appropriate word forms and errors caused by translating.

Essays

The three Essay assignments all have the same grading criteria:

Explicit Thesis Statement	10%
Essay Organization	25%
Development of Ideas	25%
Writing Style	10%
Format	5%
Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling, Sentence Structure, Clarity, Coherence	25%

While the categories and grade weight remain the same, not all essays are graded in the same way. The key is to adapt the requirements inside each category on the grade sheet each time to reflect what has been covered in class, e.g. in the first essay, give more weight to essay elements by deleting requirements not covered. For example, transitions could be totally removed if they were not covered. Grammar and punctuation marking can focus on what should be correct because it was presented in a common errors and/or editing lesson, e.g. the correct usage of *what*, *that* and *how*.

The grade sheets currently reflect the material covered in Fall 06. Fall term classes often take longer to cover the basics as they will have a number of students who have tested into the program.

Expository Essay is the first paper assignment because its only job is to inform the reader. It contains all of the standard academic essay components but has no other specific requirements.

Compare and Contrast is the second essay assignment. Returning students may have some familiarity with this style in paragraph form which will allow them to concentrate on controlling and developing the essay components. Transitions and connectors are specifically covered so should be graded strictly.

Cause/Effect is the third essay assignment. Students may have trouble understanding that effects may cause other things. A time line can help clarify this, anything before “the event or action” is a cause; anything after is an effect.

In-Class Essays

The grading for in-class essays is similar to the essay grading, but grammar is weighted a little less and there is no format grade. 5 points moved to Development of Ideas and a new category – Outline and Brainstorming – was created. While grammar and accuracy do count, the weight of the grade is on pre-writing and essay development.

Explicit Thesis Statement	10%
Outline and Brainstorming	5%
Essay organization	25%
Development of Ideas	30%
Writing Style (including legible handwriting)	10%
Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling, Sentence Structure, Clarity, Coherence	20%

Classification, the first in-class essay, is written in Week 4 or 5. Go over the specific style in class; have students analyze the example essay. Give students topic choices ahead of time so they can do their pre-writing work at home. This reinforces the idea that pre-writing work allows actual essay writing to proceed more smoothly and quickly. Allow outlines and monolingual dictionaries to be used during the class. Collect brainstorming and outlines with the essays. The grade should be on the essay, but checking the outline will help differentiate between thinking and performance problems.

Process, the second in-class essay, is written in Week 9. Students will be nervous about taking their final. This style of essay is good practice for a timed in-class essay which does not allow students to do their pre-writing work ahead of time as it can be based on concrete instructions rather than ideas. Brainstorm essay topics in class.

Final Exam

The final exam is another in-class essay. Students will have two hours to complete the final and should not be given the questions ahead of time. Part of the exam is the ability to understand that the question will determine the choice of essay style. Review the different styles as well as basic essay structure in Week 9. On the exam, offer students a choice of several questions, each of which requires one of the styles covered in class. I rarely include a process question.

Grading the Essays

As stated before, the essay grade sheets can be changed to reflect material covered in class, but the basic apportioning of points should remain the same. Adjust the content within each category to reflect material covered in class. This way, while all essays carry equal weight, marking can be tailored to fit the material covered in classes.

The check list format means you don't have to write so many comments – check what they did well and leave blanks or circles by what they are missing. To give students more information, I use a system of **+** (very well done), **check +** (well done), **check** (meets expectations), **check-** (hummm, try harder), **-** (attempted but missed the point) and **x** (where is it?).

Grading papers might be hard at first but it gets easier and faster with practice. I often quickly read all the papers without a pen or pencil in my hand assessing their basic strengths and weaknesses and the range of their quality. I toss them into rough piles of quite good, good, ok, and poor. Students at this level are learning to control several different elements in writing and sometimes have trouble juggling everything. It seems to help when I make essay comments in pencil and language comments in red pen. Don't forget to tell students what they did well as well as commenting on what needs to be improved.

Weekly Guide

Items from the *Student Guide* are underlined and italicized.

Items from the ***Handouts*** are underlined, italicized, and bolded.

Week 1

Weeks 1-3 use the first five chapters of the student book. The main ones are Chapter 2: Writing Essays and Chapter 3: Expository Essays. As students learn the basics of essay writing in Chapter 2, at the same time they are writing their first essay – the expository – from Chapter 3.

