

|

Oniduka Teturou 4/15/2015 7:07 PM
Formatted: Left: 1.18", Right: 1.18", Top:
1.38", Bottom: 1.18"

**An Undergraduate Career Restructuring Program,
its Rationale and Educational Outcome**

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to discuss the rationale for the implementation of 'Career Re-design I', an undergraduate course targeted at those students who wish to restructure their career perspectives, and to evaluate qualitatively its outcome.

The majority of the students enrolled have completed relatively few credits, a fact that derives from their decreased involvement in university activities. Previous research has clarified that it is a sense of frustrated self-image in being unable to be ideal university students that drives them away from the classroom.

In order to free them from this downward spiral, each student is encouraged to feel himself/herself liberated from hegemonic manners and discourses, and to create his/her own life-story, a resource to produce dialogues among them.

The qualitative analysis of the reflexive texts indicates that (1) all the students have deeply internalized a 'code of conduct of an idealized university student'; (2) the texts produced by the students are either 'lineal and superficial discourses' or 'complex, multifaceted and self-inconsistent discourses'; (3) the latter is in complementary relation with a 'true sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue'; (4) 'complex, multifaceted and self-inconsistent discourses' are linked with 'a true sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue' through 'memory of classroom as a spatial-temporal entity'. The texts produced by the students reflect the dialogues they produced in the classroom. The analysis suggests, therefore, that creation of life-story and its sharing through dialogue is an effective way to develop one's own independence.

KEYWORDS: career education, career restructuring, qualitative research, revised grounded theory approach, life-story reading program

1. INTRODUCTION

AN UNDERGRADUATE CAREER RESTRUCTURING PROGRAM, ITS RATIONALE AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOME

The purpose of this study is to discuss the rationale for the implementation of 'Career Re-design I', an undergraduate course targeted at those students who wish to restructure their career perspectives, and to evaluate qualitatively its outcome, thus offering evidence-based feedback for its implementation in the future.

The students enrolled in the course are in a state of low credit acquisition. They have completed fewer credits than the average. The direct trigger of this state is, more often than not, limited-access to the campus/classroom, or a lower degree of participation in university activities. A previous study (YAMADA 2011) identifies, through an analysis of interviews with the enrolled students, four factors which obstruct their participation in university activities: a sense of distrust towards the society dominated by the adults, a lack of self-determination, anxiety about their own future and a sense of fatigue.

The students have deeply internalized a code of conduct of an idealized university student, who is supposed to have many friends, a couple of closest friends, lead a well-balanced life between on-campus and off-campus activities and eventually get a good job. However this ideal is difficult to achieve because it is not based on reality. Many of them succeed, however, in achieving a good balance between their real self and the ideal, but there are some who internalize their ideal as a strictly canonized model they should reach. Once internalized, this canonized model exerts a strong pressure on them, and produces in them a sense of delusion, anxiety and fatigue, eventually driving them away from university activities. Students in this state tend to have less communication with their classmates, teachers and university staff. Although they appear to be getting along fairly well, they indeed are in a state of isolation, which keeps them away from committing themselves to academic activities.

Based on the above-mentioned hypothesis, we have come to formulate our task: If the students wish to restructure their university lives, they are strongly encouraged to liberate themselves from their canonized model and achieve a new perspective. This new perspective will allow them to acknowledge that their internalized view of an idealized university life is fairly one-sided, that they are multifaceted beings and that they are, thus, capable of restructuring their relationship with the university if only they notice the possibility of developing wider and deeper human relation.

To relativize their canonized view it is essential to hold an open and honest dialogue which should be free from hegemonic university life discourse. In order to conduct such a dialogue, we have been implementing a variety of programs, but during the last few semesters have we given

greater importance to producing narrative and its reading. By elaborating one's thought and emotion into a narrative, and reading it in front of one's classmates, a student is expected to make a deeper self-expression.

There has been no clear evidence about whether this kind of program is really effective. We have, on the other hand, shared the impression that deep and complex narratives produced by the students are directly related to their independent-mindedness and their readiness to hold an open-minded dialogue. Our task is, therefore, to verify the hypothesis that elaboration of narrative and its reading in the classroom allow the students to raise awareness of their independent-mindedness. This, in turn, derives from them deeper and more complex narratives, which, once more, derives from them more profound independent-mindedness.

