

# In-Service Training for Teaching English in Elementary Schools in Japan

Kyoko Miyazato  
Hakuoh University

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The present situation of in-service training for teaching English in elementary schools in Japan and necessary training schemes are examined in this study. Teaching English in elementary schools has been a requirement since 2011 but has faced challenges in aspects including goal setting, curriculum development, teacher quality, and teaching materials. Among these, teacher quality has been most controversial, as elementary school teachers are neither English specialists nor trained to teach English. To investigate teachers' needs, 44 participants were asked about their previous training experiences and expectations for future training. Additionally, interviews with a local trainer and two teachers were conducted and two class observations were done. Results show that most teachers have little formal training, caused by the malfunctioning top-down training structure. Teachers also voiced an urgent need to establish more solid systems and central policies to involve all teachers in teacher training.

本研究は日本の小学校英語教育に関する教員研修の現状を探り、必要とされる研修体制を考察することを目的とする。2011年から全国一律に日本の小学校において英語教育が実施されているが、目標設定、カリキュラム開発、教員の質、教材など様々な課題に直面している。中でも、教員の質は最も問題視されており、これはほとんどの小学校教諭が英語を専科とする教員でない上、英語を教えるための十分な研修を受けていないことに起因する。教師のニーズを探るべく44名の被験者を対象に、研修歴や将来の研修体制に対する考えについてのアンケート調査を実施した。さらに、教員研修担当の行政官と2人の小学校教諭へのインタビューに加え授業観察が実施された。その結果、トップダウンの研修体制が機能していないことにより、被験者の多くが正式な研修をほとんど受けておらず、小学校の全教員に研修の機会を与えるべく、より確固たるシステムや政策を緊急に構築する必要性を感じていることが判明した。

**E**NGLISH HAS been taught for 35 hours per year as “Foreign Language Activities” (FLA) to fifth and sixth graders in all elementary schools in Japan since 2011 to accommodate social and political pressure to adjust Japan to globalism. Compulsory FLA is not yet a core subject but is part of integrated studies, in which students are not graded. However, the Japan Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT, 2014) announced that starting in 2020, they will implement FLA for third and fourth graders and English as a core (i.e., official academic) subject for fifth and sixth graders. English teaching in elementary schools has already faced challenges in goal setting, curriculum development, teacher quality, teaching materials, and transition problems between elementary and junior high schools. The most controversial of these is teacher quality because elementary school teachers are neither English specialists nor trained to teach English.

## JALT2014 CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS



## History of English Education in Japanese Elementary Schools

Under the “Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities” (MEXT, 2003), a series of reform policies for English education in Japan was proposed: introducing a listening test in the National Center University Entrance Examination; making it requisite for Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) to take English proficiency tests such as TOEFL, TOEIC, or STEP (Eiken); increasing the number of Japanese students studying abroad; as well as implementing English education in elementary schools—all of which are a response to pressure from the business community and political sectors as well as to criticism against the current English language education (Butler, 2005; Machida, 2015; Nishizaki, 2009). After heated debates about the feasibility of elementary school English as a required subject, English education was implemented as FLA, in which the primary focus is on fostering international understanding and a positive attitude for English learning, rather than on acquiring actual English skills. This was a compromise by MEXT to persuade those opposed to elementary school English education and was a step towards English as a core subject in the near future. In other words, MEXT took a tactical approach by calling English education FLA.

### *Problematic Aspects of FLA*

As the main aim of FLA is not acquisition of English skills, MEXT has allowed local governments and individual schools to conduct FLA freely within their own curricula and policies (Butler, 2007; Wakita, 2013). This means that each school has been free to decide upon teaching hours, class content and curriculum, and which grades to teach, depending on their teaching and learning environments, which resulted in gaps between the English proficiency levels of students when students from several elementary schools were pooled together in junior high schools (Butler, 2007; Fennelly &

Luxton, 2011; Wakita, 2013). MEXT’s vague goal-setting has created significant diversity and confusion in managing FLA.

