

Curriculum renewal: Elective English classes

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A curriculum renewal project became necessary to entice learners into elective classes, preventing class closures that would have resulted in fewer academic choices for students and class reductions for several part-time instructors. This article describes the research process into types of elective courses learners wanted; efforts to create new, relevant courses based on learner needs; results of faculty efforts to encourage students to study elective English courses; problems encountered; and plans for ongoing curriculum renewal.

カリキュラム再編を計画するにしがたい、選択科目制度を設ける必要が生じた。それは、クラス閉鎖に伴い学生にアカデミックな選択肢の幅を狭めさせず、かつ非常勤講師の雇用を維持するためでもある。本稿が記すものは、学生が希望する選択クラスを調査するプロセス、学生の要望に添いながらも適切な新しいクラスを設ける試み、学生が英語選択クラスを選ぶことを促進させる教職員の試み、これらの過程で生じる問題点、そして進行中のカリキュラム再編計画である。

RECENTLY IN Japan, universities have been exploring curriculum renewal in order to address falling student enrolment. Some school administrators and faculty are realizing that more care is needed in curriculum planning and are seeking new ideas in order to attract students to ensure the survival of their foreign language programs. However, the development, implementation, and maintenance of a foreign language curriculum in a tertiary educational environment is a complex endeavour. With several intertwining factors involved in managing a curriculum to either fail or succeed in achieving its overall goals, school administrators and faculty need to be aware of the changing motivations and needs of the very students that they are educating. Creating courses and programs fulfilling not only vocational needs of learners but also the development of intellectual curiosity and facility are the challenges of curriculum planners. This paper describes a small case study of curriculum renewal to increase enrolment and improve elective English classes taught by native-English speaking teachers.

Context and rationale

At this university and junior college, students study in one of four diverse faculties: Arts, Human Development, Home Economics, and Contemporary Society. All first-year students



are required to take English classes, consistent with many other university curriculums in Japan. University students have two classes per week, while junior college students have one class per week. Required classes are not streamed: students self-select the level at which they are comfortable studying. At the university level, the lowest-level classes are taught exclusively by Japanese-speaking teachers and focus on reading and grammar, while higher-level classes are taught by Japanese and native-English speaker pairs. In the junior college, higher-level classes are taught by either Japanese or native-English speaking teachers.

The aim of the general language studies curriculum is to foster both language communication ability and intercultural competence through the study of foreign languages. The courses aim to strengthen basic language skills and broaden student understanding and appreciation of a diversity of cultures. From the second year of university, or in both first and second years of junior college, students can choose elective courses in English in three distinct study areas: Skills and Qualifications courses (taught by both Foreign and Japanese teachers) which tend to offer TOEIC skill-improvement; Active Communication courses (taught by both Foreign and Japanese teachers) which tend to offer communicative, content-based courses; and Further Reading courses (taught by Japanese teachers), which tend to focus on the translation and interpretation of English texts.

Over the past few years, enrolment rates in several of the elective classes have fallen consistently each year. The classes with the greatest fall in enrolment were those taught by native English teachers. From an administrative perspective it is difficult to justify running a class with only 2 or 3 students, although this had been the practice in previous years. A meeting of our department was called, and several elective classes were cut, while some (after much discussion) were salvaged and rescheduled in more convenient time-slots for students.

The overall result was fewer elective classes offered to students. The two full-time native English-speaking faculty members (herein referred to as the researchers) overseeing these classes initiated a plan to renew the elective courses offered within the curriculum. In order to increase enrolment and, hopefully, increase the number and types of classes offered, the researchers set out to gain a greater understanding of reasons students may choose to study an English elective course and what types of content they would be interested in studying.

The researchers identified several factors to be addressed or changed in order to attract more student enrolment, including the division of elective courses from full year units into discrete semester-long units, developing a deeper understanding of learners' perceptions regarding elective English classes, and clarifying course descriptions for students. It was determined that more content-based, interactive classes with a focus on communication needed to be offered, as well as custom-designed courses based on the perceived and reported interests of students.

