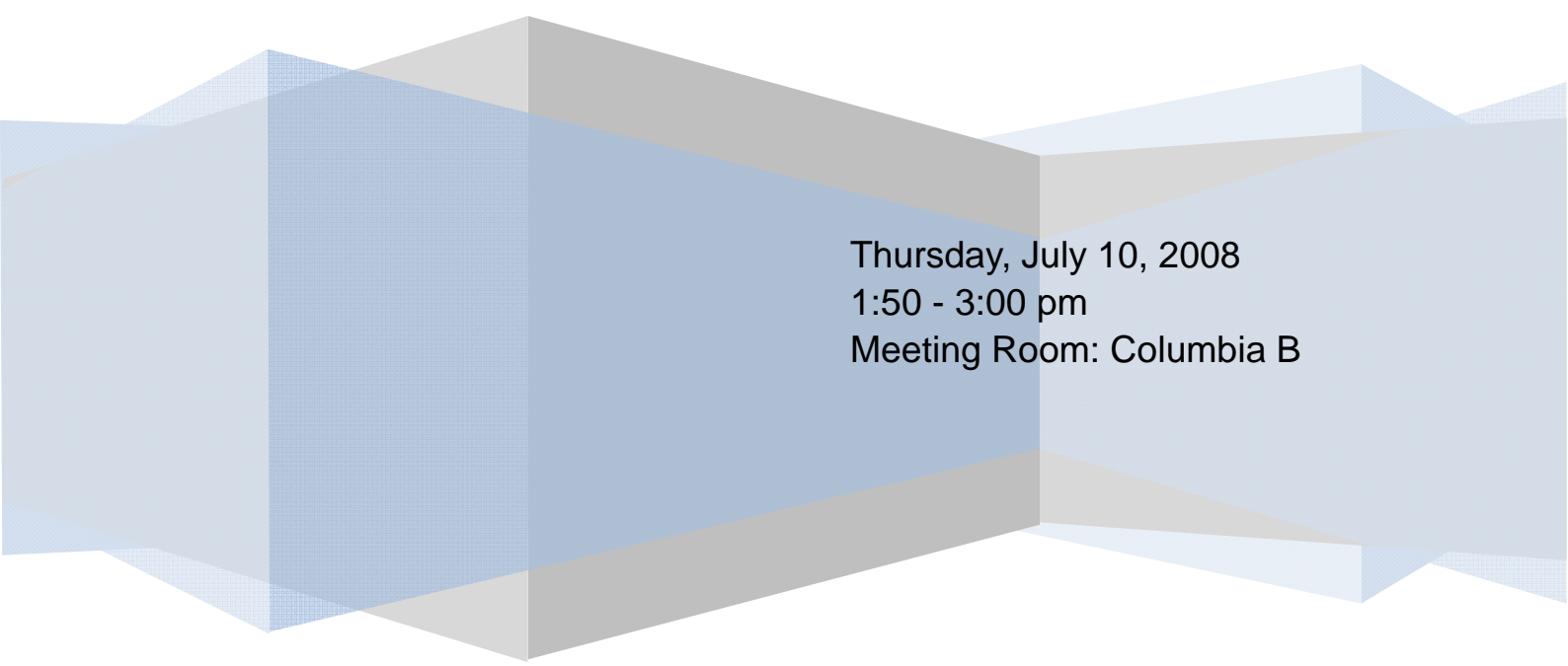


Development of Training Program for Improvement of Vocational Counseling in Public Employment Agency in Japan

Jun Kayano

**Labour College,
the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training**



Thursday, July 10, 2008
1:50 - 3:00 pm
Meeting Room: Columbia B

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- (3) For the learning of the Utterance Classification criteria, emphasize criteria related to career concept construction and omit other standards as much as possible.

Development of Training Program for Improvement of Vocational Counseling in Public Employment Agency in Japan

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I . Introduction

The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (hereafter called "JILPT") developed a training program called "Case Study Program" to improve vocational counseling. This is one of the programs in "the Professional Training Course for Career Consultant Development" for employees who engage in vocational counseling and job introduction at public employment agencies (hereafter called "counselors").

There are three steps in this program. 1) Clarification: by utilizing a software program called "System for Preparing and Analyzing Transcripts on Vocational Counseling and Job Introduction" (hereafter called "System") (Kayano,2006;Kayano and Matsumoto,2006; JILPT,2007;Kayano,2008), this process allows the counselors to analyze transcripts from their own vocational counseling and become aware of the kinds of linguistic expression and its frequency of use from the standpoint of linguistic expression for Career Concept. 2) Improvement: this process allows the counselors to examine what kinds of linguistic expression they should use and how often they should use them based on the results from 1), and try out the results in actual counseling session and confirm the effects of that tryout by using the Scaling¹. 3) Sharing: this process allows the counselors to share their experiences by reporting to JILPT which organizes the report as counseling case studies and offers feedback to the individual counselors.

The JILPT began developing Case Study Program from 2004, and implemented it as a training program targeted for counselors at the Labour College, the JILPT's training institution. As of March 2008, 209 counselors have taken the training program, and approximately 90 are expected to take the training program during this fiscal year.

