

A NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR A JAPANESE HIGH SCHOOL EFL GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT

Program evaluation is a systematic way to improve and account for programmatic actions that involves procedures that are useful, feasible, ethical, and accurate for the intended users of the evaluation process and findings (Patton, 1997). The current evaluation was motivated by an emerging need from the primary intended users for curriculum improvement and clarification of goals and objectives of a private Japanese high school's English language program. A needs analysis survey was conducted with students and full-time teachers, and the results were triangulated with national curriculum guidelines. Needs discrepancies and problems were identified and solutions to the problems and discrepancies between groups were offered. The final recommendation section proposed program goals and improvements that were presented to the school.

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum improvement is a complex process where standards, stakeholders' needs and beliefs (values), language learning factors, socio-political factors, available resources (time allocation, staff size, staff capacity, class size, and budget) and many other factors all interplay. In order to seek what area of the program needs improvement, it requires one to engage in an on-going evaluation of and reflection on the findings about pedagogy and management. But where do we start, who should be involved, what kind of information is needed, and how can we improve the curriculum systematically? To maximize the evaluation process and outcomes useful for the users of the program evaluation, Patton (1997) has argued for Utilization-Focused Evaluation. It begins with

the premise that evaluation is for the primary intended users, focusing on the “intended use by intended users” (p. 20). Thus, the evaluators’ job is to help intended users to select appropriate and feasible evaluation questions, methods, and uses, so that the users are actively involved in the process and feel ownership of the evaluation, and that the outcomes of the evaluation are reinforced.

Thinking through the process of what and how to map programmatic information is required for a systemic evaluation and improvement of the curriculum. Brown’s (1995) systematic approach to designing and maintaining language curriculum (also see Brown, 1989; Pennington & Brown, 1991) posits evaluation as a component that can “utilize all the information gathered in the processes of (1) developing objectives; (2) writing and using the tests; (3) adopting, developing, or adapting materials; and (4) teaching” (p. 24).

For a comprehensive understanding of the program, various methodologies have been utilized in the literature (e.g., survey instruments, interviews, meeting notes, teaching logs, learners’ diaries, classroom observations, learners’ outcome assessment, and self assessments) (Weir & Roberts, 1994). Long (2005) provides a rationale for conducting needs analysis to inform effective course design and to hold programs accountable. This paper focuses on the use of needs analysis as one source of information to understand and improve the language program. According to Brown (1995), needs analysis (NA) allows a “systematic collection of and analysis of all subjective and objective information necessary to define and validate defensible curriculum purposes that satisfy the language learning requirements of students within the context of particular institutions that influence the learning and teaching situation” (p. 36).

Incorporating stakeholders’ (students’ and teachers’) needs into language curriculum has been of central relevance for any type of curriculum (especially a learner-centered curriculum) because it allows a more democratic decision making process rather than *a priori* goals and objectives set by the administrators. Where the government sets national standards or guidelines, like Japan, educational goals and standards are decided in a top-down manner and constrain textbooks and decision making in the school curriculum. When curriculum is decided by the authorities, there may be a mismatch or discrepancies between what learners aim to do with the target language in the future and what the government and/or the teachers want them to attain. The impetus for the current program

evaluation study of a private high school in Japan stemmed from a concern (as a former English instructor in that school) that the learners' voices have not been well attended to in language curriculum. No matter how caring the instructor and the administrators are, if the students' voices are not collected and considered as one of the stake-holding groups, the curriculum operates on assumed needs. There was also an internal motivation, especially from the head English teacher of the school, for an outside expert to help give them suggestions for curriculum improvement and identify reasonable objectives.

The current program evaluation study serves as an example of how students' needs across different grade levels within a high school can be identified and utilized along with other stakeholders' needs and factors that mediate them for curriculum improvement (material development, curriculum change, and professional development). First, the definition of NA and its uses as a component of second language and/or foreign language curriculum are discussed. That is followed by sections on the societal and institutional context of the program, the methods and procedures used in the NA survey in this case study, the results and discussion of the findings, and concluding remarks with suggestions for curriculum improvement. Since curriculum is contextually bounded, the current study does not claim any generalizations, rather it provides an example of how the collected information can suggest a cohesive curriculum, in hopes that other evaluators or curriculum developers can adapt the instruments used in the study, and apply relevant issues and implications to their own contexts.

BACKGROUND

What is Needs Analysis?

NA is "concerned with identifying general and specific language needs that can be addressed in developing goals, objectives and content in a language program" (Richards & Rodgers 1986, p. 156). Information on needs can be used for designing a new language program and/or evaluating an existing program. NA aligns teachers' and learners' agendas by exchanging information on learners' needs. Learners' needs guide the teachers to select the appropriate tasks or content, while teachers' statements of goals and

objectives provide a better understanding of the purpose of instruction by the learners (Nunan, 1988).

What kind of framework can we use to conduct NA? Nunan (1988) states that “information will need to be collected, not only on why learners want to learn the target language, but also about such things as societal expectations and constraints and the resources available for implementing the syllabus” (p. 14). Some researchers categorized the types of needs that can be extracted for curriculum development/improvement. Brown (1995) discusses the dichotomy of *situation needs* and *language needs*, where he defines *situation needs* as information of the “program’s human aspects, that is, the physical, social, and psychological contexts in which learning takes place,” (p. 40) and *language needs* as “the target linguistic behaviors that the learners must ultimately acquire” (p. 40). Another way of distinguishing types of needs has been pointed out by Brindley (1984): *objective needs* and *subjective needs*. *Objective needs* are observable factual information about the learners but do not involve the learners’ view, such as personal background, learners’ proficiency, and where or how often students use the target language in real life. *Subjective needs* reflect learners’ perception of language learning. Learners’ views on goals, priorities, wants, expectations, preference for learning strategies and participation styles are some components of *subjective needs*. Both situation needs and language needs can be based on objective information or subjective information. These distinctions interrelate with each other and provide a framework for what types of question can be asked. The present study used the above frameworks to ask students and teachers about the subjective needs and objective needs on English learning. The next section discusses the use of NA in second and foreign language curriculum.

Needs Analysis for General English Education in an EFL Context

Many use NA as part of program evaluation studies to collect what is needed for curriculum improvement, accountability to the stakeholders (Alderson & Scott, 1992; Coleman, 1992, Palmer, 1992; Mackay & Bosquet, 1981), and content specification (Snow & Brinton, 1988). Despite the wide-spread notion of using NA as a tool for foundation-building and on-going improvement for language curriculum in other contexts, not many studies have appeared in an EFL context (Seedhouse, 1995). Many studies

using NA appeared in the field of English for specific purposes (Bosher & Smalkoski, 2002; Cameron, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Jasso-Aguilar, 1999; So-mui & Mead, 2000), English for academic purposes in an ESL context (Ferris, 1998), adult language education (Brindley, 1984), and Japanese as a foreign language (Iwai, Kondo, Lim, Ray, Shimizu, & Brown, 1999).

The current program evaluation study takes place in an EFL context, specifically classified as general English education. If English for specific purposes is to clarify a certain discourse pattern in a particular domain, one might doubt the effectiveness of an NA for a general English course, which seemingly has no specific target domains of English use. It is true that in an EFL setting, learners lack extensive opportunities to use English in their daily life. It may not sound reasonable for a public school English education program to ask about future tasks that learners will encounter in reality. However, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) argue that utilizing NA in general English education is no different from English for specific purposes (ESP). They claim that:

It is often argued that the needs of the general English learner, for example the schoolchild, are not specifiable...In fact, this is the weakest of all arguments, because it is always possible to specify needs, even if it is only the need to pass the exam at the end of the school year. There is always an identifiable need of some sort. What distinguishes ESP from General English is not the existence of a need as such but rather an awareness of the need (p. 53).

Therefore, there must be more NAs done in EFL contexts to uncover the different stakeholders' needs as well as to generate awareness that such needs exist. Japan's national curriculum guidelines for general English curriculum reflect the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of language education held by teachers, parents, and policy makers, but not students. Once wants and desires from different sources, particularly students, are extracted to identify particular tasks a particular population wants to or is expected to (or should) perform in the future, curriculum and program improvement can continue. Since the needs of a group in a language program are defined through the negotiation of multiple perspectives (i.e., desires and values from different stakeholders), the current research tries to map information from students, teachers, the institution, and the government to achieve a comprehensible view of the program. More details on the

methodological issues of triangulation and the use of multiple sources for NA are discussed in the next section.

Methodological Issues of Needs Analysis

How should NA be undertaken? Long (2005) emphasizes the benefit of a triangular approach (both for methods and sources) to deal with the incomplete nature of a single perspective. Miles and Huberman (1984) point out that “triangulation is a way to get the finding in the first place—by seeing or hearing multiple *instances* of it from different *sources* by using different *methods* and by squaring the finding with others it needs be squared with” (p. 267). As Brown (1995) indicates, information necessary for identifying curriculum purposes cannot be obtained by using a single source of information. Witkin and Altschuld (1995) concur and add:

We do recommend that you use more than one data source or method and that you balance quantitative methods with qualitative ones. Data from any single method (surveys, interviews, focus groups, or analysis of existing records) are generally insufficient to provide an adequate basis for understanding needs and making decisions on priorities (p. 279).

Building on Denzin’s (1978) classification of triangulation methodology, triangulation can be pursued by triangulating (a) data source (people), (b) method (interview, document, questionnaire, etc.), (c) investigator/researcher, (d) theory (use of multiple conceptual framework), and (e) environment (time and place). For NA, Jasso-Aguilar (1999) illustrated the advantages of triangulation by methods and sources through a case study of Waikiki hotel maids. In her study, triangulation by sources and methods revealed not only a clearer picture of target discourse patterns but also showed the political dimensions of decision-making.

Thus, data gathered only from learners are not sufficient to obtain comprehensive information about the program. In addition, teachers, graduates of the course, administrators, and material developers also provide information about the needs of students (Long, 2005). To gain objective information, perspectives other than those of the learners themselves should also be sought. Information on needs can be collected from two types of source groups: audience groups, who are directly affected by the NA results

like teachers and students, and resource groups, who can provide information about the target group, like parents and future employers (Brown, 1995). From this standpoint, I attempted to collect information from multiple sources, in other words, needs from different perspectives.

