



A Theoretical Framework for Japanese Reading Instruction for Children from Abroad: The Endogenous Development Model

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Abstract

This article identifies two causes of the absence of methodology for teaching Japanese reading to children from overseas: 1. The absence of a theoretical foundation for the principle of acquisition of academic Japanese; 2. The absence of content-based reading instruction – that is, instruction for learning school subjects. This article then proposes the Endogenous Development Model as a theoretical framework for teaching Japanese reading to these children. This framework is designed to develop proficiency in reading academic Japanese based on first language proficiency and the cognitive, affective, social, and cultural abilities which these children have developed before their arrival in Japan. This article also presents a concrete format for the model, to realize the following goals: 1. With the support of the mother tongue, children understand textbooks and lectures on school subjects in Japanese so that they can progress in subject learning; 2. By making the content of subject learning in Japanese comprehensible, children learn Japanese academic language; 3. Through the use of the mother tongue for the purpose of learning academic Japanese, children maintain and further develop their mother tongue.

1 Introduction

1.1 The absence of Japanese reading instruction for children from abroad

For the past ten years, the number of workers coming to Japan from abroad has been increasing drastically. As a result, the number of children who come to visit and learn in Japan has also been increasing, and many of these children show a tendency toward longer stays. A large portion of these children have such great difficulty learning school subjects that they lose hope for advancing their education and getting jobs. At the same time, they also face difficulties in resuming their school education upon return to their home country, due to the failure to maintain their mother tongue and delay in learning during their stay in Japan.

These children's difficulties in school learning are typified by their difficulties in developing reading comprehension in Japanese. So-called "language for daily life", for needs outside of learning, is acquired in a relatively short period – i.e. one or two years. However, research results have shown that it takes five to ten years to acquire "academic language", which is necessary for reading textbooks on school subjects as well as listening to classroom lectures. No one method to promote the acquisition of academic language has yet been fully established. In particular, there is no instruction in reading Japanese for children from abroad. This is due to the following two problems:

1. The lack of a theoretical foundation for the principle of acquisition of academic language
2. The lack of content-based reading instruction—that is, instruction in reading for the learning of school subjects

The most fundamental cause of the lack of reading instruction for these children is rooted in the lack of a theoretical foundation with regard to the principle which makes acquisition of academic language possible. Since this principle has not yet been formulated, no instructional framework based on a well-established methodology has been constructed for reading, which is the major component of academic language.

For these children, the time allotted in school for learning Japanese as the national language is usually replaced by time for so-called “toridashi gakkyuu” (independent classes) in which learning assistance is provided for these children. The reason for this is that the children don’t learn much in the national language classes, since they have difficulties comprehending the textbooks. In Japanese language learning during the independent classes, it takes a fairly long time for them to go beyond the elementary stage, where they read and write hiragana and easy Chinese characters as well as practice reading out loud. Even after finishing the toridashi “independent” stage, it is very difficult for most of these children to reach the level where they can read literary works or understand the content of units in textbooks for natural science or social studies.

Understanding textbooks for school subjects is a typical example of “context reduced” activities (Cummins, 1981). It is difficult for children from abroad to participate in activities of this kind, because they cannot understand textbook content simply by depending upon context (including the communication partner’s facial or other nonverbal expression, the situation of communication, and so forth), which they are able to use to understand the daily interactions with “embedded context” that are handled by daily life language. In addition, the content of school subjects is characterized by a high degree of abstractness; that is, it is “cognitively high demanding” (Cummins, 1981), compared to content that is “cognitively low demanding” (Cummins, 1981) at the level of daily life. Acquisition of language which enables children to understand content of this nature, i.e. context reduced and cognitively high demanding, takes place on the basis of principles which are different from those for the level of language for daily life. Reading instruction for understanding school subjects cannot surpass the stage of trial and error unless this instruction is founded on a theoretical foundation for the acquisition of academic language. A theoretical foundation of this nature is still in the early stages of development (Okazaki, 2003, 2004).

Another fundamental cause of the absence of reading instruction for children from abroad is related to the situation of Japanese language education for adults, which has had considerable influence upon its counterpart for children. Instruction in Japanese reading for adults has not been promoted in the form of content-based reading (reading for specific purposes, which composes a very small part of the area of instruction, is the only exception). Concretely speaking, instruction for the development of reading ability as the main axis of academic language proficiency has been almost non-existent in Japanese language education. It should be developed through teaching Japanese reading not as part of reading for general purposes, but as an indispensable part of learning school subjects through the understanding of textbook units.

