

Speaking Education in Japanese High Schools: Teacher and Student Views

Yohei Ito

Aichi Prefectural Showa Senior High School

Reference Data:

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In this study, I investigated the views of teachers and students on the teaching and assessment of English speaking skills in Japanese high schools. A closed-item questionnaire and follow-up interviews were conducted. The differences revealed in the questionnaire between teachers and students, between less and more experienced teachers, and the extent of emphasis on teaching and assessment were further investigated in the interview phase. In addition to a generally shared view that speaking is an important component of language competence, it was found that students did not feel confident taking speaking tests and that the educational background and experience of the teachers influenced their views on speaking. Furthermore, several important factors that constrain speaking assessment were identified. These findings have implications for the reform of Japanese university entrance examinations.

本研究では、スピーキング指導と評価に関する日本の高校生と教師の考え方を調査するため、選択型のアンケート調査と事後インタビューが行われた。アンケート調査で生徒教師間及び指導経験の長短による相違が明らかになった後、スピーキング指導と評価の間に見られた偏りについて、インタビューで詳しく探った。データ分析を通して、スピーキングが言語能力における重要な要素であるという認識を生徒と教師が共有していること、生徒がスピーキングテストに対して自信を持たないこと、そして、教師の受けてきた指導や指導経験が彼らのスピーキングへの考え方を形成していることがわかった。加えて、適切なスピーキング評価を困難にしている重要な要素も明らかになった。これらの結果は、今後の日本における大学入試改革に重要な示唆を与えるものである。

In many settings, speaking education has been dismissed because high-stakes tests often focus more on students' reading and writing ability, which can be assessed much more easily with paper-based tests (Goh & Burns, 2012). One such example is the Japanese high school context. A contradiction between the national guidelines for

teachers, which aim to enhance four skills, and the real situation of classroom instruction, which focuses on reading comprehension skills, has been criticised and regarded as a consequence of traditional university entrance examinations (UEEs; O'Donnell, 2005; Takagi, 2010). In 2014, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) announced a reform plan to transform UEE English tests into tests assessing all four skills (MEXT, 2014). This reform, to take effect from 2020, is intended to address this contradiction and also implies a radical change in speaking education in Japan.

Although numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the impact of UEEs, the Course of Study (CoS), and teacher beliefs (Nishino, 2008; Watanabe, 2004), to my knowledge, little research has focused specifically on speaking education or on the views of teachers and students on speaking. MEXT (2015) and Green (2014), both of which attempted to anticipate the impact or possibility of the implementation of a four-skill test in UEEs, are two studies with partial results in this area.

Green (2014) reported that teachers and students believe changes in UEEs would have an impact on education in high schools; hence, inclusion of a speaking component in UEEs would encourage positive washback. Although the study partly showed students' and teachers' views on speaking tests in UEEs, because the sample was chosen from affiliate high schools of one private university, the results may not represent the general views of stakeholders. On the other hand, MEXT (2015), which randomly selected its sample from state and national high schools all over Japan, may reflect wider views on English classes. This was a study of students' ability in each of four components of CEFR.

As both studies (Green, 2014; MEXT, 2015) conceded, further research with a qualitative component is required. In the present study I employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate the views of teachers and students, who will be the most important stakeholders in this reform, on the teaching and assessment of speaking skills in Japanese high schools. In order to tackle this complex area effectively and deeply, an appropriate methodology was planned (see next section), and four research questions

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were developed:

- RQ1. Are there differences between teachers and students in their views on the importance/teaching/assessment of speaking?
- RQ2. Is there any relationship between teacher views and teacher characteristics (such as age or experience)?
- RQ3. In the views of teachers and students, how much speaking is actually taught and assessed, and is this perceived to be adequate?
- RQ4. What are the implications of the above for the reform in UEEs?

Methodology

Closed-item questionnaires were designed and administered in public prefectural high schools in Aichi, Japan, in June 2015. To collect generic data on students' views on speaking, 10 high schools representing different locations and academic levels were asked to conduct the survey. Five high schools (one low, one high, and three middle-level schools) completed the questionnaires.

For the teacher questionnaire, only full-time Japanese teachers of English teaching in Aichi prefectural high schools were asked to participate. Several young teachers and experienced teachers were selected as disseminators so as to collect enough data from both young and experienced groups to answer RQ2. Then, a snowball sampling approach was used to collect teacher questionnaires. In July 2015, after analysing questionnaire responses from both groups, semistructured follow-up teacher interviews were designed (see Appendix C) and conducted in order to gain insight into the views of teachers on the basis of the survey results.