2. METHOD

To verify the above-mentioned hypothesis, we have conducted a qualitative analysis of the texts produced by the students of the class implemented by the authors of this paper, during the time that covers autumn semester 2012 through spring semester 2014. Analysis has been conducted with Modified Grounded Theory Approach (M-GTA).

3. OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

The course in question is an educational program of Kyoto Sangyo University which aims at supporting students' career formation. The program was launched in 2005, and since then has been conducted targeting 2nd~4th year students in the spring semester and 1st~4th year students in the autumn semester. The capacity of enrollment is 70~110 in spring, divided into five classes, and 100~140, divided into six classes, in autumn. The classes are given on Wednesday afternoon, with two consecutive units, and a weekend training camp with five units. More than 1,650 students have enrolled so far.

The most eminent characteristics of the course consist of: 1) that it is targeted for a well-defined group of students: that is, those students who are in a state of low credit and/or low motivation for university activities; and 2) that it is supportively operated by facilitator-minded staff. A class consists of 15~25 students, with 3~4 educational staff (a teacher, a university staff member, a professional facilitator and a student facilitator volunteer). Most of the class activities are active-learning oriented and each program has a reflection session.

Table 1 shows an overview of the programs implemented throughout the course.

Table 1: programs of the course

	programs
1 st session (2 units)	Art-communication; Sharing of life story
2 nd session (2 units)	Ice-breaking programs to build up a learning community
3 rd session (training camp, 5 units)	Team-building; Self –awareness workshop; Night program with theme-oriented workshops; preparation for interview with guests from regional communities
4 th session (2 units)	Interview with guests from the regional communities
5 th session (2 units)	Reflection on the interview
6 th session (2 units)	Five minutes speech and response from classmates

4. OVERVIEW OF THE CLASS ANALYZED

Table 2 shows the details of the programs implemented in our class. The 1st and 6th sessions are omitted because the programs in both sessions are identical to those already indicated in the Table 1.

4.1. CHANGES OUR CLASS WENT THROUGH

Table 2: details of our class activities during the research period

	Autumn 2012	Spring 2013	Autumn 2013	Spring 2014
2 nd session (2 units)	Orientation Self-awareness workshop Giving a new name workshop 1 Lecture on human rights	Orientation Lecture on human rights Creating life story workshop Giving a new name workshop 1	Orientation Lecture on human rights Creating life story workshop	Orientation Lecture on human rights Creating life story workshop
3 rd session (training camp, 5 units)	Giving a new name workshop 2 Cooking in camping pot Preparation for interview 1 Interview simulation	Giving a new name workshop 2 Self-awareness workshop Dialogue at booth Preparation for interview	Ice-breaking Self-awareness workshop Dialogue at booth Giving a new name workshop	Ice-breaking Self-awareness workshop Giving a new name workshop Dialogue at booth
4 th session (2 units)	Preparation for interview 2 Interview with guests Group workshop for reflection	Preparation for interview Interview Lecture on ‘meaning of thinking’	Preparation for interview Interview Report on the interview	Preparation for dialogue Dialogue with guests Report on the interview
5 th session (2 units)	Reflection on interview Dialogue with flip Creating report on ‘the unforgettable elements of the course’ Sharing the report	Reflection on interview Lecture on narrating Creating a narrative on ‘What I would like you to know about me’ Reading the narrative	Lecture on narrating Creating a narrative on ‘What I would like you to know about me’ Reading narrative	Lecture on narrating Creating a narrative ‘From myself now & here to myself one year later’ Reading the narrative

The most important change we have introduced during these four semesters is that more and more importance has been laid upon creating narratives on one’s life story and its sharing, whether through pair-work, group-work or through reading out loud in front of all the

classmates. We came to realize the importance of creating narrative when the semester exam was introduced in autumn 2012: The students enrolled were encouraged to write about all that they experienced during and after the course, a kind of life-story related to the course. As we read the texts generated by our students, we were deeply impressed by the fact that the texts were full of self-reflective narratives, which was not the case in classroom activities. We have, thus, realized that the act of writing one's own life story is also an act of dialogue with oneself, and once fixed in narrative, it may be a great resource with which one can dialogue with others. Therefore, we have decided to introduce programs including the writing of narratives.