Among other challenges, however, teacher quality is the most controversial issue and the fundamental challenge. Teacher quality here is equivalent to what Wang and Lin (2013) described as teacher professionalism, a definition for which is hard to construct because it is a reflection of local sociocultural circumstances. Wang and Lin stated that professional qualities or professionalism of ELT teachers in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, and Japan can comprise three major attributes: professional knowledge, pedagogical competence, and proficiency in English language. In the case of conducting FLA, Japanese elementary school teachers are lacking in all these attributes.

MEXT regards homeroom teachers as appropriate for teaching FLA because of their familiarity with students. However, Fennelly and Luxton (2011) speculated that a lack of funding to hire English-speaking teachers for every school nationwide could be another reason for positioning nonspecialists for FLA. In fact, Wakita (2013) reported that only 3% of elementary school teachers all over Japan have a license for teaching English. Researchers have emphasized that the teachers are not English teaching specialists nor have they received teacher training in TESOL methodology or pedagogy (Butler, 2007; Eguchi, 2010; Fennelly & Luxton, 2011; Machida, 2015). In addition, English ability and English teaching skills are not required in university preservice teacher training to gain elementary school teacher licenses, nor are English proficiency and TESOL knowledge tested in prefecture-initiated screening exams for employment of public elementary school teachers (Machida, 2015). Consequently, their English proficiency is not sufficient to conduct English lessons (Butler, 2005; Hamamoto, 2012; Kawanami & Kawanami, 2012; Machida, 2015).

Because of this conditional flaw of utilizing non-English specialists in FLA, wealthy cities have hired Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs), who are native speakers of English, to conduct the classes as the main teacher in team-teaching settings (Butler, 2007; Fennelly &

Luxton, 2011). Some Japanese elementary school teachers have left the teaching responsibility entirely to ALTs because of their own lack of confidence and English ability. Moreover, the lack of the need to evaluate students' achievements in FLA encouraged Japanese homeroom teachers' passive involvement in teaching and learning English.

### Future Prospect of English Education in Elementary Schools

In the fall of 2013, MEXT announced the future reform plan—to start in 2020—to prepare Japanese nationals for a global community. According to MEXT (2014), FLA, taught by regular homeroom teachers, will be offered to third and fourth graders for one or two class periods per week. MEXT will also establish new courses for fifth and sixth graders in English as a core subject, taught by homeroom teachers with a certain level of English proficiency or English-specialist teachers three times per week. To implement this substantial reform, MEXT will revise the Course of Study, the national curriculum, by 2017. MEXT will experimentally start the new curricula in 2018-2019 and the official full-scale implementation nationwide from 2020. The reform plan also presents teacher empowerment frameworks:

- Increasing specialist English teachers in elementary schools and improving their teaching skills;
- Promoting teacher training by establishing 250 core elementary schools for English education nationwide and English education promotion leaders to improve English education strategically in every region;
- Improving English teaching skills of regular homeroom teachers;
- Developing and providing audio teaching materials for teacher training; and
- Revising curricula of teacher training courses in universities for prospective elementary school teachers and prefecture-based teacher employment exams.

MEXT's reform proposals are now being carefully considered by boards of education (BOEs) and preparations are under way, but as of 2014, standardized training programs have not yet been publicized or implemented.

### Teacher Training System for Elementary School Teachers

Christmas (2014) stressed that previous research has focused on the lack of teacher training for secondary school JTEs and that discussion of teacher training for elementary school teachers for FLA has been limited. This was partly due to the complexity of teacher training for FLA, because it is neither obligatory nor standardized across the nation. In fact, the training structure represents a somewhat typical Japanese educational characteristic: top-down bureaucracy from MEXT to an individual school via a prefectural BOE.

### Top-Down Training Structure

Upgrading English to an official course would require systematic training for elementary school teachers. Nonetheless, little training has been available due to the top-down training system. According to Nishizaki (2009), representatives from each prefecture who attend the MEXT-initiated Central Training by National Center for Teachers' Development (NCTD), are responsible for "Leader Training," in which one representative selected by each individual school in the district learns the knowledge and skills by participating in the Central Training. Then, these *leader teachers* are supposed to conduct in-school teacher training in their own schools in order to transmit the knowledge and skills to their colleagues. MEXT has assumed that all teachers would receive in-service training under the top-down structure or by relay of teacher training from the central government to each individual school through prefectural or designated municipal BOEs.