NA can take various forms. Brown (1995) classified procedures and techniques for gathering NA information into six categories: existing information, tests, observation, interviews, meetings, and questionnaires. Each procedure has its own strengths and weaknesses; no procedure is conclusive on its own. Open-ended methods (e.g., unstructured interviews) are useful for eliciting perspectives that the researcher has not otherwise considered. Closed methods (e.g., structured interviews and questionnaires) will work well in obtaining overall patterns of perceptions or behaviors on pre-determined constructs the researcher wants to elicit. Brown (2001) and Long (2005) emphasize the importance of sequencing and utilizing different methods, starting with existing information, followed by unstructured interviews and meetings with the stakeholders to identify the scope and elements to be covered in a survey. Based on these pieces of information, questionnaires may be designed and administered followed by post-structured interviews that follow up on the written responses in the open-ended section of the questionnaire. Since *subjective needs* are introspective and retrospective, they should be cross-checked against other sources of information. In order to gain credibility and a true sense of what the stakeholders perceive about the English education needs at high school levels, source triangulation was also applied in this study. The next section guides readers through the steps used to create the NA survey instrument used in the current study.

The Process of Developing the Survey Instrument¹

A learner oriented view of NA involves diverse affective and cognitive variables which affect learning, such as learners' attitudes, motivation, awareness, personality, wants, expectations, and learning styles (Brindley, 1989). Therefore, the types of information collected in this study entailed not only target tasks which students would

¹ The current study was part of a large-scale NA survey study by Watanabe and Mochizuki (2005). Thus, the instrument used in the study was developed by both researchers.

like or would be expected to perform in English, but also their learning styles, and preferred content areas.

The survey used in this study was based on Yoshida and Naganuma's (2003) can-do survey and van Ek's (1975) list of functions. A can-do list is a list of tasks based on language skills (i.e., listening and speaking, reading and writing) and language use situations (i.e., English use in Japan and English use abroad). Yoshida and Naganuma measured students' confidence level in performing the listed tasks in English. Referring to the list of functions and can-do tasks, the following criteria were used in creating the students' needs survey: (a) domestic or foreign use, (b) communicating in English with friends versus foreigners, (c) minimal communication skill versus elaborate use, (d) high stakes versus low stakes language use, and (e) content difficulty (familiar topics versus social problems).

The movement toward communicative language teaching in Japan was in reaction to the emphasis on *yakudoku*, a technique or a mental process for reading a foreign language in which the target language sentence is first translated word by word, and the resulting translation reordered to match Japanese word order as part of the process of reading comprehension" (Hino, 1988, p. 46). Thus, learning strategies ranging from *yakudoku* to use-focused strategies reflect how students and teachers perceive the governments' view on how English learning should be. The following criteria were used to create learning strategy questions: (a) rote memorization versus actual use, (b) accuracy or meaning focused, (c) input flood, and (d) practice.

In addition to target tasks and learning strategies, students were asked to rate their preferences for various classroom participation styles and topics. Since the research site was where the researcher previously taught, the researcher's teaching experience and observations at the school were also drawn on in creating the survey instrument.

The instrument was improved by asking for feedback from other experienced teachers who have taught in Japan and recent graduates from Japanese high schools. Considering the valuable feedback received from different perspectives, new items and reworded old items were added. The survey instrument was then finalized by consulting survey research experts for item selection and reformation.

Purpose and Evaluation Questions

School A was chosen for this study for two reasons. Primarily, the institution was where I previously worked as a full-time English teacher, thus I was able to perceive both emic and etic perspectives. For curriculum improvement, it usually takes time to grasp the socio-political context of the institution and understand how the program is operating. Unlike the jet-in-jet-out-expert (Alderson & Scott, 1992) who conducts evaluation in a limited period of time trying to become familiar with the context, an evaluator who is familiar with the program has already built rapport with the insiders, has knowledge of how to conduct curriculum studies, and has the advantage of accessing institutional information. Second, since the school moved to a new building and wants to attract prospective students, it is in a transition and open to curricular change. This also affords the school an opportunity to address several curricular problems that were constantly brought up by the instructors during the teachers' meeting but were never solved: (a) no stated goals and objectives across and within grades, (b) uncertainty about the link across grades, (c) inconsistent curricular content across grades, (d) diverse proficiency levels within each class, and (e) lack of student motivation.

Therefore, the current evaluation study focuses on identifying learners' needs (What high school learners want to do using English by the end of their school year) to inform the curriculum coordinators of the learners' issues in an attempt to resolve the above problems thereby improving the existing curriculum. The following evaluation questions were posed through communication with the head of the English department of the school:

EQ 1: What English needs do learners perceive? Are there any differences and similarities across grade-levels? Do they match with the teachers' perceptions of students' needs?

EQ 2: What are learners' classroom participation preferences? Are there any differences across grade-levels? Do they match with how teachers manage the class?

EQ 3: What are learners' preferred learning strategies? Are there any differences across grade-levels? Do they match with the teachers' perception?

EQ 4: What topics are the learners interested in? Are there any differences across grade-levels? Do they match with the topics introduced in the textbooks in each

grade? Are there any differences in what teachers and students perceive as interesting?

METHOD

Participants

The survey was administered to 1384 high school students from School A (1st year students: 421; 2nd year students: 367; 3rd year students: 596), a private high school in Tokyo. School A is considered an intermediate level² high school attached to a mid-high level university. A total of 1316 students responded to the survey. The return rate was 95%. To simplify data analysis, 200 students from each grade were randomly selected for data analysis (a total of 600 students). Students' proficiency levels³ ranged from approximately TOEFL 360 to 479. As for the teachers' survey, six out of nine full-time teachers responded to the survey. Unfortunately, the seven part-time English teachers, including the native speaking teachers, did not return the survey.

Procedures

The survey was administered during the 5th week of the new academic year, when students start to settle down from the beginning of the semester chaos and adjust to the new environment. Depending on the grade level, the survey was either administered during the homeroom period or in a take-home mode.

Information gathering. School language curriculum is constrained by national standards and guidelines, which also affect the textbooks used in the school. In order to understand the language curriculum of the school, information from multiple sources had to be obtained. The sources of information were government documents (the Course of

² The ranking is judged by the difficulty of the high school entrance exams, listed in the high school directory published every year by Koenokyouikusha (2005).

³ Many students do not take proficiency tests, thus proficiency level is the overall pattern from the self-report to the institution when they take the Society for Testing English Proficiency (STEP) test. The STEP test is administered on a pass or fail bases in seven bands (Grade 1, pre-1, 2, pre-2, 3, 4 and 5, in advanced to beginner level order). According to TOEFL Seminar (2005), TOEFL 360-399 is equivalent to STEP 3rd level, and TOEFL 440-479 is equivalent to STEP 2nd level. Learners who passes 3rd Level STEP test are "[a]ble to understand elementary English on matters related to oneself, family, and friends [and are able] to handle easy daily conversation" (STEP, 2001b, para. 9); and learners who passes 2nd Level STEP test are "[a]ble to understand and use English well enough for everyday needs and situations [and able] to communicate if visiting or living overseas" (STEP, 2001b, para. 5).

Studies and the Action Plan from MEXT), the school's website, school documents on curriculum, and student and teacher NA surveys. I examined government documents regarding foreign language education in Japan and the institutional goals of the English program. The NA questionnaires brought in teachers' and students' perspectives on the English curriculum of the institution. By analyzing the results, agreement and mismatches between the needs manifested by teachers and students were revealed. In addition, those findings were compared with the institutional and governmental views.

Instrument

At the beginning of the questionnaire before the closed-response questions, the survey sought open-ended responses (handwritten comments) to obtain students' and teachers' perceptions of their overall needs towards the use of English by the end of high school. These questions provided insights into the quantitative data. The closed-response section of the four-point Likert-scale (1: Not at all, 2: Not so much, 3: Somewhat, and 4: A lot) survey consisted of four sections: needs for various target tasks (subcategories include reading, listening and speaking, writing, and foreign use), learning/teaching strategies, classroom participation styles, and content areas (see Appendix B for teachers' survey and Appendix C for students' survey). A four-point scale was chosen to avoid neutral and ambivalent responses.

The reliability of measurement was calculated using Cronbach to indicate the degree of internal consistency for each subsection of the survey for both students' responses and teachers' responses (see Table 1). The reliability in teachers' responses was expected to be low since there were only seven respondents. Table 2 shows the results of the reliability analysis. The reliability for the subcategories ranged from $\alpha = 0.80$ to 0.94 for students and from $\alpha = 0.68$ to 0.99 for the teachers.

Table 1

Subsection Reliabilities

Variable	<i>k</i>	Student (<i>N</i> = 600)	Teacher (<i>N</i> = 6)
Reading	7	0.89	0.93
Listening and Speaking	16	0.95	0.92
Writing	9	0.93	0.68
Foreign Use	7	0.95	0.83
Strategy	9	0.82	0.81
Topics	34 (33 ^a)	0.92	0.99
Participation style	4	0.65	-- ^b
Overall	86 (85)	0.97	0.99

Note. ^aOne item (T 17) was excluded from the reliability analysis for the teachers' survey because no respondent had introduced the topic in class.

^bThe reliability estimate was not obtained due to the small number of items ($k = 4$).

Data Analysis

The qualitative data were translated, categorized and tabulated for students' data. As for the teacher's data, because the amount of data was rather small, individual quotes were simply used to explain the quantitative data. As for the quantitative data, descriptive statistics and a principal components analysis were used. The descriptive statistics reveal how students in each grade-level view the degree of importance for language tasks, learning styles, participation styles, and content areas. In order to compare the differences among grade-level groups, instead of comparing every item among groups, composite measures were created using a principal components analysis to identify the underlying components students perceived in the survey. This was done to avoid Type I errors in comparing multiple items by reducing the number of dependent variables. Also, using inferential statistics to compare the difference for each question item would probably not be reliable. The differences in needs among grade groups were analyzed both descriptively and with these composite measures. Teachers' responses and students' responses were only compared descriptively due to the small *N*-size of the teachers.

As for the principal components analysis, it was conducted for all students. Then, items were categorized into composites based on the highest loadings (over 0.50) found for each component. The items that loaded high on each component were combined to create composite measures that represent each component. Note that some items were eliminated due to complex loadings on several components. The composite measures

were then analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance with composite scores as the dependent variable and measures and groups (three grade-levels) as independent variables. Sidak post-hoc tests were used to reveal how groups responded differently to the composite measures.

RESULTS

First, a document analysis of the government's Course of Guidelines and Strategic Plan is examined to extract societal needs. Second, the institutional context is analyzed based on the institutional information available from the homepage, school guides, and personal communication with the head of the English department of the school. Third, the survey results (descriptive statistics) for teachers, students across grade-levels, and students in each grade-level are presented separately in tables.