- Day One
 - Syllabus
 - Introductions
 - *Journal Assignment* – this is in the Student Book because it is an important assignment for improving students’ writing and should not change.
 - **HW:** Questionnaire and/or sample paragraph – ask students to write an introduction to themselves using the material in the *Questionnaire* or to write a ***Sample Paragraph***. Ask for all work they produced to write it.
- Day Two
 - Review paragraph structure (could look at *Basic Forms of Paragraphs and Essays*) and *Writing Jargon*
 - **HW:** rewrite paragraphs
- Day Three
 - ***Writing Process for Teachers*** has notes for teachers. Additional notes below.
 - *The Writing Process*
 - A. Subject, Audience, Purpose – introduce the idea that essay questions determine purpose and reinforce every chance you get
 - B. The Writing Process
 - Choose topic
 - Do “C. Brainstorming Exercise” – students have a blank page. Elicit an appropriate essay question and go through this process with them
 - Tell students: *Thinking about a topic and gathering ideas is one of the most important steps of the writing process; you can’t write without ideas.*
 - Returning students may be familiar with various techniques, listing, clustering, brainstorming, etc., but few will go beyond the minimum requirement for a basic paragraph. They will need constant reinforcement to push themselves further than a thesis, supporting points and supporting ideas.
 - Choose an appropriate question and brainstorm with the students. Push them every time to go further with their thinking to specific and real examples, facts, etc. I often write the question words as a side bar and keep asking students if they have answered as many of them as possible at each level.
 - I usually use the classic brainstorming/clustering form as it easily translates into the outline form.
 - Organizing principles (review): use to organize brainstorming time, space, order of importance, general to specific etc
 - Outline (may be new) – will be taught in detail next week

- Rough draft

Students should be familiar with the editing steps so this is a review but this is probably the first class in which they will be doing them without being in conference with their teacher. They will need to be explicitly taught how to do each one the first time.

- Revising – editing for content
- Second Draft – incorporating revising information
- Editing – editing for sentence structure, clarity
- Third Draft – using suggestions from the editing section
- Proofreading – checking for the details – spelling, formatting, punctuation, SV agreement, etc.
- Rewrite – to correct the little details and errors found in the proofreading session
- Final Draft – upload and hand in all work

To emphasize the importance of the writing process, on the day essays are due, I ask for students to hand in EVERYTHING they have done to write it. This gives me a way to check how many drafts a student actually produced, to check if it is the writer or the editor that confused an issue and to see where students need more support – ideas, or structures. If specifics aren't showing up in papers, check the brainstorming in their books. No concluding sentences? are they in the outline? etc

- Day Four

- Basic Forms of Paragraphs and Essays

Paragraph Components:

- Main Idea: Topic sentence – usually the first sentence introduces one and only one idea
- Body: Details- supporting sentences
- Conclusion – summarizes the ideas of the paragraph – the last sentence

Essay Structure:

Note: The following terminology for each level of support, which is also used in the student books, is relatively random but try to keep it consistent. It is easy to swap points for ideas etc., but not always keeping what you call supporting elements the same will confuse students.

- Introduction = first paragraph – introduces the topic,
the *supporting points*
contains the thesis statement
(idea link= topic sentence for the whole essay)
special structure to be covered later
- Body Paragraphs= development of supporting points
topic sentence= supporting point,
ideas supporting point
specific details supporting idea
concluding sentence
- Conclusion – last paragraph and summarizes the whole essay. Special structure to be covered later.

- Going from Paragraphs to Essays shows the relationship between the two forms.

- Introduce Expository Essay

Essays that explain – who, what, when, how (not how to) questions

Brainstorm a possible question in class

- Assign Essay #1 – How to Write an Expository Essay. Give students a handout of Expository Topics.

- **HW:** Brainstorming for expository essay – have students use *Your Expository Essay Brainstorming* in their books.

Week 2

- Day One
 - Thesis statements
There are several exercises in *The Thesis Statement* section of the student book to give them specific experience in recognizing what a good thesis statement must have.
 - *Common Errors #1: Parallel structure* – This is also a good time to introduce the first of the common errors exercises.
 - **HW:** Write their own thesis statement and choose supporting points.
Read *Example Essay: A Black Cat Crossed My Path* (Expository)
- Day Two
 - *The Outline*. Explain. The form may be new to students but the information has already been presented in the paragraph to essay lesson. The form may be new to students but the information has already been presented in the paragraph to essay lesson. Have students critique *From Brainstorming to Outline*. The first brainstorm shows a brainstorming/cluster with the components for a good essay paragraph labeled. The one for the sample essay has only one of the paragraphs fully thought through.
 - Assign students *Analysis of “A Black Cat Crossed My Path”*. Groups of 2-3 work best. This uses outline structure. Alternatively, there is a question-based analysis in the handouts – *Expository Analysis Questions*.
 - Collect Journals – determine a collecting/marketing rhythm
 - **HW:** *Your Expository Essay Outline*
- Day Three
 - Paragraph development in an essay
The Body Paragraphs
topic sentence = one supporting point
supporting idea
Specifics
supporting details (if still an idea)
then supporting specifics (something real: example, facts, etc.)
- get students used to thinking about these alternatives
concluding sentence = relates point back to thesis
 - Writing workshop – groups of students (2-3 best) write body paragraphs from the *Example Essay Outline*.
Divide students into groups – 2-3 in each works best. Have the groups write at least one body paragraph from the outline. Make it clear that each student will need a copy of the paragraph.
Re-mix the groups so that all the new groups have at least one version of every body paragraph. Have students cross compare with each others paragraphs AND the outline to check for all of the components.
 - **HW:** Write body paragraphs for their essays
Read: *The Introduction* and *The Conclusion*
- Day Four
 - First half of class:
Answer questions re: *The Introduction* and *The Conclusion*

Match Intros Concls Handout is a good exercise for this. The second file **Match Intros Concls How To** gives directions and the answers.