This report will explain the background of this research and Case Study Program, and will further discuss the improvement of Case Study Program. The program requires the counselors to describe their opinions of the results of the transcript analysis and their

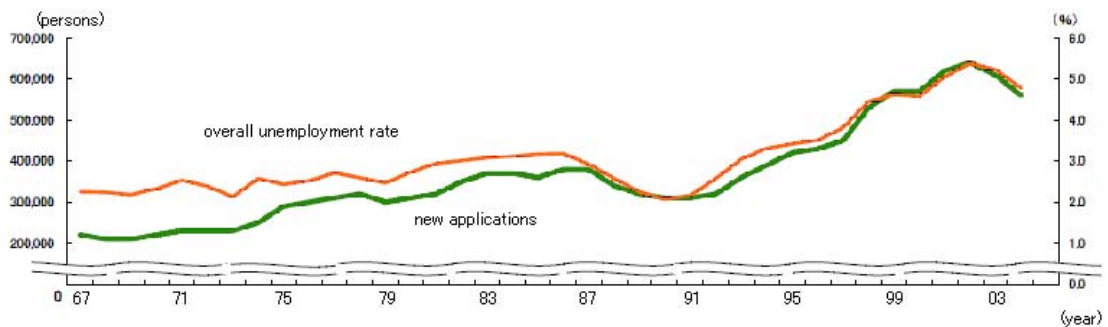
¹ Scaling is a technique used in Brief Therapy. By using numbers to describe the overall impressions under various situations and matters, it becomes easy to convey the impressions in a concrete manner to others.

reflections on Case Study Program. The efficacy and issues of this training program shall be evaluated through the collection of information based on the KJ Method².

II . Research Background

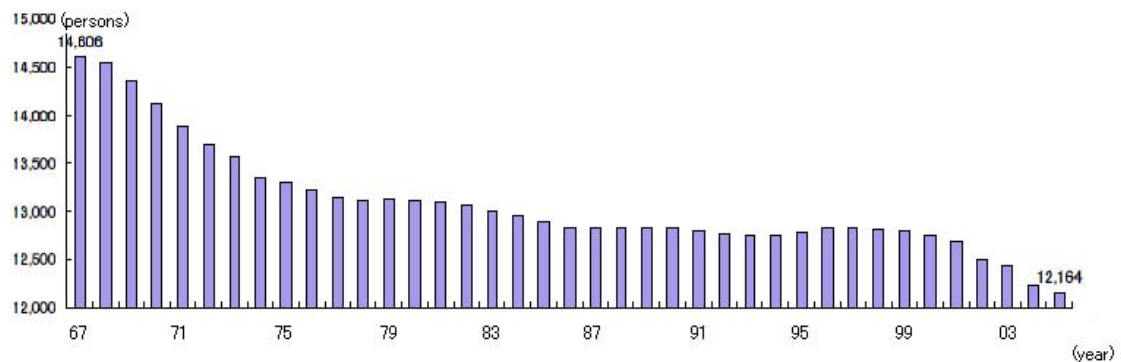
The burden of the each employee has become heavier in the public employment agency in Japan. For example, new job applications have increased and better service has been demanded as a long trend, while employees at public employment agencies have decreased (Figure1, 2). In the public employment agency, training for the employees are an essential assignment as well as providing job seekers with efficient service.

Figure 1.Shifts in the overall unemployment rate and the new applications



Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

Figure 2.Shifts in the numbers of employees at public employment agencies



Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

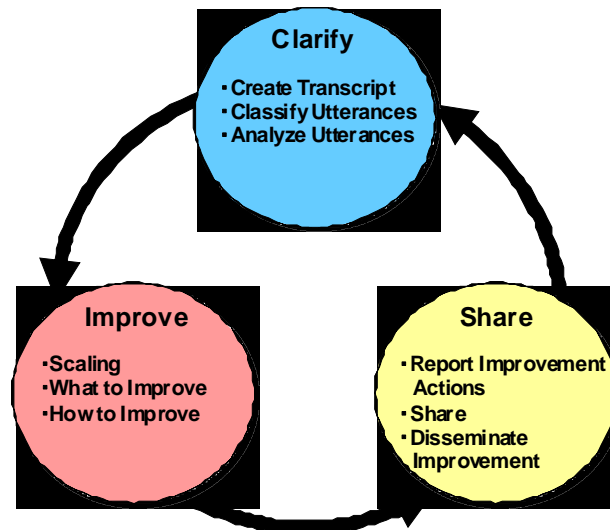
² This is the method proposed by the cultural anthropologist Dr. Jiro Kawakita on compiling data collected during research. “KJ” refers to Dr. Kawakita’s name.

III. Program Description

1. Goals of Case Study Program

The goals of Case Study Program are: 1) for each counselor to clarify their own vocational counseling process and tendencies (Clarification), 2) to consider ways to improve the vocational counseling and to test the improvements in an actual counseling setting (Improvement) and 3) for the counselors to share their experiences with each other (Sharing), through which process the counselors will work toward the improvement of vocational counseling.

Figure 3.Improvement of Vocational Counseling



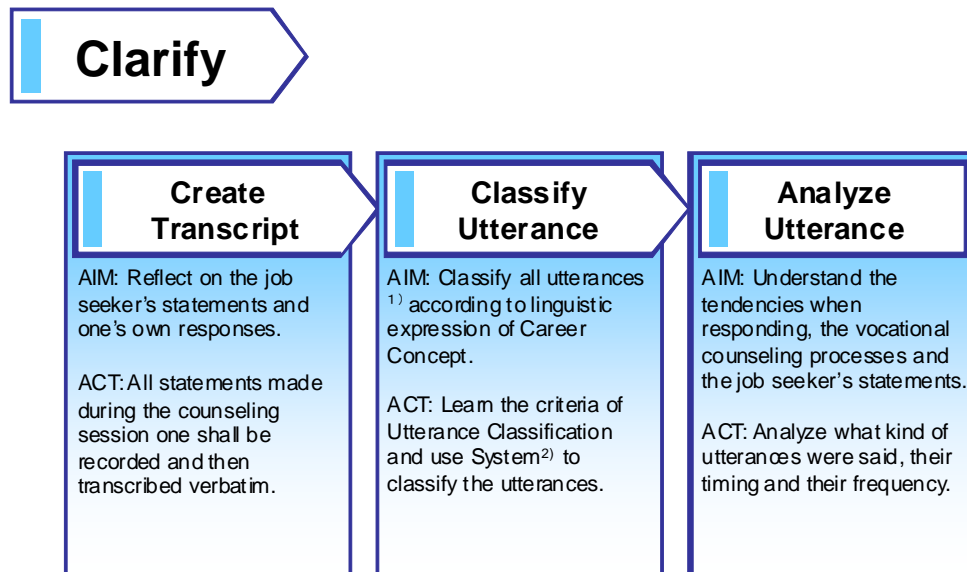
Clarify Using the creation and analysis of a verbatim transcript, the counselor clarifies the process and tendencies of his or her vocational counseling sessions.