4.2. NARRATIVE READING PROGRAM

In the 2013 spring semester we launched a 'narrative reading program', in which a student is expected to anonymously write a narrative with the theme 'What I would like you to know about me'. The narratives are collected and redistributed randomly to the students. Each student has, therefore, someone else's narrative at hand, and is expected to read (recite) it before the classmates, and once finished reading, give a comment on the narrative he/she has just recited. Then, the real author identifies himself/herself as such, and gives a comment about how he/she felt or what he/she thought during the time in which the narrative was being recited.

This program is expected to encourage a deep and diverse self-disclosure, producing a huge variety of dialogues at all levels of classroom relations. The author of a narrative is in a state of tension about not knowing who is going to read it until the moment someone begins. While the reading is going on, the author finds himself /herself in an extremely embarrassing situation because he/she is listening to his/her own narrative uttered by someone else. Other members of the class, the reader, as well as the listeners, listen to the narrative wondering "who on earth is the author?" If they guess correctly, it is not only because they have felt the author's personality through narrative reading, but also because the author has disclosed enough about his/her self. But more often than not, they fail in guessing the author, and this is because, hypothetically, someone else's reading discloses a new aspect of the author's self, explicit in the text, but unknown to him/her. The program as a whole encourages a variety of dialogues among the students, thus constituting one of the characteristic programs of our class.

5. RESEARCH METHOD

5.1. RESEARCH PERIOD

The research was conducted from the 2012 autumn semester to the 2014 spring semester.

5.2. RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS, DATA-COLLECTION and ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The texts analyzed in this research are those papers the students enrolled during the above-mentioned period have filled in at the semester exam. The exam comprises two questions. The 1st question is: “Narrate all that you have experienced, from the first class until the last, through training camp and interview with citizen-workers. Narrate not only what you have done, but also what has made you change.” The 2nd question is: “Facing yourself at this moment, what kind of change and transformation has been brought about in you since the day the course ended.

An inquiry was made on the exam paper about whether students would allow us to use the texts for the research. The names and student codes of 76 students who answered affirmatively have been removed from their texts, which were then digitalized with the data indicating the semester they belong to.

5.3. METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The texts were analyzed according to Grounded Theory Approach and its modified version (KINOSHITA, 1999, 2003, 2005), through conceptualization without segmentation. During the process of generating concepts we accumulated theoretical hypotheses, and based on these we generated categories after discussing the relation between concepts. Once the generation of concepts and relation of concepts allowed no further interpretations, analysis came to an end.

Russell Hubert 4/14/2015 5:53 PM

Comment [1]: I'm not sure about the meaning of this “left.”

6. RESULTS

6.1. RESULT OF ANALYSIS

We have derived five categories and ten concepts, indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: list of categories and concepts

CATEGORIES	CONCEPTS
Deep-rooted code of conduct as a university student	Gratitude to the teacher
	Consideration of completion of credits
Lineal and superficial self-expression	Self-expression in a word
	Simplification of experiences
Complex, multifaceted and self – inconsistent discourse	Back and forth self-expression
	Literariness
True sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue	Citation of concrete names and utterances
	Self-acknowledgement through the other

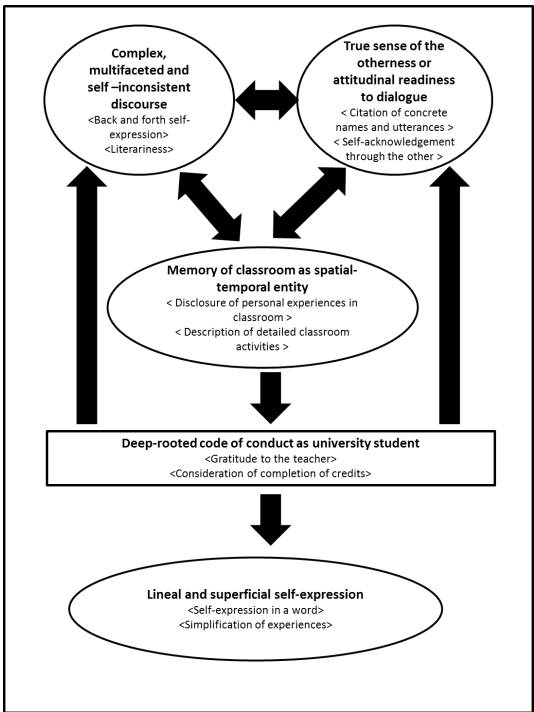
Memory of the classroom as a spatial-temporal entity	Disclosure of personal experiences in the classroom
	Description of detailed classroom activities

Russell Hubert 4/14/2015 6:16 PM
Comment [2]: I'd suggest adding these particles, but I don't know if you want to change the illustration.

