
Action Research in Career Counseling: Development of Effective Training in Career Counseling

Jun Kayano

The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training

This research aims to improve career counseling at public employment agencies. As a research methodology, we selected action research in which research, training and practice are inter-related and performed together. The research is conducted in this way. First, we present the idea of career counseling focusing on building a Career Concept (Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training [JILPT] 2009) based on a theoretical background (research). Next, based on the idea presented, we develop a training program for career counselors to conscientize a career counseling process. Then, we develop a support system in which the career counselors can practice conscientization of the career counseling process at the counseling counter (practice). Through this cycle of research → training → practice, a more effective training program will be developed. Career counseling services will also be further improved through practice. This report presents the results of our study of the above-described cycle as a practical example and discusses future issues in the development of the program and the methodology of action research.

I. Introduction

This research aims to improve career counseling through “conscientization” of a career counseling process from the perspective of building a Career Concept (JILPT 2009).

As a research methodology, we selected action research. Lewin (1951), an advocate of action research, said, “Nothing is as practical as a good theory.” Believing that training is necessary when putting a theory into practice, he suggested a triune action research to be carried out; research, training and practice. The research is conducted in this way. First, we present the idea of career counseling focusing on building a Career Concept based on a theoretical background (research). Next, based on the idea presented, we develop a training program to conscientize a career counseling process and incorporate it into the training course at the Labour College,¹ which is an institute providing training to counselors who engage in career counseling and job introduction at public employment agencies on a national scale (training). Then, we develop a support system in which career counselors can practice conscientization of the career counseling process at the counseling counter (practice). Through this cycle of research → training → practice, the theory will be revised and a more effective training program will be developed. Career counseling services will also be further improved through practice.

This article presents the results of our study of the above-described cycle as a practic-

¹ Labour College is a training institution of the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training. This college is explained in English at <http://www.jil.go.jp/english/index.html>.

al example and discusses future issues.

The career counseling referred to in this article is counseling for job seekers who request career counseling and job introduction in the services of public employment agencies.

II. Research—Career Counseling Model

1. What Is a “Career Concept”?

In career counseling, given as part of general job placement services provided by public employment agencies, the match between the skills of the job seeker and the skills needed by an employer is examined to increase the possibility for the job seeker to secure work (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2004). When assessing the vocational skills of a job seeker, his/her work experience, educational background, training history, licenses and qualifications he/she has obtained and various other work-related events are considered.

In this research, a person’s vocational skills are viewed as a Career Story which interprets and connects past, present and future events, such as “I am doing XXXX (or I am going to do ZZZZ) because I have been doing YYYY so far” or “I am going to do ZZZZ because now I am doing XXXX.”

The job seeker and the counselor in charge of career counseling in public employment agencies examine through dialogues a match between the job seeker’s skills and the skills needed by employers through the process of construction (making), deconstruction (breaking down), and reconstruction (remaking) of a story.

After this process narrows down the employment offers that satisfy the match between the job seeker and the employer, the above story will develop into one incorporating a specific and practical plan for activities to obtain employment, which includes preparing a curriculum vitae and setting up an interview schedule, which will be an activity plan for the future based on past and present events. This development of a story is called a “Career Concept.”

2. Model for Building a Career Concept

As a process of building a Career Concept through career counseling, we propose the model shown in Figure 1. In this model, the process is divided into three steps: (i) collection, (ii) processing and (iii) utilization of information on job offers and job seekers.

(i) Information collection

The job seeker and the career counselor collect information both on job offers and job seekers through discussion, using the information from job offer forms and job application forms as a guide.

(ii) Information processing

Necessary information is picked out from the job seeker’s application form and organized as a Career Story. The story is constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed repeatedly while being compared to and based on the information on the job offer form. In this way,

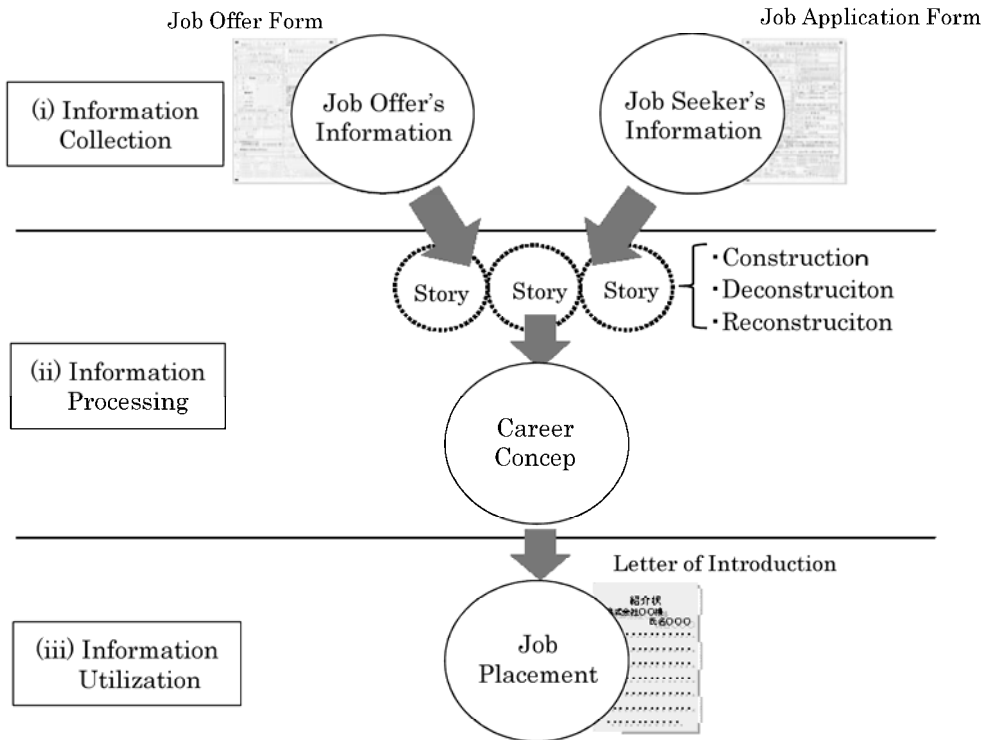


Figure1. Model for Building a Career Concept

the Career Concept is built as a more specific activity plan targeting only those jobs for which the job seeker is applying.