1.2 The symbiotic language literacy based on the Endogenous Development Model

This article proposes the Endogenous Development Model as the basis for overcoming the two problems stated above. This model is designed to depend upon and extend abilities that the children have already developed – i.e. language abilities, as well as cognitive, affective, social, and cultural abilities. It is also intended to facilitate ways of learning that these children’s families can support. Based on this, this article presents a methodology for instruction for the development of reading ability through the development of symbiotic language literacy – i.e. the bilateral development of reading abilities in Japanese and the mother tongue, supported explicitly by the children’s pre-existing abilities (mentioned above). This is a methodology for reading instruction which places, at its core, *coping with the constraints of the context reduced and cognitively high demanding nature of academic language by depending on the support of mother tongue proficiency along*

with the above-mentioned abilities. This methodology is based on the theoretical perspective of founding principles for the acquisition of academic language (Okazaki, 2003, 2004), and attaches great importance to content-based instruction.

2 The Endogenous Development Model

2.1 “Scrap and build” vs. endogenous development

In Japan, the percentage of the population made up of people from overseas is expected to increase sharply in the coming half-century. This increase will make the construction of an educational system for children from overseas an urgent necessity. This article proposes the Endogenous Development Model as a basis for education in the Japanese language, the mother tongue, and school subjects for these children, and presents a concrete format for this model.

In considering any educational system for a situation like the one mentioned above, the system will be very different depending upon whether it is based upon the idea of “scrap and build” or the idea of endogenous development. The idea of “scrap and build” does not assume that children’s linguistic and cognitive abilities based on their mother tongue will continue to develop, or that counterparts to these abilities in Japanese as a second language will develop in conjunction with them. In short, this idea assumes that children’s abilities develop by “starting from zero” – that is, by discarding the previous abilities and replacing them with the newly developing ones.

In contrast, the idea of endogenous development (Tsurumi, 1996, 1999) assumes that children’s abilities grounded upon their mother tongue should be fully utilized and that the counterparts to these abilities should be developed, not by starting from zero, but in conjunction with the pre-existing abilities, thereby elevating the level which has already been achieved. In other words, this idea aims for sustainable development of these children’s linguistic and cognitive abilities based upon their mother tongue through the interdependence between the first and second languages (Cummins, 1981).

The idea of “scrap and build” follows from a support system for these children which adopts outside values which the supporters introduce into the system. They consider that it is beneficial for these children to be able to use Japanese fluently in this country. On the other hand, endogenous development focuses on construction of a system where supporters try to start from the children’s own values and abilities, to continue to develop them, and to create Japanese language proficiency as well as corresponding cognitive abilities by integrating pre-existing abilities with the newly developing ones.

Studies on language education so far indicate that if children do not continue to use their mother tongue when they start to use their second language, they tend to develop so-called “double-limited” linguistic development, where neither their mother tongue nor their second language reaches an age-appropriate level of development (e.g. Cummins, 1981.). Preventing this discontinuation will create a basis for the coherent continuation of linguistic development. In addition, there are many children who will eventually go back to their home countries and resume use of their mother tongue, and many parents want their children to develop both their mother tongue and their second language. This suggests that it is necessary for us to create an infrastructure for education based on endogenous development (Okazaki, 2004).

2.2 Endogenous development as ecological development

2.2.1 Second language acquisition does not start from zero

The language acquisition of children from overseas does not start from zero. On their arrival in Japan, if they are around school age, their concept of “red fruit” is already established under the label of “apple” (if, for example, their mother tongue is English). In addition, their concept of “a general category which covers apples, strawberries and so on” is already established under the label of “fruit.” Further, their concept of a category which covers “fruit, vegetables, meat and so

on” is established under the label of “food.” On each of these concepts developed, labeled and maintained in the mother tongue, new labels in the second language are pasted, one by one.

Learning is understood as a process where new items are added to old ones. In the case of language learning, this process is shaped by a process in which new concepts are added through second language use to the network of concepts which have already been formed on the foundation of the mother tongue. In this sense, the Japanese language acquisition of children after their arrival in Japan does not start from zero but is shaped in such a way that the network of the Japanese language is grafted onto the network of the mother tongue. As a result, the maintenance and acquisition of both languages are nurtured through the continuity of networking.