Possible factors affecting enrolment

English language learning in Japan has a long history and curriculum planning has undergone several changes in both theory and practice. Some researchers have acknowledged the added complexities in second language learning curriculum development due to the advent of the communicative language learning approach (Diffey, 1992). In the foreign language context there are added complexities regarding differing cultural beliefs about curriculum planning and teaching methodologies (Li, 1998). Existing research in the Japanese context indicates that Japanese teachers of English, although often understanding and expounding the precepts of the communicative language teaching approach, find it difficult to implement (Gorsuch, 2001; Sakui, 2004). Despite both the Ministry of Education, Sports, Culture, Science and Technology (MEXT) Action Plan intending

to “Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities” (MEXT, 2004) and program descriptions found on university websites stressing the importance of increasing Japanese students’ communicative language skills, the actual curriculum implementation is often much different, and the communicative approach to teaching language has mostly “remained the preferred pedagogy of the foreign teaching community” (Hicks, 2010, p. 55). Sakui (2004) describes the result as a “dichotomous curriculum realization” (p. 161).

Shimizu (1995) concluded that students value their Japanese English language teachers for scholarly skills whereas foreign instructors are valued more for personal characteristics such as friendliness. In many school curriculums, and specifically in this context, TOEIC and reading courses are taught exclusively by Japanese teachers. Shimizu (1995) cautions this may result in students thinking classes taught by non-Japanese “are trivial” (p. 7). In this way, these types of classes may be harder to *sell* to students who are pressed for time and who are trying to pass recognized tests such as the TOEIC or TOEFL, which continue to be considered virtually the only reliable measure of a person’s English language ability in Japanese society.

Related to this is the possible separation between the planning of curriculum between foreign and Japanese taught classes. Influenced by deep-rooted differences in the way foreign teaching staff are integrated into the Japanese university administration and differences in language teaching philosophies and practices, curriculum planning may not be fully integrated and these two streams may run parallel to each other. Thus the native English speaker taught side of the curriculum may be seen as a necessary complement rather than a central focus of the curriculum and may encounter obstacles, affecting overall curriculum unity and success.

The need for English language proficiency in Japan is not very clear to many students. This makes curriculum development es-

pecially challenging. While some students are studying English as a major subject or have clear non-academic goals for English language acquisition, most students are simply studying English as a compulsory subject (Hicks, 2010). In advocating a more liberal arts approach to education, McVeigh (2004) states “when language is studied to please someone else (e.g., educational authorities, corporations, a vague sense of the national collective), enthusiasm for the humanistic impulse of self-edification is hampered” (p. 211). In many secondary schools the main focus of language study is on university entrance exams (LoCastro, 1996). Once entry into a university has been achieved, motivation drops significantly for many students plus the foreign language is often seen as not being useful in the domestic context (Benson, 1991). So this pull between students not studying for any specific purpose and the school curriculums often pushing vocational language training may demotivate some students.

In Japan, although a romantic ideal (Japan Times, 2007), communicative competence is often perceived by learners as the most difficult study as well as being relatively undervalued in society. Thus classes which focus on communicative competency, usually taught by foreign faculty, may be at risk of lower enrolment rates.

These factors were taken into consideration when planning this curriculum renewal. The researchers believe that curriculum development is a “network of interacting systems” (Richards, 2001, p. 41) focusing on “needs analysis, situational analysis, planning learning outcomes, course organization, selecting and preparing teaching materials, providing for effective teaching, and evaluation” (Richards, 2001, p. 41). The next section of the paper reports on the methodology and findings in our curriculum evaluation and the subsequent changes we made.

Curriculum renewal

Studies have revealed that curriculum innovation is rarely implemented as intended (Karsvas-Doukas, 1995). In order to ensure that the curriculum changes were approved by other faculty members, as well as implemented by teachers and students, the researchers surveyed students, interviewed teachers, and investigated the overall school curriculum. Some of the main considerations during redesign of the curriculum were times available for students to study, content they wanted to study, creation of clear syllabus descriptions, increasing communication and collaboration between our department and other departments, and the abilities of the teaching staff. The researchers investigated when students in each of the faculties had mandatory courses scheduled, indicating when students would not be able to study an elective course. With this information we were better able to schedule courses in more convenient time slots. Also taken into account was the typical student behaviour of *loading up* on classes in the spring semester and then having other commitments such as club activities in the fall. Thus we tried to ensure that typically popular courses were offered in the second semester to help entice students to enrol.