Findings and Discussion

Participants and General Data Processing

The questionnaire responses from 99 teachers and 639 students from all grades in Aichi prefectural high schools were analysed using SPSS 22. The questionnaire used a 4-point Likert scale with one more option, *I don't know*, to increase reliability of the data. In the 4-point Likert-scale, four options were coded and valued straightforwardly: *strongly disagree* = 1, *disagree* = 2, *agree* = 3, *strongly agree* = 4. The option of *I don't know* as well as blank responses were labelled as excluded data in order not to let those responses influence the data. Thus, the neutral mean for the items was 2.5.

For the follow-up interviews conducted by phone, out of seven teachers with different levels of experience who were asked to participate, five teachers, two from the less experienced group and three from the more experienced group, volunteered to take part in the project. These teachers were selected because the questionnaire results showed a clear difference in the two experience groups. All were working in different Aichi prefectural high schools and varied in experience, age, background, and stance on speaking (see Table 1 for teacher descriptions).

Table 1. Summary of Participants' Self-Reported Details

Detail	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D	Teacher E
Teaching experience	Approx. 5	Approx. 10	Approx. 20	Approx. 30	Approx. 35
Age	Late 20s	Mid 30s	Mid 40s	Mid 50s	Late 50s
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Male	Female
Experience staying abroad	Over 3 years	Approx. 1 year	None	Approx. 6 months	Approx. 1 month
Stance on speaking	Wants to teach speaking more, and speaking should be assessed more	Wants to teach speaking more but believes NS is needed to teach and assess S	Practical speaking is important. Speaking motivates students, but teaching habit obstructs her	Speaking can be taught because students' needs are high, but not necessary for all in EFL context	Grammar and input are more important. Anybody with basic English knowledge can speak if needed in one's life or work

The interview data, analysed through transcription and coding, was categorised by its connections with the views on speaking teaching and assessment and is summarised in Figure 1.

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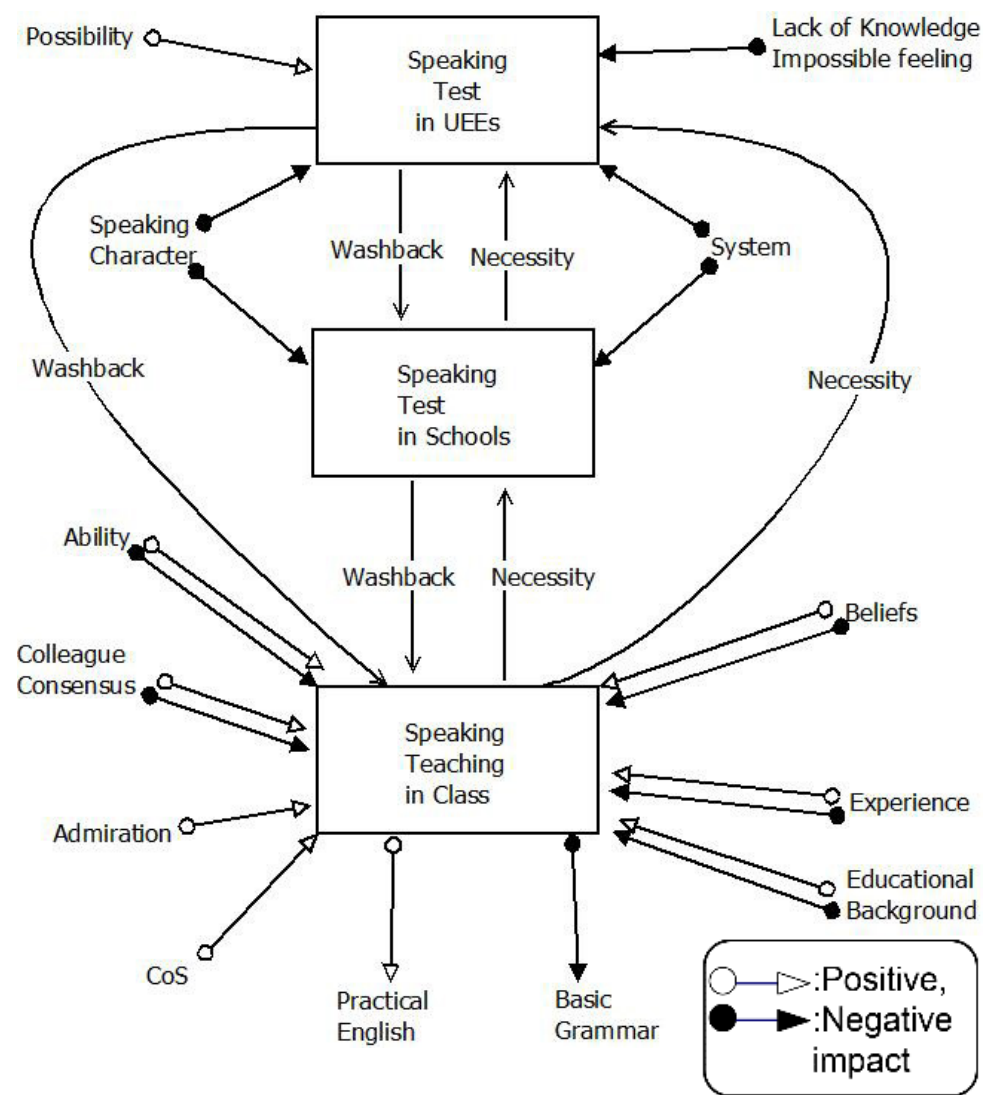


Figure 1. Summary of interview data.