6.2. RESULT ILLUSTRATED

Students have internalized **【Deep-rooted code of conduct as a university student】** . Then appear **【Lineal and superficial self-expression】** and **【Complex, multifaceted and self – inconsistent discourse】** . **【Complex, multifaceted and self –inconsistent discourse】** is in a complementary relation with **【True sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue】** and the complementariness is mediated by **【Memory of the classroom as a spatial-temporal entity】** . We have, thus, formulated the categorical structure in which Memory of the classroom as a spatial-temporal entity mediates independent-minded dialogue observed in classroom, and complex, multifaceted and self–inconsistent discourse is generated by the students.

Illustration 1 Relatedness of categories



6.3. STORY-LINE

Now we proceed to describe the story-line. The most basic category is **【Deep-rooted code of conduct as a university student】** . All the narratives analyzed have at the core this **【Deep-rooted code of conduct】** and are represented by **<Gratitude to the teacher>** and **<Consideration of credits>**.

【Deep-rooted code of conduct】 exerts a great impact on all other categories obtained in the research.

【Deep-rooted code of conduct】 constitutes the core category, to which two antagonistic

categories are juxtaposed: **【Lineal and superficial self-expression】** is based on **【Deep-rooted code of conduct】** and lacks self-disclosure. This category is constituted by <self-expression in a word> and <simplification of experiences>.

【Complex, multifaceted and self –inconsistent discourse】 , on the other hand, although based on **【Deep-rooted code of conduct as university student】** , describes in its own way experiences in the classroom and subsequent changes. This category is constituted by < Back and forth self-expression > and <Literariness>.

The **【Lineal and superficial self-expression】** category is influenced solely by **【Deep-rooted code of conduct】**and does not interact with any other category. **【Complex, multifaceted and self –inconsistent discourse】** is, on the other hand, in complementary relation with **【True sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue】** . **【Complex, multifaceted and self –inconsistent discourse】** comprises not only complex and creative self-expression, but also a strong will to come face to face with the other.

It is important to notice here that neither **【Complex, multifaceted and self –inconsistent discourse】** nor **【True sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue】** exists independently from the university environment. Both categories are irreversibly attached to classroom activities and described only in this context. Here appears **【Memory of classroom as spatial-temporal entity】** category, constituted by < Disclosure of personal experiences in the classroom > and < Description of detailed classroom activities >.

【Complex, multifaceted and self –inconsistent discourse】 and **【True sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue】** are, so to speak, an act of breaking away from **【Deep-rooted code of conduct】** . These narratives are, however, attracted again to **【Deep-rooted code of conduct】** through **【Memory of classroom as spatial-temporal entity】**

6.4. DETAILS OF CONCEPTS CONSTITUTING CATEGORIES

The details of concepts which constitute categories are presented below.

6.4.1. Concepts which constitute **【Deep-rooted code of conduct as university student】**

< Gratitude to the teacher > and < Consideration of completion of credits > are the concepts which constitute the category. The concepts are represented by such expressions as “*I have learned a lot.*” “*Thank you very much for everything during the last semester.*”(spring 2012) or

“In this training camp I rather learned than enjoyed.”(spring 2012).

6.4.2 Concepts which constitute **【Lineal and superficial self-expression】**

< Self-expression in a word > and < Simplification of experiences > are the concepts that constitute the category, in which classroom experiences and their observations are narrated in a very lineal and simplistic way, as in expressions like: “*The curry we made was very delicious!*” (spring 2012) or “*I’ve had a lot of experiences in this course*”.