Students should be writing their own essays so you can apply this directly to their own essays, or you could use the *outline groups* again to have groups write an introduction and conclusion using the example expository essay outline. Again re-mix groups to have them check each other's work.

- Second half of class:
Computer lab/library for Formatting Your Papers. There is an example title page and text page in the students' guide. Make sure students understand how to do their cover page. They should also have enough time to begin entering their body paragraphs or begin writing introductions.
- **HW:** Expository Essay Checklist
Read: Interesting Introductions and do the exercise on the following pages. Write/rewrite introduction using one of these methods

Week 3

- Day One
 - Revising: Expository Peer Review. Feel free to change or shorten the handout to fit your class.
 - **HW:** Re-write essay incorporating comments
- Day Two
 - Common Errors #2 – Some Slovak/English Problems
- Day Three
 - Basic Editing Techniques and Editing Training
Go over one or two techniques with students and do the training. Look at the Editing section and Appendices in this guide for more ideas. Another text for the training session can be found in the Collected Errors:Editing Text 2 file.
- Day Four
 - Editing: Expository Peer Editing – Use something from this handout and/or Basic Editing Techniques. Also look at the Editing explanation in this guide.
 - **HW:** Re-write essay incorporating changes.

Week 4

- Day One
 - Expository Proofreading
 - **HW:** Final draft of expository essay.
- Day Two
 - Common errors # 3 – Independent and Dependent Clauses
 - **HW:** Read Example Essay: Time for Books (Classification)
- Day Three
 - Introduce classification essay

See if students can explain the purpose of such an essay themselves based on the examples that they read.

- How to write a Classification Essay
- Analysis of "Time for Books"
- Hand out **Classification Topics** and answer any questions.
- **HW:** Brainstorm and outline classification essay. Use **Classification Essay Brainstorming** and students make their outline from that.
Read Example Essay: Under the Influence of Two Different Brothers?

- Day Four

- Introduce Compare/Contrast Essay
How To Write a Compare Contrast Essay
Analysis of Under the Influence of Two Different Brothers
- Handout out **Compare Contrast Topics** and answer any questions.
- **HW:** Brainstorming and Outline C/C essay. Students can use **Compare Contrast Brainstorming**. The handout is provided because this step must be emphasized. There is no outline handout because students must choose between the two organizational styles. However, the outline is again essential.
Read Example Essay: My Knitting Babka is a Programmer – example of 4-paragraph C/C essay.
- **Essay #1 due.** Use **Expository Grade Sheet** and modify as needed.

Week 5

- Day One

First In-class Essay – Classification.

Supply students with paper to write on. I usually try to photocopy **Classification Lined Paper** onto the back of scrap paper.

Use and/or modify **Classification Grade Sheet** to mark the essay. Don't spend too much time on it. If students do badly or you feel that some need a second chance, you can give them a little time to rewrite the essay for a small boost in their grade.

- **HW:** First draft of C/C essay due on Day 4

- Day Two

- Common errors #4 – Comparison/Contrast Words
- **HW:** Have students analyze example C/C essay for C/C words and transitions

- Day Three

- Writing Workshop

- Day Four

- **Compare Contrast Peer Review**. There are two versions, depending on which organizational style the students chose. Shorten or modify as you wish.
- **HW:** Third Draft Compare/Contrast Essay – due Day 4 next week

Week 6

- Day One
 - Common Errors #5 – Transitions
- Day Two
 - Cohesion: Making Connections between Ideas
 - Do the analysis of the example essay at the bottom of the page.
 - 1. structural links (transition words)
 - 2. pronoun and determiner referencing
 - 3. synonyms
- Day Three
 - Writing Workshop or some editing/grammar lesson taken from the **Collected Errors** file.
- Day Four
 - **Compare Contrast Peer Editing** – Use basic editing techniques and look at Editing explanation in this guide.
 - **HW:** Third draft due Day 1 next week.