Another consideration was the course content desires of students. A student survey was administered to determine what types of courses they would hypothetically consider enrolling in for the following year. This survey is discussed below. A very important consideration and change in curriculum renewal in this context was to encourage more communication within our department and with other departments. Also, up until this renewal, part-time teachers were left on their own to decide what type of class content to teach and which text to use. They were given very little information about the curriculum as a whole. As a result, elective courses tended to have unclear syllabuses, be similar to the mandatory 4-skills courses, and in some cases were similar to other elective content courses.

Clarifying the course description in the syllabus guidebook was seen as crucial to increasing student interest in the elective courses. Usually, Japanese teachers wrote their descriptions in Japanese and Native English-speaking teachers wrote their syllabuses in English, which may have meant that students read and chose an elective course based simply on their ability to easily comprehend the contents of the course description. Thus, the researchers created a short, general description and goals for each course that were translated into Japanese and published in the syllabus catalogue to encourage students to read the more detailed course descriptions in English. These descriptions also acted as a more informative guide for teachers and were used as the basis for the detailed course rationale, description, and syllabus framework.

Finally, in order for the renewal to be successful, the teachers needed to be better supported within the curriculum (Brown, 1995). The researchers were aware that most part-time teachers were *isolated*, so it was evident that more information and communication was necessary. The researchers created a manual that provided pertinent information about the wider school curriculum and the English language program. Sections covering goals as a whole and how individual courses fit into the overall English language program contributed to a greater awareness among part-time staff. The researchers also introduced an elist to improve communication between teachers. A parallel session in English was introduced for foreign teachers in the annual spring faculty development meeting, and small informal meetings were held with elective course teachers to create the syllabus and the course rationale, choose teaching resources, and to provide support for entering the syllabus online. This type of teacher support proved to be an invaluable factor in improving the quality of the elective courses.

Needs analysis: Survey

An analysis of learner needs should be the basis of a sound educational program (Richards, 2001). The researchers conducted a simple needs analysis of all first year students taught by native English-speaking teachers at the beginning of December 2008, in response to meetings in which classes had been cut, or had been threatened with being cut in the future if student attrition was not reversed. The analysis was conducted only in classes taught by native English teachers due to problems of time constraints, and can therefore be considered a pilot survey.

The purpose of the analysis was to ascertain the types of classes students would be interested in taking in the following academic year, the reasons students were currently enrolled in elective classes, and the reasons students were considering taking an elective class in the 2009 academic year. Teachers needed the information about new courses by the end of December, so timely survey administration and collation of results were central to our ability to manage the curriculum renewal.

There were five questions in the survey. The first three questions asked students to identify courses they would be interested in studying. Students were asked to choose from a list of potential elective course titles. In creating the survey, the researchers brainstormed potential courses of interest based on the course content that faculties offered in the school, previously popular courses, the gender of the students (the curriculum renewal was conducted at a women's university), as well as experience and intuition. Only course titles were presented in the survey. Students were also encouraged to write other course ideas. The fourth question sought to establish the reasons that students currently enrolled in an elective course chose to study that elective, while the final question asked the students if they were planning on enrolling in an elective in the following academic year, and the reasons for their decision. The survey is reproduced in Appendix 1.

Administration of survey

In the first week of December, 2008 surveys were distributed to teachers of first-year university and junior college compulsory classes as well as first year junior college elective classes and second-year university and junior college elective classes, for a total of 43 classes. Class sets of eight student survey question forms (Appendix 1), written in Japanese, were photocopied and placed in an envelope with teacher instructions in English (Appendix 2) and an English translation of the survey form for the teacher (Appendix 3). An answer form (Appendix 4) was photocopied and attached to the front of each envelope for easy collation of answers from the different classes.

