論 文 審 査 の 要 旨

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論 文 題 目

Exploring the Role of Vocabulary in Writing: Predicting Lexical Diversity Scores, Differentiating Writing Proficiency, and Investigating Vocabulary Knowledge Development Over Time

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〔論文審査の要旨〕

This dissertation investigates the role of vocabulary knowledge in L2 writing: the extent to which vocabulary knowledge scores can predict vocabulary use in writing activities for participants with different proficiency levels; how vocabulary knowledge scores can distinguish participant writing scores; and to what extent vocabulary knowledge scores and written production can track acquired vocabulary knowledge. To explore these questions, four experiments (three cross-sectional and one longitudinal) and a range of vocabulary tasks were conducted.

The dissertation begins by distinguishing between receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. Receptive vocabulary knowledge requires participants to understand the form and meaning of words, and productive vocabulary knowledge demands participants to produce words. Vocabulary tasks are used as effective tools to test participants' vocabulary knowledge. Lexical diversity measures offer an alternative tool for exploring the variety of different words used in written texts or spoken production. By using lexical diversity measurements, it is possible to estimate vocabulary knowledge in writing use, writing competence, and overall language proficiency levels.

The first experimental chapter partially replicates Treffers-Daller et al. (2018) and explores potential relationships between vocabulary tasks and L2 written production for participants at the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) A2 level (Council of Europe, 2001). It examines whether vocabulary scores can predict participants' vocabulary in writing use with 29 L1 Chinese participants. Participants responded to four vocabulary knowledge tasks and one IELTS writing topic. The tasks used were Lex30, a task based on word association; G_Lex, a single-word gap-fill task; the Productive

Vocabulary Levels Test (the PVLT), a sentence completion task; and the Vocabulary Levels Test (the VLT), a form-meaning matching task assessing receptive vocabulary knowledge.

The second experimental chapter focuses on productive vocabulary knowledge tasks and investigates potential relationships between productive vocabulary tasks and L2 written production for participants at CEFR levels B1 to C1. This experiment examines 91 L1 Japanese participants with higher proficiency levels than in the first study chapter.

The third experimental chapter examines how productive vocabulary tasks can differentiate between IELTS writing scores. 63 L1 Japanese speakers and 35 L1 French speakers took part in this experiment. Qualified IELTS raters marked all the writing samples based on the IELTS writing rubric.

The fourth experimental chapter explores how productive vocabulary knowledge task scores and lexical diversity measure scores relate over a short study period. It investigates whether participants' vocabulary knowledge and lexical diversity scores improve through a pre- and post-test design over a short-term intervention (approximately 12 weeks). Participants from a single language background (L1 Japanese participants, N=51) with similar proficiency levels took part in the experiment.

The findings from the four experimental chapters raise several key issues to discuss and explore further: i) disparities in accessing vocabulary knowledge used in written production, as evidenced by vocabulary knowledge measures (vocabulary knowledge measures differ in task features and task embeddedness); (ii) measuring vocabulary knowledge can differentiate levels of proficiency in IELTS writing; (iii) selecting appropriate measures of lexical diversity depends on the specific research question or goal, as different measures may have different strengths and limitations. Earlier (simple) lexical diversity measure scores show stronger significant correlations with vocabulary knowledge scores in writing use, whereas more recently devised (sophisticated) lexical diversity measures show better performance in tracking vocabulary knowledge development in written production; (iv) G_Lex shows greater power in tracking vocabulary knowledge improvement than the PVLT and Lex30; and, (v) using online flashcards learning with 2K NGSL lemma-based word lists offers an effective means to improve vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary in writing use.

The dissertation concludes by highlighting issues regarding the dynamic relationship between vocabulary knowledge and written production to support future research. The findings' implications are significant for L2 writing class and vocabulary knowledge assessment.

Published papers connected to the thesis include two peer-reviewed journal articles. The experimental findings reported in the thesis have received significant praise from lead researchers in the vocabulary field.

As a result of the above examination, the author of this thesis is found to be fully qualified to be awarded the degree of "Doctor of Philosophy".