The Effects of L2 Extensive Reading on Vocabulary Acquisition, Reading Speed and Reading Comprehension

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Extensive reading (ER) has been broadly introduced in L2 classes in Japan as an effective way to increase L2 input. The effects of ER on the numbers of words learners read and on learners' attitudes toward reading have been investigated by researchers. Few studies, however, have revealed what other aspects of L2 reading ability ER develops. The focus of this study was to measure the number of words EFL learners read, reading speed, reading comprehension, vocabulary size, and motivation in an ER class. Four groups of Japanese intermediate level university students participated in this study. The ER program lasted for 15 weeks, and followed guidelines from the "Top Ten Principles for Teaching Extensive Reading" suggested by Day and Bamford (2002). Participants read English graded readers both in and out of class. Results indicated that the learners improved their reading speed as measured by WPM (words per minute), reading comprehension as measured by TOEFL reading scores, and motivation toward reading as measured by questionnaires. An analysis of vocabulary coverage showed that the level of the graded readers used in the ER program was within the participants' linguistic ability and vocabulary knowledge. Since reading speed and comprehension increased through ER, we understood that there was a positive effect on reading fluency. However, the graded readers used in the ER program contained only a few unknown words and the results of vocabulary size tests showed that ER with at-proficiency-level vocabulary did not increase learner's vocabulary size. Therefore, we conclude that ER with at-proficiency-level books develops vocabulary fluency, reading speed, comprehension, and motivation, but not vocabulary size. Learners need specific training to expand their vocabulary.

Multilingual Writing:
Code-switching and Codemeshing in L2/L3 Composing Processes

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Previous studies have identified ways in which switching to L1 can benefit L2 writers, particularly in planning and word-searching (Manchón, 2013), but little attention has been paid to composing processes in L3, or to comparing L2 and L3 composing by the same writers. Moreover, the recently identified phenomenon of "codemeshing" (Canagarajah, 2011), where two or more languages are mixed or merged with no boundaries between them, has not yet been incorporated into the analysis of composing processes. This intra-subject case study examines how four Japanese multilingual writers compose argumentation essays in L2 English, and L3 French, Korean or Spanish to shed light on potential advantages of having multiple languages to draw on while shaping their texts. To this end, we examine general patterns of activities; similarities and differences among the participants; and factors affecting the use of L1 and mixed/meshed languages. Employing a think-aloud protocol supplemented by retrospective interviews, the analysis identifies 10 specific activities (e.g., planning, rehearsing, evaluating) used in the text production processes. Preliminary results reveal the active use of L1/L2 in composing L2/L3 essays, with 70% out of all activities performed similarly across the two essays. The uses of L1 and mixed/meshed languages (L1/L2, L1/L3 or L2/L3) were observed to serve distinctive purposes: L1 often for planning, evaluating, and metacommments; mixed/meshed languages for word-searching and translating; and L2 or L3 for rereading, rehearsing, and repairing. Individual differences reflected the interplay of various factors, including language proficiency, writing training/experience, recency of use, and perceived language similarities (e.g., English and French). All these results suggest that L2/L3 writing is a "multilingual event," where writers knowing more than one language use additional languages as strategic resources. The presentation will provide a brief
overview of the study and discuss implications of the findings for empowering multilingual writers.

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Establishing an Autonomy Scale for CEFR: The Difference between Motivational and Strategic Learner Factors

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Whether learning is successful or not is measured by proficiency level, but Pintrich stressed the necessity of discussing learning by looking at its entire process, including motivational factors and strategic factors. Recently, many researchers have been adopting and adapting CEFR to clarify learners’ proficiency goals, but a substantial gap remains between CEFR’s original European context and the situation in Japan. In particular, CEFR makes very little reference to learning factors and assumes that every learner is equipped with autonomy. Japanese second-language learners, however, are not equipped with autonomy to the same level as their European counterparts. It is very possible that helping them acquire such learner factors will lead to the better utilization of CEFR in Japan. This study has two hypotheses: (1) Not only proficiency but also autonomous learner variables can be described and ranked in the CEFR framework; (2) Strategic factors are more clearly ranked according to proficiency than are motivational factors. This study sets out to verify these hypotheses by creating an “Autonomy CEFR,” taking in consideration motives, confidence, meta-cognitive strategies and cognitive strategies. Subjects in the experiment were required to fill out a Likart scale survey and also to describe their motives, confidence, monitoring, effort-making, and strategies used when studying. Based on quantitative and qualitative analysis, it became clear that motivational factors such as motive and confidence are more complex and vary in their range in the framework. The details will be shown in the presentation.

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Building English Presentation Skills for Art Major Students

芸術専攻学生の英語プレゼンテーション力の養成

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本発表では、東京工芸大学芸術学部の学生を対象にした英語プレゼンテーションの授業について報告する。当該科目「上級英語Ⅲ」は芸術学部3年生向けの選択科目で、学際的な視点から、その授業の意義を論じる。特に、授業の設計と実践は、学生の自己表現力とプレゼンテーションスキルの向上を目的としている。授業は、(1) プレゼンテーションのスタイルの学習、(2) ミニ・プレゼンテーション演習、(3) 芸術に対する心理的障壁を下げるための授業、(4) 音とリズムの学習、(5) 学生の作品のプレゼンテーション原稿作成と練習、(6) プレゼンテーション発表会とフィードバック、で構成されている。さらに、希望者はJACETのSIG「オーラルコミュニケーション研究会」主催のOral Communication Festivalで発表を行った。受講生の英語力は必ずしも高くてはいないが、芸術学部ならではの個性とコンテンツを持つ強みを応用、英語でのプレゼンテーションを成功させることができた。本発表では、授業内容と学生のプレゼンテーション・ビデオを紹介し、授業の成果について受講生へのアンケート調査結果を報告する。