(iii) Information utilization

By using the Career Concept, the career counselor can provide job placement services in a more efficient manner, and the job seeker can also examine the information on the job offer form more efficiently.

3. Background Theories of the Career Counseling Model

There are three major theories on vocational development: (i) the trait and factor theory, which emphasizes the importance of an objective match between the personal traits of the job seeker and the job (Parsons 2005; Williamson 1964); (ii) the vocational development theory, which emphasizes the importance of the job seeker's subjective view, i.e. self-understanding and vocational understanding (Super 1953); and (iii) the constructivist approach, which holds that by expressing his/her subjective understanding of himself/herself and the job mainly by means of language and sharing it with others, the job seeker actualizes the concept of a career (e.g. Savickas 1993; Peavy 1996; Cochran 1997).

In this research, we posit that career counseling will shift from the Job Placement Type, in which “the career counselor takes a neutral position between the job seeker and the employer and introduces an appropriate job offer to the job seeker from an objective perspective,” to the Catalytic Agent Type, in which “the career counselor acts as an intermediary between the job seeker and the employer and provides support so that the two parties can constructively talk with each other.” The theoretical background of the Catalytic Agent Type of counseling is the constructivist approach.

The environment surrounding job seekers is changing with the advancement of the information society, economic globalization, diversification of employment patterns and increased mobility of employment, and it is difficult for a job seeker to directly control what happens to him/her. However, by giving meaning to what has happened by interpreting the relationships among the present, the past and the future and then creating a Career Story, the job seeker can construct his/her perspective to cope with the difficult situation he/she faces and can actively seek a job. Therefore, we believe that the role of the career counselor in career counseling is to help the job seeker create his/her Career Story.

III. Training—Program Development

1. Outline of the Training Program

The training program was developed with the aim of conscientizing a career counseling process from the perspective of building a Career Concept so that career counselors can control their activities at the counseling counter and improve their career counseling skills. “Conscientization of a counseling process” means that after a career counseling, the career counselor reviews the counseling process of the session and verbalizes what was communicated between the job seeker and the career counselor. The program is to provide training in such verbalization.

This program, which is called “Case Study,” has been provided by the Labour College since fiscal 2005 as part of its professional training course for career counselors.

At the Labour College, the program provides a total of 9 hours and 40 minutes of training in two sessions (days), with a two-week interval between the first and second session. The schedule of the Case Study Program is shown in the Appendix.

To date (as of January 2008), the program has been offered six times to a total of 263 career counselors. Starting in fiscal 2006, the career counselors taking the program have been requested to report on how they have used what they learned in their actual work to the Labour College on a voluntary basis, and a total of 69 reports have been submitted by 60 career counselors.

2. Basic Ideas of the Program

The program has three basic concepts as follows:

First, the technique we use is called the Expressional Technique. By mastering the

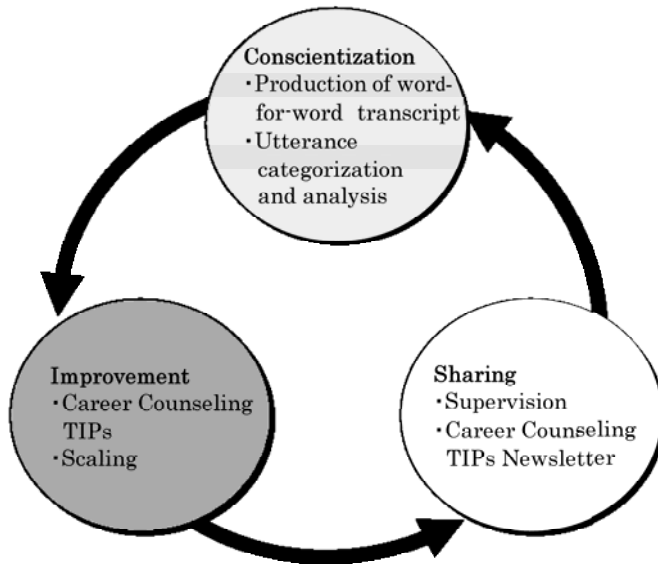


Figure 2. Improvement of Career Counseling

Expressional Technique² used in constructing a story, the career counselors will be able to help job seekers build their Career Concept more effectively.

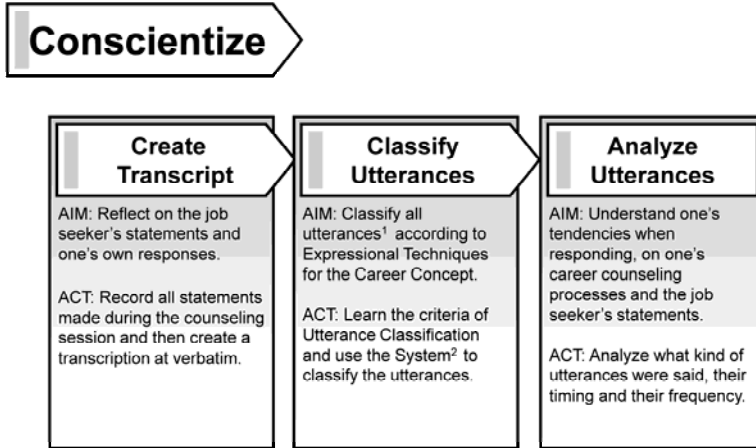
Second, as a way of mastering the techniques for career counseling, the program places more importance on making career counselors conscious of the various techniques at the counseling counter rather than focusing on a specific technique. Since the flow of a career counseling session may change in various ways depending on what the job seeker says and the career counselor's response, it is more important in the program that career counselors become conscious of different techniques and have them at their disposal, rather than being able to put a specific technique.

Third, the program not only provides training but it also intends to improve the career counseling services provided at the counseling counter. By making career counselors conscious of different techniques, the program supports them in considering which technique should be used at which time, in order to provide better career counseling.