Nishizaki (2009) criticized this top-down training system, saying that whether or not this training system works effectively depends on the mediators. Kawakami (2008) warned that the mediators might misunderstand the information. The participants in the Central Training are not necessarily English-specialist teachers but top local administrators. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, only 3% of elementary school teachers have English teaching licenses. Even if all those 3% of teachers become leader teachers, the proportion is still too small. For those who are not English specialists, teaching various issues including theoretical TESOL methods to their colleagues as trainers may become too much of a burden (Nishizaki, 2009). Moreover, training schedules and the content of in-school training can be decided by individual schools; therefore, in-school training, which has the most influential and direct effects on individual elementary school teachers, may differ substantially in its quality and frequency across the nation (Nishizaki, 2009).

To improve this situation, Nishizaki (2009) suggested more accurate transmission of information from the Central Training to in-school training, and Kawakami (2008) suggested examining the gap between MEXT's targeted information and the actual information that individual teachers acquire at the bottom of the pyramid structure. She also discussed a teacher-training project in Korea, which requires all elementary school teachers of third or upper grades to undergo 120 hours of face-to-face teacher training. In the case of Taiwan, although there are regional discrepancies in in-service teacher training and varying qualifications and levels of training (Chen, 2013), the Taiwanese Ministry of Education allowed multiple criteria for recruiting qualified elementary school teachers by offering nationwide training in 1999 to give special certificates, hiring primary school teachers with preservice teacher training for teaching English, and providing certificates to teachers with a TOEFL score of 213 or more. It is obvious that the Japanese way of positioning uncertified regular homeroom teachers with little training as FLA teachers has fundamental flaws.

In addition to voluntary support by MEXT's designated universities, which offer their own specific design of training programs, or commercial teacher training by private educational institutions, teachers' license renewal training, which has been implemented by MEXT since March 2009 to improve teachers' quality, has been another path for supporting elementary school FLA teachers. In this training, teachers of all levels from kindergarten to senior high school are required to renew their licenses every 10 years. According to a report from Tokyo Gakugei University (2014), 48 universities and prefectural BOEs in total are offering courses such as "Elementary school English" or "FLA," which are taught by university English teachers or equivalent English specialists. However, in reality, Machida (2015) emphasized that teachers have not received uniform support for teaching English yet and only one third of the teachers in his study had taken formal training despite several years having passed since the introduction of compulsory FLA nationwide in 2011.

### *Content of Teacher Training for Elementary School Teachers*

Kawakami (2008) listed the necessary components for teacher training for elementary school teachers: goals and objectives, teaching plans, evaluation, syllabus development, TESOL and SLA theories, pronunciation, activities, and communicative English skills. Izumi (2007) added micro-teaching practice and intercultural understanding.

In doing a teachers' needs analysis of training content, Inoi (2011) found that more than 90% of the participants of his training wanted English conversation practice and classroom English, 73.2% asked for English activities, 68.3% wanted English conversational abilities, 61% asked for English pronunciation and rhythm, but only 24.4% wanted lectures about TESOL and SLA. However, several researchers have emphasized the necessity of learning both activities and theoretical issues. Hojo (2009) studied teachers' preferences on

training content depending on the teachers' backgrounds and reported that elementary school teachers with English teaching licenses felt a greater necessity to learn about the critical period theory than did those without licenses. She also found that teachers with FLA experience felt it more necessary to learn such topics as Mother Goose nursery rhymes, phonics, background knowledge of the establishment of FLA, curriculum development and syllabus design, evaluation, and materials development than did those without FLA experience. Kawakami (2008) further suggested the necessity of preparing more teacher training programs of different levels and purposes, depending on participants' English abilities and training experiences.

