An exploratory consideration of approaches to assessing children’s poetry: How do we view poetry written by secondary school students?

The purpose of this study is to develop a model to interpret children’s learning from their poetry writing by subjecting it to theoretical and practical examination. Heretofore, teaching poetry writing has had low status in the school curriculum, and fewer lessons are taking place in this topic than in other genres (Dymoke et al., 2013). This situation is partly because of the view of “the product supremacist”, which emphasises whether or not children wrote an excellent poem, and which leads to children and teachers becoming anxious. Some assessment methods of children’s language ability through writing poetry have been developed in the UK (Carter, 1997; Dymoke, 2003; Wilson, 2005), but their international versatility has not yet been examined. In response, we designed an assessment model based on the model consisting of eight levels that was developed by Dymoke (2003) and we reconstructed it. We conducted a poetry-writing lesson in a secondary school classroom and assessed poems written by the students. We tried to categorise these poems based on the rater-related difference and reconstructed the model. As a result, we could extract the potential for the establishment of this method of assessing children’s poetry writing and its contribution to the improvement of the children’s creative literacy skills.