

**DEVELOPMENTAL FEATURES OF EXPOSITORY COMPOSITION SKILLS IN CHILDREN
WHO ARE HEARING IMPAIRED :
ANALYSIS ON THE DIFFERENCES IN READING ABILITY**

Shiori Ito

Special Need Education School for the Deaf, University of Tsukuba, Ichikawa, Japan

Inho Chung

Faculty of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Japan

Keiko Seki

Special Need Education School for the Deaf, University of Tsukuba, Ichikawa, Japan

Abstract

In general, children with hearing impairment have some problems in writing compositions.

However, there is no detailed information concerning the expository composition skills of these children with hearing impairment. This study aims to investigate the developmental features of the expository composition skills of deaf children.

Seventy-two deaf children who are enrolled from grade 1 to grade 6 of a Deaf school, were divided into two groups according to their reading ability : low reading group (LG) and high reading group (HG). The test consisted of two tasks (A) to give an explanation of the rules of dodge ball and (B) to give a description of their most favorite TV program.

As a result, it was clear that the length of composition became longer as the grade went up in task A. However, LG made short length compositions. Moreover, HG could write complicated sentences correctly as the grade went up, but LG could not write correct sentences even if the grade went up. It was also shown that LG made a lot of grammatical errors and wrote ambiguous sentences semantically. The difference in content between HG and LG in the lower grades was not indicated. Also, it was shown that HG could write intelligible and rich content compositions in the high grades, however the composition of LG had deviation and no compatibility in content.

These results suggest that LG didn't consider the information about the theme of the task in

their compositions, and they wrote texts with their own interests and concerns.

Purpose

In general, Deaf children have some problems in writing, and it is difficult to develop according to their age (Katsumata & Sawa, 2000). There are a lot of conventional studies which use narrative and sentences of a diary of Deaf children, but there are almost no studies about expository composition. It is known that expository composition is related to prior knowledge about the explained target (Kishi, 2004), or expository composition includes truth or false information and the situation of the communication function compared to story composition (Grasser & Goodman, 1985). Therefore expository composition is different from narrative composition. So it is important to clarify the developmental features of expository composition skills of deaf children when you consider about how to teach expository composition to deaf children.

This study aims to investigate the developmental features of expository composition skills of deaf children.

Method

Seventy two Deaf children who were enrolled from grade 1 to grade 6 of a Deaf school, were divided into two groups according to their reading ability: low reading group (LG) and high reading group (HG). The test consisted of two tasks: one was explain the rules explanation of dodgeball (Task A) and the other was to describe their most favorite TV program (Task B).

The target children wrote a composition after being shown an instructional sentence and having confirmed whether they could understand. The implementation time for each task was about 20 minutes.

The analysis was (1) measure: the number of sentences, the number of characters (2) form: the number of parts of speech, the total number of errors, numerical comparison of functional errors and formal errors (3) contents: abundance of contents, evaluation of plainness (seven-point scale about overall plainness, five-point scale about the logical aspect of the sentences) .

Result

(1) In measure, it was clear that the sentence and character amounts became higher as the grade went up by both groups in task A. However in task B, there were no differences by grade

and reading ability.

(2) In form, there were a lot of nouns, prepositions, verbs, and auxiliary verbs in turn for the parts of speech in all groups. Regarding the analysis of errors, LG had many errors even if the grade went up but HG had fewer. It was also shown that there were more functional errors than formal errors.

(3) In content, it was clear that the high grades had more content than the low grades in task A, the middle and high grades had more content in task B, and HG had more content than LG in both tasks.

Regarding the logical aspect of the sentences, all evaluation (appropriateness of vocabulary, settlement of the meaning, the explanation order, appropriateness of content), as the grade rose in task A, middle and high grade in task B, and HG in both tasks got high evaluation about plainness (Fig.1, Fig.2). Also it was indicated that middle and high grades were more highly regarded than low grades, and HG were more highly regarded than LG.