Thus, it is predicted that the more elementary school teachers experience FLA teaching, the more advanced knowledge of FLA teaching they will feel it necessary to acquire. I have therefore drawn the following conclusions from the literature:

1. The vague goal-setting of FLA has led to both a lack of teacher training and its malfunction and
2. The lack of proper teaching schemes including a set textbook and curriculum has led teachers to desire hands-on skills.

Based on these conclusions, a small-scale research project was undertaken to elicit views of those involved in FLA and their reactions to the teacher training currently available for elementary school English education.

## Method

Participants who attended the FLA course on a teaching license renewal training program in a university in the Kanto district were surveyed about their previous experiences of FLA teacher training, their reasons for taking the course, their preferences for training content, their future expectations toward teacher training, and their opinions and expectations for FLA (see Appendix A and B). Out of the 44 participants, 34 were elementary school teachers, seven were

junior high school JTEs, one was a high school teacher of a non-English subject, and two were not teachers.

Interviews with and class observations of two elementary school teachers (T1 and T2) were also conducted. I observed T1, a female teacher in her 50s, team teaching a sixth-grade class with an ALT and interviewed her briefly afterwards in March 2014. In November 2014, I observed T2, a female teacher in her 30s, team-teaching a third-grade class and interviewed her for an hour. T2 has been assuming the leading role in FLA in her city, having been selected as one of the 30 teachers in charge of developing curriculum and creating specific teaching plans for the city's FLA program. The administrators of the municipal city have adopted their own curriculum, teaching plans, and teaching materials, including an activity book called *New Let's Sing Together Song Book* by Apricot Publishing Company, and have introduced FLA from the first grade to the sixth grade (5 hours per year for first and second graders, 15 hours per year for third and fourth graders, and 35 hours for fifth and sixth graders). Thus, they offer a total of 40 hours to first through fourth graders, in addition to the MEXT requirements. The interviews were recorded with oral consent and transcribed for data analysis.

I also interviewed a *shidou shuji* (i.e., a teacher consultant) responsible for planning and organizing prefectural-level FLA teacher training for a BOE in the Kanto district by telephone in October 2014 for approximately 40 minutes to investigate the present top-down training structure. The interview was written up in my field notes.

## Results

In the survey, the teachers reported a lack of teacher training and a need for hands-on activities, due to their busy schedules. In addition, the teachers reported that for other subjects they tended to rely on MEXT's top-down policy-making practices such as providing a ready-made curriculum and specific teaching plans.

## *Lack of Teacher Training*

In terms of teacher training experiences, 25 out of 44 participants in this study had no teacher training for FLA. Among the 34 elementary school teachers, 15 had no such training. This indicates that nearly half of the elementary school teachers had had no opportunity for teacher training within the last 6 years, since the start of FLA teacher training in 2008. Furthermore, of the 19 elementary school teachers with teacher training experience, five had only observed “lesson study,” which is an open class taught by their colleagues. Lesson study is a type of professional development to improve teaching skills, in which one designated teacher creates a teaching plan and the teaching performance is observed and critiqued by peers (Christmas, 2014). Fernandez (2002) viewed it as “an effective bottom-up way for teachers to become ‘reflective practitioners’ and teachers just watch one example of an FLA class without any background knowledge in it” (p. 404). Most of the training ranged from one hour to one full day in duration.

This diversity of training experiences was caused by the flexibility and autonomy that MEXT has allowed to each school, city, and district. The teacher consultant (TC) of the prefectural BOE said that teacher training by municipal cities of the prefecture or individual schools was not obligatory. Consequently, 22 teachers requested improvement to the FLA teacher training, and eight teachers said that training for longer periods should be required of all elementary school teachers in Japan.

## *Teachers’ Desire for Hands-on Activities*

Participants were asked their preference for the contents of teacher training from among the three major areas, resulting as follows (multiple answers were allowed): 31 wanted English activities; 20 wanted SLA/TESOL basics; and 16 wanted English skills.

