

The Interrelationship among L2 Writing Ability, L1 Writing Ability, and L2 Proficiency

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1. Introduction

Over the past twenty years, there has been a growing interest in the relationship between L1 and L2, and many investigations have been conducted to identify possible factors that might have an influence on L2 acquisition. Specifically, investigations of the relationship among L2 reading competence, L1 reading competence, and L2 proficiency have been widely conducted (e.g., Carrel, 1991; Hulstijn & Bossers, 1992; Lee & Schallert, 1997).

In contrast, less emphasis has been placed on research concerning the interrelationship among L2 writing ability, and L1 writing ability, and L2 proficiency. In other words, research on possible factors affecting the quality of EFL writing is still at a beginning stage. Therefore, this study is designed to investigate the relationship between the following two paired variables for Japanese EFL students: English and Japanese writing ability (L2 W x L1 W), and English writing ability and proficiency (L2 W x L2 proficiency).

2. Method

(A) Participants

356 undergraduate students in a Japanese four-year university participate in this present study as subjects. The researcher screens those who (1) are international students, (2) have studied in English speaking countries, or (3) have received academic English writing instruction in secondary or university education.

(B) Instruments

The instruments in this research consist of argumentative writing tasks in both L2 and L1, and a standardized English proficiency test. The first variable involved, L2 writing ability, is examined by a means of the TWE (Test of Written English). The

9月6日(土) 研究発表3 第10室(522)

topic (TOEFL, 1996, p. 54) seen below is utilized as the data-gathering instrument of L2 texts to examine the participants' argumentative compositional proficiency. They write their L1 essays, the second variable, from the same prompt given in the TWE with the same procedure.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Teachers should make learning enjoyable and fun for their students.

Use reasons and specific examples to support your opinion.

The third variable involved, L2 proficiency, is assessed by a means of widely used test known as the TOEIC (Test of English as International Communication).

(C) Procedures

One week after the TOEIC administration, the writing tests of English and Japanese is administered in two different sessions.

3. Discussion

The statistical results of this research will be discussed in the presentation.

References

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