Improve The counselor considers methods to improve the vocational counseling sessions, tests those methods in the actual counseling setting, and further verifies the effectiveness of the methods through Scaling.

Share The counselor reports their experiences in the counseling session to the Labour College where the experiences are collected for feedback to the trainees.

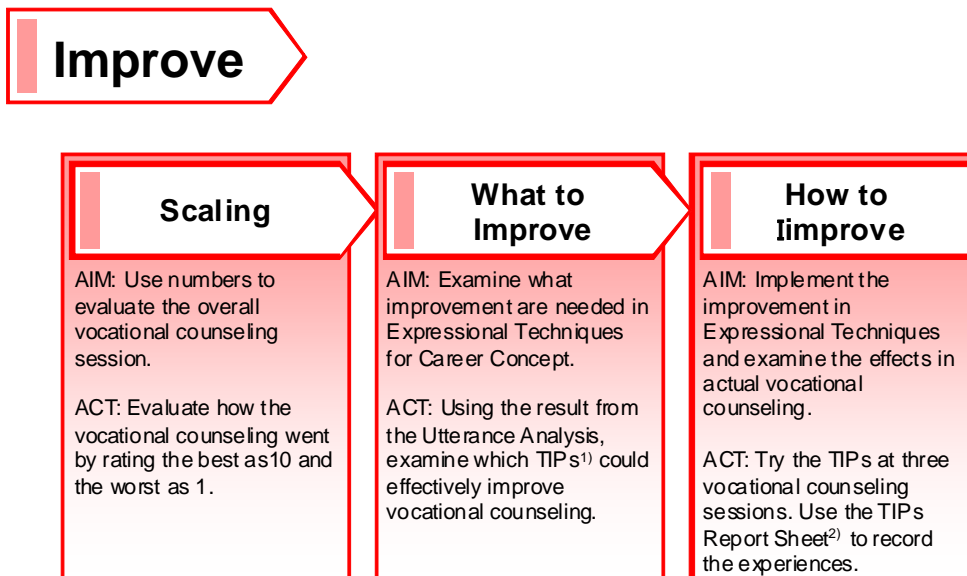
2. Process of Case Study Program

Figure 4. Process of Clarification



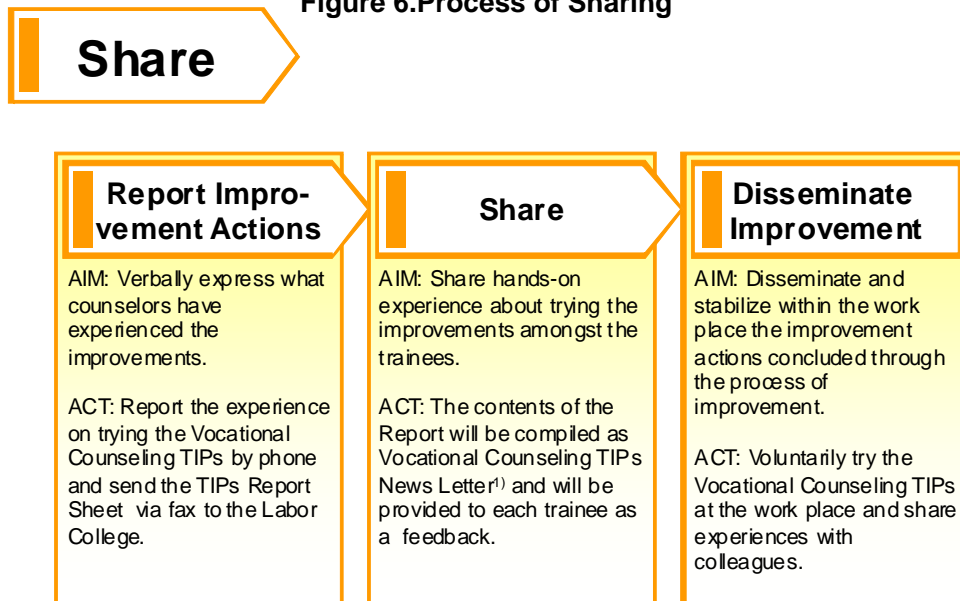
- 1) Utterance is defined as "a string of words that expresses a certain organized meaning." To be specific, the following are considered to be utterances: 1) Anything leading up to a period [.] or a question mark [?]. 2) Anything up to the point where one person ceases speaking and the other person begins. (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 Vocational Counseling and Job Introduction".

Figure 5. Process of Improvement



- 1) Vocational 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 vocational counseling TIPs consisted of 15 items based on the result of the analysis on 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 when trying the TIPs at the vocational counseling sessions and their effects.

Figure 6. Process of Sharing



1) The Vocational Counseling TIPS News Letter is a booklet that compiles the trainees' experiences on trying the TIPS basing on their reports. So far we have issued eight News Letters (4th News Letter not issued). It is set to be distributed to all of the trainees who have participated in Professional Training Course for Career Consultant Development.

