外 国 語 要 旨

The Effect of Constructing Graphic Organizers on Reading Comprehension of Japanese Language Learners.

TAGAWA   Mao

The aim of this study is to investigate empirically the effect of constructing graphic organizers strategies on the forming of a coherent representation. The participants of this study are intermediate and advanced level Chinese Japanese language learners. The graphic organizer used in this study involves relating main ideas from the text in the form of a chart. As it is believed that for second language learners it is important to promote the searching for main ideas and correlation of information (below correlation searching), I have decided to use the "constructing graphic organizers" activity in this research.

A cause-and-effect expository text was used as reading material. In order to draw the learners' attention to the searching for main ideas and correlation searching, along with the text the "constructing graphic organizers" group was provided with a list of idea units where the text is presented in the form of information units. The participants were required to select main ideas from the list, write them down on post-it notes which they would then arrange on a piece of white paper and draw relations. All groups did a written free recall test after reading. In researches 1, 2, 4, for the analysis of the coherent representation I have analyzed the written free recall test in terms of recollection of main ideas, recollection of support ideas and inference generation. In research 3, I have analyzed the graphic organizers made by the learners in terms of the quantitative correctness of main ideas, the involvement of the cause-and-effect relation of the main ideas and the way of relating the main ideas. This study consists of the four above mentioned researches.

In research 1, in the case of intermediate level language learners, in order to clarify what kind of effect the searching for main ideas and correlation searching have on the forming of a coherent representation, I have setup four reading conditions depending whether there was or was no searching for main ideas and correlation searching activity. The results showed that, although the effects of the searching for main ideas and the correlation searching differ, it has become evident that in the case of intermediate level language learners in overall the forming of a coherent representation has been promoted by the "constructing graphic organizers" activity.

In research 2 the relation of the proficiency level to the effect of the "constructing graphic organizers" activity was analyzed. The results showed that even in the case of advanced level

language learners there is a possibility that the forming of a coherent representation has been promoted by the "constructing graphic organizers" activity. Furthermore, it was confirmed that with the "constructing graphic organizers" activity there is a possibility that the coherent representation of intermediate language learners comes closer to the coherent representation of advanced language learners.

In research 3 the relation between the proficiency level and the graphic organizers was analyzed. Although in terms of the quantitative correctness of main ideas no difference has been found, in terms of the involvement of the cause-and-effect relation of the main ideas and the way of relating the main ideas a difference between the two proficiency levels has been confirmed.

In research 4 I have graded the way of relating the main ideas in the graphic organizers in order to clarify what kind of graphic organizers promote the forming of a coherent representation. The results showed that in both high score group and low score group of both proficiency levels, although through relating many main ideas logically a further recollection of main ideas is promoted, there was no effect on the recollection of support ideas and inference generation.

In conclusion, although through relating the main ideas logically the forming of a coherent representation is promoted, the effect will be limited if we simply instruct the learners to make graphic organizers. With this the importance of doing the "constructing graphic organizers" activity with the focus on promoting the main idea searching has been pointed out.