The survey took approximately 10 minutes of class time. One survey form was given to each group of students in the class, and the students were asked to complete it as a group task. Teachers then collected the forms. Many teachers collated the results on the front sheet, making final collation of results much faster.

Results were obtained from only 39 classes (27 compulsory university, 4 elective university, 4 compulsory junior college, and 4 elective junior college), and the results from one university elective class were excluded due to large discrepancies between the number of students reported in the groups and the total number of students enrolled in the class. In total, 1028 students (812 compulsory university, 124 compulsory junior college, 43 university elective, and 49 elective junior college) completed the survey. Although not all surveys were returned, some clear trends emerged.

Results

The following results were obtained from the survey. These results were used to guide the redesign and planning of courses for the upcoming academic year.

Types of courses in which students reported interest

The first question asked, “Which of the following classes would you be interested in taking next year?” The students selected all of the courses in which they were interested. Table 1 indicates the compiled results across all classes in both the university and the junior college.

Table 1. Kinds of elective courses requested (university and junior college)

Business English 177 (17.2%)	Travel English 741 (72%)	Study abroad preparation 157 (15.2%)	English for sports, nutrition, and health 121 (11.7%)
Fairy tales and storytelling 546 (53.1%)	Podcasting and listening skills 146 (14.2%)	Talking about Japan in English 219 (21.3%)	English speaking countries 217 (21.1%)
Pop psychology 77 (7.5%)	English through movies 834 (81.1%)	English through music 782 (76%)	Environment and globalization 33 (3.2%)
Modern cultures 87 (8.5%)	Mass media studies 115 (11.2%)	Manga and animation 318 (31%)	Human relationships 89 (8.6%)

The results show that many students were interested in studying English through movies, English through music, travel

English, and fairy tales and storytelling. However, there was also interest in courses in Business English; study abroad preparation; English for sports, nutrition, and health; podcasting and listening skills; talking about Japan in English; English speaking countries; mass media studies; and *manga* and animation. Interest tended to reflect the majors in which the students were enrolled, for example, 30% of students enrolled in the nutrition course were interested in taking a course in English about sports, nutrition, and health. This was an important finding, since classes catering for students in specific faculties could be scheduled at times in which no required classes had been scheduled for that faculty.

The second question asked, “What skills and qualifications would you be interested in studying?” Table 1 shows the compiled results across all classes in both the university and the junior college.

Table 2. Kinds of skills and qualifications courses requested (university and junior college)

Extensive reading 388 (37.7%)	Travel English 209 (20.3%)	Multimedia 84 (8%)
Podcasting and blogging 113 (11%)	Teaching English to children 331 (32.1%)	English for nutritionists 104 (10%)
English for travel, tourism, and hospitality 562 (54.6%)	Creative writing 125 (12.1%)	Listening and presentations 188 (18.2%)

Reported demand was high for classes in English for travel, tourism and hospitality; extensive reading; teaching English

to children; and Travel English. There was also some interest in studying listening and presentations, creative writing, and English for nutritionists. Interest in Skills and Qualifications courses tended to reflect either the majors in which students were enrolled or skill sets that may prove useful either at work or in daily life in the future, which also proved an important finding for course renewal.

The third question was open-ended and asked students to identify other topics that they would be interested in studying as an elective subject. Considering the sample size, responses were few and varied, but included the following: everyday conversation (11 suggestions), debate (5 suggestions), discussion (5 suggestions), history and culture of English speaking countries (2 suggestions), Disney English (1 suggestion), listening (1 suggestion), having parties in English (1 suggestion), talking with tourists (1 suggestion), English sign language (1 suggestion), and studying about Japanese culture in English (1 suggestion).

Reasons for current enrolment in an elective course

The fourth question sought to establish the reasons why students currently enrolled in an elective subject chose to study that subject. This question was aimed specifically at second year university students and first and second year junior college students already taking an English elective subject, and sought to shed light on questions raised during departmental meetings earlier in the year.