3. Processes of the Program

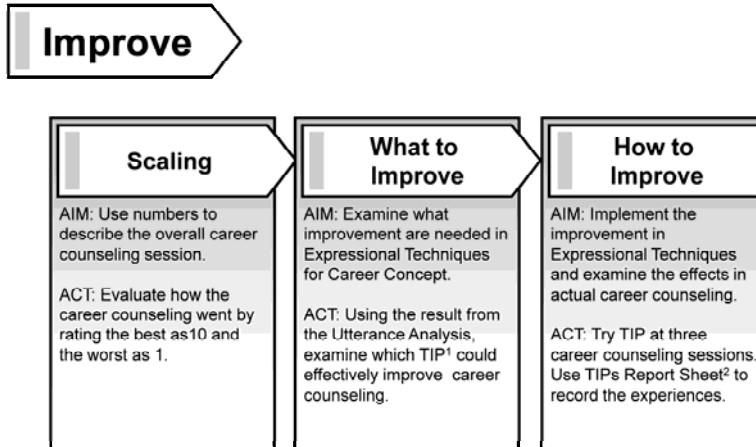
The program consists of three phases as shown in Figure 2. First, in the "conscienti-

² The Expressional Technique is defined as "techniques constructed from multiple linguistic expressional methods used to express one's Career Story that enables one to select and carry out an appropriate method of expression in response to the status and flow of the career counseling between the job seeker and the counselor." The Expressional Technique is divided into "Subject," "Viewpoint" and "Tense." Each Expressional Technique is subdivided into three categories of the Expressional Method; Past, Now, Future for Tense; Outer, General, Inner for Viewpoint; and Matter, Sentiment, Reasoning for Subject.



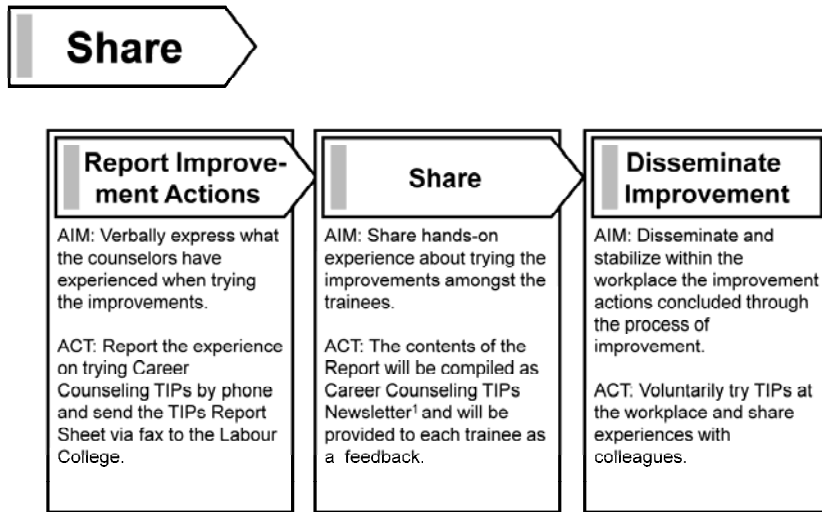
- Notes: 1. Utterance is defined as “a string of words that expresses a certain organized meaning.” To be specific, the following are considered to be utterances: (1) Anything leading up to a period [.] or a question mark [?]; (2) Anything up to the point where one person ceases speaking and the other person begins; and (3) A period of silence or a pause that continues over a certain length of time.
2. System means “System for Preparing and Analyzing Transcripts on Career Counseling and Job Introduction.”

Figure 3. Process of Conscientization



- Notes: 1. Career counseling TIPs are defined as “a small technique in choosing expressions and a little device on phrasing the words.” The Labor College has compiled a standard career counseling TIPs consisting of 15 items based on the result of the analysis on utterance transcripts that were reported by the trainees. These TIPs will be amended based on the report from the improvement activities of the trainees.
2. The TIPs Report Sheet is used to record the experiences of counselors upon trying a TIP at the career counseling sessions and their effects.

Figure 4. Process of Improvement



Note: 1. Career Counseling TIPs Newsletter is a booklet that compiles the trainees' experiences on trying TIPs based on their reports. So far we have issued eight Newsletters (4th Newsletter has not been issued). It is set to be distributed at the Professional Training for Career Consultant Development Program.

Figure 5. Process of Sharing

zation" phase, career counselors become conscious of the process of their career counseling session (Figure 3). Next comes the "improvement" phase, in which the counselors consider how they should change their responses during conversations with job seekers and put this knowledge into practice at the counseling counter (Figure 4). Then, in the "sharing" phase, career counselors share with each other practical cases, mainly concerning verbal communication with job seekers, where the Labour College plays a central role (Figure 5).

The program provides support for one cycle of these phases. Even after completing the program, career counselors become more conscious of the process of career counseling through "sharing" and have more options to respond to what job seekers say, which will lead to further "conscientization" and "improvement." Thus, the practice is expected to continue in cycles.

(1) Changes in Evaluation of Counseling after the Program

Each career counselor has three opportunities to grade his/her own counseling performance, giving 10 points for the best and 1 point for the worst performance called "Scaling"³: (i) prior to participating in the program (hereinafter referred to as "pre-participation") but immediately following a counseling session of which the production of a word-for-word

³ "Scaling" is a technique used in Brief Therapy. By using numbers to describe the overall impressions under various situations and matters, it becomes easy to convey the impression in a concrete manner to others.

transcript⁴ has been assigned; (ii) after the word-for-word transcript has been analyzed in the program (hereinafter referred to as “post-analysis”); and (iii) after the practice activity of what has been learned upon returning to the counseling counter (hereinafter referred to as “post-practice”).

We conducted two types of analysis on the scores of scaling: a comparison between pre-participation and post-analysis scores and a comparison between post-analysis and post-practice scores. In the comparison between the pre-participation and post-analysis evaluation of 80 career counselors who participated in the program in fiscal 2007, the largest proportion of participants, or 65.0%, lowered the evaluation of their counseling performance, followed by those who did not change and those who raised the evaluation, at 17.5% each. The same tendency is also observed among the 47 participants in the program in fiscal 2008.

This is probably because by participating in the program, the career counselors became conscious of what the job seekers said as well as their own responses during the process of career counseling, and as a result paid more attention to the problems of their own responses.

In the comparison between the post-analysis and post-practice evaluation of 41 career counselors who participated in the program for fiscal 2006 and 2007, the evaluation of all three post practice counseling performances was raised by more than 70.0%. This result may indicate that career counselors became more conscious of the process of career counseling during their pre-participation time and were able to better control their activities and improve their counseling skills through practice.