Document Analysis

The Societal Context: English Education in General

In 2003, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) announced an Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities to drastically improve the English education in Japan. The government regards English as an international language which is necessary for the nations' empowerment and development in international society (MEXT, 2003a, para. 4). Driven by the belief that high English proficiency leads to international presence, the English education policy in Japan has drastically changed its focus since 1998 to foster learners' practical communication skills.

Along with the formulation of a strategic plan, there was a need to set up an index of what it means to be able to use the language. Thus, a nationwide can-do survey was conducted targeting high school students by Yoshida and Naganuma in 2003. The survey measures students' self-assessment of doing activities in English, and the results were compared to a standardized measure. The test reflects what students think they can do with English, but it does not reflect what they need or want to do by the end of their

school year. In addition, only the students' views were investigated in the survey, which only partially reveals information about the English language program.

As an attainment goal, the government uses the Society for Testing English Proficiency (STEP) test, a proficiency test divided into seven levels, authorized by MEXT. In the action plan, MEXT expects the following outcomes from the high school students: the “[a]bility to hold normal conversations (and a similar level of reading and writing) on everyday topics. English-language ability of graduates should be the second level or semi-second level of the STEP test, on average” (MEXT, 2003a, para. 11). Thus, many teachers advise students to take the STEP test. A recent trend for university entrance requirements in Japan is to use portfolio assessment. In the portfolio, students include their essays, recommendation letters and proof of their English proficiency such as their STEP test certificates. The evaluation standard of Pre-2nd Level is:

The successful examinee is (1) able to understand and use English well enough for everyday needs and situations; (2) able to communicate if visiting or living overseas, (3) able to converse about basic matters of daily life (make simple explanations, conduct simple business by telephone, etc.); (4) able to read materials related to basic daily life (general newspaper and magazine articles, pamphlets, instructions, etc.); (5) able to write about basic matters of daily life (STEP, 2001a, para. 2).

The procedures of the STEP test are as follows. An examinee will first take a multiple-choice, pass-fail, paper-based test, and once the person passes, then he/she will proceed to an interview test (sample interview questions and the picture task are given in Appendix A). In a typical interview, the examinee will read and answer questions on a given passage, accompanied by an illustration. There are three types of questions asked by the examiner: (a) questions related to the passage, (b) questions related to the illustration, and (c) questions designed to elicit the examinee's opinions. The scoring of the interview test is based on *phrasing*, *pronunciation*, and *intonation* for the reading portion, and *content*, *naturalness*, *pronunciation*, and *grammar* for the question responses (STEP, 2001b, para. 1). However, from the researcher's experience teaching in Japan, textbooks and classroom instruction do not incorporate tasks that are required by the interview test. The topics asked in the interview are related to daily life, but such communicative output tasks are not common in the everyday classroom. According to the

research site (School A), the number of students who obtain a STEP pre-2nd level certificate is approximately 10 % of the student body and less than 1% achieve the STEP 2nd level (Teacher A, personal communication, October 15, 2005). There seems to be a gap between the attainment goal and reality.

In line with the Action Plan (MEXT, 2003a), the Course of Study (MEXT, 2003b), which are standards for educational courses for all schools, emphasizes the importance of communication ability. According to the Course of Study, one of the overall objectives of foreign language education is “to develop students’ practical communication abilities such as understanding information and the speaker’s or writer’s intentions, and expressing their own ideas” (MEXT, 2003b, para. 1).

From the government released documents (Action Plans and the Course of Study), the aims of foreign language as part of general education seem to be two-fold. One aim is the awareness of the intra-diversity and inter-diversity due to the fluidity of the population (i.e., easy access to travel overseas). Knowing another language becomes more and more important as interactions among nations increase, and the country becomes more diverse. This view is reflected in the following press release on the development of a strategic plan: “With the progress of globalization in the economy and in society, it is essential that our children acquire communication skills in English, which has become a common international language, in order for living in the 21st century” (MEXT, 2003a, para. 1). Furthermore, MEXT emphasizes the empowerment of the country in the global society: “This [acquiring communication skills in English] has become an extremely important issue both in terms of the future of our children and the further development of Japan as a nation” (MEXT, 2002, para. 1).

The second aim of foreign language education comes from liberalization or humanization, rooted in the theological idea of “the truth shall set you free”. The mission of education, freeing students from the narrow ethnocentric view by learning a foreign language and culture, will allow students to step outside of themselves and view themselves and their culture through pluralistic eyes.

These two aims are reflected in the “Curriculum Design and Treatment of the Contents” of the Course of Study for upper secondary school (high school) (MEXT, 2003b) foreign language education. It calls for materials that are useful in

- (a) *enhancing the understanding of various ways of seeing and thinking, cultivating a rich sensibility, and enhancing the ability to make impartial judgments.*
- (b) *deepening the understanding of the ways of life and cultures of Japan and the rest of the world, raising interest in language and culture, and developing respectful attitudes to these elements.*
- (c) *deepening international understanding from a broad perspective, heightening students' awareness of being Japanese citizens living in a global community, and cultivating a spirit of international cooperation.* (emphasis added, para. 62)

The two views of general English education are also echoed in the overall objectives of foreign language education at the high school level: “To develop students’ *practical communication abilities* such as understanding information and the speaker’s or writer’s intentions, and *expressing their own ideas*, deepening the understanding of language and culture, and *fostering a positive attitude toward communication* through foreign languages” (emphasis added, para. 50).

Regardless of the innovative leadership taken by the government, at the level of practice, formal English education is faced with reconciling the two completely different needs: communication-focused instruction advocated by the government policies, and reading and grammar focused instruction to prepare students for university entrance exams or standardized tests. The following section discusses the institutional context of the research site to gain insights into the institution’s views on the language needs of its students.

The Institutional Context of the Program

School A is a private, high-intermediate level high school attached to a mid-high level university. In order to get into the school, prospective students must take an entrance exam. Its ranking is due to the difficulty of the entrance exams as listed in the directory for high schools in Tokyo (Koenokyouikusha, 2005).

Students’ ages range from 16 to 18 divided into three age-grade levels. Each grade has 10 to 14 classes with 38 to 42 students per class. In spring 2005, there were 1384 students enrolled in the school taking general English education courses taught by nine full-time English teachers and seven part-time teachers. Among 1396 students (with a

total of 34 classes and 37-42 students per class), 421 were enrolled in the first year, 367 were enrolled in the second year, and 596 were enrolled in the third year. Upon entering the high school, students had studied English for at least three years in junior high school. From the learners' background survey, 9% of the students said they started learning English before junior high school. Four percent of the students had experience traveling in an English speaking country. Only 10 students had experience living in an English speaking country for more than one month.

Every year, about 90% of the students go on to the attached university, so those students do not have to take the college entrance exam. Thus, the schools' stated agenda for the English curriculum is "to build English ability to what the society expects of high school students, by the end of the high school year" (translated from the web-page). However, there is no further clarification of what societal expectations are. For 1st year students, the school started to incorporate a daily ten-minute extensive reading session to cultivate students' motivation towards various topics in English. For the 2nd and 3rd year students, the school promotes international understanding through short-term homestay programs during the summer in New Zealand and the spring in the U.S.

The courses that students have to take are set by the government in the Course of Study (MEXT, 2003b), although there is some room for flexibility. School A's curriculum sequence and the courses that students take are listed in Table 2. The first year students take *English I* (nominally an integrated four-skills course, but in reality there is a heavy emphasis on reading) and *Oral I* (a communication focused course, along with a once-a-week English conversation class with a native speaker of English). The 2nd year students take *English II*, which is a continuation of *English I*, and *Writing*. The writing class is stretched over two grades (2nd and 3rd grade) because the teachers think that the writing skill takes time to develop. The 3rd year students take writing and reading classes. All students are encouraged to take the STEP test and TOEIC-bridge test⁴.

⁴ The TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) Bridge test is a test for beginning and lower intermediate learners of English, assessing reading and listening skills. The test format is very similar to TOEIC test, but the difficulty level is lower.

Table 2

Curriculum Sequence and Class Hours Per Week

Subjects	Credits required by the Course of Study	1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade
Oral Communication I	2	2		
English Conversation	Not required	1		
English I	3	3		
English II	4		3	
Reading	4			4
Writing	4		2	3

Survey Data

Tables 3 to 6 summarize the descriptive statistics and open-ended responses of teachers' and students across grade level's with regard to English needs by the end of high school (reading, listening/speaking, writing, and foreign language use) (Table 3), preferred classroom student participation styles and learning strategies (Table 4), additional strategies identified other than those listed in the survey (Table 5), and preferred topics (Table 6). Notice that each of the numerical tables presents the number of participants who responded and who did not respond to the item (shown as 'miss' in the column). To analyze the distribution of the responses, the means, standard deviations, and percentage of students who chose each scale point (1: Not at all, 2: Not so much, 3: Somewhat, 4: A lot) are presented.

Results of the Teachers' Survey

Although data were collected from only nine teachers, some patterns were observed in the survey results. More detailed information on the proportion of teachers agreeing on each scale point per item is summarized in Tables D 1 and D 2 in Appendix D.

Reading. Most teachers agreed that reading tasks are necessary, resulting in a narrow standard deviation ($SD = 0.41-0.55$) except for item R 1 (Read the textbook with correct pronunciation, $SD = 0.84$). Among reading tasks, teachers viewed that students will be tackling with texts introduced in classrooms (R 1-3) or authentic materials (R 4-6), but

will be less concerned with entrance exams and STEP tests (R 7). Sixty-seven percent of the teachers answered that textbook-based classroom tasks are “definitely necessary” for their students to be able to perform by the end of high school. Compared to tasks using authentic materials, understanding English textbooks (R 2: Understand words, expressions, & gram rules in the textbook; R3: Understand the words, expressions, & gram rules in the textbook) were regarded as highly necessary.

Listening and speaking. All teachers agreed that “introducing oneself in English” (LS 1) is an inevitable task for the high school students ($M = 1.00$, $SD = 0.00$). Students’ ability to communicate with foreigners on simple daily topics (LS 1-4) and personal/familiar topics (LS 6), introduce Japanese culture to a foreigner (LS 6), and pass listening and interview section of high stakes testing (LS 15 and 16) were perceived as relatively important. In contrast, teachers’ perceptions of tasks that require complex functions such as outlining and summarizing stories and songs (LS 8: $M = 2.83$; LS 10: $M = 2.50$; and LS 11: $M = 2.50$), and expressing feelings and opinions (LS 7: $M = 2.67$ and LS 12: $M = 2.50$) based on the input varied. Half of the teachers have marked tasks with TV shows and movies as input as “not so necessary,” this may be due to the belief that the level of language used in such authentic materials is too difficult for high school students.

