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アカデミックライティング夏季集中ワークショップ対 1 学期授業受講者の達成度を測る
Academic Writing Workshop vs. Semester-course Participant Improvement

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1. Introduction

From 2008 for three consecutive summers, academic writing workshops were offered to graduate and undergraduate students of Nihon University, CST. In the first semester of 2011, a Special Lecture with similar content was initiated for graduate students. This report analyzes participant improvement comparing the intensive workshop course and the semester-long course in terms of knowledge of academic paper structure and knowledge of question and answer strategies during oral presentations.

2. Workshop and Semester-long Course: Outline, Participants and Goals

The workshop data were reported on during the 54th Gakujutsu Kouenkai (GK) in 2010. The 2011 Special Lecture Academic Writing and Presenting in English was held in the first semester as part of the Transportation Engineering and Socio-Technology curriculum but was open to graduate students from all majors. Students applied before the start of the course by filling out a questionnaire about their English abilities and their goals for the course. Based on this information, students were divided into three groups with ten to thirteen students per group. The "Student Pack" of materials used during the workshops in the previous years was updated to meet the needs of a full-semester course. In total, 45 students spanning eight majors applied. The number of participants was set to 30 but 35 were accepted. Of these, 19 received credit for the course.

Each of the three courses had slightly different goals ranging from a writing focus or a presenting focus to a mixed focus. However, each group received a minimum education on both writing and presenting as referred to in the course title. Similar to the workshops, individual teachers focused on specific group needs, such as writing paragraphs, building grammatical knowledge, or answering questions respectfully.

3. Entrance and Exit Tests

3.1 Methods

Upon workshop completion in 2009, it was unclear whether participants understood the correct order for the different parts of an academic paper or if they could define the parts accurately. Also, participants struggled with the Q&A session after presentations. These teacher observations led to the 2010 introduction of entrance and exit tests in the two Surugadai campus workshops. These level checks tested participants knowledge of academic paper structure as well as Q&A strategies. The tests consisted of three parts. Part A gave four definitions which participants had to match with paper parts from a given list. In Part B the given paper parts had to be put in the correct order. Part C asked for a praise sandwich (praise-question-(answer)-praise). During the semester-course, the two teachers in charge of the Surugadai workshops had their students fill out the same test. At the beginning and the end of the workshop in 2010, 21 of the 27 participants took the test, without dictionary, and with a 15-minute time limit. For the semester-course in 2011, 12 of the 25 participants of the writing focussed and the presenting focussed classes took the test under the same conditions.

3.2 Results and Discussion

The results of the 2010 tests showed that a three-day intensive workshop is useful to improve knowledge on structure (Part B) rapidly. However, when more active production (e.g. writing English) (Part A and C) is required, the improvement may take more time/instruction.

Table 1 indicates the results of both tests in 2011. For Part A, three participants (25%) could match the four definitions with the correct part of a paper at the start of the workshop. By the end of the semester-course, 5 (42%) could do so (shown in red). As for Part B, three participants (25%) knew the correct order of the different parts of a paper by the start of the workshop. This number improved to 9 (75%) by the end of the workshop (shown in purple). One of the participants formulated a praise sandwich during the

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entrance test, and in the exit test, two (17%) wrote a complete praise sandwich (shown in orange).

The results showed a marked improvement on paper structure (Part B) but less so for the definitions of the different parts of a paper (Part A) or of Q&A strategies (Part C). Considering the total improvement, five participants (42%) improved significantly (7 to 14 points out of 16, (shown in blue). Another six participants (50%) improved slightly (between 1 and 4 points) but had a total exit score between 13 and 16 points (shown in green), leaving little possibility for further improvement. These results were similar to the 2010 workshop results, although the number of students with a perfect score for each part was lower in 2011.

Table 1. Entrance and Exit Test Results 2011

Participant (Year)	Part A (Max.=4)			Part B (Max.=9)			Part C (Max.=3)			Total (Max.=16)		
	Entrance	Exit	Improvement	Entrance	Exit	Improvement	Entrance	Exit	Improvement	Entrance	Exit	Improvement
6 (M2)	0	3	3	0	9	9	0	2	2	0	14	14
4 (M2)	2	4	2	0	9	9	0	2	2	2	15	13
2 (M1)	1	4	3	2	9	7	0	2	2	3	15	12
8 (M1)	1	3	2	0	9	9	1	2	1	2	14	12
15 (M1)	1	3	2	4	8	4	1	2	1	6	13	7
7 (M2)	3	4	1	6	9	3	3	3	0	12	16	4
12 (M1)	1	3	2	5	6	1	0	1	1	6	10	4
13 (M1)	3	3	0	7	9	2	0	2	2	10	14	4
9 (M2)	4	3	-1	9	9	0	0	3	3	13	15	2
20 (M1)	4	4	0	7	7	0	0	2	2	11	13	2
11 (M1)	2	2	0	9	9	0	1	2	1	12	13	1
14 (M1)	4	4	0	9	9	0	1	2	1	14	15	1

Table 2. Average Score and Average Improvement 2010 and 2011

	Part A (Max.=4)			Part B (Max.=9)			Part C (Max.=3)			Total (Max.=16)		
	Pre	Post	Improvement	Pre	Post	Improvement	Pre	Post	Improvement	Pre	Post	Improvement
2010	2.32	3.05	0.73	5.32	8	2.68	0.5	1.73	1.23	8.14	12.77	4.64
2011	2.15	3.33	1.17	4.83	8.5	3.67	0.58	2.08	1.5	7.58	13.92	6.33

Table 2 indicates the average score and average improvement for 2010 and 2011. Entrance scores for 2011 were lower compared to 2010, but exit scores were higher. This indicates participants started at a lower proficiency level in the semester-course but achieved more than in the intensive workshop.

4. Conclusions

As discussed at GK in 2010, the workshops gave the participants an overview of what is needed to write an academic paper in English. However, the 3-day workshop period was too short to put the theory into practice. Compared to the 2010 workshops, the semester-course participants showed a higher improvement in all three parts of the test indicating that a long-term approach is useful. Similar to 2010, Table 1 indicates two levels of students. One level had little prior knowledge of academic writing and presenting skills. However, they showed marked improvement at the end of the course. The other level demonstrated more familiarity with the workshop content but less improvement. Dividing participants into leveled courses remains an issue to be addressed in the future.

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