However, considering that this is just one of many programs in a professional training course, these changes in the evaluation of their own counseling performance by career counselors may be attributed by the effects of other programs. Therefore, we cannot say, only based on this analysis that conscientization of a career counseling process caused the improvement in their counseling skills.

We need to further study the conscientization of a career counseling process derived by the program through works in practice.

(2) Conscientization of the Career Counseling Process

In the utterance analysis, career counselors experience conscientization of a career counseling process from the perspective of building a Career Concept by analyzing the word-for-word transcripts of career counseling sessions that they provided by using Career-Talk. There are six kinds of worksheet in this training. They are:

⁴ The transcript is made based on an actual dialogue during career counseling which was recorded and following “the 10 Rules for Formatting Transcripts Using Carritalk,” (Kayano 2009), every single word was transcribed from the recorded dictation. Not only verbal communication but also non-verbal communication (including facial expression, gesture, and posture) was transcribed.

1. Number of Turns and Utterances
2. Processing of Utterances
3. Tense of Utterances
4. Viewpoint of Utterances
5. Subject of Utterances
6. Career Counseling TIPS⁵

Program participants are scheduled to work on each worksheet for about 30 minutes according to the instructions provided on the worksheet. After the completion of Case Study Programs I and II, participants are expected to write their reviews on the review sheets.

Conscientization of a career counseling process proceeds in three steps. The first step is “comprehension of fact” based on an analysis of the word-for-word transcript. The second step is “interpretation of fact,” which is to understand the utterances of the job seeker, responses of the career counselor and characteristics and tendencies in the career counseling process. The third step is “verbalization of interpretation,” by writing the above results on a worksheet.

Using the KJ method,⁶ we sorted out and summed up the information written on the worksheets as well as the participants’ opinions and comments written on the review sheets. By doing so, we examined to what extent the career counselors experienced conscientization of a career counseling process and what opinions and comments they had.

(3) Method

1) Program Period and Number of Training Participants

In 2008, the professional training course for career counselors was held three times. The area covered in this analysis consists of Case Study Program I performed on February 19 and Case Study Program II performed on March 5 as part of the professional training course for career counselors held from February 18 to March 7. A total of 57 counselors participated in the training.

2) Protocol for the KJ Method

The KJ Method was implemented according to the following protocol.

(i) Creation of basic elements

The content of the worksheets and review sheets are divided into sentences to create the basic elements. For that purpose, the following rules are applied.

- When multiple meanings are included in a sentence, the sentences are divided so that each sentence has only one meaning.
- When there are omitted words and the sentence cannot be understood on its own,

⁵ Career Counseling TIPS are defined as “a small technique in choosing expressions and a little device on phrasing the words.”

⁶ This is the method proposed by the cultural anthropologist Dr. Jiro Kawakita on compiling data collected during research. “KJ” refers to Dr. Kawakita’s name.

words with curly brackets { } are inserted to make out the meaning.

- Incorrect or missing letters are corrected and placed in curly brackets { }.
- Explanations are added in curly brackets { } after the coding of Utterance Classifications and abbreviations.

(ii) Creation of mid-level elements

When basic elements contain the same meaning, they are grouped together and a sentence is created to represent the meaning. This is written on a card as a mid-level element.

(iii) Mapping the relationship between mid-level elements

Mid-level element relationships are organized by placing elements that are related close to each other on simili paper, while unrelated elements are placed far apart.

(iv) Creation of primary elements

Related mid-level elements are collected and grouped together and assigned a title which represents their meaning, and the title is then written on a card to create a primary element.

(v) Relationships between primary elements.

Lines and arrows are written on the simili paper to represent the relationships between the primary elements, and are labeled with the number of primary and mid-level elements included.

(4) Results

1) Summing Up Information on Worksheets

Table 1 is a summary of the information provided on the worksheets, which shows what a career counselor experienced during the program from the perspective of (i) clarification of fact by quantitative analysis, (ii) clarification of fact by qualitative analysis, and (iii) interpretation and verbalization of fact.

These results indicate that the career counselor experienced both “comprehension of fact” and “interpretation of fact” in terms of the number of remarks and utterances, Processing, and Tense, while in terms of Viewpoint and Subject, the career counselor only comprehended the fact and did not go further to interpret it.

2) Summing Up Information on Review Sheets

There are two kinds of review sheets. Review Sheet 1 is for reviewing the first day of the program, mainly focusing on learning the criteria for Utterance Classification⁷ and practical training of Utterance Classification. Review Sheet 2 is for reviewing the second day, mainly focusing on the analysis of the word-for-word transcript.

Program impressions can be divided into three primary elements. They are “high ap-

⁷ Utterance Classification is performed in accordance with the Coding Manual compiled the Utterance Classification criteria (Kayano 2007).

Table 1. Result of Worksheet Analysis

Worksheet	Conscientization of a Career Counseling Process		
	Clarification of Fact		(iii) Interpretation and Verbalization of Fact
	(i) Quantitative Analysis	(ii) Qualitative Analysis	
Number of Turns and Utterances	The counselor realized how many opportunities to speak were provided to the job seeker through quantitative analysis of the number of utterances.	The counselor realized the contents of the job seeker's utterances by searching his/her utterances.	The counselor interpreted whether the job seeker could say what he/she wanted to say.
Processing	The counselor realized the tendency of career counselor's questions through quantitative analysis of his/her "Question" and the job seeker's "Response."	The counselor realized the contents and effect of his/her question by searching utterances in his/her "Question" and the job seeker's "Answer."	The counselor interpreted the appropriateness of his/her own questions.
Tense	The counselor realized which tense was used most often in the utterances through quantitative analysis of "Past," "Now" and "Future."	The counselor realized which point in time the participants were referring to by searching utterances in "Past," "Now" and "Future."	The counselor interpreted the time span of the topic.
Viewpoint	The counselor realized to what extent each participant expressed his/her ideas and feelings through quantitative analysis of "Inner."	The counselor realized what ideas and feelings the participants expressed by searching utterances in each participant's "Inner."	N/A
Subject	The counselor realized to what extent each participant expressed his/her sentiments and desires through quantitative analysis of "Inner" and "Sentiment" and "Inner" and "Reasoning."	The counselor realized what sentiments and desires were expressed by each participant by searching utterances in "Inner" and "Sentiment" and "Inner" and "Reasoning."	N/A

praisal of the program," "problems with the program" and "expectations for the program/disseminating the program."