Hereinafter, the findings of both the survey and the interview are presented and discussed in relation to each of RQs 1-4 in order.

RQ1 Teacher-Student Differences

Findings From Questionnaires

Both teacher and student questionnaires contained eight parallel items, in addition to which two further items (Items 1 and 10 in both questionnaires) were similar (see Appendices A and B). Thus, the means of those 10 item pairs were compared and similar tendencies were observed (see Figure 2). Those 10 pairs of items are labelled as Item 1 to 10 hereinafter.

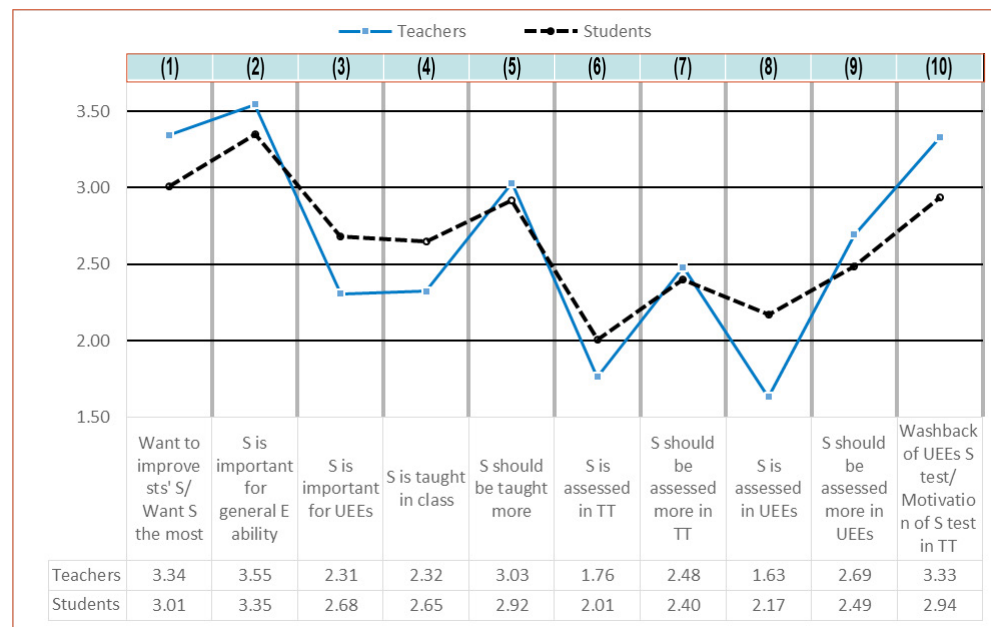


Figure 2. Comparison of means in common items of teacher and student questionnaires. Teacher n = 99; student n = 639. Strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, agree = 3, strongly agree = 4. S = speaking, TT = term tests, UEE = university entrance exams.

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In general, although both groups seemed to have similar views on each item, student responses were less extreme than those of the teachers. In Items 1, 2, 5, and 10, both groups agreed with the statements, with Item 2 having the highest means. This clearly indicates that participants believed speaking ability to be important for general English competence.

However, the opposite tendency can be observed in Items 7 and 9 (see Figure 3). Here, the division between the means of teachers and students is subtle. Nevertheless, the data displayed in Figure 3 suggest a slightly clearer split, with the median on either side of the neutral point. These data appear to show that although both groups seemed reluctant about the implementation of speaking in high-stakes tests, students felt slightly more negatively about it. This difference needed to be explored through interviews.

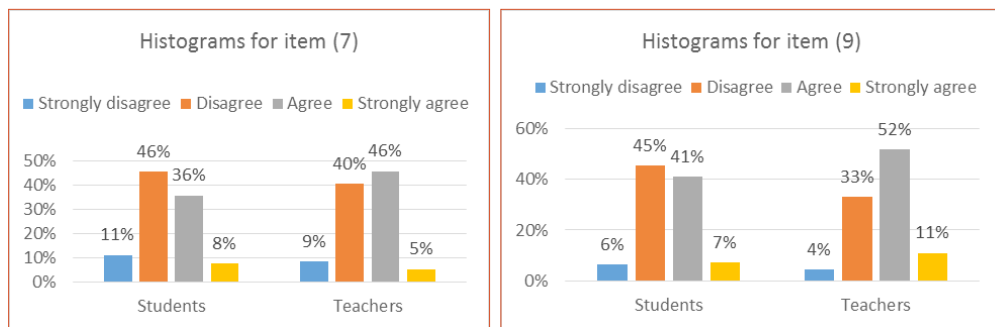


Figure 3. Comparison of Item 7 “Speaking should be assessed more in term tests” and Item 9 “Speaking should be assessed more in university entrance exams.” Teacher $n = 99$; student $n = 639$.