IV. Career Concept and Expressional Techniques

In Case Study Program, the counselor uses the verbatim transcripts of his or her vocational counseling sessions as learning material. Utilizing this System, the counselor analyzes the transcript from the standpoint of linguistic expressions of Career Concept, classifying the utterance units from the interaction between the counselor and the job seeker (hereafter called "Utterance Classification"), and performing Utterance Analysis³ and Utterance Selection⁴.

1. Career Concept

Career concept is a career story in the form of "up until now I have done A, I am currently doing B, and I plan on doing C."

Kayano (2007) states that as a prerequisite for the formation of an employment relationship, it is necessary to share an overall picture of the job seeker between the job seeker and recruiter, including vocational ability and work style, and that this necessitates the linguistic expression of Career Concept.

³ In Utterance Analysis, utterances are analyzed quantitatively from the standpoint of what type of utterance has been made in what frequency.

⁴ In Utterance Selection, certain types of utterances are selected from the standpoint of Expressional Techniques to see what specific content has been mentioned in the utterances.

In this process it is the counselor's job to position him or herself between the job seeker and the recruiter and to support the job seeker in order to enable a constructive dialogue with the recruiter. Specifically, the job seeker constructs a Career Concept and then reconstructs it through discussion with the counselor during the vocational counseling.

In other words, the benefit of vocational counseling is that dialogue with the recruiter is more constructive when the job seeker reconstructs a Career Concept with the support of the counselor than when he or she constructs it alone.

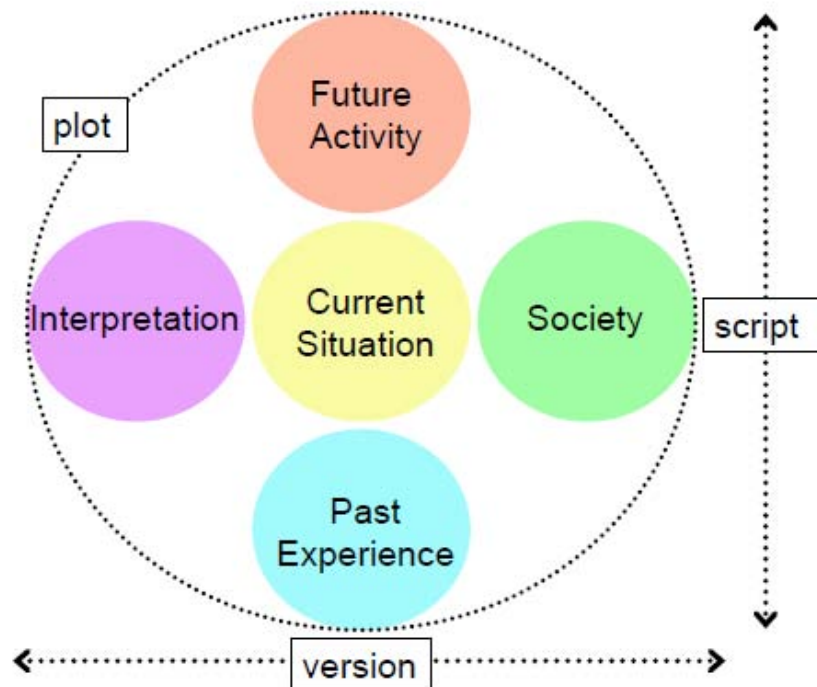
2. Five Topic Categories

Career Concept in vocational counseling is comprised of five topics (Kayano, 2006). These are the job seeker's events including "Past Experiences," "Present Situation" and "Future Activities," the "Interpretation" of those events including understanding and feelings, and finally "Society," the social structures such as labor regulations and the labor market which form the background to those events.

These topics are arranged into a story during the vocational counseling by bringing meaning to the connection of "Past Experiences," "Present Situation" and "Future Activities" through "Interpretation" against the background of "Society."

The three components, "Plot," "Script," and "Version", are required to form these topics into a story (Figure 7). "Plot" is the expression of the subject or central theme of the story. "Script" is the expression of the events over time (past, present and future). "Version" is the expression of the viewpoint of the story being told.

Figure 7. Story Components and Topic



3. Expressional Techniques and Methods

(1) Expressional Techniques

In vocational counseling, the counselor and job seeker cooperate to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct Career Concept while looking for matches with available job offerings. During this process, the order and connection of the five topics are arranged.

Techniques to express Career Concepts are essential to arrange the order and connection between the topics (Kayano, 2007). 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 vocational counseling processes that enable one to select and carry out an appropriate method of expression in response to the status and flow of the counseling between the job seeker and the counselor.”

There are two types of Expressional Techniques: Process and Career (Table 1). Expressional Techniques of Process enable a smooth progression of interaction between the job seeker and the counselor. Expressional Techniques of Career arrange the order and connection of the previously mentioned topics.

The Expressional Techniques of Career are divided into Subject, Direction, and Tense and closely related with the construction of a story. The correlation between the expressional techniques and story components are “Subject” to “Plot,” “Direction” to “Version,” and “Tense” to “Script.”

Table 1. Expressional Techniques

Expressional Technique		Definition
Process	Processing	The technique of expression on the influence from a speaker to a listener
	Tools	The sub technique of processing
Career	Direction	The technique of expression on the direction and distance from a speaker
	Subject	The technique of expression on the subject such as sentiment , matter
	Tense	The technique of expression on tense such as past, present and future.

(2) Expressional Methods

In utterance classification, each utterance is classified from the standpoint of the four types of Expressional Techniques of Processing, Direction, Subject and Tense. Each Expressional Technique is categorized into three types of Expressional Methods.

