

Expressive Writing Activities Adopting Analytic Reading

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Writing and reading share a strong relationship. People acquire knowledge of characters and sentences through reading. They can start to write only after that basis has been formed. Not only children or Japanese learners, but also adult native speakers of Japanese refer to several sentence structures when they write in unfamiliar genres. Having read and understood the structure and style of sentences analytically, they apply that structure and style in various ways to their writing activities.

This study is a practical report of composition education that adopts analytic reading for its approach to actual sentence-production processes. By adopting analytic reading into composition writing classes, we intend for students to build awareness of sentence structure and to consider sentence concepts and structures. Analytic reading does not simply mean to imitate model compositions, but rather to observe sentences carefully and thereby interpret clues to apply them to the learners' own sentence production. For that purpose, we have devised a method by which even those who are not experienced at reading or writing can work independently: teachers give learners some tasks that facilitate thinking on this subject.

We conducted classes according to the following methods. During the preparation stage of writing, learners performed analytic reading using sentences in the same genre with different contents as they intended to write. As they did so, we gave tasks that could become clues to reading out sentence structures. Subsequently, they began the processes of outline creation and composition.

Learners' production (outline/sentences) and results of analyzing questionnaires of expressive writing activities elucidated the following: (1) Learners came to write thoughts about the structure of whole sentences through analytic reading and outline creation. All learners altered paragraphs in their compositions and became aware of coherence of meanings so that they became able to specify conclusions clearly. (2) Specifically examining their difficulties with sentence structures, notations and sentence-ending expressions, learners referred to various things and brought them into compositions through analytic reading. (3) Results showed that, with or without learning

experiences of using model compositions in composition education, the mother tongue does not influence expressive writing activities.

The above results indicated that learners conceptualized sentence structures by themselves and applied them to expressive writing activities independently through analytic reading. In addition, they showed that the sentence production was performed depending on difficulties or levels of respective learners.

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