Findings From Interviews

When asked to explain the difference between teachers and students observed in Items 7 and 9, all of the teachers referred to students’ lack of confidence in their speaking ability. Teacher B noted that “I think that the negative response is grounded in students’ lack of confidence in speaking, like ‘I can’t get a good result if speaking tests are implemented right now.’” Thus, according to teachers’ perceptions, students seemed to show negative responses to the implementation of speaking tests in term tests and UEEs because they did not feel confident about their speaking ability.

Discussion

As shown above, students showed reluctance about the implementation of speaking tests in high stakes exams. This finding is similar to Green’s (2014) result, in which the possible reason for this reluctance was explained to be communication anxiety. The teachers in the present study believed the reason to be students’ lack of confidence in their speaking ability. Considering that 87.2% of final-year students in Japanese high schools are at CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for languages) A1 speaking level (MEXT, 2015), the teachers’ opinions seem reasonable. If this is the case, what should be required for students appears to be clearer than in the case of communication anxiety: sufficient speaking practice.

RQ2 Differences Among Teachers

Findings From Questionnaires

In order to address RQ2, the survey data were compared through grouping and regrouping. A clear difference was found between the less experienced group (under 16 years of teaching experience, $n = 39$) and the more experienced group (16 years or more experience, $n = 60$). Overall, the less experienced group showed more positive attitudes towards all 10 items (see Figure 4).

Interestingly, in Item 7 a clear split can be observed. Although the means of both groups are not extreme enough to be defined as belonging to either side, as Figure 5 shows, an opposite tendency is obvious. Similarly, in Item 9, 7% of the more experienced teachers strongly disagreed with the statement, but none of the less experienced teachers did (see Figure 5). From these two items, it could be said that the less experienced teachers generally agreed with the implementation of speaking assessment in both term tests and UEEs, whereas the more experienced teachers slightly disagreed with the implementation in term tests, and neither agreed nor disagreed with it in UEEs. The reasons for these differences between the two groups were explored in the interviews.

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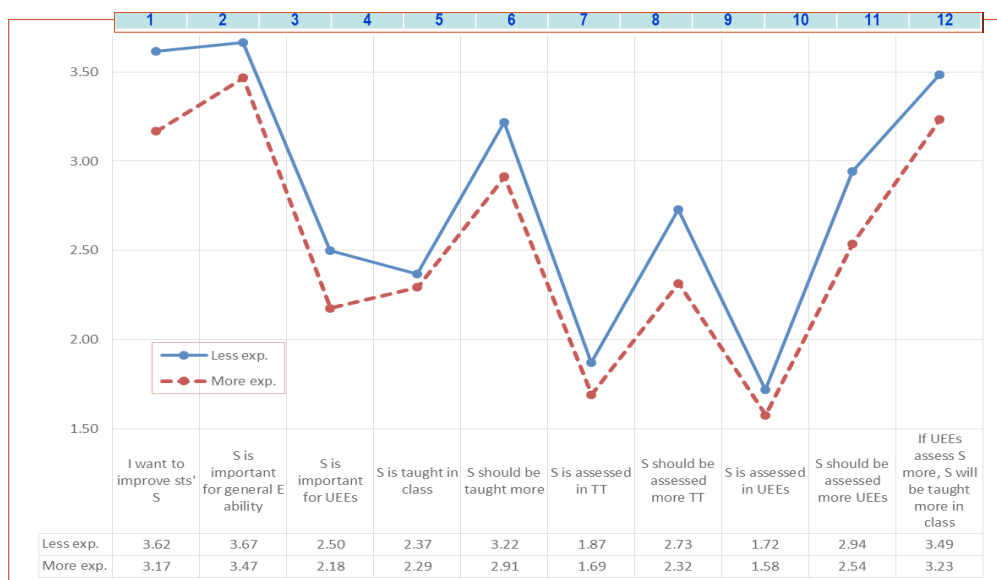


Figure 4. Comparison of means of teachers in two experience groups. More experienced (16 years or more experience) $n = 60$; less experienced (under 16 years of teaching experience) $n = 39$. Strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, agree = 3, strongly agree = 4. S = speaking, TT = term tests, UEE = university entrance exams.