The popularity of English activities shows that the participants wanted hands-on skills for their own teaching. T2, who has taken

the leading role in FLA in her district, explained, “There is no room available for studying theoretical issues for us. We are eager to know more activities and teaching ideas to be applied directly to our own classes.” Her remarks indicate the urgent necessity of learning about “plug and play activities” (Christmas, 2014, p. 6), which can be used in the classroom without much modification.

Teachers with little or no training in FLA asked for SLA/TESOL basic theoretical study. Out of 25 such teachers, 13 chose theory-related items. It is also notable that more than half of all participants wanted to learn theory-related issues, which surpassed those who wanted to improve their English skills. This implies that the teachers felt a necessity to acquire theoretical foundations for what they are doing in class and that improving their English abilities was secondary.

Presumably, the more teachers become involved in FLA, the more they will feel the necessity for hands-on knowledge that they lack, although teachers with FLA experience do not deny the importance of learning theoretical issues.

## *Busy Schedule for Elementary School Teachers*

One of the main reasons for teachers’ longing for hands-on information is due to their busy schedule. T2 clarified the reasons as follows:

We elementary school teachers have to teach nine subjects and other integrated studies. English is not the only subject we can spare time and energy for. . . . we must acquire various teaching skills on the job. Unless we become the lead teacher of a subject, we have almost no skills. . . . In a small school like ours, we have to take the lead in two or three multiple subjects at the same time regardless of our majors or fields of strength. For instance, this year I’m a lead teacher of FLA and arts & crafts. Lead teachers participate in the obligatory teacher training in summer organized by the district, but we

just briefly report the training contents at a morning meeting to other teachers in school or just circulate the information in the staffroom. Teachers have almost no knowledge about other subjects that they do not take care of.

This indicates that it is difficult for elementary school teachers to receive solid teacher training under the present work schedule, and that different training opportunities should be made available to them.

### Teachers' Dependence on MEXT Initiatives

T1, who took an assistant role in the classroom, did not acknowledge the necessity of teacher training for FLA. The city where her elementary school is located has hired ALTs for all the FLA classes in all elementary schools, so Japanese teachers do not have to teach but simply have to be there as assistants. She evaluated her English level as low and said she did not help her students much, only standing in the back of the classroom even when they did not understand the ALT's English instructions. For example, when the students misunderstood the ALT's English *spelling game as supearibu* (sparerib) and *match the card as macho*, she did not correct their misunderstandings. Obviously, she entirely depended on the ALT in class. T1 also said, "Once MEXT decides the details of new English education, an authorized textbook will be set and a step-by-step syllabus with specific teaching plans will be provided. We teachers just follow the plan, so I'm not worried much."

The TC of the BOE also emphasized the stance of following a MEXT decision. She said, "We should wait for a MEXT decision. Things will be decided soon so we shouldn't act in our own way and mislead our teachers before MEXT shows their directions. Hasty actions cause much confusion among teachers." According to Stewart (2009), "In Japan's centralized system, policy comes down from MEXT bureaucrats to local school administrators and teachers. . . . This power relationship dominates the educational environment

in Japan" (p. 10). Administrators and teachers accept MEXT policies and directions without much question or resistance; the educational values are shared and the policies and values are put into practice.

In the case of T2, however, the municipal BOE provided all elementary school teachers with a set syllabus and teaching plans for all 6 years of FLA classes. In fact, T2's confident way of conducting a FLA class, standing side-by-side with the ALT, was observed. She has intermediate-level English skills with short-term overseas experience, so she spoke English and translated the ALT's difficult expressions into Japanese when her students were in trouble. But T2 said that even elementary school teachers without high English proficiency have been able to manage FLA without much trouble as long as they read and follow the teaching plans of the BOE booklet. Allowing a municipal BOE this autonomy and freedom is an exception, given the fact that MEXT usually retains all decision-making powers. However, perhaps MEXT has left the responsibility up to the individual schools and prefectural BOEs because human resources and preparation for FLA have been lacking since its outset, caused by the shaky political stance and the hasty tactical procedure of introducing English to elementary schools all over Japan.