Note that in the processing of utterances, each Expressional Method is further divided into three lower level Expressional Methods (Table2).

The relationship of the three Expressional Methods is exclusive in the sense that all utterances either belong or don't belong to an Expressional Method. For instance, an utterance Subject contains the three Expressional Methods "Reasoning," "Sentiment" and "Matter." Whether an utterance expresses emotion, shows cause or reason, an utterance can be classified into one of the three Expressional Methods.

Table 2.Criteria of Classification

Expressional Category Expressional Technique	Priority ← →									
	Low			High						
Processing	<u>Explanation</u>			<u>Answer</u>			<u>Question</u>			
Tool	<u>Non-directive</u>	<u>Repeated</u>	<u>Directive</u>	<u>neUtral</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Open-ended</u>	<u>Why</u>	<u>Closed</u>	
Direction	<u>Outer</u>			<u>General</u>			<u>Inner</u>			
Subject	<u>Matter</u>			<u>Sentiment</u>			<u>Reasoning</u>			
Tense	<u>Now</u>			<u>Past</u>			<u>Future</u>			

4. Protocol of Transcript Analysis

Utterance classification follows the steps shown in figure 8. First, if the verbatim transcript is created according to the established rules, it can be loaded into the System as is. Once this System is used to perform utterance classification in accordance to the Coding Manual, compiled for the utterance classification criteria, it is possible to analyze the verbatim transcript and select utterances using specific Expressional Methods.

Protocol is as follows (Figure 7):

- (1) prepare transcripts from audio recording of vocational counseling,
- (2) learn the criteria of Utterance Classification,
- (3) enter the transcript into the System and code the utterances,
- (4) analyze the transcripts by quantity, and
- (5) analyze the transcripts by quality, for example, searching specific code of utterance and interpreting their tendencies.

to analyze the verbatim transcripts of their vocational counseling sessions and consider improvements based on the results. Vocational Counseling TIPs were developed to act as a catalyst for the counselor to consider those improvements. The thinking behind Vocational Counseling TIPs is as follows. If the counselor tries Vocational Counseling TIPs in his or her own statements, this will affect the statements of the job seeker. In turn, the statements of the counselor change upon receiving such statements from the job seeker. These changes in interaction lead to a more effective overall counseling session.

Currently, Vocational Counseling TIPs include 15 items (Table 3). TIP1 through 6 emphasize listening to the job seeker. TIP7 through 15 emphasize constructing Career Concept based on the content of the job seeker's speech.

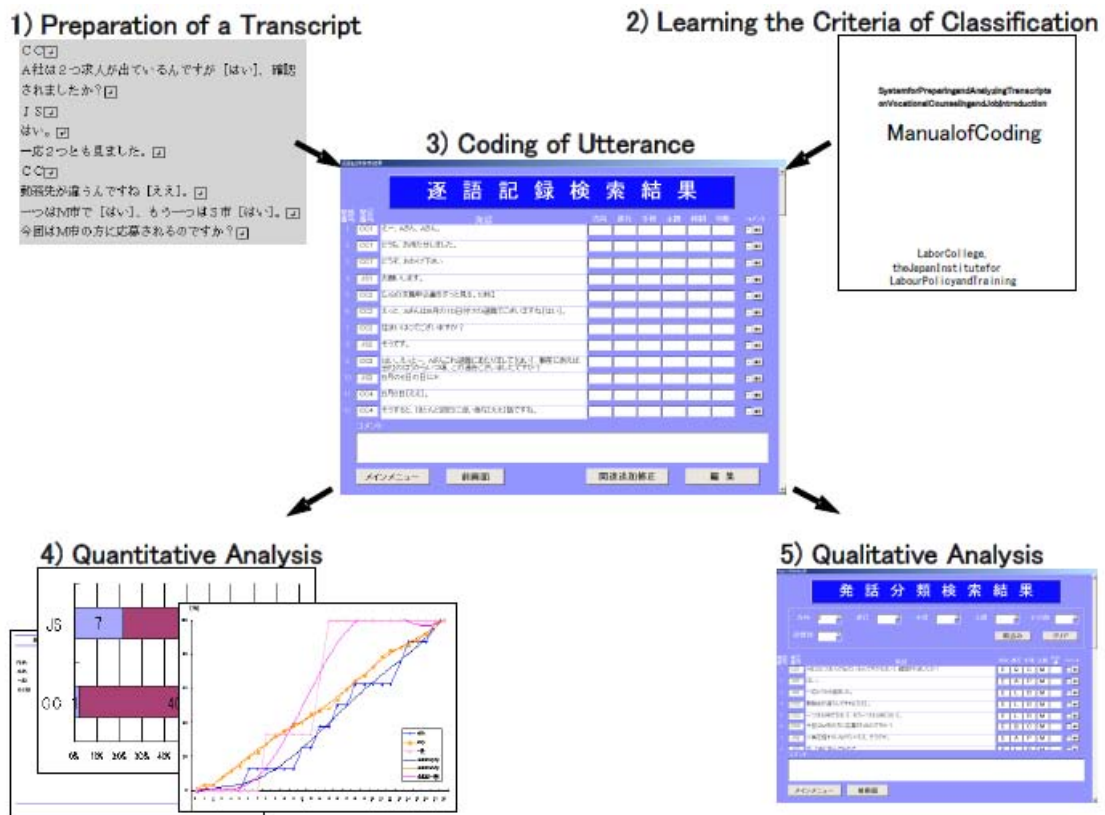
Table 3. Vocational Counseling TIPs

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 or she finishes his or her thought.
TIP 3	Give more verbal responders to make a conversation go smoothly than you usually do with 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 vocational counseling session, ask as many open-ended questions as possible.
TIP 7	When the job seeker begins to speak on 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 their emotions, repeat their words in your mind several times and then respond.
TIP 12	When the job seeker begins to express their emotions, think about how you felt when you heard it and put those thoughts into words.
TIP 13	Be aware of what tense the job seeker uses most often in their speech.
TIP 14	When the job seeker is explaining their previous experience, think about what your impressions are of their 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.