2.2.2 The organic whole of the mother tongue and the Japanese language

The network described above is in fact woven into the network of the ecological system that is shaped by individual children. Children from overseas lived in their home country rooted to a network where they were part of an ecological system that was shaped by the nature of their home country and the people in their community. This network included a network of learning which was developed in their life at home and in society and was constituted by their parents, grandparents, siblings, and the people whom these children encountered in various kinds of situations. Linguistic, cognitive, affective, social and cultural networks were formed internally in these children through their interaction with this network.

In the process of their transfer to Japan, these children experience “being uprooted” (Trueba, Guthrie & Au, 1981). Individuals who lived in an ecological system in their home country are separated from it and transported to a totally different environment.

These children come to Japan to be newly “downrooted” (Okazaki, 2000a, 2002) in the new environment. They start weaving a network within the new ecological system, making themselves a part of it. They identify their place, and develop new images of themselves (i.e. identity) and the world in which they grow, through their interaction with the environment and the people which together constitute the new ecological system. What makes this downrooting possible is the vitality these children had before their arrival, as well as the continuation of growth – especially the continued development of the linguistic, cognitive, affective, and sociocultural network which they have formed internally.

The aim of endogenous development is to focus on how these children’s original vitality can be kept alive and how it develops and grows in continuity in the new environment – i.e. the new ecological system. Endogenous development also looks at how these children’s mother tongue, the linguistic aspect of their original vitality, is kept alive and to what degree it develops and grows by connecting itself to Japanese as a second language. In other words, endogenous development is concerned with how these children shape the image of the organic whole of themselves – or more concretely, how these children’s linguistic symbiote (Okazaki, 2003) is developed in the network of the new ecological system. Endogenous development is defined as the development of some entity that exists in the gene; i.e. something that is inherited (for example, the genome). It is development that enables an entity to continue to let its original self grow and take shape in the ecological system, and it does not interrupt or discontinue the growth of that being. Therefore support based on endogenous development is support that is intended to develop, explicitly and positively, these children’s endogenous abilities.

2.3 Endogenous development as the development of ethnolinguistic vitality

If, during his/her stay in Japan, a child from abroad expands his/her opportunities for Japanese language use at school, as well as reducing use of his/her mother tongue, language attrition, language loss or language shift takes place. Maintenance of the mother tongue is made possible by attempting to secure its use right in the environment – i.e. in the sea of Japanese language – by creating opportunities for its use to promote understanding of the content of school subjects and maintaining contact with mother tongue media.

The formation of an inner basis which supports preservation of the mother tongue is realized in the formation of an ethnolinguistic vitality which is shaped through contact situations. Ethnolinguistic vitality is defined as an entity which distinguishes one group from another. A group without this vitality cannot continue to exist as an active entity in contact situations. "Subjective ethnolinguistic vitality," i.e. how highly each of the group members estimates the vitality of his/her own group, plays an important role in intergroup behavior (Giles & Johnson, 1981).

Typically, subjective ethnolinguistic vitality influences language maintenance in contact situations (Giles & Johnson, 1987). In cases where language users of a certain group recognize that its educational, economic, and media power has not reached an appropriate level considering the actual power of the group, motivation for improving the situation is created. As a result, they are inclined to move toward a situation where their linguistic vitality is enhanced by their educational, economic and media power, so that characteristics of their language group are not jeopardized in contact situations (Bourhis, 1984). This is a move toward securing linguistic self-preservation (Okazaki, 2003). This self-preservation is realized as maintenance and development of the mother tongue (Giles & Johnson, 1987; Landry & Allard, 1992; Chen, 1997). Second language acquisition is advanced upon the realization of this maintenance and development, and consequently, the whole entity of the linguistic symbiote continues to exist and function.

This is also the case with children from outside Japan. Their new language develops based on their linguistic self-preservation; that is, the language ability they already possess is integrated into a new stage of development driven by ethnolinguistic vitality. In this sense, endogenous development takes ethnolinguistic vitality as its base.

2.4 The reading comprehension based on the Endogenous Development Model

2.4.1 The development of Japanese reading comprehension is advanced bilaterally

2.4.1.1 Problems with school subject learning based solely upon the Japanese language

The aim of this article is to propose a solution for the fundamental problems which children from overseas face at present with school subject learning based solely upon Japanese. It would be extraordinary if children at the middle to upper level in elementary school or at the junior high school level could come to read, for example, novels and essays in textbooks for Japanese as the national language within a year or two after their arrival in Japan. The extraordinary nature of such progress is quite understandable, if it is considered that children have to read hiragana and a great number of Chinese characters, as well as understand many varieties of sentence and text structures. Not only textbooks in the national language but also textbooks in the natural and social sciences are far beyond satisfactory understanding for them. As suggested by these examples, these children are often in a state of bewilderment; they feel helpless learning school subjects based solely on the development of Japanese reading comprehension.

