

Effects of task procedural repetition on lexical diversity and clausal complexity in L2 written narrative production of motion events

Daisuke Nakamura

Japan Women's College of Physical Education

nakamura.daisuke@jwcpe.ac.jp

Keywords: motion events, second language acquisition, task repetition, writing, complexity

It is well known that task repetition, or repeated exposures to and performance on the same task or tasks with similar procedural contents promote the development of grammatical complexity (e.g., Nakamura, 2018; Bygate, 2001) in second language (L2) speech and written production. Yet, complexity is not a monolithic concept (Norris & Ortega, 2009), and as Robinson claims (e.g., Robinson, Cadierno, & Shirai, 2009), general performance measures such as dependent clauses per clause are not sufficient for capturing a complicated picture of L2 task performance and its resultant L2 development. He argues that "task-motivated", specific indices are necessary, and such specific measures of complexity in describing motion events (Berman & Slobin, 1994) in L2 have been employed for investigating the effects of task demands on "thinking for speaking" in L2 by Nakamura (2007; Robinson & Nakamura, 2009), and Robinson et al., (2009). However, in relation to task repetition, no studies have investigated its effects on L2 written narrative production of motion events, and thus the present study investigates whether repeating tasks with similar procedural contents, particularly narrative descriptions of the frog stories (e.g., Mayer, 1969) lead to increases in the variety and the amount of manner verbs (MVs), of path verbs (PVs), and of path adverbials (PADs) for describing motion events in English with typologically different, Japanese learners of English population. The study also considers whether task repetition promotes more clausal confluences of semantic elements (CAUSE, MANNER, and PATH). Twenty-eight Japanese learners wrote narratives of the frog stories once a month over a semester (thus three times in total). Their narratives were analysed by following measures (some of them were taken from Robinson et al., 2009): (1) MVs (types & tokens), (2) PVs (types & tokens), (3) PADs (types and tokens), (4) the number of motion clauses (MCs), (5) the number of semantic elements, and (6) the average number of semantic elements per MC. A series of Friedman ANOVAs showed that task repetition had significant effects on the tokens of MVs ($p = .006$) and PADs ($p = .000$) as well as the total number of words ($p = .016$), but not on the other dependent variables. Pairwise comparisons showed that learners produced less PADs at Time 2 (Time 1 > Time 2, Time 2 < Time 3, $ps = .000$) and less MVs at Time 3 (Time 2 > Time 3, $p = .016$), as well as more words at Time 2 (Time 1 < Time 2, $p = .013$). Task repetition had no significant effects on the number of the MCs and of semantic elements, nor on the average number of semantic elements per MC. Moreover, there were *always* positive correlations between the types and the tokens of MVs and those of PADs at each time point (all Kendall's $\tau_s < .369$) (and also those of PVs at Time 1 & 3), which means that those who produced a greater variety and amount of MVs also produced a greater variety and amount of PADs. This suggests potential individual differences in describing motion events in target-like ways. These results will be discussed with additional analyses.

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