Writing. Compared to other skills, teachers did not regard writing tasks as necessary. The writing tasks were ranked lower than 20 in the overall ranking. Nevertheless, the mean score for all writing tasks except for W 2 (Writing a poem) were over 2.50 on a four point scale. Nearly 85% of the teachers regarded “writing poems” as an unnecessary task (W 2: $M = 2.00$), marking this task as the most unnecessary task among the entire list of tasks. Teachers agreed that writing for communicative purposes, such as writing a letter, online chatting, and exchanging emails, were either “somewhat necessary” or “definitely necessary.” Since the STEP test only requires essay writing at the 1st level (the most advanced level) and since students do not reach that level, item W 8 (Answer composition questions in the entrance exams and STEP test) had a lower rating ($M = 2.83$). In the listening and speaking section, the teachers seemed to attribute little value to the opinion exchange tasks, while in the writing section, they viewed self-expression as necessary (W 5 and 6). This suggests that depending on the mode, the complexity of the

functions that teachers require of students is somewhat different. Teachers may have perceived that it is more difficult to orally express one's opinion spontaneously, whereas in writing, the learner can take time to choose words and construct sentences.

Foreign use. Overall, the ability to use English abroad was the most strongly agreed set of tasks teachers thought students need by the end of high school. Since the school has three opportunities for students to join the homestay program in an English speaking country, "get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad" (F 1), "communicating with the local people" (F 2), and "communicate with a host family" (F3) (all $M = 3.83$) were ranked as the second most necessary tasks among others. As for studying abroad, over 83% of the teachers regarded "choosing classes" (F 4) and "communicating with other students in a university or a language school abroad" (F 6) as "somewhat necessary" or "definitely necessary." Teachers seem to expect students to be able to communicate with peers and local people when those students are outside Japan, but do not perceive the need for students to engage in tasks that require more than simple daily conversation in Japan.

Participation styles and learning strategies. Teachers were asked to rate students' classroom participation style according to the subject they are teaching. Three teachers listed two classes, resulting in a total of nine cases. The most frequent classroom participation style was individual work ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.33$), followed by teacher centered class ($M = 2.78$, $SD = 1.20$), pair work ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 1.12$), and group work ($M = 1.78$, $SD = 0.44$). Great variability was observed for the teacher-centered style and pair work. The results indicate that there were less communicative activities conducted in the class. Most of the respondents were teaching integrated classes (i.e., English I and English II). Thus, classroom observation is needed to determine whether teachers change their teaching styles according to the subject and purpose of the class (e.g., reading class versus oral communication class).

The results for the learning strategies revealed that the teachers believe in the effectiveness of paying attention to accuracy while using the language (St 7: $M = 3.67$) and simulating conversational situations (St 9: $M = 3.67$). In order to use the language, teachers also acknowledge that the learner needs many words and idioms (St 1: $M = 3.50$). Eighty-four percent of the teachers agreed on the effectiveness of input flood (St 8: to

listen and read many English sentences and understand them without paying too much attention to grammar, $M = 3.33$). It was interesting that learning through translation was perceived as the least effective strategy (St 6: translating English into Japanese, $M = 2.00$, $SD = 0.89$). Other than the learning strategies covered in the survey, the teachers wrote additional strategies that they thought were useful (see Table 5). Such strategies included (a) reading aloud ($N = 2$), (b) communication activities among students ($N = 1$), and (c) exposure to a great amount of easy English ($N = 1$).

Topics. The teachers rated students' interest in the topics they have introduced in their class. *Music*, *Japanese around the world*, *language in the world*, and *foreign culture and people* were the most frequently introduced topics in class. The teachers perceived that students were highly interested in *sports* and *traveling* ($M = 3.50$), followed by *music* ($M = 3.50$), and *domestic news* ($M = 3.33$). The results do reflect the formal topics often introduced in government approved textbooks. In addition to the textbook, teachers seem to introduce up-to-date timely domestic news in English. It is understandable that students show interest in narrative stories since the school started an extensive reading program. It is rather surprising, that the teachers thought that foreign culture and people were not so interesting for the students, although the school promotes a positive attitude towards foreign cultures through student exchange programs. Another thing to note is that topics related to students' school life (e.g., school festival, club activity, and school work) are not introduced to classes by at least half of the teachers.

Table 3

Teachers' and Students' Perception of High School English Needs

Item	Description	Teachers				Overall Students			
		<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Rank	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Rank
R 1	Read a text from a textbook with correct pronunciation.	6	3.50	0.84	11	599	2.77	0.77	19
R 2	Understand words, expressions, & gram rules in the textbook.	6	3.67	0.52	6	599	2.65	0.89	23
R 3	Understand a text equivalent to the level of the textbook.	6	3.67	0.52	6	599	2.81	0.82	18
R 4	Understand the gist of easy stories or novels in Eng.	6	3.50	0.55	11	596	2.84	0.84	16
R 5	Choose & read an interesting article from newspapers/magazines	6	3.50	0.55	11	596	2.48	0.98	27
R 6	Extract necessary info from internet	6	3.50	0.55	11	598	2.40	0.96	31
R 7	Answer the reading section of entrance exam s or STEP	6	3.17	0.41	21	598	2.88	0.90	12
LS1	Engage in a simple daily conversation with foreigners in Japan.	6	3.83	0.41	2	596	3.10	0.89	1
LS2	Introduce oneself in English.	6	4.00	0.00	1	596	3.06	0.79	3
LS3	Establish friendship w/ a foreigner and talk about interesting topics.	6	3.67	0.52	6	595	2.82	1.06	17
LS4	Give direction when asked by a foreigner on the street.	6	3.33	0.82	18	594	2.93	0.93	9
LS5	Introduce Japanese culture & custom to an exchange student.	6	3.33	0.52	18	593	2.64	0.94	24
LS6	Exchange opinions on personal stories/familiar topics w/a friend.	6	3.50	0.55	11	594	2.45	0.93	29
LS7	Exchange opinions on social problems with one's friend	6	2.67	0.52	32	596	2.18	0.91	37
LS8	Understand the main message/ideas of the favorite songs	6	2.83	0.75	27	594	3.05	0.89	4
LS9	Sing one's favorite Eng songs.	6	2.67	0.82	32	595	2.99	0.91	5
LS10	Understand the main idea of the favorite TV shows & movies.	6	2.50	0.55	34	595	2.86	0.92	13
LS11	Tell the summary of the favorite TV shows & movies to a friend.	6	2.50	0.55	34	596	2.41	0.93	30
LS12	Exchange feelings and opinions about TV shows/movies w/a friend.	6	2.50	0.55	34	595	2.30	0.92	36
LS13	Deliver a speech or give a presentation in Eng.	6	3.17	0.75	21	595	2.47	0.95	28
LS14	Speak w/attention to rhythm, intonation, volume, speed, & pronunciation..	6	3.17	0.75	21	596	2.71	0.92	22
LS15	Answer the listening section of entrance exams or STEP.	6	3.50	0.84	11	595	2.93	0.87	9
LS16	Pass the interview portion of the entrance exam or STEP.	6	3.33	1.03	18	592	2.95	0.90	8
W 1	Keep a diary in English	6	2.83	0.41	27	594	2.16	0.89	38
W 2	Write English poems.	6	2.00	0.63	39	594	2.03	0.92	39
W 3	Communicating w/ foreigners by writing a letter/online chatting/email.	6	3.17	0.41	21	594	2.51	0.99	26
W 4	Write a summary of a story, novel, or other people's opinions	6	2.50	0.55	34	595	2.37	0.90	32
W 5	Write thoughts/opinions about a story, novel, other people's opinions.	6	3.00	0.00	25	595	2.37	0.89	32
W 6	Write thoughts & feelings about one's favorite songs/movies/TV.	6	2.83	0.41	27	595	2.37	0.88	32
W 7	Request / fill an application form from an institution abroad.	6	2.83	0.75	27	594	2.35	0.95	35
W 8	Answer composition questions in the entrance exams & STEP.	6	2.83	0.75	27	594	2.86	0.93	13
W 9	Answer grammar & vocabulary questions in the entrance exams /STEP.	6	3.00	0.89	25	595	2.86	0.92	13
F 1	Get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad.	6	3.83	0.41	2	591	3.08	0.93	2
F 2	Communicate w/ the local people while traveling/homestay abroad.	6	3.83	0.41	2	587	2.98	0.93	7
F 3	Communicate w/a host family during a homestay program.	6	3.83	0.41	2	586	2.99	0.93	5
F 4	Read course descriptions & choose a course when studying abroad.	6	3.67	0.82	6	588	2.72	0.91	21
F 5	Complete the necessary task/matters in a foreign country.	6	3.50	0.55	11	586	2.73	0.96	20
F 6	Communicate w/ students in the university/language school abroad.	6	3.67	0.52	6	587	2.92	0.93	11
F 7	Go abroad to work or do volunteer work.	6	2.50	0.55	34	588	2.57	0.95	25

Note. ^aSince all teachers chose 4 on the scale point, standard deviation is not available.

