

外国語要旨

The Collaborative Learning of Writing during the Transition from Preschool to Elementary School

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In Japanese language education, among the four activities of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, children find writing the most difficult (Akita, 2002), as it involves deciding what to write, holding a writing tool, and writing freely, all of which are difficult skills to acquire. In other words, the difficulty with writing is that nothing happens unless they activate themselves. As learning how to write is necessary in school education because it is an established practice for modern nations, there is extensive research on this subject. Nonetheless, many children think they are not good at writing (Shimamura, 2004). Makido (2004) stated that the reluctance to write is perceived as an individual problem and the involvement of others in the writing process is unclear. In other words, writing is not necessarily related to the individual but it is open to societal interaction, maintaining that resistance to writing can be overcome.

This study focuses on the studies of Goodman (1986) and Lippman (2014) from a theoretical perspective. Goodman (1986) observed that children who had not yet entered the formal education system exhibited improvement in their spoken language but struggled to write when they entered school. Furthermore, he noted that written language is rooted in social interactions and communities. He advocated for the whole language approach in education. Further, Lippmann (2014) warned that children who are active in kindergarten may suddenly become passive in school. He advocated for community inquiry, stating that sharing experiences can help other individuals in the community, and contemplation while engaging in dialogue expands one's thinking abilities. Consequently, this study adopted the community theory proposed by Goodman (1986) and Lippman (2014) as a theoretical perspective and reconsidered behaviors indicative of being open in society. Specifically, we considered "the act of writing" in terms of writing, drawing, and chipping. Furthermore, we clarified the connection between kindergarten and elementary school from an ecological perspective (i.e., children's writing behavior) and examined the relationship between teachers and children. The study period covered two years from early

childhood to the first grade of elementary school.

Through fieldwork in kindergartens and elementary schools, the following four writing ecologies were identified. In the first category, including “the spontaneous act of writing in play” and “intentional writing learning,” writing was carried out in a communal place. Second, through a longitudinal study regarding “the world of meaning born from reciprocity,” dictation and revision were carried out jointly. Third, “care and inquiry,” the act of caring for things in early childhood and for people in the first grade of elementary school, was clarified. Finally, the “acquisition of Japanese language matters related to writing” showed that a child learns rules common to society.

Four characteristics were found in the ecological connection between kindergarten and elementary school: “writing play germination and elaboration of learning,” “collaborative dictation and elaboration,” “inquiry based on caring for things and people,” and “fusion of oral and written language.” Moreover, for each grade level, “transmission of written culture, which is the teacher’s educational intention,” “creation of [a] new community,” and “publicization of body and language” were suggested. From the viewpoint of connecting early childhood with the first grade of elementary school, the steps taken facilitated a smooth connection in developmental cooperativeness.

The following four conclusions can be drawn. First, regarding “why do people writing?” children communicate with gestures and speech. We recognized the role and function of Goodman’s (1986) statement about creating an immersive place and sharing life with others: “I created a place where I could share my life with others.” Second, regarding “not writing alone,” the writing act, which is perceived as an individual one, was supported by a sense of community: “I was able to reconfirm that I, who live in society, am respected; furthermore, I am not a person who lives alone.” Third, “care that relates to writing” means that the writing act involves caring for oneself throughout life and receiving care from others. Through writing, the children in this study were able to confirm whether they were anxious, having fun, or experiencing events from the past or the future. Care can be seen in all actions from the perspective of community and there is a relationship between caring and being cared for. Fourth, regarding “writing’s relationship with things, people, and things that nurture joy,” in the relationship between teachers and children, teachers must accept others’ actions positively and wait for progress. As Lippmann (2014) pointed out, thinking together develops communality. Therefore, the joy of writing becomes

evident in a child who has lived independently and that joy gives birth to further motivation.

The study was conducted at a university-affiliated school. We acknowledge that the cultural background of the home is likely richer than that of a local school. The numbers of children whose mother tongue differed from the language taught and of children with special needs were likely small. Furthermore, in terms of “the writing act,” behavior is expected to vary under diverse circumstances, which can be addressed in future studies.