2. Examples of Improvement Activities

Counselors who participated in the 2006 Professional Training Course for Career Consultant Development used the System to analyze their own vocational counseling

Figure 8. Protocol of Utterance Classification



V. Vocational Counseling TIPS

1. The Thinking behind Vocational Counseling TIPS

In order for the counselor to learn the Expressional Techniques in Case Study Program, it is necessary for the counselor to become aware of the Expressional Methods that he or she and the job seeker are using during the vocational counseling session. For this purpose, it is important for the counselor to review the daily vocational counseling sessions and repeatedly consider and test which Expressional Method should be used at which point to improve the vocational counseling.

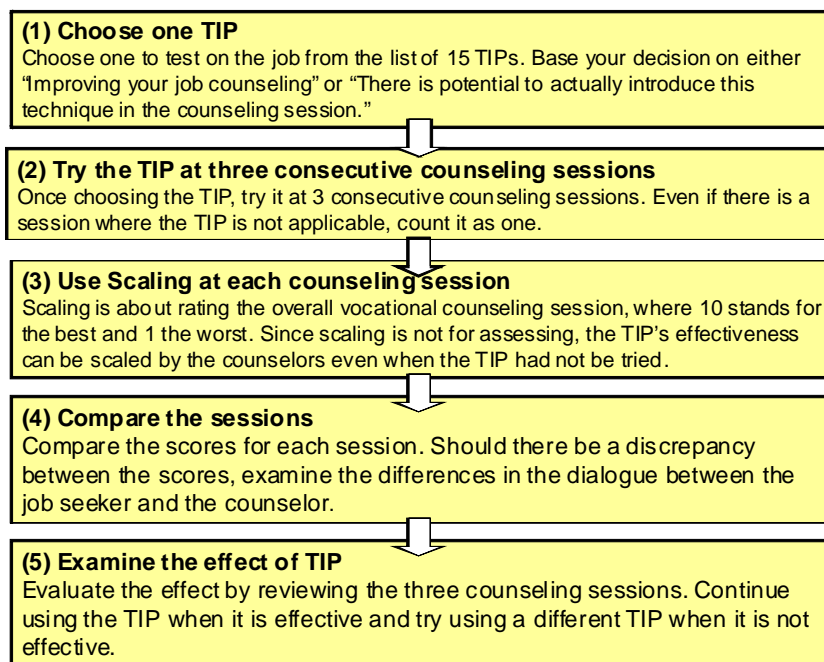
The System-based transcript analysis contributes to this type of vocational counseling improvement activities. This is because it becomes possible to express the process and tendencies of the vocational counseling sessions in words and numbers. As a result, the counselor is able to express his or her vocational counseling experience, making it possible to compare with past experiences and share those experiences with other counselors.

This effort was begun as Case Study Program in 2005. Counselors use the System

sessions during Case Study Program portion of the course. Based on the analysis results, counselors chose one TIP where its effectiveness can be proven and tested at their own sessions. After the course was completed and the counselors returned to their work place, the counselors tested the TIP three times in their vocational counseling sessions and were then required to report their results to the Labour College (Figure 9). However, at that time it was emphasized that the use of TIPs and their reporting were not mandatory but rather up to each counselor.

As a result, 18 counselors submitted reports out of a total of 38 program participants. When these 18 counselors were asked to rate the effectiveness of the Vocational Counseling TIPs across four levels, 3 answered “extremely effective” and 12 answered “quite effective” while on the other hand three answered “not very effective” but no one answered “no effect.” In other words, more than 80% of the counselors evaluated the Vocational Counseling TIPs as being effective.

Figure 9. Protocol for Vocational Counseling TIPs



VI. Program Research and Development

1. Goal

During Case Study Program, counselors were required to write about their opinions regarding the results of the verbatim transcript analysis and their impressions of Case Study Program. The efficacy of and issues remaining for this training program were examined by summarizing and organizing this information using the KJ Method.

2. Method

(1) Schedule of Case Study Program

The Schedule of Case Study Program in the Special Training for Career Consultant Development Course is shown in Appendix. Case Study Program is comprised of three subprograms. In Case Study Program I, counselors learn Utterance Classification. In Case Study Program II, they perform Utterance Classification on the verbatim transcript, and in Case Study Program III they analyze the verbatim transcript.

In order to improve the program, participants are required to write their reviews on both the System's analysis results and the program itself on the prescribed forms and then submit those forms.

For the results of the analysis, participants are required to write the analysis results and their reviews on a worksheet for each of five themes including 1) the number of statements and utterances, 2) Utterance Processing, 3) Utterance Direction, 4) Utterance Subject and 5) Utterance Tense.

After the completion of Case Study Program I, II and later Case Study Program III, participants are expected to write their reviews on a Review Sheet.

(2) Program Period and Number of Training Participants

In 2008, the Special Training for Career Consultant Development Course was held three times. The area covered in this analysis consists of Case Study Program I and II performed on February 19 and the Case Study Program performed on March 5 as part of the Special Training for Career Consultant Development Course held from February 18 to March 7. 57 counselors participated in the training.

(3) Protocol for the KJ Method

The KJ Method was implemented according to the following protocol.

1) 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 1 meaning.
- When there are omitted words and the sentence cannot be understood on its own, 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 symbols and abbreviations that stand for Utterance Classifications.

2) 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.

3) 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.

4) 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.