2.4.1.2 Schema as a means to make academic language comprehensible

One of the issues that the present article tries to address in order to solve the above problem is to identify how academic language can be made comprehensible. One of the key concepts for the solution is schema. Human beings, starting from birth, form specific knowledge frameworks with which they understand and make sense of the situations which they experience daily through interaction with things and people in their environment. These frameworks are called schema. When one attempts to understand things by listening or reading, one understands them according to the framework that one already possesses. For example, there is a schema called the "restaurant schema." When someone goes to a restaurant, he/she opens the door, goes inside, and sits down on a chair. When a menu is brought to him/her by a waiter or a waitress, he/she decides what to order, and then waits to be served. The food is brought to him/her and he/she eats it; then he/she pays the bill and leaves. When one tries to read about or listens to events or stories where a restaurant is

alluded to, understanding is advanced by knowledge of the flow described here.

In the first language or mother tongue, various types of schemata are formed through various kinds of experiences accumulated through use of the language. These schemata play a vital role not only in making reading/aural material comprehensible in the mother tongue, but also in forming a “common underlying proficiency” of the first (mother tongue) and second languages (e.g. Cummins, 1981; Okazaki, 2000b, 2003). This common underlying proficiency functions as a foundation for interdependence between the first and second languages (e.g. Cummins, 1981). Consequently, academic Japanese used in class can be made comprehensible by using schemata as clues – schemata which have been formed in these children’s mother tongue.

For example, consider a situation where a child attends a class in which “friction” is explained in Japanese. “If you rub one wooden stick with another, you’ll find it becomes hot, you know? This is called heat produced by friction. OK? You’ll find a difference between when you rub one wooden stick with another, and when you do the same with two sticks made of glass. In the case of wooden sticks, you don’t find that they slide smoothly down each other, do you? In another case where you make a cake of soap slide down a board, you’ll find it goes down without any resistance. But if you cover the board with a towel and try to let the soap cake slide down along the towel, you’ll find the soap stops in the middle of the slope and doesn’t go down easily. Right? This is also due to the effect of friction. And this friction causes heat, as I said before. OK?”

When a child tries to understand an explanation of this sort, he/she will utilize the schema for friction which he has already formed in his mother tongue: i.e. if one rubs one object with another, or if one puts two rough objects into contact, one will find them resistant to each other and they will become hot. Consequently, the child will be able to guess that the Japanese word *masatsu* “friction” that is heard frequently in an explanation like the above probably corresponds to the concept of “friction” which he/she has acquired through experience and learning in the mother tongue. In addition, if the child can grasp that a flow of events related to the friction schema is being explained in the class, then Japanese words like *netsu* “heat” and *kosuru* “to rub,” which are used in relation to “friction,” may fall within his range of comprehensibility; the flow of explanation will also become predictable, and the whole process of the class in Japanese will, little by little, become comprehensible. This is the process in which comprehensibility (of academic language) is realized as the basis for the acquisition of Japanese as an academic language.

In short, we can restate the above as follows. If a schema, for example, of a concept such as friction is already formed through the experience of education in the home country in the mother tongue, this schema will make Japanese academic language comprehensible by means of a process whereby the schema functions as common underlying proficiency between the first and second languages.

2.4.1.3 Using the mother tongue in the process of learning Japanese academic language

InterLAJAM (inter-developmental learning between Japanese and the mother tongue), which has been discussed elsewhere by the author (Okazaki, 2004) and will be described briefly later, realizes a process whereby a child participates in classroom learning in Japanese after he/she already understands the content of school subjects from reading or listening to a recorded version of textbooks translated into his/her mother tongue. In this way, the mother tongue is used in the process of learning Japanese academic language, and thus the mother tongue academic language is also maintained and developed. Further, the integrated development of acquisition of Japanese academic language and maintenance and development of mother tongue academic language is achieved (Okazaki, 2002, 2004).

In this process, by understanding translations of textbooks written in Japanese, it also becomes possible to activate and maintain schemata which the child already possesses. In addition, by using activation and maintenance as a basis, a foundation for the formation of new schemata will be created. As a result, continuation of the children’s cognitive development will become possible without waiting for Japanese reading comprehension to reach a certain level.