The results (see Bradford-Watts, 2010), suggest that the major reasons are the need to complete units for graduation, subjects being offered at convenient times, and the syllabus description being interesting or appearing useful. Clearly, offering interesting courses at times convenient to students is important, as is offering an adequate number of courses to enable students to accumulate credits in a timely manner.

Student intentions to take an elective course in 2009

The fifth question surveyed students regarding their plans to take an English elective in the 2009 academic year, and the reasons for their decision. Some students did not provide an answer to this question. Overall, 453 (44%) students indicated that they were planning to take an elective course in the 2009 academic year, while 538 (52%) indicated that they were not. The major reasons for planning to take an elective subject were *travel* (19%), *future job* (23%), *need credits to graduate* (25%), and *personal interest* (24%), while the major reasons for not planning to take an elective were *no interest* (16%) and *no time* (27%). These results varied according to the major in which the students were enrolled. Table 3 presents the results by department and Tables 4-6 show the variation among departments.

Table 3. Student intention to enrol in an English elective in 2009 by department

		Total answering survey	Intend to enrol	Do not intend to enrol
University	Japanese Literature	89	16 (17%)	73 (82%)
	Contemporary Society	207	101 (49%)	84 (41%)
	English Literature	135	101 (75%)	32 (31%)
	Education/Music	80	25 (31%)	55 (69%)
	Education	95	37 (39%)	53 (55%)
	Nutrition	84	7 (8%)	77 (91%)
	History	91	47 (51%)	38 (41%)
	Welfare	31	11 (35%)	20 (64%)

		Total answering survey	Intend to enrol	Do not intend to enrol
Junior College	English Literature	28	23 (82%)	4 (14%)
	Japanese Literature	26	3 (11%)	22 (85%)
	Design	25	2 (8%)	25 (100%)
	Early Education	37	13 (35%)	23 (62%)

Proportionately, English Literature students in both the university and junior college were the largest group intending to enrol in an English elective in 2009, followed by History, Contemporary Society, Education, and Welfare. A very low proportion of students studying Japanese Literature, Nutrition, and Design intended to enrol in English elective classes in 2009. The reasons for students choosing to study an elective in the following academic year are discussed at greater length in Bradford-Watts (2010). However, for the purposes of curriculum renewal,

Table 4. Reasons for not choosing to enrol in an English elective in 2009 by department

		No interest	No relation with life	Will take another language	No time	Will be graduating	Other
University	Japanese Literature	30 (33%)	5 (5%)	5 (5%)	28 (31%)	1 (1%)	9 (10%)
	Modern Society	45 (28%)	19 (9%)	13 (6%)	27 (13%)	0	9 (4%)
	English Literature	7 (7%)	3 (3%)	0	11 (11%)	2 (2%)	11 (11%)
	Education/Music	9 (11%)	6 (7%)	6 (7%)	43 (54%)	0	3 (3%)
	Education	10 (10%)	10 (10%)	2 (2%)	37 (39%)	0	5 (5%)
	Nutrition	3 (3%)	0	0	69 (82%)	0	0
	History	26 (29%)	9 (10%)	11 (12%)	12 (13%)	1 (1%)	5 (5%)
	Welfare	2 (9%)	0	0	14 (49%)	0	2 (9%)
Junior College	English Literature	2 (7%)	2 (7%)	0	2 (7%)	0	2 (7%)
	Japanese Literature	13 (50%)	2 (7%)	2 (7%)	7 (26%)	0	2 (7%)
	Design	11 (44%)	4 (16%)	2 (8%)	8 (32%)	4 (16%)	11 (44%)
	Early Education	9 (24%)	0	1 (2%)	16 (43%)	0	3 (8%)

the reasons for not choosing to study an elective English class in the following academic year are more important:

A significant proportion of students in the Japanese Literature (33% of university students and 50% of junior college students), Design (44%), Contemporary Society (28%), and History (29%) indicated that they did not plan to enrol in an English elective because of lack of interest. Few students in any department indicated that they thought that English had no relevance to their lives, or that their decision not to enrol in an English elective was because they planned to study another language instead. However, many students in the Nutrition, Education, and Welfare departments, and to a lesser degree, the Japanese Literature and Design departments reported that they did not plan to study an English elective because they had no time.