The relationship between the primary elements is that while there is "high appraisal of the program," "problems with the program" are being pointed out. Additionally, with

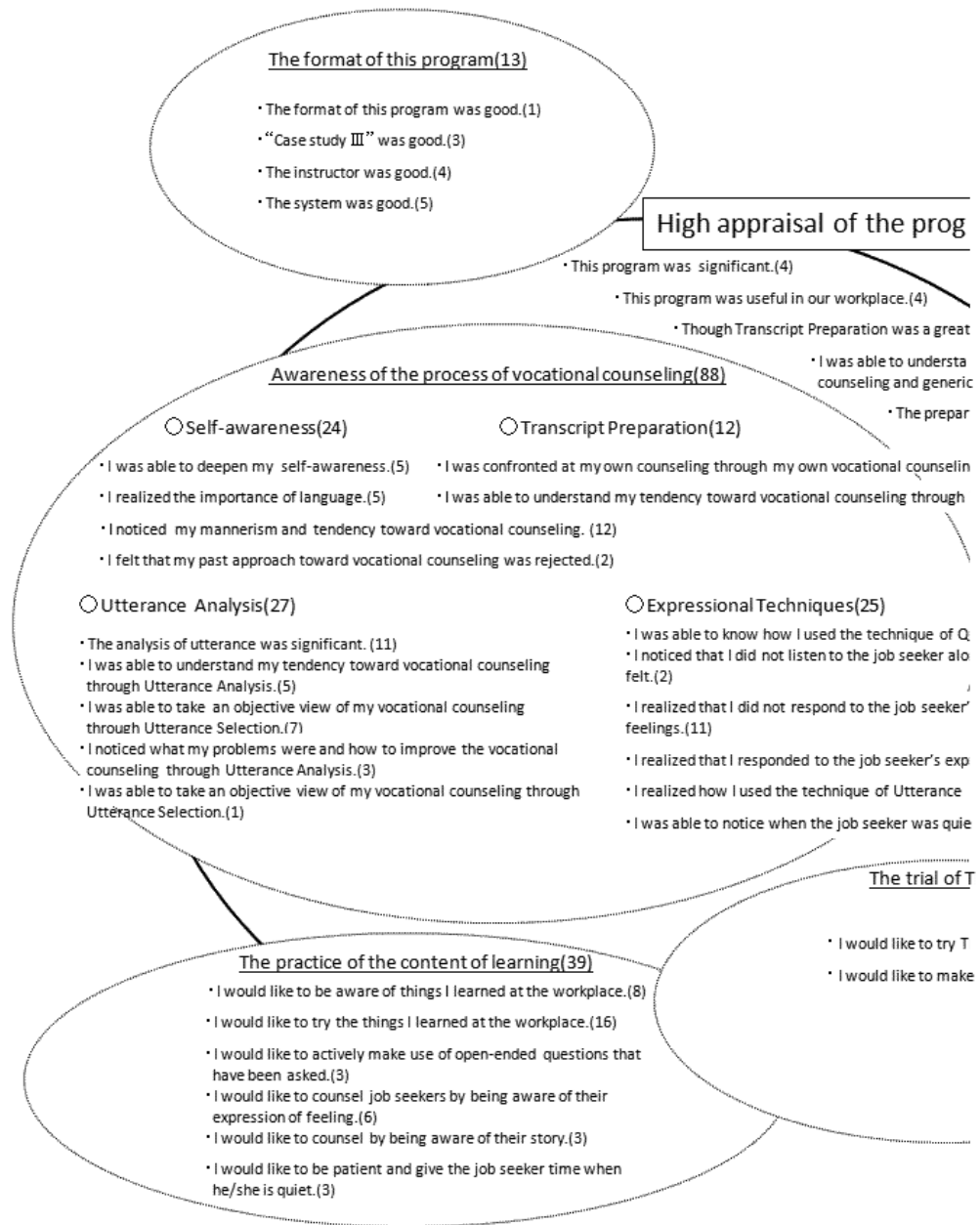
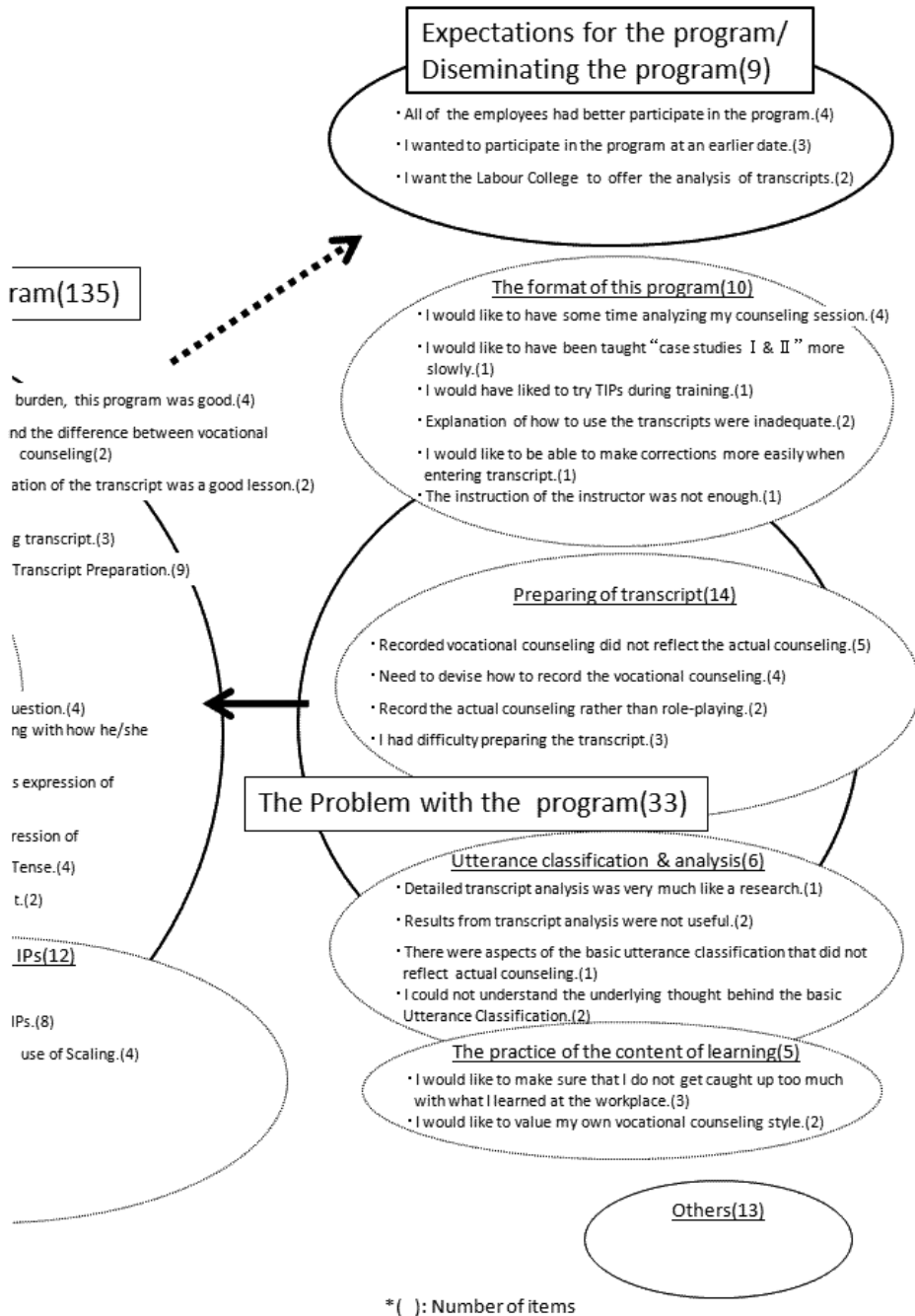