### Discussion

It is apparent to me that the teachers at the bottom of the training structure pyramid have not received enough teacher training and that the system itself is flawed. As the TC stated, there was no obligation to offer teacher training to all teachers because of the status of FLA. Hence, whether or not BOEs and individual schools offer teacher training for FLA and how it is executed are not controlled by the central government. Therefore, only teachers who are willing to learn about FLA themselves or are assigned to be lead teachers of FLA have had opportunities for teacher training. If FLA were a formal core subject like math or Japanese, the English abilities of elementary school teachers would be tested in the teacher recruitment tests offered by each BOE, and education departments in

universities would offer teacher training concerning English and SLA to their future teachers. Thus, the decision to offer FLA as part of integrated studies with vague goals, not as a formal subject with specific goals, has led to a lack of teacher training and the failure of its uniform implementation.

Furthermore, it seems that appropriate training content is not included in the present teacher training, as participants in this study requested three major aspects: theoretical issues, easy-to-use activities, and a set curriculum with specific teaching plans. Most of the representatives in the Center Training and Leader Training were not English specialists, so they probably could not teach theoretical issues themselves as trainers in the training programs and resorted to only introducing activities and lesson study. Teachers need to be informed of the relevance of studying basic SLA theory as well as TESOL methods to support their teaching of FLA. Activities that can be easily used without much preparation were also called for due to the teachers' busy schedules.

The third item that teachers in this study asked for was a set curriculum with specific teaching plans. Again, because of the unofficial status of FLA, MEXT has not published an authorized textbook, and this has resulted in a lack of a nationwide set curriculum. *Hi, Friends* and its predecessor *Eigo Note*, both of which consist of only formulaic English expressions and visual aids such as illustrations and photos, have been provided to students in the fifth and sixth grades, but are not MEXT authorized textbooks. Therefore, they do not need to be used in class. Nor are they accompanied by a ready-made, MEXT-directed set curriculum and detailed teacher manuals with specific, step-by-step lesson plans for teachers, as are textbooks in other school subjects. For elementary school teachers who have become accustomed to following curricula and using authorized textbooks, it is a burden to create an original curriculum and lesson plans on their own. This is even more difficult for busy non-English-specialist elementary school teachers who have to deal with nine other school subjects at the same time. Curriculum and teaching

materials including teaching plans were identified by Kawanami and Kawanami (2012) as the top two needs of elementary school teachers.

Thus, due to the vague purpose and status of FLA, the lack of a proper teaching scheme appears to cause teachers to desire hands-on skills, easy-to-use activities, and specific teaching plans. As Machida (2015) noted, elementary school teachers who have to struggle with an unfamiliar subject are forced to spend additional preparation time for FLA without getting much official support, which has led to their high anxiety when conducting FLA. The establishment of solid schemes and central policies to involve all teachers in more systematic training by proper trainers is urgently required.

## Suggestions and Concluding Remarks

Within a short time, MEXT will decide on and present a new teacher training scheme in order to prepare for the new English education to start in 2020, and BOEs are waiting for MEXT's final decisions to lead their teachers in the appropriate directions. By that time, authorized textbooks will be published based on the new Course of Study, and then an annual curriculum and syllabus will be set, which will have specific teaching plans for each lesson. With all preparation completed, teacher training content will be automatically decided and suitable training will be implemented, in the same way as for other school subjects, although in all probability, this does not mean that in 2020 perfect teacher training programs will be provided by the government. However consequently, city or prefectural BOEs seem to be hesitant about developing new teacher training until MEXT decides goals and directions for English education in elementary schools. Naturally, teachers themselves appear reluctant to participate in and organize teacher training.

Although this study was limited by the small number of participants and its outcomes cannot be generalized to other cases, I



would support the recommendation of participants that all elementary school teachers in Japan undergo intensive face-to-face FLA training with specific teaching plans of a set textbook, when such is available, to prepare for the reforms. Specifically, as soon as the contents of the teacher training are uniformly set, teachers should be able individually to take a weeklong intensive training, not under the present pyramid structure, but possibly during vacations. However, even if teachers take turns to attend the training sessions during their summer vacations, including all elementary school teachers would take several years. MEXT should carefully plan and execute teacher training for all teachers by providing appropriate funding, and ensure equal access for every student in public school settings nationwide by hiring well qualified trainers.