Week 7

- Day One
 - **Compare Contrast Proofreading**
 - **HW:** Final draft: compare/contrast due Day 4
Read Example Essay: Computer Games (Cause/Effect)
- Day Two
 - Pre-teach: Brainstorm the causes and effects of an event using a time-line
 - How to Write a Cause/Effect Essay
 - Analysis of “Computer Games”
If students have problems with the grammar of the cause/effect words introduced in How To, then create an exercise based on **Cause Effect Words Exercise** for them to do as homework.
 - Hand out **Cause Effect Topics** and answer any questions.
 - **HW:** Brainstorming and outline Cause/Effect Essay. Students can use **Cause Effect Brainstorming** and **Cause Effect Outline** or do it on their own if they are thorough enough. The handouts are provided because these steps must be emphasized.
- Day Three
 - **Editing Quiz #1**
Test common errors and punctuation material covered in class. Most questions should be based on exercise style sentences but I also include a section of student sentences. I sometimes make this an open book exam since an aspect of good editing is being able to look up what you are not sure about and you have to know where it is to find it quickly. In this case, monolingual dictionaries, and writing and grammar books allowed.
 - **HW:** First draft of Cause/Effect Essay due tomorrow

- Day Four
 - **Cause Effect Peer Review**. Shorten or modify the handout as you wish.
 - **HW:** Second draft of Cause/Effect Essay
 - **Essay #2 Due.** Use and/or modify **Compare Contrast Grade Sheet**.

Week 8

- Day One
 - **Cause Effect Peer Editing** - Use basic editing techniques and look at Editing explanation and Appendices in this guide.
 - **HW:** Third draft of Cause/Effect Essay
Read **Example Essay: How to Be Successful in Level 4** and **Example Essay: How to Prepare for an Exam** (process essays).
- Day Two
 - Pre-Teach – what does it take to understand How to do something
 - Brainstorm a recipe or topic elicited from students
 - **How To Write a Process Essay**
 - **Analysis of the Example Essays**
- Day Three
 - Writing workshop or do some editing or grammar work from **Collected Errors** – the file has exercises, student writing to edit, and some grammar explanations.
- Day Four
 - **Cause Effect Proofreading**. Alter the handout as you wish.
 - **HW:** Final draft of C/E essay.

Week 9

- Day One
 - **Editing Quiz # 2**
Give each student a paragraph from one of their own, previously uploaded essays. Assign groups of 3 to use the editing techniques they've learned to edit their papers. I don't suggest using information from their books, dictionaries, or grammar books but they are allowed. Credit is given under techniques for using them to answer a question. Grading is about the process as much as a correct end product. **Editing Quiz 2 Grade Sheet** is available to help you evaluate the students' work.
 - **Essay #3 Due.** Use or modify **Cause Effect Grade Sheet**.
- Day Two
 - **Second in-class essay – Process Essay.**
Supply students with paper to write on. I usually try to photocopy **Process Lined Paper** onto the back of scrap paper.
Hand out **Process Topics** (after you put some topics on it).
Use and/or modify **Process Grade Sheet** to mark the essay. Don't spend too much time on it.

- Day Three
 - *Basic Plan of an Academic Essay* – Review with students for the final.
 - Could also do something from **Collected Errors** file.
- Day Four
 - Review essay questions and styles for the final.
 - Review of Essay Styles for Teacher** has a teacher's guide.

Week 10

- **Final Exam** – a choice of several questions that will force a choice of essay style. There is an example (**Final Example Exam**) in the teachers' handouts. Use **Final Grade Sheet** or some form of it to grade.

Collected Essay Topics

When introducing each type of essay, ask students for suggestions. They have many really good ideas and it is easier to write when they are interested. Also, for every essay, except exams, I offer: Free choice. (Teacher must see it and agree to it.)

Expository

- **What can teachers learn from their students?** Students attend school to gain knowledge and skills from teachers. However, students are not the only ones who learn in the classroom: teachers learn too. Write an essay explaining what teachers learn from their students.
- **Why do you dress the way you do?** People who buy or make their own clothes are making choices each and every time they get something new. Each morning, when you choose what you are going to wear you do so for a reason. Everyone has their own style. Describe your style and explain your reasons it.
- Since 1989, many things have changed in Slovakia as Slovak society has become more integrated with the rest of the world. However, Slovakia has certain traditions and values that belong only to Slovaks which should not be lost. **In your opinion, which values and/or traditions of Slovakia should remain a part of Slovak society?** Write an essay describing the three most important values/traditions of Slovak culture which you do not want Slovakia to lose in its integration to Europe.
- What are the best methods of disciplining children?
- Neighbors are people who live near us. What are the qualities of a good neighbor?
- What are strange things people do for good luck?
- What are your unusual study habits?
- What are the most important or valuable skills or values a child can learn from their grandparents?
- How do you cope with stress?
- Why is it a good idea or not a good idea to marry someone significantly older than yourself?
- Name a person, place or thing that is currently very popular but that, in your opinion, is overrated. Explain why it does not deserve its popularity.
- Many students have to live with flat mates while going to school. What are the important qualities of a good roommate?
- What are the essential characteristics of a good parent?
- What is the greatest thing you ever accomplished? Remember the small things as well as the bigger ones
- What are some of your family's traditions? Discuss why they are important to you
- What really scared you as a child that you now consider humorous? Explain
- What are the advantages of a City University education?