5) Relationships between primary elements.

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

3. Results

(1) Review of the Analysis Results

In the reviews of the analysis results, there was a tendency for the primary elements to be “consciousness of Expressional Techniques,” “interpreting the use of Expressional Techniques” and “improving vocational counseling.”

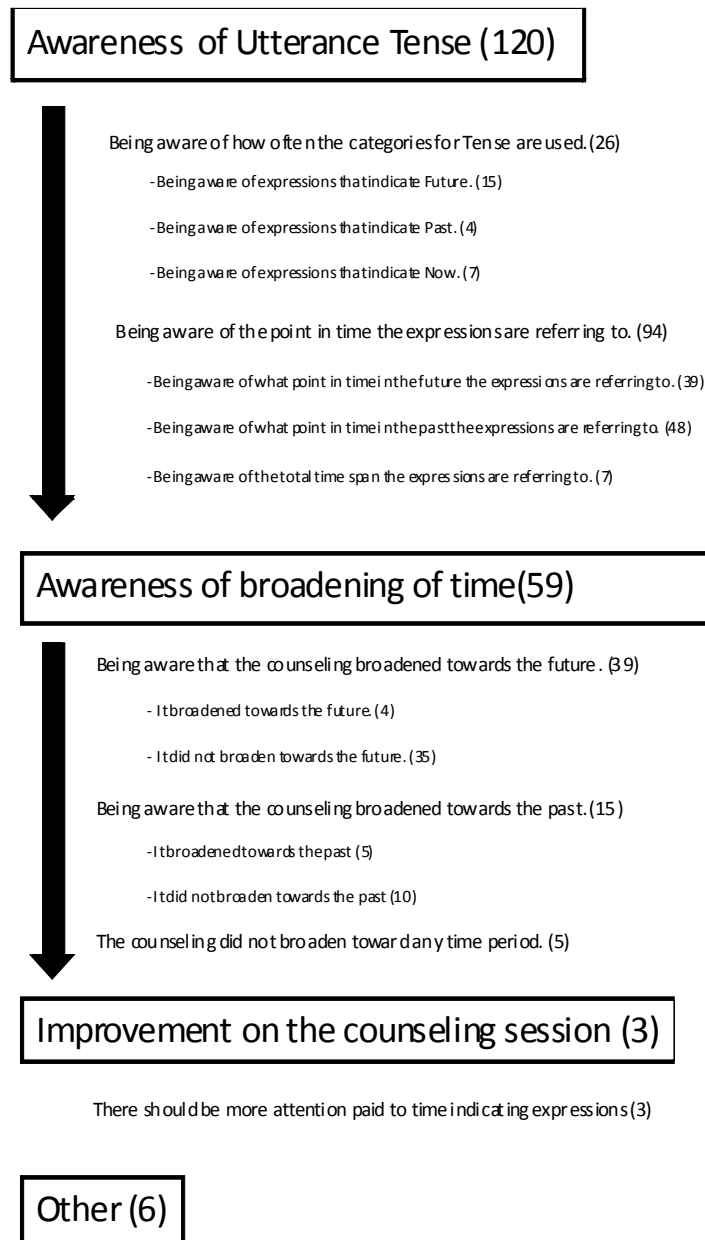
In “consciousness of Expressional Techniques,” the counselor becomes conscious of the degree to which each Expressional Method is used and how that changes over time. In “interpreting the use of Expressional Techniques,” the counselor interprets the meaning behind the degree of use and change over time. In “improving counseling,” the counselor adjusts his or her use of the Expressional Techniques during the vocational counseling to perform better counseling.

It can be said that the relationship between the primary elements demonstrates a progression from “consciousness of Expressional Techniques” through “interpreting the use of Expressional Techniques” to “improving vocational counseling.” This progression corresponds to the workflow of the participants using the worksheets.

Looking at the number of elements per primary element, the trend is that “consciousness of Expressional Techniques” has the most elements by far, followed by “interpreting the use of Expressional Techniques.” Comparatively, “improving vocational counseling” has very few elements. It is possible that the reason for this is that participants were not strongly encouraged in this regard in their use of the worksheets.

Here is an example of using the KJ Method to summarize and organize the elements of the reviews on the results from the analysis of Utterance Tense (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Result from Trainees' Reflection of Utterance Analysis Using KJ Method



(2) Program Impressions

Program impressions can be divided into three primary elements (Figure 11). They are “high appraisal 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 regards to “high appraisal of the program,” after Case Studies I and II, there are high expectations for the verbatim transcript analysis in Case Study III, and after Case Study III 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 Studies I and II with Case Study III, the former has 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 the most often at 42 times.