Figure 6. Result of the Review



Sheet Analysis of “Case Study II”

regards to “high appraisal of the program,” after Case Study I, there are high expectations for the verbatim transcript analysis in Case Study II, and after Case Study II there are high expectations for disseminating the program in the workplace, showing a connection to “expectations for the program/disseminating the program.”

Looking at the number of elements per primary element, the trend is that “high appraisal of the program” has the most elements, followed by “problems with the program.” The number of elements in “expectations for the program/disseminating the program” is extremely low. Comparing the impressions written after Case Study I with those of Case Study II, the former have a total of 192 elements with 91 elements in “high appraisal of the program” compared to 72 elements in “problems with the program.” Among the mid-level elements in “problems with the program,” “problems with the Utterance Classification” appears most at 42 times (JILPT 2009).

For Case Study II, the latter have comprised of a total of 207 elements, 152 of which are “high appraisal of the project” whereas only 33 elements are “problems with the program,” a reduction of only a fifth. Within “high appraisal of the program,” “consciousness on vocational counseling” is the most common with 88 elements (Figure 6).

According to the results from both review sheets as sorted out by the KJ method, the advantages for career counselors in participating in the program are that, mainly through the production and analysis of word-for-word transcripts, they can realize the characteristics and tendencies of their career counseling sessions in which they took part and they become aware of practical issues.

Their evaluation of the program is higher for the second day than for the first. This is probably because they understood the significance of troublesome work such as (i) the production of word-for-word transcripts, (ii) learning the criteria of Utterance Classification and (iii) classifying the utterances from the word-for-word transcripts.

IV. Practice—Activity Case Report

1. Career Counseling TIPS

Using the analysis of the word-for-word transcripts through CareeTalk as a reference, the career counselors try to find better ways of expressing a Career Concept that can improve their career counseling and be to try them at the counseling counter. To help them find such ways, we developed the Career Counseling TIPS, which consists of 15 items as shown in Table 2. TIP 1 through 6 emphasize listening to the job seeker. TIP 7 through 15 emphasize constructing a Career Concept based on the content of the job seeker’s speech.

The thinking behind Vocational Counseling TIPS is as follows. If the counselor follows the Career Counseling TIPS in his or her own statements, this will affect the statements of the job seeker. In turn, the statements of the counselor will change upon receiving such statements from the job seeker. These changes in interaction lead to a more effective overall counseling session. The protocol for Career Counseling TIPS is shown in Figure 7.

Table 2. Career Counseling TIPs

TIP 1	Be aware of the number and length of interruptions.
TIP 2	When the job seeker uses words such as 'well' or 'but,' wait patiently until he/she finishes his/her thought.
TIP 3	Give more verbal responders to make a conversation go smoothly than in a normal conversation.
TIP 4	Pay attention to changes in the job seeker's facial expression and body language after you pose a closed question.
TIP 5	Pay attention to changes in the job seeker's facial expression and words after you offer directions or advice.
TIP 6	For the first half of the career counseling session, ask as many open-ended questions as possible.
TIP 7	When the job seeker begins to speak about their feelings, try to repeat their words in your mind even if it delays your response.
TIP 8	After you have spoken on a general topic, always allow time for the job seeker to speak.
TIP 9	At least once a session, attempt to explain in your own words how you are currently feeling and what observations you have made.
TIP 10	Pay attention to the job seeker's emotional expressions.
TIP 11	When the job seeker expresses his/her emotions, repeat his/her words in your mind several times and then respond.
TIP 12	When the job seeker begins to express his/her emotions, think about how you felt when you heard about it and put those thoughts into words.
TIP 13	Be aware of what tense the job seeker uses most often in his/her speech.
TIP 14	When the job seeker is explaining his/her previous experience, think about what your impressions are of his/her experience and put those thoughts into words.
TIP 15	Try to draw a timeline linking the past, present and future from the job seeker's words.

Career counselors are requested to report their experiences of the training by filling in the prescribed TIPs report sheet and submitting it to the Labour College by facsimile or other means. This is not mandatory but left to the discretion of each counselor. These practice activities started in fiscal 2006 and have continued up to now (January 2007). During this period, 229 career counselors participated in the program, and 60 reported on their experiences.

Interviews were conducted for these 60 counselors, and the summaries of the reports and the interviews were disseminated in the form of the Career Counseling TIPs Newsletter to all career counselors who participated in the program. To date, 10 issues have been published and 41 cases have been reported.

Using these 41 cases, we examined two points. First, we examined how career counseling services improved through practicing TIPs, and identified future issues. Next, we examined the impact that conscientization of a career counseling process had on the improvement of career counseling services.