Table 4

*Teachers' and Students' Perception of Participation Style and Learning Strategy for**English*

Item	Description	Teacher				Overall Students			
		<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Rank	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Rank
Part1	Teacher centered	9	2.78	1.20	2	587	2.28	0.80	4
Part2	Individual	9	2.89	0.33	1	586	2.29	0.83	3
Part3	Pair work	9	2.33	1.12	3	587	2.43	0.88	2
Part4	Group work	9	1.78	0.44	4	587	2.55	0.91	1
St1	Memorize many words and idioms.	6	3.50	0.55	3	571	3.10	0.71	3
St2	Understand and memorize grammar.	6	3.00	0.63	6	573	2.95	0.76	6
St3	Memorize many English sentences from the textbook.	6	3.17	0.75	5	573	2.42	0.81	9
St4	Solve many grammar exercises.	6	3.00	0.89	6	572	2.91	0.78	7
St5	Solve many reading comprehension questions.	6	2.83	1.17	8	572	2.95	0.77	5
St6	Accurately translate English into Japanese.	6	2.00	0.89	9	570	2.77	0.84	8
St7	Verbalize or write correct sentences using words, idioms, and grammar rules one memorized.	6	3.67	0.52	1	570	3.05	0.70	4
St8	Listen & read many English sentences & understand them w/o paying too much attention to grammar.	6	3.33	1.21	4	570	3.16	0.72	2
St9	Simulate real conversational situations and use English.	6	3.67	0.52	1	570	3.29	0.70	1

Table 5

Additional Strategies

Teachers	<i>N</i>	Students	<i>N</i>
Read aloud	2	Communicate with a foreigner/native speaker	16
Communication activities among students.	1	Go abroad (traveling, to study, homestay, etc.)	8
Exposure to a great amount of easy English.	1	Communication/communicate a lot	4
		Use English	4
		To read and listen to many sentences	3
		Have native speaker as a teacher	2
		Speak English	2
		Be in a situation you have to speak English	2
		Watch movies in English	2
		Write a diary in English	1
		Create sentences by using the memorized words	1
		Talk without being shy	1
		Listen to music	1
		Listen to an English tape with fast speed.	1
		Listen to native speakers talking	1
		Listen to real English	1
		Invite foreign students for a homestay	1
		Study movie scripts and lyrics, and try to mimic them.	1
		Translate English songs into Japanese	1
		Read many books without a dictionary	1
		Verbalize and practice pronunciation while reading	1
		Solve exercises and review incorrect answers.	1
		Write up daily expressions from a dictionary	1
		Dictation	1
		Make learning enjoyable	1
		Follow a textbook thoroughly (negative strategy)	1

Table 6

Teachers' and Students' Topic Preferences

Item	Description	Teacher				Overall Student			
		<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Rank	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Rank
T1	Language in the world	5	2.80	0.45	19	580	2.57	0.84	20
T2	Foreign culture, people	5	2.40	0.55	32	582	2.47	0.84	23
T3	World history	4	2.75	0.96	20	581	2.37	0.88	29
T4	Famous historical sites	3	3.00	0.00	11	579	2.96	0.85	10
T5	Current world events	4	2.75	0.50	20	581	2.53	0.80	22
T6	Japanese around the world	5	3.00	0.00	11	581	2.67	0.86	17
T7	Japanese culture	4	2.75	0.96	20	579	2.58	0.83	19
T8	Domestic news	3	3.33	0.58	4	579	2.69	0.75	16
T9	Narrative stories	4	3.25	0.50	5	580	2.61	0.84	18
T10	Literature	4	2.50	0.58	29	579	2.35	0.85	30
T11	Drama (play)	3	2.67	0.58	23	578	2.39	0.89	28
T12	Art	3	2.67	0.58	23	576	2.39	0.91	27
T13	Music	5	3.40	0.55	3	580	3.23	0.80	4
T14	Movies	4	3.25	0.50	5	579	3.26	0.75	3
T15	Fashion	3	3.00	1.00	11	577	3.11	0.80	8
T16	TV drama	4	3.25	0.50	5	577	3.15	0.73	6
T17	Animation	0				577	2.46	0.85	24
T18	People in show biz	4	3.25	0.50	5	577	2.93	0.81	13
T19	Education	3	2.67	0.58	23	575	2.31	0.77	31
T20	Psychology	3	3.00	0.00	11	575	2.54	0.89	21
T21	Science	3	2.67	0.58	23	573	2.15	0.81	33
T22	Nature/environment	4	2.50	0.58	29	574	2.42	0.84	26
T23	Computer	4	3.00	0.82	11	574	2.46	0.87	25
T24	Animal	4	3.00	0.00	11	575	2.74	0.88	15
T25	Sports	4	3.50	0.58	1	575	3.12	0.85	7
T26	Traveling	4	3.50	0.58	1	575	2.95	0.85	12
T27	Food, cooking	4	3.25	0.50	5	574	3.07	0.80	9
T28	Homeroom	3	2.67	0.58	23	581	2.23	0.78	32
T29	Club activity	3	2.67	0.58	23	581	2.87	1.00	14
T30	School festival	2	2.00	0.00	33	582	2.06	0.82	34
T31	School work (study)	3	3.00	1.00	11	581	2.95	0.82	11
T32	Future course	4	3.00	0.82	11	581	3.22	0.74	5
T33	Friendship	4	2.50	0.58	29	581	3.27	0.70	2
T34	hobby	4	3.25	0.50	5	581	3.29	0.79	1

Note. ^aSince only one teacher introduced the topic to the class and rated students' degree of interest on the topic, the standard deviation is not available.

Results of Students' Survey: Overall

The results of students' perception across grades on needs for tasks using four skills and foreign use, and preferences for learning strategies, participation styles, and content area are presented in Tables 3 through 6, along with the teachers' perceptions. Students'

responses across grades guide the setting of the overall goals for the three-year language curriculum.

Reading. Overall, students did not perceive a strong need for reading ($M = 2.69$) compared to the teachers (see Table 3). Rather, students found a stronger necessity for foreign use ($M = 2.86$) and listening and speaking ($M = 2.74$). Active reading tasks, such as choosing an interesting article (R 5) or extracting necessary information from the internet (R 6), were rated lower than comprehension tasks (R 1-4). Students seem to also think that tasks using textbook-level material is enough for high school level English and do not think that reading authentic materials, such as newspapers, magazines, and internet articles are necessary.

Listening and speaking. Simple oral communication tasks such as *simple daily conversation with a foreigner* (LS 1: $M = 3.10$) and *introducing oneself in English* (LS 2: $M = 3.06$) were ranked as the 1st and 3rd among all tasks, similar to teachers' perceptions. Tasks involving songs were rated quite high (LS 8: $M = 3.05$; LS 9: $M = 2.99$) compared to other listening and speaking tasks for students, but were ranked lower in the teachers' survey. Great variability was seen for item LS 3, *establishing friendship with a foreigner and talk about interesting topics* ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 1.06$). This may be due to the fact that students do not encounter many English speaking foreigners of same age in a face-to-face situation, unless they have a visiting exchange student in their class, or they have a chance to visit an English speaking country. Items LS 10, 11, and 12 distinguish the degree of cognitive demand on entertainment topic tasks ranging from comprehending, summarizing, to expressing opinion. The more cognitively demanding the task, the lower the degree of necessity students perceived (comprehending: $M = 2.86$; summarizing: $M = 2.41$; expressing opinion: $M = 2.30$).

Writing. The writing tasks seem not to be relevant in the students' views, except for preparing for the entrance exam and the STEP test. Approximately 70% of the students considered answering grammar, vocabulary, and composition questions to pass the STEP test or the entrance exam as important tasks (W 8 and 9: $M = 2.86$). Note that free composition is not required for the STEP test until the 1st level, which is equivalent to TOEFL 600 and over. Most students take the pre-2nd level and 2nd level of the STEP test, which only require choosing and arranging English words from the list to create Japanese

equivalent sentences. Among the writing tasks other than for testing purposes, a more communicative task (W 3: write a letter, chat online, or email) was preferred over writing for oneself (W1: keep a diary; and W2: write English poems). It can be assumed that out of 27% of the students who strongly felt the need for tackling composition, grammar, and vocabulary sections of the high stakes testing either did not know that there is no composition section for the pre-2nd and 2nd level STEP test, or knew that they must take a university entrance exam at the end of the high school.

Use abroad. Students strongly suggested their need to prepare for traveling abroad (F 1: $M = 3.05$) and joining the homestay program (F 3: $M = 2.99$), but not so much for tasks related to a study abroad program and volunteer work. In fact, *getting minimal things done in English when traveling abroad* (F 1: $M = 3.08$) was ranked the second among all tasks, indicating the trend for going overseas for vacation. Students may have high expectations in terms of going abroad for a homestay program, since the school provides two opportunities each year, one trip to the United States and another to New Zealand.

Learning strategies and participation styles. Students' preferences for participation styles across grade-levels had greater variability than their preferences for learning strategies (Participation style: $SD = 0.80-0.91$; learning strategy: $SD = 0.70-0.84$) (see Table 4). In other words, students generally agreed on which learning strategies were more effective than others, but preferences for classroom participation styles varied more. The central tendency of students' perceptions for participation styles showed that students like group work (Part 4: $M = 2.55$) followed by pair work (Part 3: $M = 2.43$). This is in alignment with their needs in performing more communicative tasks rather than receptive reading tasks.

As for learning strategies, using English in a real conversation was perceived as the most effective way for learning English ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.70$), followed by input flood without attention to grammar ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.71$). There was a contradiction for memorization strategy. Memorizing words, idioms (81%), and grammar (74%) were considered useful, while memorizing many sentences in the textbook was not (only 44%). Students thought that memorizing sentences does not lead to accurate use of language, which is also supported by the fact that they acknowledge 'using' the memorized words, idioms, and grammar in a sentence is more important (St 7: $M = 3.05$) than just

‘understanding’ and ‘memorizing’ grammar (St 2: $M = 2.95$) or solving grammar exercises (St 4: $M = 2.91$).

In addition to the nine learning strategies listed in the survey, there were 26 write-in learning strategies (see Table 5). Only one write-in strategy, *To follow textbook thoroughly*, was rated “not useful at all” while all the other write-in strategies were rated as either “somewhat useful” or “very useful.” Among the suggested strategies in the open-ended section, *communicating with a native speaker* ranked as the most useful strategy, followed by *go abroad*. Two students even said that having a native speaking teacher would enhance their language learning. Students seemed to feel that they need input and practice with native speakers. Considering the students’ limited contact with native English speaking teachers in their first year conversation classes, students may realize that what they learned in the classroom did not compare to real world English use. This may indicate that students are perpetuating the myth that native English speaking teachers are superior to non-native English speaking teachers, especially given the popularity of English conversation schools with native-only teachers.

Topic preference. Table 6 shows overall student respondents’ degree of interest in 34 topics. The popular topics among students were topics related to their life and entertaining topics. Over 80% of the students were interested in *hobby* (T 34: $M = 3.29$), *friendship* (T 33: $M = 3.27$), *movies* (T 14: $M = 3.26$), *music* (T 13: $M = 3.23$), and future course (T 32: $M = 3.22$). The least popular topics were *school festival* (T 30: $M = 2.06$), *science* (T 21: $M = 2.15$), *homeroom* (T 28: $M = 2.23$), and *education* (T 19: $M = 2.31$), which were all marked as either “not at all interesting” or “not so interesting” by more than 60% of the students.

Results of the Students’ Survey: Each Grade-level

In order to see how students from different grade-levels perceive their high school English goals differently, the survey results from each grade-level were compared. The descriptive statistics (the mean, standard deviation, and rank for each item) for each grade level are summarized in Tables 7 through 9. Tables D 3 through D 10 in the Appendix provide more detailed information on the percentage for those who chose each scale point.