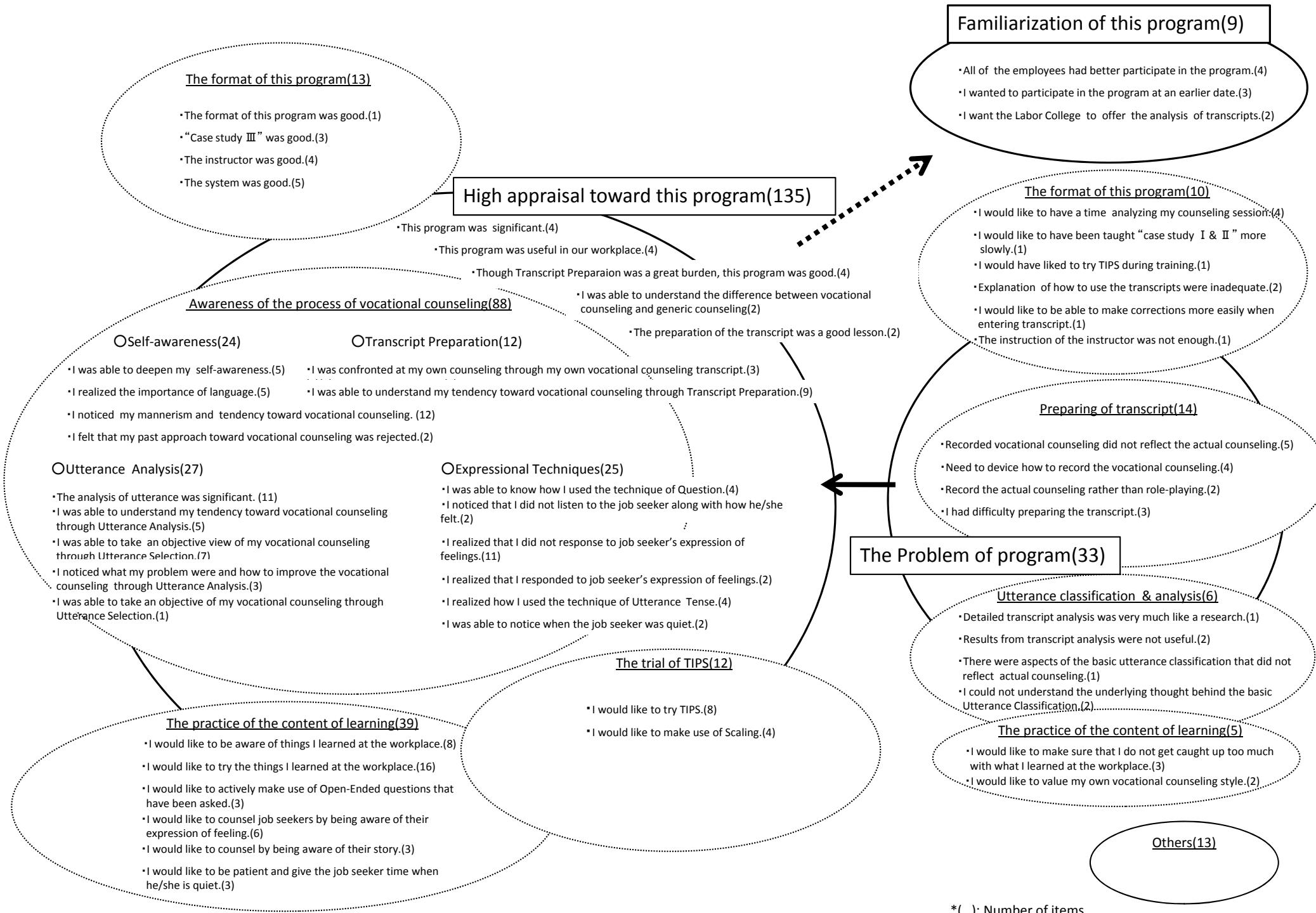
The latter, Case Study III, is comprised of a total of 207 elements, 152 of which are “high appraisal of the project” whereas only 33 elements are “problems with the program,” a reduction to only a fifth. Within “high appraisal of the program,” “consciousness on vocational counseling” is the most common at 88 elements.

Here are the results of summarizing and organizing the impressions from Case Study III using the KJ Method.

4. Discussions

From the results of the analysis of the program impressions, it can be seen that the program is highly appraised by the counselors and that consciousness of the vocational counseling process is the primary agent. Additionally, it can be seen from looking at the analysis of the counselors’ reviews on the System analysis results, that while counselors are focusing on consciousness of Expressional Techniques during their work, we see a trend such that this does not often lead to interpreting the use of Expressional Techniques.

Figure 11. Trainees' Impressions of "Case Study III"



VII. Future Issues

One of the primary effects of Case Study Program is that the counselor becomes aware of the degree of use of the individual Expressional Methods for each Expressional Technique and the way that this changes over time. However, this does not necessarily lead to improvement of the vocational counseling. As a cause, the work trend shows that the counselor stops at the point of gaining consciousness of Expressional Techniques and does not continue on to interpret the use of the techniques. This means that in vocational counseling, the counselor's consideration of the relationship between the Expressional Techniques and the job seekers Career Concept reconstruction is weak.

An additional problem is that in Case Study Program I and II, it is difficult for the counselors to learn the Utterance Classification criteria. This is likely due to the fact that 4 Expressional Techniques and 21 Expressional Methods are studied in a net time of 90 minutes.

The following three issues can be foreseen for the future. 1) Include work promoting awareness of job seeker's Career Concept in Case Study Program. 2) In the analysis results of each Expressional Technique, include work to interpret the meaning of the use of Expressional Techniques from the relationships between Career Concept construction, deconstruction and reconstruction. 3) For the learning of the Utterance Classification criteria, emphasize criteria related to Career Concept construction and omit other standards as much as possible.

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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 Case Study Program and this schedule.	20
2. Vocational counseling and Expressional Technique	Lecture In vocational counseling, the counselor and the job seeker cooperate to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct 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 vocational 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 vocational 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 II, and Utterance Analysis in Case Study III.	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 20 10 Break 10

Case Study Program II: Training on Utterance Classification

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 vocational counseling sessions.	60 Break
6. Review 1	Review	The trainees are required to fill in Review Sheet 1 with their thoughts on Case Studies I and II.	10

Case Study Program III: Utterance Analysis

7. Review of Case Study Program I and II	Review	Review Case Studies I and II 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 vocational 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 30 10 Break
9. Vocational Counseling TIPS	Lecture	There will be an explanation on methods to improve everyday counseling duties using Scaling. There will also be an explanation on Vocational 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.	30
10. Review 2	Review	The counselors will be required to fill out Review Sheet 2 with their thoughts on Case Study Program III.	10



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