6.4.3. Concepts which constitute **【Complex, multifaceted and self–inconsistent discourse】**

The **【Complex, multifaceted and self–inconsistent discourse】** category is constituted by the concepts < Back and forth self-expression > and < Literariness >. These concepts are constituted by those texts which are not so fluent but full of long and winding personal expressions, such as: “*In this class, however, everybody paid much attention to my story and tried to understand it. How nice was that! Moreover, I found myself a little bit more confident with myself, that I’m not so awkward in expressing my ideas as I used to think, something very insignificant, though...*” (spring 2014). Here we witness a couple of rhetorical expressions such as ‘not so awkward’ instead of ‘skillful’ or anastrophe (*something very insignificant, though...*). There are several cases in which we were totally moved by the literary quality of the text: “*It was a little bit difficult for me to tell that story, but as I wanted to make myself understood, I dared to tell that. When I finished speaking, all the members of the class gave me their comments, which turned out to be really nice, full of good things, and while reading, I could not help shedding tears!*” (spring 2014). In this example we find a rich emotional expression in an unpretentious style.

6.4.4. Concepts constituting the category **【True sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue】**

The category **【True sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue】** is constituted by the concepts < Citation of concrete names and utterances > and < Self-acknowledgement through the other >. When we cite the name of the other or his/her utterances, we allow the otherness to go through our existence. Thus, when a student cites concrete names and cases, it may testify that he/she really experienced a real interaction between the self and the other. Here we find a student who independently expresses his/her idea because he/she already has a trustworthy relation with all those who participate in class activities, as shown in a case like this: “*When I asked him what he would carry if he had to go to a place where there is absolutely nothing*”, he replied “*pen and memo-pad*” and immediately I felt that I wanted to become an

Oniduka Teturo 4/15/2015 7:04 PM

Deleted:

adult like him.”(spring 2014).

6.4.5. Concepts constituting the category **【Memory of the classroom as a spatial-temporal entity】**

The category **【Memory of the classroom as a spatial-temporal entity】** is constituted by the concepts < Disclosure of personal experiences in the classroom > and < Description of detailed classroom activities>. In these concepts, all that a student experienced was narrated with concrete details about time and space, as shown in this case: “13th of June, five minutes speech. I still have a vivid memory of that occasion. Details like ‘I went to the aquarium by motorcycle.’ or ‘These days I have great difficulty communicating my room-partner’ sounded to me very interesting and very-well narrated. There were one or two people who didn’t utter a word, but it still seemed to me interesting, it’s their personality anyway...”(spring 2012). In the following case details of the training camp are evoked with a sense of time: “I still remember that I had a great time talking with people of various ages. I really felt sorry when people began leaving the place to go to bed one by one.” (spring 2014).

7. DISCUSSION

It is important to notice that the results of the analysis above-mentioned dose not demonstrate that the process of producing narrative is a direct trigger of the students’ independence. Rather, our analysis shows that the categories **【Complex, multifaceted and self–inconsistent discourse】** , **【True sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue】** and **【Memory of the classroom as a spatial-temporal entity】** are closely related one another. This simple affirmation leads, however, to a fact of undeniable importance: When a student makes a **【Complex, multifaceted and self–inconsistent discourse】** , it does not derive only from his/her own literal competency nor from his/her desire to express himself/herself, but it also is a consequence of its complementary relation with **【True sense of the otherness or attitudinal readiness to dialogue】** and **【Memory of the classroom as a spatial-temporal entity】** . In other words, these three categories form an absolute complementariness, in which none can be absent without destroying the whole.

In our course, many attempts have been introduced to allow the students to come face to face with others, relativize their concept of values and grow up as an independent citizen. The present

Russell Hubert 4/15/2015 12:23 AM

Comment [3]: I'd suggest adding these particles, but I don't know if you want to change the illustration.

Oniduka Teturuou 4/15/2015 7:02 PM

Comment [4]:

Oniduka Teturuou 4/15/2015 7:03 PM

Comment [5]:

Oniduka Teturuou 4/15/2015 7:03 PM

Comment [6]:

Oniduka Teturuou 4/15/2015 7:03 PM

Comment [7]:

Oniduka Teturuou 4/15/2015 7:03 PM

Comment [8]:

research has, however, demonstrated that programs including production of narratives can be a key-element of our enterprise, which can be summarized as a process of self-understanding through the otherness.