Also, through this process the abilities the children already possess – mother tongue profi-

ciency and basic cognitive, affective, social and cultural abilities – will continue to form under the following conditions:

1. Without interrupting the development of the pre-existing abilities, thus maintaining and further developing them;
2. Forming Japanese academic language proficiency and the ability to understand and manipulate the content of school subjects;
3. Enabling children to maintain and develop mother tongue academic language proficiency, especially mother tongue reading comprehension.

On the other hand, if children try to learn school subjects solely through the Japanese language, the following problems will become unavoidable:

1. Interruption of cognitive development;
2. Inability to develop Japanese academic language proficiency to the level of understanding abstract content;
3. Difficulty in the formation of ability to understand and manipulate the content of school subjects;
4. Inability to maintain and develop mother tongue academic language proficiency, due to reduction of mother tongue use.

2.4.2 The Endogenous Development Model

Through the integrated developmental process described above, Japanese reading comprehension ability is formed with the support (i.e. exploitation and development) of pre-existing mother tongue proficiency. This enables a learning process to develop in which new entities are added onto old ones; in particular, new concepts in the Japanese language are added one by one to the network of those produced in the mother tongue.

In this process, development takes place in which these children's original vitality is realized and continues to grow within a new ecological system, and development of the linguistic source of this vitality, i.e. the mother tongue, is sustained by its connection to Japanese language development. Intentional support for this process could lead to the promotion of endogenous power. An instruction model based on support of this kind is here called the Endogenous Development Model, in which Japanese reading comprehension ability and its counterpart in the mother tongue are encouraged to develop bilaterally.

3 The development of symbiotic language literacy

3.1 Symbiotic Japanese language education

Contact situations (Neustupny, 1982, 1995) are triggered by introduction as well as acceptance of new languages and cultures into the country. In contact situations, the processes of linguistic and cultural symbiotization (Okazaki, 1994, 1996, 2003) take place equally in those entering the new country as well as in those receiving them, through linguistic and cultural negotiations with the other side based on each side's resources. In the process of symbiotization, a perspective for the possibility of maintenance of both sides is developed, through the formation of newly integrated abilities under the circumstances that each of the two parties' resources is limited. These integrated abilities are called symbiotic abilities. Linguistic abilities of this kind are called linguistic abilities with symbiotic abilities, and the language created under these circumstances is called symbiotic language.

Contact situations are understood as one of the arenas in which symbiotization takes place. In the process of symbiotization, organisms which constitute an ecological system form new relationships with each other through activity in situations where previous resources have become insufficient due to relentlessly occurring environmental changes. These organisms are motivated to create new ways to utilize mutual resources, and consequently they produce new abilities which enable each and every one of them to continue to exist. Language activities particular to contact

situations are those of human beings as organisms which continue to create new modes of symbiosis and symbiotic abilities through the process of symbiotization. These language activities are understood as situations in which new abilities are formed which enable human beings to adjust to difficult conditions by integrating the resources of the new members who have come to participate in the contact situation.

Language symbiotes are formed and developed in order for human beings to gain integrative abilities through symbiotization of abilities in two languages. They cannot attain the level of symbiotic abilities if the mother tongue and the second language are used independently from each other under the difficult conditions particular to contact situations (Okazaki, 2003). For example, language symbiotes of Japanese and the mother tongue are formed when children from abroad use their mother tongue in a process of learning Japanese academic language through which they maintain, newly acquire and develop their mother tongue academic language. Through this process, these children can focus on school learning in Japan and continue to develop cognitive, affective, social, and cultural abilities under conditions where it is difficult for them to gain sufficient academic language proficiency. They cannot attain the desired results with sole use of either the mother tongue or the Japanese language. They can attain reasonable results only through a process by which they understand the textbooks for school subjects written in Japanese with the help of the mother tongue – i.e. the process of making the content of school subjects explained in Japanese academic language comprehensible with the help of the mother tongue. That is, the Japanese language and the mother tongue are used in such a manner that each of the two languages is indispensable to the other. Symbiotic Japanese language education aims at forming language through a particular process that includes the three aspects of symbiosis, i.e. pluralism, additive bilingualism, and alternation (Okazaki, 2003), rather than promoting Japanese language acquisition only.