Actions in curriculum renewal

According to Gallagher (1994), "Changes in the school program... can occur along three major dimensions: (a) Where the instruction takes place, (b) what content is to be taught, and (c) what skills are to be mastered" (p. 190), and in this case it involved skills and content.

Armed with the survey results and timetabling information regarding required courses in each faculty available at that time, content of elective classes was decided and assigned to a time-slot and teacher. Books were collected from publishers and a selection made available to teachers for their consideration over the winter holidays. A brief course outline was produced in both English and Japanese to summarize the scope of each course to be taught.

After the holidays, but before the syllabus was due, meetings were held with the teachers concerned, and the syllabus co-constructed, ideas for teaching plans discussed, and methods

of evaluation decided. Other useful resource materials were also identified and acquired in order to support the teachers.

The syllabus was, for the first time, submitted online, so support for teachers unfamiliar with the system was also provided, and a brief Japanese explanation of the scope of the course inserted above the English description in the syllabus. A promotional handout in Japanese detailing course offerings from our department was also produced and distributed to all students in the final week of classes in January.

Results of curriculum renewal

The results of the curriculum renewal in terms of student enrolment have been mixed (see Tables 7 and 8 for details of enrolment over the past 5 years).

Table 5. Enrolments in first semester elective courses 2005-2009

	University 2nd year	University 3rd and 4th years	Junior College 1st year	Junior College 2nd year
2005	499	74	241	128
2006	476	96	148	134
2007	400	46	146	104
2008	310	48	147	122
2009	448	39	147	112

Table 6. Enrolments in second semester elective courses 2005-2009

	University 2nd year	University 3rd and 4th years	Junior College 1st year	Junior College 2nd year
2005	107	34	132	46
2006	139	42	84	58
2007	84	18	101	14
2008	89	35	98	73
2009	110	20	101	50

Enrolments of second year university students in elective courses increased in both first and second semester. However, enrolments continued to fall for third and fourth year university students and, in the second semester, for second year junior college students, but held steady for first year junior college students and, in the first semester, for second year junior college students.

The promotional materials were only distributed to first year students at the end of the 2008 academic year, and to new first year junior college students at the orientation session in 2009, so it is likely that students in higher years were unaware of the changes in course offerings. It will be interesting to see whether third year enrolment rates increase next year as a result of the continuing curriculum renewal efforts. Rates of enrolment in first year junior college and in the first semester of second year junior college appear to be reasonably stable, possibly indicating that students prefer to attempt to complete language elective requirements quickly so they have time for job-hunting.

In terms of the reactions of individual teachers, the results have also been mixed. One teacher reports being very excited by the process of collaboration in designing the new courses and, after a difficult start in first semester due to room changes that were not advertised to students and misunderstanding the optional nature of the first week of elective classes, went out of her way to design excellent second semester courses involving a variety of media. She is looking forward to undertaking the process again in preparation for the 2010 academic year. Another teacher responded positively to the planning meetings, but was overwhelmed by the enrolment in his first semester classes—one class had 60 students enrolled, so in week 5 was divided into two classes. However, other teachers, due to full-time work commitments elsewhere, were unable to spend a great deal of time in meetings to further develop the new syllabus collaboratively.

One challenge to renewal efforts has been that of textbooks, which are mandatory for all language courses at the school. Texts with suitable content and at an appropriate language level for the students often do not exist, or are often not available from the major publishers in Japan. The bookshop contacted us several times because of their inability to secure the texts that had been requested by teachers, which occasionally meant that teachers needed to choose a different textbook and rethink their approach to the teaching of the class.

Another challenge has been that of electives offered by the faculty in which students are enrolled for their major being scheduled at the same time as those of our department. Decisions regarding scheduling are finalized in our department in mid-December, but in other departments are made by late January. Therefore, although a previously empty timeslot was selected for one of the elective classes, another faculty placed three electives in that timeslot in second semester, resulting in an enormous semester-on-semester drop in the number of

students enrolled in the elective offered by our department in that time period.