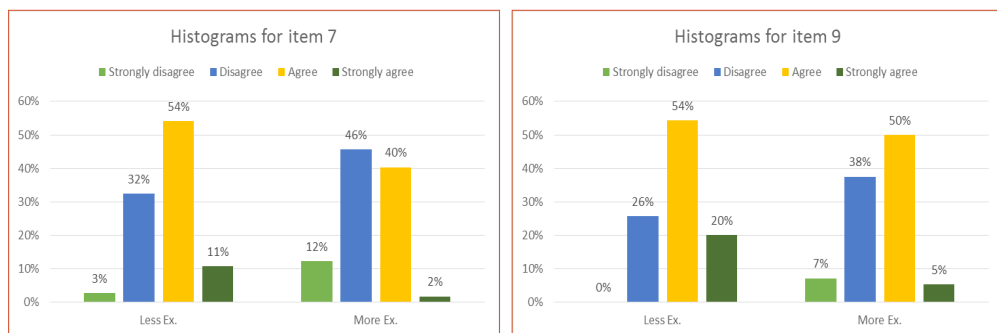


Figure 5. Comparison of Items 7 and 9. More experienced (16 years or more experience) $n = 60$; less experienced (under 16 years of teaching experience) $n = 39$.

Findings From Interviews

The five teachers' opinions relevant to their beliefs and views on speaking education, as well as their thoughts on the general difference between the views expressed by the two experience groups, are summarised in Table 2. As observed in the survey, more experienced teachers expressed more negative views on speaking education in the interviews.

Table 2. Summary of Five Teachers' Beliefs and Views

	Teacher A (L)	Teacher B (L)	Teacher C (M)	Teacher D (M)	Teacher E (M)
Belief around S	Language is S	S should be taught more	Needs for S is fundamental desire for all	Impossible or needless in EFL context	Impossible or needless in EFL context
View on S teaching	Positive	Positive	Positive	Rather Negative	Negative
Reason of the view	Her belief	Education in university	Teaching experience, her belief	Experience in education he had and taught	Lack of S ability, generation, education she had
Needs for S tests	Necessity, possibility	Necessity, possibility	Necessity, possibility	None	None
What makes the difference between less and more experienced teachers?	Background education, trend	Individual difference	Background education, teaching experience, CoS	Disappointing experience in unchanging education in Japan	Background education, trend

Note. S = speaking, L = less experienced, M = more experienced.

All of the teachers regarded background education to be an influential factor on teachers' views of speaking education. The teachers in both groups believed that less experienced or young teachers had had more speaking-related education when they themselves were students.

In addition to background education, the more experienced teachers (C, D, and E) identified their teaching experience as another influential factor, which was focused on reading and writing so that their students could pass the traditional UEEs.

As for the reason why background education and teaching experience were different for each experience group, some of the teachers referred to changing trends, such as the gradual acceptance of CLT and demands for speaking ability due to globalisation, and the CoS. Teacher C reported on the impact of the CoS: “I think the CoS has great impact on all the teachers. . . . Because such teachers (who try to teach English communicatively) plan their classes on the basis of the CoS.”

The overall difference between the experience groups seems to be based mainly on teachers’ background education and partly on their beliefs influenced by their background education and teaching experience. Furthermore, their background education and teaching experience may have been influenced by the CoS and trends in ELT.

A second interesting finding is that if a teacher had positive views on teaching speaking, he or she showed a preference for speaking tests (see Table 2). This indicates that teachers’ positive views on teaching speaking lead to the inclination for, or positive expectations of, speaking tests, and that teachers’ negative views lead to reluctance towards, or indifference to, speaking tests. Thus, combined with the previous findings about the overall difference, teachers’ background education and teaching experience, which are generally different in experience groups, seem to influence their views on teaching speaking, and these views appear to affect their opinions about speaking assessment. This tendency may be one reason for the wider differences in the implementation of speaking tests in high-stakes tests.

Discussion

This finding supports Watanabe’s (1996) and Nekota’s (2014) point that teacher beliefs are formed through their educational background. Views collected in the present study indicate a gradual change in focus toward a communicative-based methodology in teachers’ educational backgrounds, which is possibly an effect of the more communicative CoS implemented from 1989. If educational background is the most important factor affecting the construction of teacher beliefs, then it could be suggested that the majority of teachers’ beliefs on speaking will be positive sometime after an emphasis on speaking has become the norm in English classroom instruction.

RQ3 Actual Amount of Teaching and Assessment

Findings From Questionnaires

From the results of Items 4 to 7 in Figure 2, two general trends can be seen: (a) speaking is taught in class to some extent, though it is rarely assessed in term tests (compare Items 4 and 6 in Figure 2); and (b) even though speaking assessment in term tests is not conducted adequately, the demand or need for this is much lower than for speaking instruction in class (compare Items 5 and 7 in Figure 2).