First-year high school students. The 1st year students were more aware of high-stakes testing (see Table 7) than other grade levels. About 80% of the 1st year students rated English ability to pass/answer the listening section (LS 15: $M = 3.14$), the interview section (LS 16: $M = 3.16$), grammar and vocabulary (W 9: $M = 3.13$), composition section (W 8: $M = 3.13$), and reading section (R7: $M = 3.09$) of the entrance exam and/or the STEP test as necessary. Students were favorable towards simple daily conversation (LS 1: $M = 3.20$), introducing oneself (LS 2: $M = 3.11$), and getting minimal things done when traveling (F 1: $M = 3.23$). Tasks that require reading authentic materials (internet, newspapers, magazines), telling a summary, expressing opinions, and free writing were rated relatively low. Students may not have done tasks that require these cognitive skills and proficiency in their junior high school classes, thus they may have regarded those tasks as less relevant for them.

It was clear that the 1st year students preferred to learn English by using the language (St 9: $M = 3.27$ and St 8: $M = 3.17$). This was also supported by the fact that 1st year students preferred group work and pair work, as opposed to individual work and teacher centered classroom style. Students liked fun topics and topics related to their lives.

Although about 80% of the students showed their needs/wants in ‘traveling abroad’ and/or ‘going on a homestay’, many did not rate ‘language in the world’ and ‘foreign culture/people’ as attractive topics. In reality, there are many students who wish to go abroad, but they may be idealizing travel and the role of language in going abroad. Therefore, when they do travel abroad, they may be under-prepared for cross-cultural understandings.

Compared to the 3rd year students, it was reasonable that 1st year students were more open to science related topics (T 21: science; T 22: nature/environment), since most of the students (approximately 90% of the students every year) choose humanities track over science track at the end of the 2nd year.

Second-year high school students. Compared to the 1st year and 3rd year students, the 2nd year students’ responses were skewed towards lower scale points for most of the items. In other words, their motivation towards English is relatively low compared to other grades. All of the means for the 2nd year students’ responses for each item on English needs (39 items) were less than 3.0, except LS 1 (Engage in a simple daily

conversation with foreigners in Japan) and LS 2 (Introduce oneself in English) (see Table 7). Twenty-four out of 134 second year students who responded to the open-ended question (What would you like to be able to do using English by the time you graduate this school?) expressed no interest in English or no reason to study English.

Students showed greater interest in minimal conversation skills (LS 1 and 2), singing and understanding songs (LS 8 and 9), and going abroad for a short term (F 1, 2, and 3), all with a mean score of over 2.80. The recruitment and promotion of the homestay program at the beginning of the semester may have attracted students' interest to above topics. The writing tasks were rated relatively low ($M = 1.94-2.69$) compared to other subsections. As teachers perceived reading as the most important skill and since writing is not emphasized in the first year curriculum, second year students perceived writing as not that important at the beginning of the school year. A clear explanation of the writing course starting from the second year and exposing them to various types and purposes of writing tasks that they may encounter in their lives may be needed. As for learning strategies, the 2nd and 3rd year students valued building vocabulary and idioms (St 1: $M = 3.14$), in addition to simulating conversation and using English (St 9: $M = 3.20$). The 2nd year students were the only group who ranked teacher-centered class (see Table 8) as second preferred participation style after group work. The content area ratings indicated that their preferences were not so different from the 1st year students (see Table 9).

Third-year high school students. The 3rd year students favored English needs like simple communication tasks (daily conversation, introducing one-self, giving directions), song tasks and going abroad for travel and homestay (similar to the 1st and 2nd year students). In addition to the short term stay abroad, 76% of the students eyed the possibility of attending a university or a language school abroad (F 6: $M = 2.95$). Compared to the 1st year students, the 3rd year students' were not so conscious of the high-stakes testing (see items R 7, LS 15, LS 16, W 8, and W 9 in Table 7). Their favorite learning strategy matched with their preference of participation style. Nearly 90% of the 3rd year students agreed that *simulating real conversation* (St 9) was useful and also expressed preference for group work and pair work over individual work and teacher centered for classroom participation styles. The 3rd year students had similar interests to those of the 1st year students, such as hobby, friendship, music, movies, future courses,

fashion, food/cooking, TV drama, sports, traveling, historical sites, and school work; all listed items were rated either “somewhat interesting” or “very interesting” by at least 70% of the respondents.

Up to this point, the results were descriptively analyzed. In order to make judgments about the probability that the observed differences between groups are dependable, inferential statistics were utilized. The next section describes the statistical methods and the results of the differences in the perceptions of English needs and learning styles among the three grade levels.

Table 7

Students' Perception of Needs on Reading, Listening, Speaking, Writing and Foreign Use: Each Grade Level

Item	Description	1st grade				2nd grade				3rd grade			
		N	M	SD	R*	N	M	SD	R*	N	M	SD	R*
R 1	Read a text from a textbook with correct pronunciation.	200	2.93	0.72	17	200	2.66	0.75	19	199	2.73	0.82	13
R 2	Understand words, expressions, & gram rules in the textbook.	200	2.89	0.80	22	200	2.48	0.85	23	199	2.60	0.97	15
R 3	Understand a text equivalent to the level of the textbook.	200	2.98	0.71	15	200	2.73	0.80	13	199	2.72	0.92	19
R 4	Understand the gist of easy stories or novels in Eng.	199	2.92	0.82	18	198	2.72	0.81	15	199	2.86	0.88	20
R 5	Choose & read an interesting article from newspapers/magazines	199	2.60	0.94	27	199	2.29	0.96	30	198	2.56	1.02	24
R 6	Extract necessary info from internet	200	2.51	0.91	34	199	2.30	0.92	28	199	2.40	1.02	26
R 7	Answer the reading section of entrance exam s or STEP	200	3.09	0.79	11	199	2.75	0.90	10	199	2.81	0.96	31
LS1	Engage in a simple daily conversation with foreigners in Japan.	199	3.20	0.83	2	199	3.02	0.88	1	198	3.09	0.94	1
LS2	Introduce oneself in English.	200	3.11	0.76	9	199	3.01	0.77	2	197	3.08	0.84	2
LS3	Establish friendship w/ a foreigner and talk abt interesting topics.	200	2.92	0.94	19	199	2.71	1.21	16	196	2.82	1.01	3
LS4	Give direction when asked by a foreigner on the street.	200	3.05	0.86	13	198	2.75	0.97	11	196	3.00	0.94	5
LS5	Introduce Japanese culture & custom to an exchange student.	200	2.76	0.90	24	196	2.46	0.91	24	197	2.69	0.98	7
LS6	Exchange opinions on personal stories/familiar topics w/a friend.	199	2.57	0.89	28	198	2.30	0.87	29	197	2.48	1.00	10
LS7	Exchange opinions on social problems with one's friend	200	2.34	0.85	38	199	2.04	0.86	37	197	2.17	1.00	11
LS8	Understand the main message/ideas of the favorite songs	200	3.10	0.85	10	199	2.89	0.91	4	195	3.16	0.88	12
LS9	Sing one's favorite Eng songs.	200	3.02	0.86	14	198	2.83	0.96	5	197	3.11	0.91	14
LS10	Understand the main idea of the favorite TV shows & movies.	200	2.97	0.84	16	199	2.74	0.91	12	196	2.88	0.98	22
LS11	Tell the summary of the favorite TV shows & movies to a friend.	200	2.52	0.89	33	199	2.28	0.88	31	197	2.44	1.00	23
LS12	Exchange feelings & opinions abt TV shows/movies w/a friend.	200	2.38	0.90	36	198	2.19	0.86	36	197	2.31	1.00	27
LS13	Deliver a speech or give a presentation in Eng.	200	2.54	0.88	30	199	2.36	0.93	27	196	2.53	1.01	28
LS14	Speak w/attention to rhythm/intonation/volume/speed/pronunciation.	200	2.90	0.86	21	199	2.58	0.92	20	197	2.66	0.96	29
LS15	Answer the listening section of entrance exams or STEP.	199	3.14	0.73	6	199	2.72	0.89	14	197	2.91	0.94	35
LS16	Pass the interview portion of the entrance exam or STEP.	199	3.16	0.81	3	199	2.77	0.92	8	194	2.92	0.91	37
W 1	Keep a diary in English	200	2.36	0.90	37	198	1.99	0.85	38	196	2.13	0.91	16
W 2	Write English poems.	200	2.10	0.89	39	199	1.94	0.87	39	195	2.07	1.00	16
W 3	Comm w/ foreigners by writing a letter/online chatting/email.	200	2.67	1.00	26	199	2.42	0.98	25	195	2.43	0.98	30
W 4	Write a summary of a story, novel, or other people's opinions	200	2.55	0.90	29	199	2.23	0.85	33	196	2.33	0.93	32
W 5	Write thoughts/opinions abt a story, novel, other people's opinions.	200	2.53	0.88	31	199	2.22	0.83	34	196	2.36	0.92	33
W 6	Write thoughts & feelings abt one's favorite songs/movies/TV.	200	2.48	0.90	35	199	2.25	0.83	32	196	2.37	0.89	34
W 7	Request / fill an application form from an institution abroad.	200	2.53	0.89	31	199	2.21	0.96	35	195	2.31	0.97	36
W 8	Answer composition questions in the entrance exams & STEP.	199	3.13	0.79	7	199	2.69	0.97	17	196	2.76	0.95	38
W 9	Answer gramm & vocab questions in the entrance exams /STEP.	200	3.13	0.76	8	199	2.68	0.97	18	196	2.76	0.96	39
F 1	Get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad.	199	3.23	0.85	1	198	2.92	0.94	3	194	3.09	0.98	4
F 2	Comm w/ the local people while traveling/homestay abroad.	197	3.14	0.86	5	198	2.81	0.90	7	192	2.98	1.01	6
F 3	Communicate w/a host family during a homestay program abroad.	197	3.15	0.86	4	197	2.82	0.90	6	192	3.02	1.01	8
F 4	Read course descriptions & choose a course when studying abroad.	197	2.87	0.84	23	198	2.57	0.86	21	193	2.72	0.99	9
F 5	Complete the necessary task/matters in a foreign country.	196	2.92	0.87	20	198	2.53	0.93	22	192	2.73	1.05	18
F 6	Communicate w/ students in the university/lang school abroad.	196	3.06	0.85	12	198	2.76	0.90	9	193	2.95	1.02	21
F 7	Go abroad to work or do volunteer work.	197	2.72	0.90	25	198	2.41	0.93	26	193	2.59	1.00	25

