

Teaching writing based on an analysis of the needs of professors and learners

- Writing class as a preparation for academic theme writing –

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Keywords: Teaching writing for academic purpose, needs analyses, spiral learning, feedback, clarifying the points for evaluation

Nowadays, academic writing class focused on reports and papers has become more important.

This paper suggests a way of teaching writing as preparations for academic purpose, which is based on the needs analyses of professors and returnee students who needs Japanese language education in International Christian University. A survey of the consciousness of the faculty members in International Christian University taken in 1995 reports the followings (Ozawa 1996a):

- a) To be able to write reports and papers in Japanese is important on the aspect of grading.
- b) Most of the faculty members think “ the organization of writing”, “ the way to use references”, “content”, “form”, and “comprehensibility” important as the points of grading.
- c) About 70 % of the faculty member think that returnee students require to the class for writing papers in Japanese.

The other survey of the consciousness of the returnee students in International Christian University taken in 1995 reports the following (Maruyama 1996a):

- d) More than 60 % of the returnee students want to be able to write their thought by using effective structure, and by using literal expressions. In addition about 50% of them want to be able to write their thought by using references effectively, and by using graphs and charts.

Moreover the reports of the Japanese language classes for returnee students in 1995 points out the followings:

- e) Before writing papers in the writing class, students need to learn how to summarize, how to build up their thesis and so on, and they should do this kind of practices repeatedly (Ozawa 1996b).
- f) The learning points of (e) are exactly the points that the faculty members

look important when they read students' reports (Ozawa 1996b).

- g) Japanese teachers should tell learners the points and the weights of evaluation when they give tasks to learners (Maruyama 1996b).

Based on these results, the writing class for returnee students has been improved.

The characteristics of the way of teaching writing in this paper are as followings:

- 1) Choosing the learning points of writing skill based on the surveys and the reports of the writing classes.
- 2) Making strong links between the former learning point and the latter learning point.
- 3) Giving learners feedback in the class, and showing the model writing as a part of feedback.
- 4) Telling learners the points and weights of the evaluation for each task.

Each writing skill is taught in the following way:

- i) Learners hand in their homework, and receive feedback at the same time by using model writing, which is written by Japanese language teachers.
- ii) Learners are introduced the new learning point, learn the structure and expressions, and practice writing.
- iii) Learners receive homework, and receive the explanation about the homework such as the aim, points and weights of evaluation.

This paper discuss about the effects of this way of writing class by course evaluation and the comparison of a student's homework. The results of the course evaluation points out that most of learners are be able to understand the aim of each class, and enjoy the class activity. It also points out that all of the learners think that they can understand easily the points of the evaluation for homework, and that more than 80 % of the learners evaluate that feedback for homework are useful. In addition, the comparison of a student's homework shows that learners learn writing skills by feedback and repeated practices.

In short, this paper reports that strong links between the former learning point and the latter learning point give learners the concrete aims of classes, feedbacks in the class make repeated practice effective, clear points and weights of evaluation help learners understand what they are supposed. Finally, this paper points out that the way of teaching in this paper can be applied not only to the class for returnee students but also the class for foreign students.

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