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平成 27 年度一般教育 C A L L 教室 TOEFL 講座 (前期)

The First Semester of the Department of General Education CALL Group TOEFL Course

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Abstract: 一般教育 C A L L 教室は幅広い学問に適応できる英語スキルを育成するために 2015 年度の前期からブレンド型学習の TOEFL 講座を実施した。本稿はこの 1 年間続く講座の計画、実施要領および予備的な結果について記述する。

1. Introduction

Study abroad opportunities are part of the university experience. In May of 2015, the CALL Group of the General Education Department approved an English course to assess and build academic English skills for the TOEFL, which is the most widely accepted English proficiency test for international universities. This report will discuss the course design, rationale, implementation, and preliminary results of this course.

2. Course Design and Rationale

Nihon University is affiliated with various international universities which have English proficiency entrance requirements for programs. This TOEFL course provides an opportunity for students of all levels to supplement their current credited English language coursework and build their academic skills in listening, reading, speaking, writing, and vocabulary. The course was designed for flexibility with an online component and face-to-face sessions which allows students to focus on the aspects of English they want to improve at the time they want to. This blended course is being offered on a Moodle CMS platform with face-to-face sessions running biweekly, alternating between the Surugadai and Funabashi campuses to allow all CST students equal opportunity to join (Table 1). Each semester contains six sessions of three hours each with two additional sessions during holiday seasons (indicated with *). The sessions are held during first and second periods on Saturday mornings. The general outline of each session is: speaking, vocabulary building, reading, discussion, and writing. Outside of class, essay writing and discussions are held in online forums and students engage in self-study.

To evaluate participant progress, in-house and

Table 1. Session Schedule

Session	Date	Campus	Topic
1	May 30	Surugadai	Interviews, writing
2	June 13	Funabashi	Interviews, writing
3	June 20	Surugadai	Reading, writing
4	July 4	Funabashi	Reading, writing
5	July 7	Main	TOEFL PBT
6	July 25	Online	Reading, writing
7*	Aug. 8	Surugadai	Reading, discussion
8*	Sept. 26	Surugadai	Data-driven learning workshop
9	Oct. 10	Funabashi	Data-driven learning workshop
10	Oct. 24	Surugadai	All skills
11	Nov. 7	Funabashi	All skills
12	Nov. 21	Surugadai	All skills
13	Dec. 19	Surugadai	All skills
14*	Jan. 9, '16	Funabashi	All skills
15*	Feb. x, '16	Surugadai	All skills
16	Mar. 30, '16	Main	TOEFL PBT

out-of-house methods are being used. The in-house methods being applied are analyses of the participants written and spoken output. Participant essays and transcriptions of spoken responses to TOEFL writing prompts are being analyzed with concordance¹ and word profiler² software to determine writing characteristics and enhance feedback. The out-of-house method being employed is to measure growth using the TOEFL-ITP (Paper-based test) available via the main campus of Nihon University. This test was taken by fifteen participants on July 7, 2015 and will be taken again on March 30, 2016.

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3. Implementation

In May of 2015, the CALL Group of the General Education Department approved this course. The course teacher then posted advertisements for the course at each campus and sent information via email to professors and students who had expressed interest in academic English study. Applicants emailed the teacher directly and were then sent detailed information about the purpose and schedule of the course, as well as how to register for the course on the Moodle CMS. Although the schedule is generally set, both the location and contents of each session are negotiated by teacher and students who can attend the session. The teacher provides materials for the sessions, and participants were encouraged to buy or borrow self-study textbooks and materials that focused on the skills they wanted to build. Each session generally consists of a reading, a listening, discussion, and practice TOEFL items.

4. Results

In total, thirty-two of the forty-six students who initially emailed the teacher and expressed interest in the course registered on Moodle as participants. Of these, twenty-eight are undergraduates and four are graduate students. There are nineteen participants based at the Funabashi campus and thirteen based at the Surugadai campus. Nineteen have attended face-to-face sessions, and five to twelve students regularly participate in each session. Participants who attend regularly have voiced that building skills for academic discussions is their main reason for attending. Absentees often cite the cost of the commute or other coursework as reasons for not being able to participate.

Regarding in-house measures of output, students complete essays and speaking tasks similar to those on the TOEFL. Once students complete five essays or speaking tasks, they are sent results to show their improvement. Figure 1 is a sample of one part of one of these reports. It can be seen that for this participant the tokens (the number of words written per 30-minute essay) have increased from 303 to 410, and also the types (the number of different words used) have increased from 136 to 195. Other analyses will not be discussed here due to space constraints

Of the thirty-two registered participants, twenty expressed interest in and were therefore registered for the TOEFL on July 7, 2015. Of these, only fifteen attended the test, with the five absentees citing lack of time to complete

coursework for other classes (3) and illness (2). Table 2 summarizes the results (n=15), where the overall average score is 468, the highest score was 567, and the lowest score was 360.

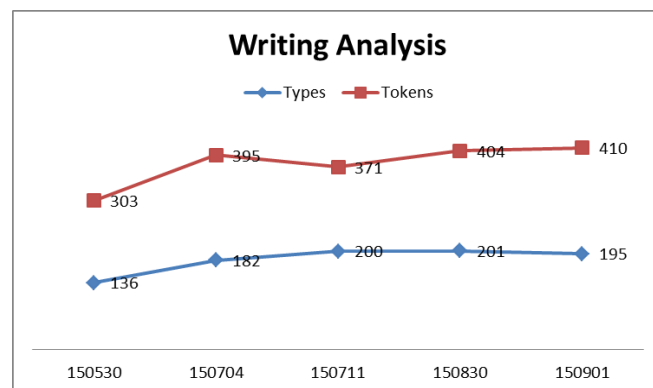


Figure 1. A Graph from a Participant's Writing Analysis

Table 2. Summary of TOEFL PBT Scores

	Listening Compre- hension	Structure and Written Expression	Reading Compre- hension	Total Score
High	63	56	56	567
Average	48	46	47	468
Low	40	31	37	360

4. Conclusion

Overall, the initial semester of this TOEFL course has provided an opportunity for students at both campuses to build academic English skills. The initial measures of output provide a picture of proficiency levels, and in-house essays and speaking tasks generally indicate improvement.

5. Acknowledgements

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5. References

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