Another result from the teacher questionnaire (shown in Table 3) supports the first trend. On average, teachers *sometimes* (average 3.14) used speaking activities in their class yet *seldom* (average 2.19) assessed students’ speaking. Furthermore, whereas teachers put 12.65% weight on teaching speaking in class, as little as 3.19% of the whole marks for the subject of English were given to the speaking component.

Table 3. Means of Frequency and Weight of Speaking Instruction and Assessment (N = 5)

	Frequency of S activity	Frequency of S assessment	Weight of S in class	Weight of S in whole mark
Mean	3.14	2.19	12.65%	3.19%

Note. S = speaking.

Evidence to support the second trend is clear when tables of frequency distribution are compared (see Tables 4 and 5). Only 13 % of teachers disagreed that speaking is taught in class yet disagreed with further teaching (top left box in Table 4). In contrast, the equivalent for assessment in term tests consists of approximately 50% of the teachers (top left box in Table 5). That is, half of the teachers were reluctant to implement speaking tests in term tests despite believing there was a lack of speaking assessment. On the other hand, 34% of the teachers thought speaking was being taught but should also be taught more (bottom right box in Table 4).

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Speaking Instruction in Class

Speaking should be taught more	Speaking is taught				Total
	SD	D	A	SA	
Strongly disagree (SD)	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Disagree (D)	2%	10%	4%	0%	16%
Agree (A)	5%	32%	23%	1%	62%
Strongly agree (SA)	1%	10%	8%	2%	21%
Total	10%	52%	35%	3%	100%

Table 5. Frequency Distribution in Speaking Assessment in Term Tests

Speaking should be assessed more	Speaking is assessed			Total
	SD	D	A	
Strongly disagree (SD)	8%	1%	0%	9%
Disagree (D)	10%	32%	0%	41%
Agree (A)	13%	24%	8%	45%
Strongly agree (SA)	2%	2%	1%	5%
Total	33%	59%	9%	100%

The reasons for those two main trends with regard to RQ3 were investigated in the interview phase. Two questions were asked.

- Why is speaking taught more than it is assessed (teaching-assessment gap)?
- Why is the need for speaking assessment so low when speaking is not assessed as much as it is taught (adequacy of speaking assessment)?

Findings From Interviews

First, when asked about the teaching-assessment gap, Teacher A pointed out that the proportion of marks assigned for speaking tests was the largest factor that caused this gap:

Well, I think it is the most crucial that there are no time and mark we can use for speaking tests. There were some teachers who were doing a speaking test in my previous school, but the mark allocated to it was one point (%) or two . . .

It is highly unlikely that teachers could allocate more than a very small proportion of the marks to speaking tests, even if they wished to do so, because of traditional mark allocation systems that assign most of the marks to paper-based tests.

Second, as for the factors that support speaking teaching, Teacher C positively summarised the current trend of speaking, using examples including the CoS and official teacher training: “Speaking is on a trend now. The trend of the new curriculum (CoS). Teacher training has been held on the basis of that trend.” This extract indicates that the trend and teacher training, which seem to be based on the CoS, tend to push speaking education ahead.

Thus, for teachers, although teaching speaking was supported by trends of the CoS and teacher training, assessment was constrained by structural shortcomings such as having few marks allocated to speaking components, which may account for both assessment frequency and mark proportion being less than what is taught.

When asked about the adequacy of speaking assessment, none of the five teachers mentioned that assessment was conducted adequately. In contrast, all the teachers who were positive about speaking mentioned the need for speaking assessment (see Table 2). Teacher B, referring to the teaching-assessment gap, believed speaking assessment to be inadequate compared with speaking teaching, which was now encouraged by the CoS:

I think I’m teaching what I’m supposed to teach (according to the CoS), but because there’s no clear goal (such as speaking tests) I feel like “where am I leading my students to? Is this a right track to teach speaking?” . . . I feel I make them speak for nothing with inadequate feedback.

However, even the positive teachers thought it was particularly difficult to assess speaking due to the unique characteristics of speaking. For instance, Teacher A commented: [If the weight of the speaking test in marks becomes larger,] we need to assess more precisely, and justify the result. . . . Otherwise complaints will arise among students.” Here, teachers predicted the difficulties they would face if speaking needed to be assessed more. Most of the teachers raised questions about how speaking can be assessed fairly. Because speaking tests have several difficulties related to the low number of marks allocated and the unique characteristics of speaking, teachers tended to doubt the fairness and feasibility of the tests. Thus, it is quite possible that teachers disagreed with Item 7 (*Speaking should be assessed more in term tests*), even though it is not adequate-

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ly assessed currently. In other words, teachers did not think speaking assessment was adequately conducted, but they also thought it was not feasible in reality. This may be a reason for the second trend.

