

Summary

Theme

**The meaning and uniqueness of
composition education in second
language acquisition**

name

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The aim and structure of the thesis

Recently there seems to be more research from a psychological perspective in Japanese Language Education Study. Studies from the sociocultural approach, which originates from the work of Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky, are one of the studies in cognitive developmental psychology. These studies put emphasis on the cultural aspect, which will influence cognitive development of human beings. The focus of this thesis is to study the second language (L2) composition activity from a psychological perspective and provide implications for the Japanese second language classroom. Therefore the aim of this thesis are to clarify the characteristics of learners in L2 composition for suggesting suitable media in terms of the theory of the zone of proximal development and to examine media which promote the development of L2 composition ability.

From chapter 1 to chapter 3, background theories which will give explanations for the findings of this thesis are introduced. In chapter 1, the theory of mediation by Vygotsky is first explained. The characteristics of the written speech were discussed and then the draft as a medium of composition is investigated. In addition, the study of the composition education is surveyed. In chapter 2, the significance of the education of composition and the use of the first language (L1) in the composition are described from the viewpoint of second language

education. In chapter 3, theories of motivation promoting the learning of composition are surveyed and the idea of the Zone of Proximal Development by Vygotsky and the ways of teaching of L2 composition are discussed. Next, from chapter 4 to chapter 8, the findings of the investigations of this thesis are described. The investigations aim to clarify the actual behaviors of the learners in L2 composition, and to find effective media that can be used in L2 composition activities.

In chapter 4, the development of L2 composition ability is analyzed. In chapter 5, the learners' motivation to promote the learning of composition is discussed. In chapter 6, the learners' behaviors in the process of L2 composition are observed. In chapter 7 and chapter 8, the draft and the use of L1 is investigated to examine media which could contribute to L2 composition education. In chapter 9, the results of the surveys are summarized and discussed based on the theories that are presented from chapter 1 to chapter 3.

The results of the thesis

In chapter 4, it is investigated what develops in the quality of composition from the early to the middle periods of L2 learning. The result suggests that "organization" and "style" develop, but "content" does not seem to develop very much.

In chapter 5, it is clarified if motivation of the learners in L2 composition learning differs by the level of the learners. As a result, it is likely that motivation changes by the level and competence is found to play an important role in the learning of composition.

In chapter 6, the writing activities in the process of L2 composition and the use of L1 by the learners are examined in relation to the level of the learners and the quality of their composition. The result shows that the writing activities and the use of L1 are different when they are analyzed from the point of view of the level of the learners and from that of the quality of composition. In addition, it is supported by the result that composition is a "going back and forth" activity and suggested that it does not disappear even if learners' composition improves.

In chapter 7, two points were examined. One is whether a learner used a draft, and another is what kind of draft there is particularly. As a result, most learners wrote a draft and a memo, but there was the person who did not use a draft and a memo even if a level rose. And three types were extracted as a characteristic draft. In chapter 7, it is analyzed whether a learner is using a draft in their process of composition, and if so, what kind of draft is particularly used. The result reveals that most learners are using a draft, but there are some learners who don't use them even if their level is high. Three different types of drafts are extracted from their works.

In chapter 8, it is investigated how the use of L1 in the draft influences the quality

of L2 composition. As a result, learners turn out not to get worse scores when they use L1 in their draft than when they only use L2. There is no negative influence on the quality of composition when they use L1 in their draft. On the contrary, learners turn out to get better scores in a particular point when they use L1 in their draft than when they only use L2.

The conclusion and significance of this thesis

In conclusion, it is suggested from the results of the investigations of this thesis that the goal of writing is not writing something smoothly without pauses, but by understanding that the characteristic of writing is “going back and forth”, objectifying words expressed in the process of writing, and abstracting and re-recognizing the thought during the process. Then, it is thought that the significance of learning composition in L2 is to improve the ability of composition in L1 and to deepen the abstraction and re-recognition of the thought. Next, it is suggested that the feeling of competence is important for learners to engage in the activity of writing and it is necessary to further examine the media which enable learners to feel competent. In addition, it is also suggested that learners need some guidance to understand the characteristic of writing and to feel that they willingly choose to write. Then, the draft and the use of L1 are proposed as the media which function effectively in the L2 composition learning. Finally, it is stated that there are problems left unsolved in the variety of learners and media examined in this thesis.