Note. *R = rank

Table 8

Students' Perception of Learning Styles and Participation Styles: Each Grade Level

Item	Description	1st grade				2nd grade				3rd grade			
		N	M	SD	Rank	N	M	SD	Rank	N	M	SD	Rank
Part1	Teacher centered	198	2.28	0.77	4	196	2.32	0.80	2	193	2.23	0.85	3
Part2	Individual	198	2.36	0.83	3	196	2.30	0.81	3	192	2.22	0.84	4
Part3	Pair work	198	2.56	0.90	2	196	2.26	0.85	4	193	2.47	0.87	2
Part4	Group work	198	2.62	0.94	1	196	2.40	0.90	1	193	2.62	0.89	1
St1	Memorize many words and idioms.	197	3.05	0.77	6	191	3.14	0.64	2	183	3.11	0.72	3
St2	Understand and memorize grammar.	197	3.03	0.79	7	192	2.88	0.71	6	184	2.94	0.79	5
St3	Memorize many English sentences from the textbook.	197	2.49	0.82	9	192	2.43	0.80	9	184	2.33	0.81	9
St4	Solve many grammar exercises.	196	3.09	0.74	3	192	2.83	0.77	7	184	2.79	0.80	7
St5	Solve many reading comprehension questions.	196	3.09	0.76	4	192	2.90	0.74	5	184	2.87	0.79	6
St6	Accurately translate English into Japanese.	195	2.78	0.84	8	191	2.76	0.78	8	184	2.76	0.89	8
St7	Verbalize or write correct sentences using words, idioms, and grammar rules one memorized.	196	3.08	0.69	5	190	2.97	0.65	4	184	3.09	0.75	4
St8	Listen & read many English sentences & understand them w/o paying too much attention to grammar.	196	3.17	0.76	2	190	3.09	0.64	3	184	3.20	0.75	2
St9	Simulate real conversational situations and use English.	197	3.27	0.71	1	189	3.20	0.68	1	184	3.39	0.69	1

Table 9

Students' Preference of Topics: Each Grade Level

Item	Topics	1st grade				2nd grade				3rd grade			
		N	M	SD	Rank	N	M	SD	Rank	N	M	SD	Rank
T1	Language in the world	197	2.56	0.84	22	194	2.50	0.82	20	189	2.64	0.86	20
T2	Foreign culture, people	197	2.44	0.83	26	196	2.39	0.83	25	189	2.60	0.85	22
T3	World history	196	2.41	0.92	27	196	2.31	0.83	28	189	2.40	0.90	30
T4	Famous historical sites	196	2.99	0.82	13	196	2.79	0.85	13	187	3.12	0.84	11
T5	Current world events	197	2.60	0.77	19	196	2.41	0.81	23	188	2.58	0.81	23
T6	Japanese around the world	197	2.73	0.80	16	196	2.52	0.88	17	188	2.75	0.88	15
T7	Japanese culture	196	2.62	0.78	18	195	2.43	0.82	22	188	2.70	0.88	19
T8	Domestic news	196	2.80	0.70	15	196	2.54	0.77	16	187	2.74	0.77	16
T9	Narrative stories	197	2.60	0.84	19	196	2.51	0.81	19	187	2.73	0.87	18
T10	Literature	196	2.35	0.82	29	196	2.27	0.79	30	187	2.45	0.93	28
T11	Drama (play)	195	2.39	0.86	28	196	2.30	0.87	29	187	2.48	0.95	26
T12	Art	195	2.33	0.85	30	195	2.32	0.87	27	186	2.52	1.01	25
T13	Music	197	3.15	0.81	8	196	3.21	0.82	1	187	3.33	0.77	3
T14	Movies	196	3.31	0.69	3	196	3.15	0.79	4	187	3.32	0.76	4
T15	Fashion	197	3.07	0.80	9	195	3.01	0.82	7	185	3.26	0.77	6
T16	TV drama	197	3.23	0.70	4	195	3.03	0.72	6	185	3.18	0.75	8
T17	Animation	197	2.46	0.84	24	195	2.40	0.79	24	185	2.52	0.91	24
T18	People in show biz	197	3.01	0.78	12	195	2.86	0.82	10	185	2.91	0.82	13
T19	Education	196	2.26	0.78	33	194	2.21	0.69	31	185	2.48	0.81	27
T20	Psychology	196	2.51	0.90	23	194	2.51	0.86	18	185	2.62	0.91	21
T21	Science	195	2.28	0.85	32	193	2.13	0.75	33	185	2.02	0.81	33
T22	Nature/environment	196	2.45	0.86	25	193	2.37	0.79	26	185	2.44	0.89	29
T23	Computer	196	2.58	0.83	21	193	2.44	0.85	21	185	2.35	0.93	31
T24	Animal	196	2.70	0.87	17	194	2.64	0.86	15	185	2.88	0.89	14
T25	Sports	196	3.22	0.80	6	194	2.96	0.87	9	185	3.18	0.85	8
T26	Traveling	196	2.93	0.87	14	194	2.80	0.83	12	185	3.12	0.82	10
T27	Food, cooking	196	3.01	0.81	11	193	2.97	0.79	8	185	3.22	0.79	7
T28	Homeroom	198	2.30	0.75	31	196	2.13	0.76	32	187	2.26	0.82	32
T29	Club activity	198	3.21	0.88	7	196	2.65	1.00	14	187	2.74	1.01	16
T30	School festival	198	2.24	0.81	34	196	1.93	0.74	34	188	1.99	0.87	34
T31	School work (study)	198	3.04	0.85	10	196	2.83	0.80	11	187	2.98	0.81	12
T32	Future course	198	3.22	0.75	5	196	3.15	0.76	3	187	3.30	0.72	5
T33	Friendship	196	3.34	0.66	1	197	3.13	0.72	5	188	3.34	0.71	2
T34	Hobby	198	3.32	0.76	2	195	3.19	0.83	2	188	3.35	0.79	1

Principal Components Analysis and Composite Measures for Grade Comparison

Principal components analysis (PCA) is often used to determine the underlying trait beneath the measured qualities by examining the patterns of correlations (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). In other words, principal components analysis can reveal the construct validity which is “the degree to which an instrument measures what it claims to be measuring” (Brown, Cunha, Frota, & Ferreira, 2001, p. 266). PCA groups collinear indicators (each question item in current study) that capture common traits and reveal the degree of association between indicators and latent components (traits). I conducted a PCA on the needs and strategy parts of the survey⁵ to explore what kinds of traits students perceived among the items. In addition, PCA was utilized to create a composite measure that represents the identified components and to compare how similar or different those components were perceived by grade level.

I first extracted components by means of a principal component analysis, and performed an orthogonal varimax rotation on the components whose eigenvalues (an amount of total variance accounted for by a single component) were greater than 1.0 (this means that the component explains at least 10% of the total variation in the data). I also performed the PCA a different rotation technique (oblique rotation), but the results were essentially the same. For this reason, only the results from the varimax rotation are reported here. The number of components was validated by Cattell’s (1978) scree test, which is generally considered the best solution for selecting the correct number of components (Kline, 1994). A screeplot indicates the proportion of variance accounted for by each component. The general rule of thumb is to count the number of components to the left of the intersection of two slopes. By examining the screeplot in Figure 1 and those eigenvalues over 1.0, it was determined that there were seven components involved in this survey instrument. The cut-point for component loading was set at 0.50, since that cut-point provides a relatively clear picture in explaining the components. This is not to say that the items that have loadings between 0.30 and 0.49 can be ignored. Items with loadings of 0.50 and over are indicated in boldface type in Table 10.

Table 10 shows the component loadings after varimax rotation for all students’ responses. The seven components were examined by looking for common characteristics

⁵ The participation style was excluded from the analysis since the reliability was low.

among the items that had high loadings on each component. The common characteristics of the items that loaded more than 0.50 on the component are summarized in Table 11. The seven components listed in Table 11 explain 69% of the total variance of students' response patterns.

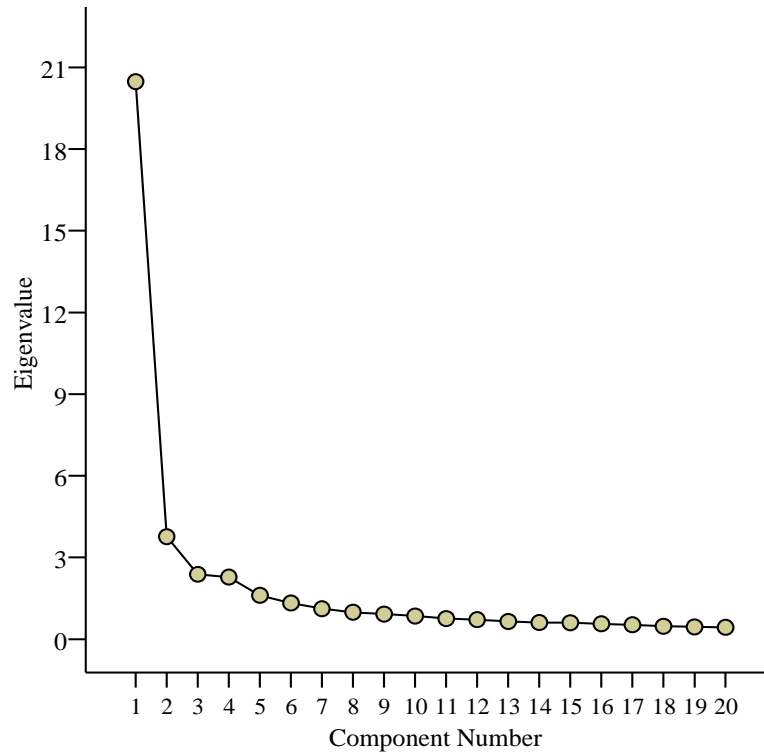


Figure 1. Scree-plot of principal components of students' survey responses

Table 10

Extracted Components from Students' Perceived Needs among High School Students

Item	Description	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<i>h</i> ²
W6	Write one's thoughts & feelings abt one's favorite songs, movies, TV shows.	0.79	0.18	0.24	0.12	0.10	0.09	0.12	0.76
W2	Write English poems.	0.76	0.12	0.12	0.06	0.00	0.18	0.02	0.64
W5	Write one's thoughts/opinions abt a story, novel, other people's opinions.	0.74	0.21	0.30	0.20	0.06	0.01	0.11	0.74
W1	Keep a diary in English	0.73	0.16	0.20	0.06	0.03	0.09	0.09	0.63
W4	Write a summary of a story, novel, or other people's opinions in English.	0.73	0.29	0.29	0.22	0.06	0.02	0.11	0.77
LS12	Exchange one's feelings and opinions abt TV shows/movies with a friend.	0.68	0.15	0.04	0.35	0.11	0.33	-0.02	0.74
W7	Request / fill an application form from an institution abroad.	0.66	0.33	0.30	0.23	-0.01	-0.02	0.05	0.70
LS7	Exchange opinions on social problems with one's friend	0.65	0.20	0.07	0.45	0.08	0.12	-0.06	0.70
W3	Communicate with foreigners by writing a letter, online chatting, or email.	0.61	0.29	0.25	0.34	0.01	0.14	0.11	0.66
LS11	Tell the summary of the favorite TV shows, and movies to one's friend.	0.60	0.21	0.06	0.37	0.09	0.45	-0.03	0.76
LS13	Deliver a speech or give a presentation in English.	0.58	0.23	0.23	0.39	0.05	0.11	0.04	0.61
F6	Communicate with other students in the university/lang school abroad.	0.22	0.79	0.23	0.24	0.06	0.15	0.17	0.84
F2	Communicate with the local people while traveling / home stay abroad.	0.21	0.77	0.22	0.33	0.03	0.11	0.15	0.84