Discussion

All of the teachers expressed negative views on speaking tests in class due to practical constraints such as large class size, lack of time, difficulty in making fair and objective tests, and few marks allocated to speaking. These results raise doubt about the feasibility of speaking tests in high schools. Although Nishino (2008), in her study on teachers' beliefs and practices concerning CLT, also raised large class size and lack of time as the two factors most in need of change, the issues of doubts about fairness and very limited mark allocation found in the present study seem fairly specific to the area of speaking assessment. In order to improve the situation of speaking assessment, not only MEXT and English teachers, but also schools, would need to make efforts to reform fixed mark allocation standards to increase the proportion of marks allocated to speaking tests.

RQ4 Implications

As discussed above, a number of factors identified in this study have particular relevance to MEXT's proposed reform. As was mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the reform is intended to solve the contradiction between a communicative CoS and reading-focused classroom instruction. Whether the intended (positive) washback is going to work in classroom instruction should be an important issue.

In addition to the strong agreement to the teacher questionnaire Item 10 (see Figure 4), all of the teachers admitted in the interviews that the inclusion of a speaking test in UEEs would have a washback effect. Showing concerns about the difficulties of offering speaking opportunities for all students, some teachers suggested possible forms of speaking training. Teacher D believed that a one-on-one interview was the fundamental and ideal form, whereas Teacher E thought group discussion was practical in terms of limited time, stating: "Teachers believe it [a speaking test] is impossible due to lack of time. . . . [But if speaking is assessed in UEEs,] I will prepare for the speaking test in class. The form would be, well, like group discussion?" From such comments, it is apparent that teachers were well aware of the effects of washback on classroom practices if a speaking test were to be included in UEEs.

Because teachers were clearly aware of washback resulting from changes to the UEEs, if speaking tests become mandatory, the amount of teaching and assessment in class

relevant to the speaking component would increase. However, because negative views or reluctance still exist in both teachers and students, without resolving those issues by showing teachers clear and manageable sample criteria for classroom assessment, reducing class size, establishing a practical and fair way to assess speaking, minimising students' fear of speaking assessment by giving them adequate opportunities to practise, or presenting the form of the UEE speaking test far in advance, the resistance will remain in both teachers and students. All of the above findings, in relation to the views of the most important stakeholders, should therefore be taken into account in order to make the reform successful.

Conclusion

This study was undertaken to investigate the views of Japanese high school students and teachers on English speaking education. Through the data analysis, several key issues were identified. First, although teachers and students had similar views in general, students showed more reluctance to the inclusion of speaking tests in high-stakes exams, because they were not so confident in their own speaking ability. Second, more experienced teachers showed more negative views than less experienced teachers, and this difference in opinion seemed to stem mainly from their own educational backgrounds and experiences. Third, although teaching speaking is encouraged through national guidelines and teacher training, and hence is taking place to some extent in schools, assessment is constrained by a number of factors such as large class size and having few marks allocated to speaking, resulting in limited implementation of speaking tests. In terms of the coming reform (MEXT, 2014), although teachers doubted the feasibility of the speaking test in UEEs, they acknowledged the washback effects this would cause if such tests were included. These findings appear to raise valuable implications for teachers, schools, MEXT, and test developers in order for the reform to succeed and Japanese students' speaking ability to improve.

Admittedly, the data collected in this research are limited in area and number, and hence may be biased. Further study is recommended with a larger sampling area, students' qualitative data, and with a different timing, such as after the details of the reform have been clarified. Nevertheless, this study identified a number of factors that influence complex views on teaching and assessing speaking; it is hoped that this makes a contribution to research in the field of English speaking education.

Bio Data

Yohei Ito currently teaches in Aichi Prefectural Showa Senior High School. He is an MA (ELT) graduate from the University of Warwick, UK. His research interests include washback, speaking education, motivation, learner autonomy, CALL, professional development, and teacher-practitioners.

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Appendix A

Student Questionnaire (English Translation)

Survey on Views of Students and English Language Teachers in Japanese High Schools on Speaking Ability and Its Assessment

This survey aims to study views of high school students in Aichi prefecture on speaking skills and tests. Your participation is entirely voluntary and the questionnaire will remain completely anonymous. It is hoped that the results of the questionnaire, which should take you less than 5 minutes to complete, will help to inform decision-making in the area of teaching and testing speaking. Because your responses are not marked or graded, and there is no right or wrong answer, please answer honestly.