Classification

- Types of English teachers you have had. .
- Types of dreams you have at night.
- Types of friends you have.
- Types animals you like

- Types of car drivers
- Types of magazines.
- Types of students in your class.
- Types of other teachers you have had.
- Types of clothes
- Kinds of bad habits
- Types of good habits
- Types of athletes
- Types of sports
- Kinds of mistakes that people make when they are learning a 2nd language.
- Types of music
- Kinds of things that would make the world a better place
- Kinds of things that can ruin your day
- Types of things that can make your day.
- Kinds of lies people tell
- When you are unhappy what kinds of things do you do that usually make you feel better?
- Types of excuses students make up for missing class

Compare/Contrast

- **Compare/contrast your life now and your life 5 years ago.** Don't just explain the differences or similarities; have an opinion about those two times in your life.
- **What are the differences in men and women's communication styles?**
- Have you ever visited a place you had left a long time ago and found it had changed a lot? **Contrast the "way it was" with the "way it is now."**
- **Compare/contrast your values with your parents' values.** What is important to you in life and how is it the same as or different from what is important to them?
- When I stand in front of the classroom, you see a smiling and confident "teacher me." However, there is a serious and scared "real me" inside my head who is quite different from what you see. What about you? **How does your public image differ from your private self?** In an essay, contrast the way people see you and the way you see yourself.
- Compare/Contrast what it is like to be a member of two different groups.
- Compare and contrast two towns or cities that you know well.
- How have your eating habits changed since you started college?
- How are you different than your parents?
- Besides age, what are some major differences between a teenager and an adult?
- What is the difference between courage and recklessness?
- What is the difference between love and infatuation?
- What are some of the differences between CU teachers and other teachers you have had in the past?

Cause/Effect

- Think of a great fear that you have. **What are the causes of this fear?** Explain why you have this fear.
- **Do you vote in elections? Why or why not?** In an essay, explain the reasons you have for voting or not voting in Slovak elections.
- The end of communism in Slovakia was over 10 years ago, but its effects have not disappeared. **What effects of 40 years of communist rule still exist today in your life?** Describe the effects and how they influence your life.
- Think of a major event which happened in your life and made you change your lifestyle and/or your personality. **Describe the effects of this event on your life.** Remember to describe what you were like before the event, why the event changed you, and what you're like now.
- More and more young people spend their free time using the Internet. **What are the effects of teenagers and young adults "surfing the net?"** In an essay, discuss the effects of this interest.
- Think about your time spent living or traveling in a foreign country. What did you gain from this experience in a foreign country? Remember to focus on what this experience has given you or how it has changed your thinking and behavior.
- What are the effects of Slovakia's joining the European Union?
- Why are television soap operas so popular?
- Each year many teenagers run away from home. What are the main causes?
- What are the causes for the high rate of teen pregnancies?
- Why did you decide to attend City University?
- What are the causes of stress?
- What are the main causes of shoplifting?
- How has your birth order effected your personality development?
- Think of an important invention. What have been the effects of this invention on people's lives since its creation?
- What is the best advice you have ever been given? Explain its effects on you.
- Have computers made our lives easier or more complicated? Explain the effects of computers on your life.
- How do you expect your college education to affect the rest of your life?
- What are the reasons for suicide among young people?
- Why do you or don't you give money to beggars on the street?
- People work because they need money to live. What are some other reasons people work?
- Each culture has certain values (like a belief in the importance of family, or a respect for education, for instance) that have endured and will endure for centuries. Choose one value from your culture and explain what has caused it to be so important.

Process

- How to find the ideal partner
- How to break up with your boyfriend/girlfriend
- How to give a great presentation
- How to cheat effectively on a grammar test.