Also, lack of coordination by different departments led to, for example, four movie-based English courses offered by two departments, two of which used the same movie with a very similar text. The provision of such similar courses meant that students had less variety of content from which to choose, and each of the classes likely suffered from lower enrolment.

Conclusion

According to comments made during the question and answer session of this presentation, surveys and curriculum renewal projects such as the one described herein have been conducted elsewhere but have not been reported via presentations or publications. Reporting all efforts is, however, of great import in order to ascertain student preferences in a range of learning contexts, to share information about the successes or failures of course redesign efforts, and to advance the discussion of how large-scale academic surveys may be successfully conducted.

The curriculum renewal efforts described in this paper need to be conducted on a yearly basis in order to properly respond to changing student demand. Many students indicated an interest in studying English, so interesting and relevant skills and content-based courses must be developed. Information about courses must also be made available to students to ensure informed choices. Understanding motivation of students enrolling in an English elective course also assists in deciding the kinds of classes to offer (see Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). However, students have indicated time constraints restricting their ability to study, although it is currently unclear as to the nature of these constraints, but may include the workload of other courses, club involvement, or part-time work commitments.

These curriculum renewal efforts have suggested some revisions that should be made in the next round in preparation for the 2010 academic year. They include:

- Surveys should be conducted with all first year students and address student preferences for all classes.
- Students should be asked to specify in the survey in which semester(s) they are considering taking an English elective class. This may prove beneficial in course planning.
- Shorter surveys should be undertaken at the conclusion of first semester elective courses and information about upcoming second semester courses distributed to students and made available via the university website.

In addition, this study has suggested further research questions concerning related issues, including:

- What factors constitute the time constraints identified by students as a reason not to enroll in an English elective?
- What motivational factors lead students to enroll in an English elective?

We hope that this description of our curriculum renewal efforts will prove useful to others in similar situations, and that more teacher researchers will report upon their endeavours for curriculum renewal and related issues in order to expand the body of research available regarding the Japanese context.

Bio data

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Appendix 1 Survey

2009年度選科科目についてのアンケート

※本アンケートの目的は、今後の皆さんの希望を知るための調査を行うにすぎません。ご協力をお願いします！
 〒565-0821 大阪府吹田市吹田 吹田高等学校 英語部 英語部 英語部

※以下のアンケートに以下の選科科目のいずれかのクラスに興味がありますか。

1. エンジニア英語 _____人	2. 旅行英語 _____人	3. 海外研修の準備 _____人	4. 英語でのレポート、論文や発表の練習 _____人
5. 英語の海外旅行の準備 _____人	6. ポッドキャストの制作 _____人	7. 英語でのプレゼンテーション _____人	8. 英語を話す機会を増やす _____人
9. 英語でブログ・サイト制作 _____人	10. 海外で勉強の準備 _____人	11. 音楽の制作の準備 _____人	12. 英語で海外旅行の準備 _____人
13. 海外文化を英語で学ぶ _____人	14. 英語でアニメ制作の準備 _____人	15. 英語で海外でのアルバイトの準備 _____人	16. 英語で海外旅行の準備 _____人

※以下の学より学びたい内容の希望を教えてください。

1. エンジニア英語 (海外での英語で働くための準備をします) _____人	2. エンジニア英語 _____人	3. エンジニア英語 _____人
4. ポッドキャスト制作 _____人	5. 海外旅行の準備 _____人	6. 音楽制作の準備 _____人
7. 旅行・海外文化 _____人	8. エンジニア英語・プレゼンテーション _____人	9. エンジニア英語・プレゼンテーション _____人

※興味がないトピックがありますか(下の枠内に書いて下さい)

※もしも選科科目を選んでほしいのなら、ぜひその科目を選びましたかや希望するものをいくつかでも記入して下さい

1. 英語が得意になったから _____人	2. 英語が楽しくなったから _____人	3. エンジニア英語に興味を持ったから _____人
4. 海外旅行が楽しかったから _____人	5. 英語が役に立ったから _____人	6. その他 _____人

