Designing Autonomous Learning to Accommodate Diverse Learners in an English Writing Class

Tazu Togo,
Jane Singer, Shiho Mochizuki, Tomoko Takahashi, Yuriko Teratani, Hitomi Yamasaki

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Outline of presentation

1. Aims and background of this presentation
2. Framework for designing autonomous learning
3. Facilitating autonomous learning
4. Results and discussion
5. Conclusion
1. Aims of this presentation

This presentation aims to introduce additional classroom materials which are developed by a team of university instructors and researchers, who concerned with students in the new era of “universal college admission”.

1.1 Aims: target students

- Students with a poor understanding.
- Students who lack motivation for studying.
1.1 Aims of development team

- For students whose poor command of English.
- For students whose lack of motivation.

- To be able to work autonomously in a classroom
- To learn according to individual objectives and skills
1.2 Background of this project

A new era of “universal college admission” has not come yet, but...

- Out of 744,000 applicants to universities and colleges, 684,000 were admitted in 2008.
- That means 92% of applicants succeeded.
- 55.3% of Japanese 18 years olds went on to higher education. This is 5.4% higher than in 2004.
1.2 Background of this project

- 92% of applicants were admitted.
- 1,182 universities & colleges in 2008 (1,129 in 1993)
- 589 universities & 386 colleges are private.

The average academic level of university entrants is declining in Japan.
1.2 Background of this project

The average level of university entrants is declining in Japan.

- More students have a poor command of English
- More students lack motivation for studying English
1.2 Background of this project

- In 2007 a project team developed a curriculum for a small-sized remedial English class.

2. Framework for Designing Autonomous Learning

• The concept was based on a symbolic approach (Nishinosono and Togo 2006).
• Metaphors were created to conceptualize the methodology for a classroom course both for the team and for students.
• The textbook exercises were divided into segments.
## 2.1 Metaphors in 2007

Health control Illustrated by Tomoko Takahashi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Unit A</th>
<th>Unit B</th>
<th>Unit C</th>
<th>Unit D</th>
<th>Unit E</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>★★★★★ (イタリアン)</td>
<td>必修</td>
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<tr>
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<td>★★★★★ (イタリアン)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8P</td>
<td>13P</td>
<td>10P</td>
<td>23P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>17P</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5P</td>
<td>10P</td>
<td></td>
<td>15P</td>
<td></td>
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<td>RANK</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rank 1</td>
<td>Rank 2</td>
<td>Rank 3</td>
<td>Rank 4</td>
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<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>RANK</td>
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<td>3P</td>
<td>4P</td>
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</table>

**Attack Chance**

- 単語
- 文法
- 創造
- 総合問題
- 自己表現

**Omaké**

- 個人学習
### 2.1 Metaphors in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment No.</th>
<th>Contents of Segments</th>
<th>Metaphors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Segment 1</td>
<td>Training about English grammar</td>
<td>![Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 2</td>
<td>Training about writing paragraphs</td>
<td>![Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 3</td>
<td>Training about combining sentences with proper conjunctions</td>
<td>![Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 4</td>
<td>Training about joining sentences to display unity</td>
<td>![Image]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1 Profile of the class

English Composition I

• Required class for freshmen.
• Half-year semester (15 classes).
• 44 female students (including 7 retakers)
• Beginning-level writing skill textbook for students of English as a Second Language is used. *Get Ready To Write* 2nd ed. (PEARSON Longman)
3.2 Materials and assistance to facilitate autonomous learning

- Pre-designed materials
- Materials added as needed
- Student tutors
3.2.1 Pre-designed materials

- Study Guide
- Answer Guide
- Orientation Sheet
- Learning Menu
### 3.2.1.1 Learning Menu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course 1</th>
<th>Page 1</th>
<th>Develop Your Writing Skills</th>
<th>Develop Your Writing Skills</th>
<th>Using AND, BUT, OR SO</th>
<th>A &amp; C</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>改正日本語</td>
<td>PP13-19</td>
<td>日日</td>
<td>日日</td>
<td>日日</td>
<td>日日</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course 2</td>
<td>Paragraph Pointer: The Writing Process</td>
<td>You Be the Editor</td>
<td>Real Life Writing</td>
<td>A &amp; E-MAIL MESSAGE</td>
<td>A &amp; C</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PP16</td>
<td>PP17</td>
<td>PP18</td>
<td>PP19</td>
<td>PP20</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PP15</td>
<td>PP16</td>
<td>PP17</td>
<td>PP18</td>
<td>PP19</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PP14</td>
<td>PP15</td>
<td>PP16</td>
<td>PP17</td>
<td>PP18</td>
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<tr>
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<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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<td>まとめられた英文を書くトレーニング</td>
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<td>まとめられた英文を書くトレーニング</td>
<td>まとめられた英文を書くトレーニング</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PP21</td>
<td>PP22</td>
<td>PP23</td>
<td>PP24</td>
<td>PP25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
<td>月日</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- 日日: 每日
- 月日: 每月
3.2.1.2 Orientation Sheet

Checklist

1. Is your final composition publishable on the Web as it is?
   a) No modification is needed.  
   b) It needs a little modification.  
   c) It needs considerable modification.  
   d) Not a chance. (My composition can never be published on the Web.)