- How to write an essay
- How to read a newspaper
- How to store a number in a mobile phone
- How to write an essay
- How to make money in Slovakia

Thanks to everyone who contributed these. Many are from Anne Whitaker's level 5 teaching guide which notes: Ideas for some of these topics came from the following source: Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. (2004, May 3). *Approved Regents' Test essay topics*. Retrieved July 12, 2004, From the Georgia State University web site: <http://www.gsu.edu/~wwwrtp/topics.htm>

Appendix I: General Notes on Editing Activities

- Activities aimed at sensitizing students to the importance of editing are important. See Other Activities for some ideas.
- Opinions vary as to whether peer or self-editing is more valuable. It is suggested that these two activities be interspersed at the teacher's discretion.
- It should be remembered that language learning is not a linear process, but more like a spiral. Sometimes when a new grammar element is introduced, known elements may be temporarily forgotten. The implication of this is that students should not be castigated for forgetting their grammar; instead, these elements should be reintegrated within the new context and level of complexity. This may need to be done in Writing class as editing activities reveal errors. Some alternative exercises for revising an element can be found in Kent Smith & Goldstein's *English Brushup* (1993). A variety of exercises for sensitizing writing students to the need to edit and for revising grammar are given in Chapter 6 of Heaton's *Classroom Testing*. Both books are in the Teachers' Resource Centre in Trenčín.
- Liaison with the Grammar teacher for the level is necessary to ensure that all error correction exercises in the grammar text are covered, whether in Grammar class or Writing class, or as homework. These can be revisited after editing activities in Writing class whenever relevant.
- In editing exercises done on the board, ask students to identify instances of the correct use of a designated element as well as errors in its use.
- Modeling the steps of the editing process on the board at the beginning of the term and from time to time may be valuable to ensure that students benefit from it.
- Encourage students to cover all but one line of a passage when self- or peer editing, in order to facilitate focusing on one thing at a time.
- Make use of aural learning skills by having students read written passages or sentences aloud, particularly when punctuation and/or run-on sentences are being focused on.

Peer Editing

Steps

1. Elicit from class or give instructions concerning target element(s). Write on board, including correction symbol(s)*.
2. Students work in pairs. Swap assignments.
3. Underline target errors only in partner's assignment.
4. Swap back. Students rewrite correctly their own sentences/ paragraphs.
5. Students check pronunciation of new/problematic words in dictionary.
6. Students read corrected work aloud to partner/ class.*

Self-editing

Steps

1. Elicit from class or give instructions concerning target element(s). Write on board, including correction symbol(s)*.
2. Underline only designated errors in own work.
3. Rewrite correctly.
4. Students check pronunciation of new/problematic words in dictionary.
5. Students read corrected work aloud to partner/ class.**

* These correction symbols should be the same as the ones used by the teacher when grading assignments, if using them is the teacher's preferred technique.

** In reading aloud, phonemes and word stress are of paramount importance. Symbols indicating these in the dictionary can be taught from the outset. Students *should not be allowed to ignore the pauses indicated by stops and commas* (pause + downward intonation, pause + upward intonation, respectively).

Appendix II: Common Slovak/English Problems

The following are some (by no means exhaustive) categories of difficulties arising out of the Slovak – English interface not necessarily given a high profile in English grammar text-books generally. Such errors need to be corrected as *early as possible*, and the correct form and pronunciation reinforced as soon as they occur in edited material.

Note: When applicable, reference numbers are given for the relevant section of Konkol's excellent booklet, *Chyby, ktoré robíme v Angličtine*. It provides good examples to help students understand differences in meaning. 'Sparling' refers to *English or Czenglish?* 'Šiša' refers to Dr Pavel Šiša's donated notes.

Categories

1. Spelling/pronunciation

loose, lose	fell, felt
than, then	staff, stuff
trim, term	weather, whether
through, true, trough, truth	thing, think
research, researchers	career, carrier

Note: Dictionary activities are recommended for clarifying these problems. Phonemic transcription should be routinely included in recording correct forms on the board and in students' Error Logs. Care needs to be taken to ensure that it is taught accurately.

2. Different English words – same word in Slovak

- ago, before 1.1.1
- big, great, large 1.1.8
- do, make, take 1.1.15, also Sparling: 'do the shopping, make mistakes, take a course'.
- give, put 1.1.27
- how, like 1.1.5
- in, on 1.1.31
- nature 1.1.37. Teach acceptable expressions. NEVER allow 'go to the nature'.
- say, tell 1.1.40. See also 4.2.2 for 'explain'. Deal with say / explain / describe together, as they follow the same D.O. / I.O. pattern.
- so, such 1.1.41
- borrow, lend 1.2.2
- learn, teach 1.2.5. Include 'study'.
- it, this 'This' refers to a whole idea: 'This means ...'

3. Definitions and 'false friends'

- absolve, graduate 1.3.1
- actual 1.3.8
- pathetic 1.3.59
- psychic 1.3.66
- recipe, receipt, prescription 1.3.67
- serious 1.3.78. Teach with 'actual'.
- sympathetic 1.3.80
- too Emphasize the fact that it means 'príliš' or 'aj', NOT 'very'.
- stereotype Important because of 'logical fallacies' in later Writing classes.

4. 'Singular' nouns

news
information
knowledge
advice
furniture

5. Grammatically unacceptable direct translation

can be... 'Može byť'... can mean 'OK, alright, maybe...', NEVER 'can be'.

cause(s) that ... Sparling: 'means that, leads to, is often the cause of...'

belongs to... Use 'is one of the most', 'is an example of...'

take care of... NEVER 'take care about'. Teach 'look after' as preferable.