Please circle one code number for each question unless otherwise specified.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
1. Of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), speaking is the one in which I would like to improve my ability the most.	1	2	3	4	0
2. Speaking ability is important for my future.	1	2	3	4	0
3. Speaking ability is important for general English language competence.	1	2	3	4	0
4. Speaking ability is important in order to pass university entrance examinations.	1	2	3	4	0
5. Speaking ability is important for taking English classes in university.	1	2	3	4	0

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	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
6. Speaking is taught in classes adequately.	1	2	3	4	0
7. Speaking should be taught in classes more.	1	2	3	4	0
8. Speaking ability is adequately assessed in term tests in my school.	1	2	3	4	0
9. Speaking ability should be assessed in term tests more.	1	2	3	4	0
10. If term tests placed more emphasis on speaking, I would be more motivated to learn speaking.	1	2	3	4	0
11. University entrance examinations assess speaking ability adequately.	1	2	3	4	0
12. University entrance examinations should place greater emphasis on Speaking.	1	2	3	4	0
17. Which grade are you in?	1	2	3	others	
18. What is your sex?	Male	Female			
19. Which group are you in? (According to the results of your term exams in your school.)					
Weak group (1 or 2 in maximum 5)	1				
Middle group (3 in maximum 5)	2				
Strong group (4 or 5 in maximum 5)	3				
Don't know	4				
20. Is there anything you would like to add? (optional)					

Appendix B

Teacher Questionnaire (English Translation)

Survey on Views of Students and English Language Teachers in Japanese High Schools on Speaking Ability and Its Assessment

This survey aims to study views of high school English teachers in Aichi prefecture on speaking skills and tests. Your participation is entirely voluntary and the questionnaire will remain completely anonymous. It is hoped that the results of the questionnaire, which should take you less than 10 minutes to complete, will help to inform decision-making in the area of teaching and testing speaking.

Please circle one code number or one option (Yes/No) for each question.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
1. I would like to improve my students' speaking ability.	1	2	3	4	0
2. Speaking ability is important for general English language competence.	1	2	3	4	0
3. Speaking ability is important for success in university entrance examinations.	1	2	3	4	0
4. Speaking is taught in classes adequately.	1	2	3	4	0
5. Speaking should be taught in classes more.	1	2	3	4	0
6. Speaking ability is adequately assessed in term tests in my school.	1	2	3	4	0
7. Speaking ability should be assessed in term tests more.	1	2	3	4	0
8. In general, university entrance examinations assess speaking ability adequately.	1	2	3	4	0

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	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
9. University entrance examinations should place greater emphasis on speaking.	1	2	3	4	0
10. If university entrance examinations placed more emphasis on speaking performance, classroom instruction regarding speaking would increase.	1	2	3	4	0

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
11. How often do you use <u>speaking activities</u> ¹ in your class?	1	2	3	4	5
12. How often do you assess/test students' speaking ability?	1	2	3	4	5

(¹e.g., conversation, speaking tasks from a coursebook, simulations, spoken pairwork, groupwork etc.)

17. What subject do you mainly teach?
 (If you teach two or more subjects equally, choose all of them.)

- English Communication Basic, I, II, III ... 1
- English Expression I, II 2
- English Conversation I, II 3
- Other 4

If Other, please specify: _____

18. In your classes of that subject, how much time is approximately spent on teaching each component?

Component	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking
Proportion	%	%	%	%

19. In that subject, what weighting approximately does your school put on each component for the final mark/grade? (Writing includes "Japanese-English translation," essay and journal.)

Component	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking
Proportion	%	%	%	%

20. Which grade are you mainly teaching? 1 2 3 others
 21. Which age range are you in? Under 25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56+
 22. How many years have you been teaching? Under 7 8-15 16-25 26-35 36+
 23. What is your gender? Male Female

Appendix C
Interview Guide (English translation)

This interview will be recorded. The data may be treated as the consent form notes. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time.

0. Do you have any special background as an English teacher, for example, studying abroad?
1. Please let me know your general view on speaking teaching and assessment.
- Do you think speaking should be taught in class or assessed in term tests and university exams more? Why?
2. How often do you do speaking activity and assessment? How much do you assess it in term tests?
 What is the reason for those gaps?
3. Do you think your students' views on speaking are positive?
- Why do you think there are gaps between teachers' and students' opinions on Items 4 & 6?
 - Why do you think students don't agree with implementation of speaking assessment/test in term tests and university exams?
 - If speaking tests were implemented, what kind of test style would it be, and would you do any preparatory activities in your classes?
4. What do you think influences your views on speaking teaching and assessment?
5. What do you think influences your actual behaviours when speaking teaching and assessment, positively and negatively?

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6. Please let me know your opinion on teacher training in Aichi in terms of its effect, efficiency, and necessity.
7. About the coming reforms in university entrance exams, do you think the effect is significant in high school English teaching?
 - Are there any thoughts around the reform?
8. (Thoughts about opposite group) Do you think young teachers (or experienced teachers) have different opinions about speaking teaching and assessment? Why do you think so? Why do you think they think differently from you?
9. Anything you would like to add?

Thank you. Please tell me your teaching experience length and your approximate age, if you don't mind.