# My learning method

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I like solving tsumegos very much. I would do them even if the full board two player game did not exist. Like many others, I see $9 \times 9$ games as competitive tsumego exercises. I study Go puzzles in several ways. Tsumego books are great if they have the Japanese format: question on one page, solution on the other side. I also have flash cards, which is exactly the same idea. Of course, there are the digital options, the smartphone apps and online puzzle sites. These are useful, but the temptation is bigger for just to tapping or clicking through a problem. That way we do not learn much. One has to play it out in the head. On `goproblems.com` there is a rating system; sort of the problems playing against humans. I figured how to inflate my rating up to 3 dan by solving a lot of simple problems very fast. This is totally fake, since I often have difficulties even with single digit kyu problems. But it looks good, and I think the training for speed of reading is not useless. On this site I have the following strategy. I try to solve new problems with no time pressure. Inevitably, this is when my rating goes down. I study the problems more if I find them difficult. I explore the variations and produce an annotated SGF file (good material for the course). Then, to get my rating back, I do time trial on the problems I know.

People say that tsumego practice is the most improtant for improving. I can't really tell its effect, since there is no control experiment, another copy of me playing Go but not doing Go puzzles. There were some cases, where I could save a group by making seki (and had to tell the opponent several times in the scoring phase online), which trick came straight from a Go puzzle. On the other hand, my OGS rating is the same as half a year ago, when I started to study the game again.

I think I should do a lot more for becoming stronger, not only tsumegos. Like studying openings, josekis (standard sequences), doing more game reviews. One thing I started to do is immediate game reviews on $9 \times 9$. Playing against an AI, when I loose the game, I go back to the point where I feel I lost the game, and play it again from there. This is very instructive, a great help from the software tools.

I'm also experimenting with the new AI analysis tools. These show the winning percentages for each candidate move. How to use this information for better understanding the game is still an unsolved problem for me. I invested in a powerful graphics card required for the deep neural networks computations, so I am determined to develop an efficient method.

There is a lot of excellent material available on `youtube`. I watched game

reviews by Michael Redmond (of course), Hajin Lee and Nick Sibicky from Seattle Go Center. Watching these make me feel that Go is a very simple game, since good teachers make it look easy. But then, at the board again is not that simple.

For me, the game is here to stay. I hope the Igo Math course will continue and I will be able to do more research on the connections with mathematics and programming. Also, I will play the game (and other board games like Chess, Checkers) with my children. I am thoroughly convinced that traditional board games remained one of the best ways to train your brain in the 21st century.