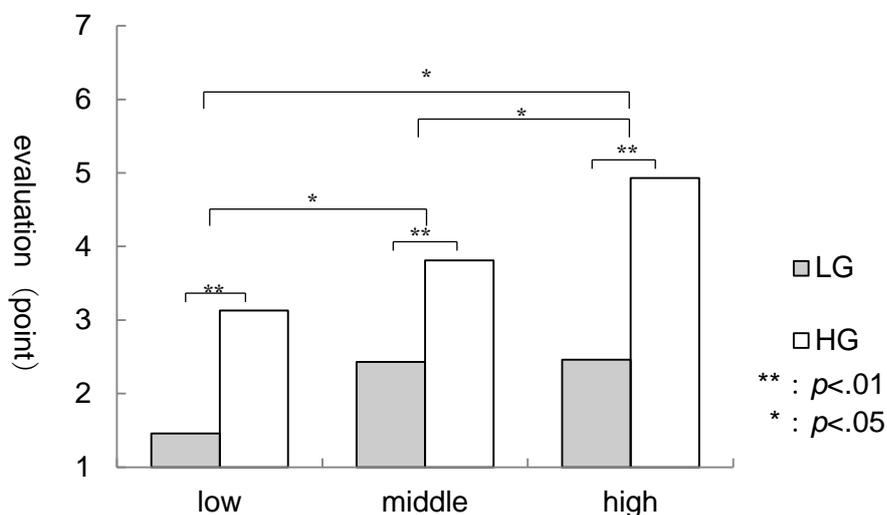


Fig.1 average of plainness in task A

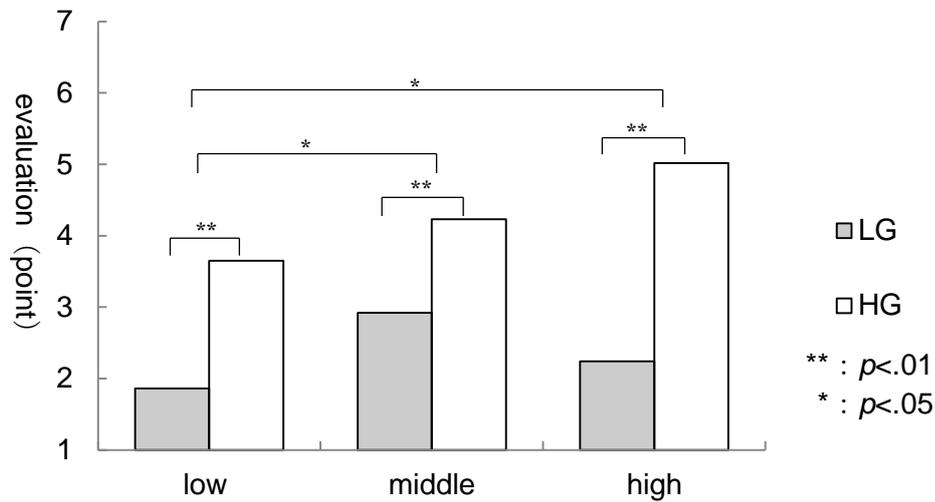


Fig.2 average of plainness in task B

Discussion

As for the developmental aspects, while MG and HG use a great number of sentences and characters in task A, there is no difference in the number of sentences and characters in task B. However, in both tasks, it is shown that MG become to write expository composition with more contents. Therefore, in LG, while they write expository composition that has less abundant contents because of a small number of sentences and characters or they write redundant expository composition with only a partiality in contents, as the grade goes up, they write expository composition with more of contents. Also, because the percentage of error decreases when the grade went up to HG, it is shown that they write more accurate expository composition with more content, as the grade went up. So, it is considered that they get high scores in evaluation of difficulty.

As for the differences in reading ability, in the analysis of measure, form and content, LG gets lower scores than HG and they get only as high scores as low grade of HG when LG become to HG. However, on average of evaluation of abundance in LG, MG and HG get from 2 to 3 points in evaluation about difficulty while LG get only 1 point. Thus, these results suggest that LG is slightly learning to write a plainer expository composition as they go up to MG or HG.

Also, there are different results from tasks A and B.

The former study that cleared the feature of expository composition of hearing children (Nakamura, Kishi, 1996), it is suggested that 2nd and 5th grade students don't have the skills

to write stable expository texts which aren't influenced by tasks. As a result of this study, deaf children are also like hearing children; they don't have the skills to write stable expository texts which aren't influenced by tasks when they are elementary school children.

Reference

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