Save 'care about' for 'be concerned about, worry about, like...'

in good way... Instead, use 'well, properly, responsibly, thoroughly, nicely...'

way how... NEVER use '(noun) how'. Use 'way to, solution for, advice for...'

thing what... NEVER use '(noun) what'. This includes 'everything, something,

nothing...' Remember that 'čo' DOES NOT translate literally when preceded

by a noun. It sounds 'uneducated'. Drill 'thing that/which, something

that/which, everything that/which, nothing that/which...'

possibility to... Sparling pp. 186-188 treats this thoroughly.

Use 'chance to + verb, opportunity to + verb, opportunity for + gerund, it is possible to + verb...')

brings... Use 'causes, creates conditions for, encourages...'

6. Expressions

recipes / instructions. Use imperative, not 1st plural as in Slovak.

time expressions such as 'in march, on Friday, at that time...'

'What's your name?'

'How long have you been here?'

'What's the water like?'

Activities

The following are some activities for clarifying or drilling any of the above L1/L2 elements whenever they occur.

1. Small group translation

Materials

- Worksheet for each student with the same sentences or paragraph written in Slovak, based on Writing Tasks, Grammar Elements and L1/L2 errors for the week, and space for writing the translation.
- Longman Advanced American Dictionary

Steps

- Divide class into groups of 3.
- Hand out to each student worksheet with the same sentences or paragraph in Slovak.
- Student writes English translation and passes the sheet to the student on the right.
- Each student underlines errors and passes the sheet again to the right.
- Each student makes the necessary corrections and passes the sheet on to the right. Students should now have their own sheet.

- Students consult their dictionary to check corrections and pronunciation.
- Students read their corrected work aloud in turn to the other two students.
- Teacher monitors throughout, making corrections only when necessary, and taking note of any issues needing revision.

2. Finding and explaining the problem

Materials

- Worksheets for each student with sentences or paragraph in Slovak, paired with literal English translation which is incorrect.

Steps

- Divide class into pairs.
- Pairs spot the problem and write correct translation.
- Pairs join with another pair and compare translations.
- These groups of four students discuss and prepare an explanation for each example, to be shared in turn with the class.
- Teacher verifies and clarifies if necessary, making board notes.
- Students make notes in Error Log if required.

3. Choose the correct sentence

Materials

- Worksheets for each student with pairs of English sentences. One sentence is a better translation than the other.

Steps

- Divide class into pairs
- Students choose the better sentence and prepare an explanation of their choice.
- Students join with another pair and compare choices and explanations.
- A spokesperson from each group shares the explanation with the class.

Appendix III: Other Activities

Activity

Activities which raise awareness of the need to edit written language need to be included at the beginning of the term and intermittently as a reminder. Some sources are as follows:

- Readily available humorous mistranslations from the internet and colleagues are useful and entertaining. Slovak teachers could play with these by giving the Slovak translation first. The following are from the training notes of the Trinity College of London TESOL Certificate course, but examples from Slovak-English need to be used as well.
 - * Detour sign in Japan: Stop, Drive Sideways
 - * In a Copenhagen airline office: We send your bags in all directions
 - * In a Bangkok temple: It is forbidden to enter a woman even a foreigner if dressed as a man
- The following website has juxtaposed passages, one of which has been edited. These would be useful to use as a model for constructing passages or sentences incorporating selected errors:

www.goodsenseenglish.com/samples.htm

Suggestion: Half the students could be given the unedited version, and half the edited version. They find a partner with the 'other' passage, spot the problems, and prepare explanations together as to why one is better than the other. The results are explained aloud to the class, and any difficulties discussed using the board.

Activity

Ferris (1995) recommends that students be shown how their errors sometimes prevent their writing from being understood (pp.18-19). One of her examples for this is: '*My parent always gave me a lot of advice.*' (p. 18)

Students could be asked to write a description of this family. Different interpretations of this family structure will be made according to assumptions made concerning whether 'parent' is intended to be singular, or if it is a singular/plural error.

Activity

Asking students to identify not only errors, but also *examples of the selected element used correctly*, has been found to be helpful. This could be done on the board and discussed, using sentences or a paragraph from students' own work, similar to those which will be used in an editing skills test.

Activity

Several of the grammar activities described in Chapter 6 of Heaton's *Classroom Testing* (in the Teachers' Resource Centre in the CU Trenčín library) could be used to advantage to revise an element which has come into focus as a result of an editing activity in Writing class. Not all of them involve language production, but may be useful for practicing error recognition. Some activities are:

Multiple choice for filling in blanks
Error recognition
Rearrangement of sentences
Sentence / paragraph completion
Controlled writing

Activity: Teaching Determiners (Articles)

The following is the approach currently being used by Trinity College of London trainers in the TESOL Certificate course. It introduces the topic as 'Determiners' rather than as 'Articles'. This can be taught in Writing class to great effect using students' own work. Care must be taken that students genuinely understand each step before proceeding to the next.