2. Could you clearly demonstrate what you learned in each chapter in your writing?
   (Until the final exam, copy down all composition, made in red ink, should have at least one page.)
   a) Yes. I could.
   b) Almost.
   c) Not really.
   d) No, I could not.

Chart showing a model flow of a student's studies.

Check list for deciding the level of a student's composition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>60-69 Points</th>
<th>70-78 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>70(B)</td>
<td>80(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>85(C)</td>
<td>75(B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>60(C)</td>
<td>70(B)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*How to decide the level of your final composition:
Select the appropriate response from a) d) to each row. Each row has the points for each response:
4 points) a) 4 points, b) 3 points, c) 2 points, d) 1 point.

If your total is 13-16 points, your level is Gold.
If your total is 8-12 points, your level is Silver.
If your total is 4-7 points, your level is Copper.

☆ Read the Tutor Training Sheet to learn more about becoming a Tutor
3.2.1.2 Topic of Composition

• “What is the reason you chose this major (or university or department)? Write your reasons as concretely as you can.”
3.2.1.2 Setting goals

The total points of exercises which each student plans to tackle with from Learning Menu.

Levels that a student would like to acquire from a checklist

Your final evaluation will be calculated as shown in the table below according to your workload (your total points) and the level which you assess using the checklist.

Tutors receive three additional points for each chapter. If you act as a Tutor for all four chapters you will receive another one point.

You will decide your Final Evaluation by yourself. You will set your goals according to this table.

Numbers indicate the final grade. Letters indicate the final evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Workload (Total Points)</th>
<th>80-88 Points</th>
<th>70-78 Points</th>
<th>60-89 Points</th>
<th>50 Points and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>70(A)</td>
<td>80(A)</td>
<td>90(A)</td>
<td>100(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>65(C)</td>
<td>75(B)</td>
<td>85(AA)</td>
<td>95(AA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>80(C)</td>
<td>70(B)</td>
<td>80(A)</td>
<td>90(A)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HOW TO DECIDE THE LEVEL OF YOUR FINAL COMPOSITION

Select the appropriate response from a)-d) to each question below, and calculate the total. The points for each response: a) 4 points, b) 3 points, c) 2 points, d) 1 point.

1. Is your final composition publishable on the Web as it is?
   a) No modification is needed.
   b) It needs a little modification.
   c) It needs considerable modification.
   d) Not a chance.

2. Could you clearly demonstrate what you learned?
   (Until the final revision, each change in the level should have applied what you learned in each chapter.)
   a) Yes, I could.
   b) I could clearly demonstrate what was learned.
   c) I could clearly demonstrate what was learned but I had to modify it.
   d) I could clearly demonstrate what was learned but I had to modify it significantly.

3. How do you think the class instructor or a close friend would rate you?
   a) Excellent
   b) Good
   c) Fair
   d) Poor

If your total is 13-16 points, your level is GOLD.
If your total is 9-12 points, your level is SILVER.
If your total is 4-7 points, your level is COPPER.
Select one appropriate item from a) ~ d) in each questionnaire ᵃ through ᵇ, and calculate a sum. Each item has its points: a)-4 points, b)-3 points, c)-2 points, d)-1 point.

Students check the list, and decide their levels by themselves.

EX. 15 points ☑ Level is GOLD

If your total is 13-16 points, your level is **GOLD**.
If your total is 8-12 points, your level is **SILVER**.
If your total is 4-7 points, your level is **COPPER**.
Final evaluation is settled like in the table below in accordance with each student workload (total points that she gains) and the level which she assesses using the checklist. Final Evaluation is set up by themselves, therefore, students will set their goals in accordance with this table.

* Numbers indicate the final grade. ** Letters indicate the final evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>60-69 Points</th>
<th>70-79 Points</th>
<th>80-89 Points</th>
<th>90 Points and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>70*(B)**</td>
<td>80(A)</td>
<td>90(AA)</td>
<td>100(AA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>65(C)</td>
<td>75(B)</td>
<td>85(AA)</td>
<td>95(AA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>60(C)</td>
<td>70(B)</td>
<td>80(A)</td>
<td>90(A)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EX. 65 points and Level GOLD  △  70 (B )

65 points and Level Copper  △  60 (C )
3.2.2 Materials added as needed

- Study log
- File to keep materials
- Criteria for evaluating each student’s composition (distributed only to tutors)
- Checklist for turning in final assignments
3.2.3 Tutors

- Student tutors facilitated other students’ learning.
- Student tutors improved their own learning.
4.1 Results and Discussion
4.1 Results and Discussion
“Others” means not to be judged, and it contains irregular cases like:

- 2 students didn’t check the list.
- 2 students misunderstood the content of the final composition.
Conclusion

• Designing for autonomous learning in a writing class seemed to be successful to help less-motivated students to study English autonomously.

• We intend to continue developing the course while implementing it in classrooms.

• Our team will keep exploring more effective measures to expand opportunities for these students.
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Thank you for your attention!

Tazu Togo, Jane Singer, Shiho Mochizuki, Tomoko Takahashi, Yuriko Teratani, Hitomi Yamasaki
Symbolic approach for designing a class course  
(Nishinosono, Miyata, Mochizuki 2006)