Now we proceed to discuss how we should understand the meaning of career education. The midterm report of General Research Collaborator Board (Ministry of Education & Science 2003) defines 'career' as 'a series of positions and roles that a person assumes throughout one's life span' and as 'an accumulative process of relation between self and work.' The Report of the Central Education Board (Ministry of Education & Science 1999) defines 'career education' as 'education which enables one to learn a desirable career and labor view, to get occupational knowledge and skill, to understand one's own personality and to cultivate competence and attitude for choosing one's career path. There have, on the other hand, been attempts to understand career education as a process an undergraduate student goes through in order to be competent in designing his/her own career and life plan before their transition from school to workplace. In this context the outcome of the undergraduate education tends to be evaluated by the percentage of graduates who found work, who found work at prestigious enterprises, who obtained some kind of qualifications, who became qualified as a civil servant, etc. Career education is, therefore, something attached to undergraduate education, something which is intended to give an additional value to it through supporting the transition.

From our viewpoint, this understanding is insufficient. For us 'career' is a very broad concept which covers something like 'one's life in social context' and 'career education' is an education which 'cultivate competence and attitude for choosing one's career path'. It does not aim at supporting the transition nor presuppose organized work. According to KONDO (2006), career education at the university level is 'an educational process in which each student cultivates power to build up independently his/her own way of living, gain an understanding of work view, learn how to cope with new knowledge and skills required in a certain job, and cultivate competence for choosing his/her career path. In short, career education cultivates power to independently make a choice when he/she faces such questions as: "What kind of life am I to lead?" "Should I find a job?" "Shall I work as a full-time worker or part-time worker?" "In the process of my career should I make a career change?"

In this context our career education come to signify a discipline which cultivates a citizen who independently thinks and acts, has a true sense of reality towards his/her society in which his/her workplace is integrated, and finds his/her way through to cope with his/her society. But

this overlaps with the goal of Humanities. The rationale of the Liberal Arts, based on radical skepticism and a fundamental view is also valid in career education.

REFERENCES

- BURR, V. *An Introduction to Social Constructionism*, Routledge. 1995
- =Shakaiteki Kotikushugi heno Shoutai –Gensetsu-Bunseki towa Nanika. Tanaka
Kazuhiko-yaku ,Kawashima-Shoten:p.74, 1997
- ISAACS, W. *Taking Flight: Dialog, Collective Thinking, and Organizational Learning*.
pp.24-39, 2002
- KINOSHITA ,Y, *M-GTA—Jissennteki Shitsuteki Kennkyuuho Shuseiban-Guraundeddo Seori*
Apurochi no Subete, raibu Kogi, Kobundo,2007
- KONDO S, *KyariaKyouiku ni miru Kyoushoku Kyodo to Sanngaku Renkei, Kyaria Dezain*
Kenkyu,Vol.02:pp61-72, 2006
- LEWIN, K. *Resolving social conflicts; selected papers on group dynamics*. Oxford, England:
Harper, 1948
- ONITSUKA, T. *How to motivate Low-motivated Students-A Case Study of Kyoto Sangyo*
University, abstract from WACE, Singapore, 2007
- ONITSUKA T, *Teitani no tameno Kyaria Dezainn Programu, Kyaria Dezain Kenkyu,*
No.3pp.145-152, 2007
- ONITSUKA, T, NAKANISHI K, *TeitaniTeiyoku-Sou ni muketa Kyaria Kyouiku Keisei*
Shien Kamoku'Kyaria Ri-Dezain' ni okeru Jukousei no Henka, Koto Kyouiku
fo-ramu, Vol.4:pp.29-35, 2014
- TSUMURA, T, *Purosesu edyuke-shon:Manabi o Shien-suru Fasirite-shon no riron to*
Jissai,Kaneko Shobo, 2012
- SCHEIN, E.(1993) "On dialog, culture, and organizational learn- ing", *Reflections*, 4(4):
pp.27-39
- YYAMADA,S et al *GakushiKatei Gakusei no Kyaria Keisei o SogaisuruYouin ni kannsuru*
TeiseitekiKenkyu, Kyaria Dezain Gakkai, Endai Happyo 2011