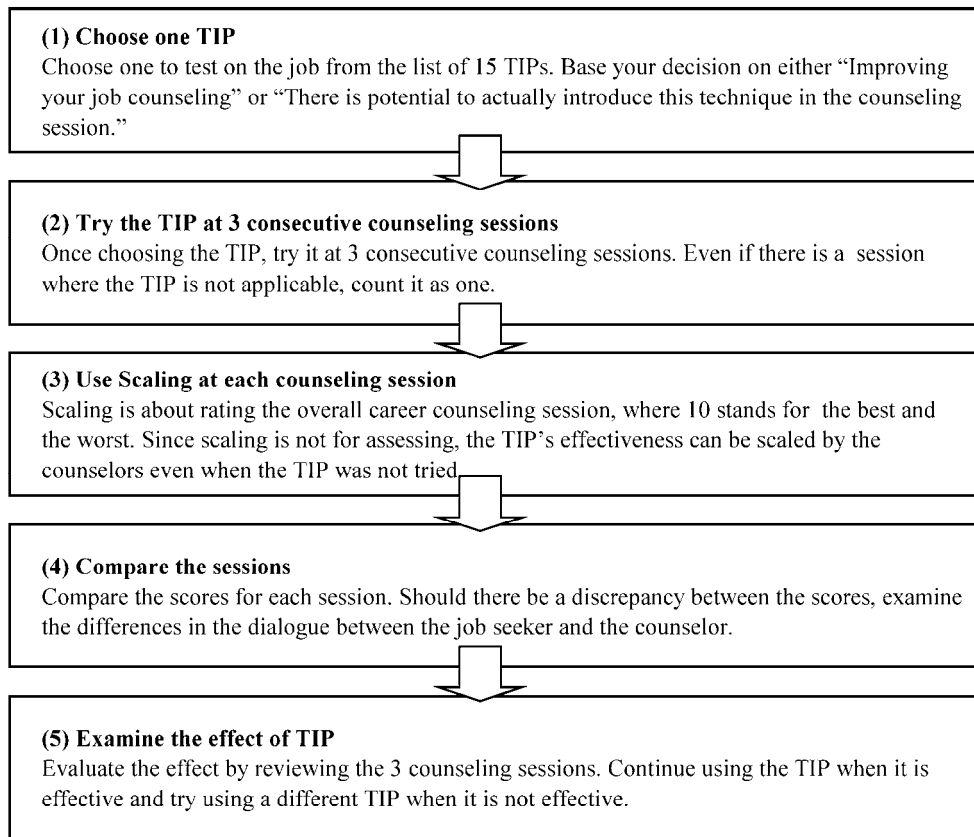


Figure 7. Protocol for Career Counseling TIPs

2. Effectiveness of Career Counseling TIPs

On the TIPs report sheet, the career counselors are requested to evaluate the effectiveness of the TIPs that they practiced using four grades from “very effective” to “not effective” (Figure 8).

According to the analysis of the evaluation by 58 career counselors who submitted TIPs report sheets, the proportion of those who evaluated them as “fairly effective” was the largest at 72.4%, followed by those who said “very effective” at 17.2% and “not very effective” at 8.6%. Nearly 90.0% of these career counselors practiced TIPs at the counseling counter and evaluated them as effective.

In the case study of the practice activity, the effects of Career Counseling TIPs can be classified in three ways: (i) the job seeker finds it easier to talk (TIPs 2, 3, and 4); (ii) the career counselor can understand how the job seeker feels (TIPs 6, 7, and 10); and (iii) the career counselor can provide information and advice to the job seeker more effectively (TIPs 5, 8, 9, and 15).

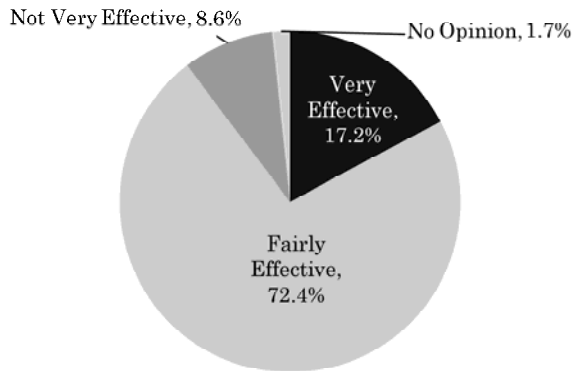


Figure 8. Effectiveness of Career Counseling TIPs (N = 58)

Most of the Career Counseling TIPs demonstrate these three effects when they are put into practice, generally in the order of (i) → (ii) → (iii). We can say that the career counselors carefully listened to what the job seekers said and then gave advice or information.

The problem with Career Counseling TIPs is that, by creating a comfortable atmosphere for job seekers, they tend to talk longer or talk about broader subjects not directly related to job seeking, thus resulting in longer counseling sessions.

3. Effect of Conscientization of a Career Counseling Process

The effect of conscientization of a career counseling process is that the career counselors learn to control their activities depending on how the counseling proceeds and further improve their career counseling services. Using the cases of practice activity, we studied how career counselors have become able to control their activities through conscientization of a career counseling process (JILPT 2009).

The study suggested that as a result of conscientization of a career counseling process, career counselors have become conscious of the changes in their own activities and the influence of how the changes in their own activities have influenced the changes in the activities of the job seeker.

V. Conclusion and Future Issues

1. Issues in the Development of the Program

The first issue is to make it easier to classify utterances and improve training materials to help master Utterance Classification. Considering that many career counselors expressed opinions regarding the difficulty in classifying utterances, immediate action may be required.

The second issue is to revise the program so that the participants will be less pressed

for time. Under the current program, career counselors learn 4 Expressional Techniques and 21 Expressional Methods within 160 minutes. We may consider lessening their burden by reducing the program's content.

The third issue is to make it easier to produce a word-for-word transcript. Under the current schedule, career counselors are required to produce the transcript in less than a month, while performing their daily tasks. It is necessary to extend this period and at the same time simplify the formal procedure for producing a word-for-word transcript.