Steps

- Ensure that the concept of count and noncount nouns is clear.
- Tell students that the subject of this lesson is *count nouns only* in the *singular*.
- Draw a grid on the board with four boxes with 'Count' and 'Noncount' along the top, and 'Singular' and 'Plural' down the side. Write in the top left hand box 'Singular Count Nouns'.
- Explain clearly that this session involves *only this box*. Explain that the rules concerning the other categories, and whether a noun is specific or generic, will be dealt with in another session.
- Write underneath 'Singular Count Nouns' in the top left-hand box, the following rule: **MUST HAVE A DETERMINER**
- Explain that the only exceptions to this rule are headings and headlines, but that this rule is 99% applicable.
- Now teach the definition of 'determiner'. Use the following categories to explain what a determiner is:
 1. Articles: a, an, the
 2. Possessive adjectives: my, your, his, her, its, our, their, John's etc.
 3. Demonstrative adjectives: this, that
 4. Group of words: each, every, any, no, one
- Write on the board: **EVERY COUNT NOUN MUST HAVE A DETERMINER** – remind students about the null
- Grade and teach to edit strictly for this. Explain that using singular count nouns without a determiner is unacceptable. It sounds and reads like baby-talk.

Appendix IV: Testing

- The following test has been modeled on a class activity constructed by Ferris (1995). It is suggested that it be used as a default format, to be modified by the teacher as required. For example, the number of steps in the instructions will vary according to the number of grammar categories appropriate at the time. The possible types of errors given here are Ferris' Major Error Categories.
- This activity should be practiced in class before being used as a test so that students are familiar with the format and procedure at testing time.
- On the worksheet, Ferris' category, 'Articles', has been changed to 'Determiners'. Teaching how to use determiners from the beginning, rather than just articles, is taught by Trinity College of London teacher trainers. It has been found to solve many article problems from the outset, provided that each step is thoroughly taught before proceeding to the next. See Appendix V for an outline of the recommended approach, which can be taught in Grammar class as well as Writing class.

Grammar Editing Skills Test

(Here should be given a paragraph or sentences incorporating relevant mistakes, prepared by the teacher. This material could be guided by the examples given for practice at the end of each chapter in *Get Ready to Write*, but should include examples of incorrectly used grammar elements from students' work during the preceding weeks and relevant L1/L2 errors.)

Part I: Instructions

- Read the sentences or paragraph above
- Find all nouns and underline any errors
- Find all the verbs and underline any errors
- Find all punctuation and sentence structure errors and underline them
- Find all word form errors and underline them
- Find all the prepositions and underline any errors
- Count each type of error and write the number in the box

<i>Type of Error</i>		<i>No. of errors</i>
1. Noun errors	- endings	<input type="text"/>
	- determiners	<input type="text"/>
2. Verb errors	- subject/verb	<input type="text"/>
	- tense	<input type="text"/>
	- form	<input type="text"/>
3. Punctuation and sentence structure errors	- fragments	<input type="text"/>
	- commas	<input type="text"/>
	- run-ons	<input type="text"/>

4. Word form errors

5. Preposition errors

Part II: Instructions

- Read the paragraph again
- Find an example of each type of error
- Write an example from the paragraph in the spaces below

Type 1: Nouns

- ending _____

- determiner _____

Type 2: Verbs

- S-V _____

- tense _____

- form _____

Type 3: Punctuation and sentence structure

- fragment _____

- comma _____

- run-on _____

Type 4: Word form _____

Type 5: Preposition _____

Appendix V: References about Editing

- Ferris, D. (1995). Teaching students to self-edit. *TESOL Journal*, 4 (4), 18-22.
- Fox, L. (1992). *Focus on editing: A grammar workbook for advanced writers*. N.Y: Longman.
- Heaton, J. B. (1990). *Classroom testing*. U.K: Longman.
- Kent Smith, R. & Goldstein, J. M. (1993). *English brushup*. U.S: Townsend.
- O'Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U. et al. (September, 1985). Learning strategy applications with students of English as a second language. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19, 3, 557-584.
- Konkol, Š. (2001). *Chyby, ktoré robíme v Angličtine*. Bratislava: Smaragd
Pedagogické Nakladateľstvo
- Monk, B. & Burak, A. (2001). Russian speakers. In M. Swann (Ed.), *Learner English* (pp. 145-161). U.K: Cambridge University.
- Sparling, D. (1987). *English or Czenglish?* Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství.