

***Benefits of L2 collaborative writing: How do Japanese EFL students share their L2 knowledge and construct new knowledge while writing together?***

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Research has shown benefits of collaborative writing in L2 learning. Writing together engages learners in discussion of L2 form (Adams, 2006; García Mayo & Azkarai, 2016; Niu, 2009) and provides them with opportunities to resolve linguistic problems through collaboration (Adams, 2006; García Mayo & Azkarai, 2016). It also promotes the use of metalanguage, through which learners co-construct new L2 knowledge as well as utilize the knowledge they already possess (Fortune, 2015; Fortune & Thorp, 2001). This study explores this topic in the Japanese EFL context. Twenty-five pairs of university students in Tokyo completed a narrative writing task in pairs. During the 15-minute task, they produced a total of 393 language-related episodes (LREs), in which they discussed lexical, grammatical, or discourse features. They used metalanguage in 233 LREs, and in 35 LREs, they used metalanguage to verbalize their explicit knowledge of English. In the majority of these 35 episodes, the student who heard the verbalization signalled understanding or co-constructed new knowledge with the other student. In 25 of the 35 LREs, the two students successfully resolved the problem that triggered the episode and incorporated the form in their composition. These results show that L2 collaborative writing generates ample opportunities for form-focused discussion and interactive problem solving. They also indicate that such discussion can be a sphere where learners articulate their L2 knowledge using metalanguage and transfer it to their peers or put their knowledge together to construct new knowledge. The author will discuss the results with sample LREs and draw pedagogical implications.