2. Issues in Action Research

The first issue is to introduce more of the instructors' viewpoints. In this study, the researchers had two roles, one as an instructor and the other as an observer. The experiences of instructors and the comments and evaluation by observers are valuable information for proceeding with action research. For the future, we need to actively take up these personal experiences with the program. Such a viewpoint should not remain strictly personal, but should be expanded into a more generalized viewpoint by discussing them in connection with the reviews of past studies and the results of research and experiments.

The second issue is to establish indicators for building a Career Concept. In career counseling process, we posit that matching the job offer's information with the job seeker's information is to make a story based on the job seeker's information, interpret the vocational skills of the job seeker based on the story, and then determine whether those skills satisfy the needs of the employer based on the job offer's information. By verbalizing the above matching process, it will be made clear what is important for a Career Concept, i.e. how the job offer's information should be selected and processed in order to make an activity plan for the future on the basis of the past and present, which includes a plan for activities to obtain employment with a specific job-offering company. Also, the development of indicators will help determine the degree of progress in the formation of a Career Concept in career counseling and thereby help assess the effects of career counseling and training in a more efficient manner.

The third issue is to develop a training program where career counselors can build their own Career Concepts. In career counseling according to the constructivist approach, an individual cannot control events but can change the interpretation of the events and make a new story. By doing so, it is possible to make the future activities of an individual more active.

An important point is whether the career counselors can understand the active nature of the job seeker. In order to do so, the counselors themselves experience this, and through their own experience, try to understand the active nature of the job seeker. For that purpose, we hope to develop a program in the future in which career counselors create various career stories by interpreting their own career and, using these various stories, construct their own Career Concept.

Appendix: Schedule of Case Study Program

Case Study Program I: Basics of Utterance Classification

Item		Content	Time (min.)
1. Objective of Case Study Program	Lecture	There will be an explanation of the objective of the Case Study Program and this schedule.	20
2. Career counseling and Expressional Technique	Lecture	In career counseling, the counselor and the job seeker cooperate to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct the career concept while looking for matches with available job offerings. In this regard, techniques to express career concepts are essential. These techniques have been named "Expressional Techniques" and are defined as "techniques constructed from multiple linguistic expressional methods used to express one's career, or the career counseling process that enables one to select and carry out an appropriate method of expression in response to the status and flow of counseling between the job seeker and the counselor." There will be an explanation on the relationship between career counseling and Expressional Techniques.	20
3. Flow on preparing transcripts, classifying and analyzing utterances	Lecture	There will be an explanation on the flow of the preliminary transcription preparation, Utterance Classification in Case Study Program I, and Utterance Analysis in Case Study II.	10
4. Criteria for Utterance Classification	Training	There will be an explanation on the criteria for Utterance Classification, such as Utterance Processing, Subject, Direction, Tense, and Silences/Interruption, according to the Manual of Coding. The counselors will be required to answer questions on classifying utterances in relation to the criteria, and they will be required to grade their own exercise.	20 10 [Break] 20 20 10 [Break] 10
5. Training on Utterance Classification	Training	There will be an explanation on how to operate the system. The trainees are required to use a computer to operate the system and to classify the utterances on the transcriptions of their own career counseling sessions.	60 [Break]
6. Review I	Review	The trainees are required to fill in <i>Review Sheet 1</i> with their thoughts on Case Study I.	10

Case Study Program II: Utterance Analysis

Item		Content	Time (min.)
7. Review of Case Study Program I	Review	Review Case Studies I referencing the Review Sheet 1 filled in by the trainees.	10
8. Utterance Analysis and Utterance Selection	Lecture	There will be an explanation on Utterance Analysis and Utterance Selection through an analytical method for the transcripts.	10
9. Training on Utterance Analysis and Utterance Selection	Training	The trainees operate the system and run a series of analyses on the transcripts of the career counseling sessions they actually conducted. They are required to interpret the results of the analysis while filling out Work Sheets 1-5 .	30 30 10 [Break] 30 30 10 [Break]
10. Career Counseling TIPS	Lecture	There will be an explanation on methods to improve everyday counseling duties using Scaling. There will also be an explanation on Career counseling TIPS. The counselors will examine what techniques are required to improve the Scaling rate. They will also think of which technique can be used when they are back at work while filling out Work Sheet 6 .	30
11. Review 2	Review	The counselors will be required to fill out Review Sheet 2 with their thoughts on Case Study Program II.	10

References

Cochran, Larry. 1997. *Career counseling: A narrative approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.

Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT). 2007. *Shokugyo sodan ni okeru kaunseringu giho no kenkyu*. [Research on technique for career counselling]. JILPT Research Report, no. 91. Tokyo: The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training. The summary of this report is available in English at <http://www.jil.go.jp/institute/reports/2007/documents/091.pdf>.

———. 2009. *Shokugyo sodan ni okeru akushon risachi* [Action research in Career Counselling]. JILPT Research Report, no. 107. Tokyo: The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training. The Summary of this report is available in English at <http://www.jil.go.jp/english/reports/documents/jilpt-research/no.107%20.pdf>

Kayano, Jun. 2008. The development of a system for preparing and analyzing transcripts on vocational counseling and job introduction. *Japan Labour Review* 5, no.2: 159–73.

———. 2009. Conscientization of a career counselling process—Becoming aware of one’s

- career counselling process. *Japan Labour Review* 6, no. 4:135–56.
- Lewin, K. 1951. Field theory in social science: selected theoretical papers. Ed. Dorwin Cartwright. New York: Harper & Row.
- Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. 2004. Ippan shokugyo shokai gyomu toriatsukai yoryo [Guidelines for implementation of public job placement service]. Compiled and Published by Employment Security Bureau, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Tokyo.
- Parsons, Frank. 2005. *Choosing a vocation*. Broken Arrow, OK: National Career Development Association. (Orig. pub. 1909.)
- Peavy, R. Vance. 1996. Counselling as a culture of healing. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling* 24, no. 1:141–49.
- Savickas, Mark L. 1993. Career counseling in the postmodern era. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy: An International Quarterly* 7, no. 3:205–15.
- Super, Donald E. 1953. A theory of vocational development. *American Psychologist* 8 (5): 185–90.
- Williamson, Edmund G. 1964. *Kaunseringu no riron to jissai* (Counseling Theory and Technique). Trans. Keisuke Sawada and Tadashi Hidano. Tokyo: Minshu Kyoiku Kyosai.