3.2 *The development of symbiotic language literacy*

Instruction for reading Japanese within the framework of symbiotic Japanese language education, unlike the current system, does not aim at developing reading comprehension through school subject learning which depends solely upon Japanese language use. This instruction aims at the development of symbiotic language literacy which can be attained through the bilateral development of mother tongue reading comprehension ability and Japanese language reading comprehension ability. It has the following three characteristics:

1. The curriculum for the development of mother tongue reading comprehension ability and that for the development of its Japanese counterpart are advanced bilaterally, as a spiral compound curriculum.

Symbiotic language literacy development aims for the development of language symbiotes of the Japanese language and the mother tongue. In other words, development of mother tongue reading comprehension ability is promoted as an indispensable half of instruction. More concretely, both the development of mother tongue reading comprehension ability for reading academic mother tongue texts and the development of Japanese reading comprehension ability for reading academic Japanese language texts are situated as indispensable components of this instruction. In order to fulfill this requirement, the curriculum is designed so that reading activities of both languages are intertwined.

2. The aim is not to attain Japanese reading comprehension ability of the same level as that of native Japanese speakers. The aim is achievement of the goals for Japanese language reading comprehension which individual children under a variety of circumstances have set for their own purposes.

These children's needs for academic Japanese vary depending upon diverse factors: e.g. permanent resident vs. shorter stay, Kanji region vs. non-Kanji region, parents' educational philosophy, etc. Consequently, they set goals for Japanese language reading comprehension depending upon their own individual needs. Symbiotic language literacy development aims at providing freedom of choice as well as equal opportunity, in the sense that all children are given equal opportunity to attain individually selected goals.

3. The development of symbiotic language is advanced through integration with the development of speaking, listening, and writing, rather than being separated from development of these three skills.

In contrast to Japanese academic language, Japanese language for everyday life is acquired in a relatively short period. Instruction for reading comprehension within the framework of symbiotic language literacy is advanced by making speaking and listening abilities fundamental media for developing reading ability, which requires more time.

3.3 *Interdevelopment of Learning of Academic Japanese and Academic Mother Tongue*

Interdevelopment of Learning of Academic Japanese and Academic Mother Tongue (hereafter InterLAJAM) is a concrete format for reading instruction which aims at developing symbiotic language literacy. InterLAJAM is designed to attain the following:

1. With the support of the mother tongue, these children understand textbooks as well as lectures on school subjects in Japanese so that they can progress in subject learning;
2. By making the content of subject learning in Japanese comprehensible, children learn Japanese academic language;
3. Through use of the mother tongue for the purpose of learning Japanese academic language, children maintain, acquire and further develop their mother tongue.

In contrast to Japanese language for everyday life, which is acquired in a much shorter period (within 1-2 years), the acquisition of Japanese academic language takes 5-10 years. Because of this, children from abroad may face the situation where the cognitive development they have attained in their home country stagnates to the degree that they experience difficulties in school learning and cannot easily move on to higher education and/or find jobs. These difficulties can be overcome by promoting linguistic development based on the principle of interdependence between the mother tongue and the second language, which predicts that development of one language constitutes development of the other, so that interdevelopment between the two languages takes place.

In order to accelerate this process, InterLAJAM is designed so that children read textbooks which are translated into their mother tongue and listen to a recorded version of the translation. Thus they understand the content of a learning unit in advance and are prepared to listen to lectures and attend classroom activities in Japanese. After classroom work they read the Japanese version of the textbook, bringing with them previous understanding of the content. They start by comprehending keywords in the textbook units and later comprehend sentences and paragraphs, by consulting the translated version and its recording as well as working on a variety of reading tasks. Cumulative repetition of this process will eventually result in the realization of points 1, 2, and 3 (above).

4 Summary and conclusion

The present article has identified two problems as causes of the absence of any instruction that can be legitimately called instruction for Japanese reading comprehension for children from abroad: first, the absence of a theoretical foundation for the principle of academic language acquisition; second, the absence of instruction for reading comprehension for the learning of school subjects (that is, content-based reading instruction). As one way to solve these problems, this article has presented a theoretical framework for the development of symbiotic language literacy based on the Endogenous Development Model as well as a concrete learning format. This framework aims for the development of Japanese reading comprehension ability based on the explicit support of abilities these children already possess – mother tongue proficiency and pre-existing cognitive, affective, social and cultural abilities – and thereby aims for maintenance and development of these abilities as well. Discussion of concrete details of the learning format will be the next step in this program of research.

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