However, it is also advisable to utilize the teacher license renewal training offered by more than 40 universities all over Japan, wherein theory-based instruction can be taught by university TESOL teachers, in order to compensate for the lack of the present on-the-job teacher training for elementary school teachers. University TESOL teachers could also become involved in developing a curriculum based on *Hi, Friends* with recommended lesson plans, which busy elementary school teachers urgently require. They could also create activities based on the lesson plans, or activity books currently published could be distributed to Japanese teachers, as is done by T2's city BOE. To provide a clear image of appropriate teaching methods, MEXT could provide audio-visual materials with sample teaching lessons, or junior high school JTEs and experienced elementary school teachers could present their model lessons in the city-level teacher training. The role of ALTs in teaching basic English communicative skills in individual schools could also be extended. Thus, teacher training universities, secondary school JTEs, and ALTs could share supplementary training opportunities to fill the gap until the hoped for more systematic training structure becomes available.

Most importantly, immediate attention should be given to restructuring preservice teacher training for future elementary school

teachers in university education departments by offering advanced English courses to improve the future teachers' communicative English abilities as well as providing instruction in TESOL theory and language teaching skills. Such young professionally trained elementary school teachers with both English and teaching skills can then be expected to boost both the motivation for teaching English and the English proficiency levels of other teachers in elementary schools in Japan. Educators at all levels should cooperate to support these epoch-making changes for more successful outcomes.

## Bio Data

**Yoko Miyazato**, Ed.D, is a professor of EFL and TESOL at Hakuoh University, Tochigi. Her research interests include team teaching, NS-NNS issues, and intercultural communication.

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## Appendix A

### Survey of Teacher Training for FLA

Name

Affiliation/Occupational title

1. Why did you take this course?
2. What do you expect most to learn from this course?
3. Explain about your previous FLA teacher training experiences. Have you ever experienced teacher training for FLA? If yes,

- who organized the training? How many hours in total have you been trained? What style of training was that? (e.g., open class observation, in-school training by an English education leader, etc.)
- What do you want to learn about most in this course among these three issues: improvement of your English, foreign language acquisition theories and TESOL methods, and activities? You can choose multiple answers. If you want to learn other things, please identify them.
  - Do you think the present teacher training for FLA is satisfactory? What kind of teacher training do you think is appropriate to prepare for the new start of upcoming official elementary school education from 2020?

3. Opinions about present teacher training ( $N = 44$ )

Satisfactory	0
Should be improved	22
I don't know	20
No answer	2

All teachers should be involved in the training for a longer period of time	8
More in-school training should be offered	6
More systematic training structure should be established	2
Busy schedule for elementary school teachers should be changed	1

## 4. Preference on training contents (multiple answers possible)

English activities	31
SLA/TESOL basics	20
English skills	16

## 5. Reasons for taking this training course

To improve my present teaching skills	11
To improve English skills	5
To prepare for the official start in 2020	5
To have smooth transition between elementary and junior high schools	5
To prepare for teaching FLA alone	3
To grasp FLA situation	3

## Appendix B

### Survey Results

1. FLA teacher training experience ( $N = 44$ )

Yes 19 No training experience 25

Elementary school teachers' FLA teacher training experience ( $n = 34$ )

Yes 19 No training experience 15

2. Styles of FLA teacher training ( $n = 19$ ) (multiple answers possible)

Lesson study	5
Training by city BOEs	5
Training by prefectural BOEs	4
In-school training	2
ALT seminar	3
Leader Training	1
University summer seminar	1

## 6. Preference for training contents by teacher training experience

Stated preference	Teacher experience level		
	Experienced (n = 14)	Lesson study (n = 5)	No experience (n = 25)
English skills	1		2
SLA/TESOL		3	6
Activities	8		6
English & activities	2		2
SLA/TESOL & activities	3	1	3
SLA/TESOL & English		1	3
All three			3