※もしも年度ごとの選科科目を上る予定はありませんか。その場合は何科目まで希望するものまで記入して下さい

Yes 予定あり _____人	1. 旅行 _____人	2. 海外旅行に英語が必要 _____人	3. 海外で仕事のため _____人	4. 卒業後のため _____人	5. 友人の誘い _____人	6. その他 _____人
No 予定なし _____人	7. 興味なし _____人	8. 他に科目がないから _____人	9. 他の科目も学びたい _____人	10. 時間がないから _____人	11. 海外で勉強するから _____人	12. その他 _____人

Appendix 2 Survey in English

Survey about 2009 elective courses

In order to prepare elective courses for the 2009 academic year, we are conducting this survey to find out about your plans, needs, and wishes for those classes. Many thanks!

a) Which of the following classes would you be interested in taking next year?

Business English _____人	Travel English _____人	Study abroad preparation _____人	4. English for sports, nutrition, and health _____人
Fairy tales and storytelling _____人	6. Podcasting and listening skills _____人	Talking about Japan in English _____人	English speaking countries _____人
Pop psychology _____人	English through Movies _____人	English through Music _____人	Environment and globalization _____人
Modern cultures _____人	Mass media studies _____人	Manga and animation _____人	Human relationships _____人

b) What skills and qualifications would you be interested in studying?

Extensive reading _____人	Business English _____人	Multimedia _____人
Podcasting and blogging _____人	Teaching English to children _____人	English for nutritionists _____人
English for travel, tourism, and hospitality _____人	Creative writing _____人	Listening and presentations _____人

c) What other topics would you be interested in studying?

d) If you are currently taking an elective class, why did you choose that class?

The class is at a convenient time _____人	My friends took this class _____人	The syllabus looked interesting _____人
I needed credit _____人	There was no other choice _____人	Other _____人

e) Are you planning to take any English elective classes next year?

_____人

Yes __人	Travel __人	Academic study __人	Future job __人	Need credits to graduate __人	Personal interest __人	Other __人
No __人	No interest __人	No relation with life __人	Will take another language __人	No time __人	I will be graduating __人	Other __人

Appendix 3

Teacher instruction form

Teacher Instructions for the Elective Course Survey

Please conduct this survey in your class. It will take approximately 10 minutes.

How to conduct the survey:

1. Write the number of students in attendance in the appropriate space on the envelope.
2. Put the students into groups of approximately 5.
3. Give each group one survey paper.
4. Students should complete the survey as a group. Students can select as many answers as they like. They should write the total for each item in the appropriate square.
5. Collect the surveys.
6. Place survey envelopes in the box in the non-smoking part-time teacher's room after class.

Many thanks for your cooperation!

Appendix 4

Class answer form for compilation of group responses

Survey about 2009 elective classes—Answer sheet

School (please circle): University / Junior College	Year (please circle): 1 st / 2 nd / 3 rd / other...
Department _____	Teacher Name _____ 先生
How many students took this survey? _____ 人	

a)

1. _____ 人	2. _____ 人	3. _____ 人	4. _____ 人
5. _____ 人	6. _____ 人	7. _____ 人	8. _____ 人
9. _____ 人	10. _____ 人	11. _____ 人	12. _____ 人
13. _____ 人	14. _____ 人	15. _____ 人	16. _____ 人

b)

1. _____ 人	2. _____ 人	3. _____ 人
4. _____ 人	5. _____ 人	6. _____ 人
7. _____ 人	8. _____ 人	9. _____ 人

c) (student suggestions for other kinds of courses)

--

d)

1. _____ 人	2. _____ 人	3. _____ 人
4. _____ 人	5. _____ 人	6. _____ 人

e)

Yes _____ 人	1. _____ 人	2. _____ 人	3. _____ 人	4. _____ 人	5. _____ 人	6. _____ 人
No _____ 人	7. _____ 人	8. _____ 人	9. _____ 人	10. _____ 人	11. _____ 人	12. _____ 人