F5	Complete the necessary task/matters in a foreign country.	0.31	0.76	0.27	0.15	0.07	0.10	0.04	0.78
F3	Communicate with one's host family during a home stay program abroad.	0.23	0.76	0.24	0.28	0.04	0.14	0.16	0.80
F4	Read course descriptions & choose a course when studying abroad.	0.28	0.75	0.21	0.16	0.06	0.11	0.03	0.73
F1	Get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad.	0.18	0.72	0.29	0.33	0.03	0.10	0.13	0.77
F7	Go abroad to work or do volunteer work.	0.41	0.65	0.08	0.12	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.64
W9	Answer the gramm & vocab questions in the entrance exams & STEP test.	0.28	0.23	0.81	0.08	0.17	0.12	0.02	0.84
W8	Answer composition questions in the entrance exams and STEP test.	0.27	0.26	0.79	0.07	0.20	0.10	0.00	0.82
R7	Answer reading comp questions of entrance exams or the STEP test.	0.16	0.19	0.76	0.24	0.15	0.07	0.03	0.73
LS15	Answer listening comp questions of entrance exams or STEP test.	0.24	0.17	0.75	0.17	0.19	0.21	0.00	0.75
LS16	Pass the interview portion of the entrance exam or the STEP test.	0.22	0.26	0.73	0.20	0.15	0.21	-0.02	0.76
R3	Understand a text equivalent to the level of the textbook.	0.20	0.18	0.62	0.45	0.09	0.02	0.07	0.68
R2	Understand words/expressions/grammar rules that appear in the textbook.	0.24	0.24	0.59	0.44	0.10	-0.03	0.02	0.67
LS3	Establish friendship with a foreigner and talk about interesting topics.	0.30	0.34	0.12	0.61	-0.01	0.16	0.06	0.62
LS5	Introduce Japanese culture and custom in English to an exchange student.	0.41	0.34	0.13	0.61	0.10	0.16	0.01	0.70
LS1	Engage in a simple daily conversation with foreigners living in Japan.	0.16	0.38	0.30	0.58	-0.02	0.30	0.15	0.71
LS4	Give direction when asked by a foreigner on the street.	0.27	0.43	0.24	0.56	0.02	0.21	0.05	0.68
R4	Understand the gist of easy stories or novels in English.	0.24	0.17	0.43	0.56	0.02	0.14	0.15	0.62
LS2	Introduce oneself in English.	0.17	0.27	0.25	0.56	0.07	0.18	0.21	0.56
R5	Choose an interesting article from newspapers/magazines and read them.	0.44	0.21	0.24	0.55	-0.06	0.09	0.07	0.61
LS6	Exchange opinions on personal stories / familiar topics with one's friend.	0.54	0.23	0.08	0.55	0.08	0.15	0.01	0.68
R1	Read a text from a textbook with correct pronunciation.	0.27	0.14	0.38	0.49	0.10	0.11	0.24	0.55
R6	Extract necessary information from internet (homepages written in English).	0.47	0.14	0.24	0.49	-0.08	0.10	0.03	0.55
LS14	Speak Eng w/ attention to rhythm, intonation, volume, speed, pronunciation.	0.44	0.25	0.35	0.47	0.04	0.23	0.11	0.67
St4	Solve many grammar exercises.	-0.02	0.06	0.16	0.07	0.82	-0.01	0.00	0.70
St2	Understand and memorize grammar.	0.00	0.05	0.17	-0.04	0.78	0.01	0.07	0.64
St5	Solve many reading comprehension questions.	-0.02	0.05	0.09	0.10	0.77	-0.02	0.09	0.62
St6	Accurately translate English into Japanese.	0.10	-0.04	0.05	-0.02	0.67	0.10	0.08	0.48
St3	Memorize many English sentences from the textbook.	0.06	0.01	0.02	0.09	0.66	0.02	-0.16	0.47
St7	Verbalize/write correct sentences using memorized words, idioms & gram.	0.11	0.09	0.06	0.00	0.57	0.00	0.52	0.61
St1	Memorize many words and idioms.	0.05	0.06	0.10	-0.11	0.52	0.00	0.31	0.40
LS9	Sing one's favorite English songs.	0.25	0.13	0.18	0.21	0.05	0.78	0.12	0.79
LS8	Understand the main message / ideas of the favorite songs in English.	0.23	0.29	0.24	0.27	0.00	0.70	0.13	0.78
LS10	Understand the main idea of the favorite TV shows and movies in English.	0.30	0.33	0.24	0.33	0.07	0.57	0.01	0.70
St9	Simulate real conversational situations and use English.	0.09	0.15	0.01	0.18	0.08	0.06	0.81	0.73
St8	Listen/read many Eng sentences & understand them w/o attention to gram.	0.08	0.18	0.00	0.14	0.16	0.12	0.79	0.73
<i>Proportion of variance explained</i>		0.16	0.12	0.12	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.04	0.69

^aLS 6, St 7 were eliminated from the composite measure analysis due to complex loadings on several components.

^bLS 14 and R 1 and R 6 were also eliminated from the composite measure analysis since the decision cut point was set at loadings of over .50.

Table 11

Description of the Seven Components

Components	Name	Description of the component
Component 1	Meaning oriented output tasks	Meaning oriented output tasks with focus on summarizing the main message of input and expressing own ideas.
Component 2	Foreign use	English use in a foreign country (traveling, homestay, study abroad, and job).
Component 3	High-stakes testing	English use and preparation for high-stakes testing, such as entrance exams and the STEP tests.
Component 4	Authenticity	Communicating with foreigners in a real-world situation and studying authentic materials.
Component 5	Rote memorization learning strategies	Traditional, rote memorization and accuracy oriented strategies with focus on words, idioms, and grammar
Component 6	Comprehend fun content	Non-creative activity (understanding and singing) with non-academic fun content (songs, movies, and TV programs)
Component 7	Communicative learning strategies	Input flood and simulation of real-world conversational situation.

Validity Analysis and Revision for Future Survey Use

The seven components somewhat matched the criteria used to create the survey (domestic or foreign use; communicating with friends versus foreigners; minimal communication skill vs. elaborate use; high-low stake language use; familiar and fun topics versus social problems; and traditional versus communicative learning strategies).

The results of the principal component analysis provided a direction for future revisions of the survey items. First, items LS 6 and St 7 should be either revised or eliminated due to the complex loadings on several components. Second, items L 14, R 1 and R 6 should be clarified to better represent the construct, since these items had loadings below 0.50. Thirdly, many of the items were created based on two constructs (one on the function of the language use and the content of the language) which made the results difficult to interpret. It is advisable to separate the constructs and have one construct for each item. Fourthly, as indicated in component 6 (comprehend fun topics), students seem to be sensitive to the academic versus light-hearted topics. Thus, all task types with input should have had a parallel question item depending on the topics to clarify whether the topic alone was a major factor. Finally, steps should be taken to

balance the number of items that represent the seven components (11 items loaded on component 1 while only two items loaded on component 7). Consequently, shortening or lengthening the survey may be necessary to achieve a greater balance between items and components.

Differences Among Grade Levels

Based on the principal component analysis, seven composite measures that represent the components were created. Some of the items were eliminated from the analysis due to complex loadings on several components (L 6 and St 7), or due to the low loading below 0.50 on one component (L 14, R 1, and R 6). For every student, the mean of the items that loaded on one component over 0.50 was calculated to create the composite measure. Table 12 shows the composite measure names, a list of retained items that were calculated for each composite measure, Cronbach reliability of each composite measure, and descriptive statistics for the composite measure in each grade. The researcher acknowledges that Cronbach *alpha* is affected by the number of items in each measurement, the variance, and the number of participants. The small number of items in Comp 7 may have affected the reliability, resulting in a moderate level of reliability ($\alpha = 0.79$).

Table 12

Items and Reliability and Descriptive Statistics of the Composite Measures

Description of the composite measure	Retained items	<i>k</i>	α	Grade	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Comp 1: Meaning oriented output tasks	W1, W2, W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, LS7, LS11, LS12, LS13	11	0.95	1	197	2.45	0.73
				2	190	2.20	0.71
				3	183	2.33	0.78
				Total	570	2.33	0.75
Comp 2: Foreign use	F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7	7	0.95	1	197	3.02	0.75
				2	190	2.69	0.79
				3	183	2.87	0.88
				Total	570	2.86	0.82
Comp 3: High-stakes testing	W8, W9, L15, L16, R2, R3, R7	7	0.94	1	197	3.07	0.64
				2	190	2.68	0.79
				3	183	2.79	0.81
				Total	570	2.85	0.77
Comp 4: Authenticity	LS1, LS2, LS3, LS4, LS5, R4, R5	7	0.93	1	197	2.94	0.72
				2	190	2.72	0.74
				3	183	2.88	0.79
				Total	570	2.85	0.75
Comp 5: Rote memorization learning strategies	St1, St2, St3, St4, St5, St6	6	0.82	1	197	2.92	0.59
				2	190	2.83	0.52
				3	183	2.80	0.58
				Total	570	2.85	0.57
Comp 6: Comprehend fun content	LS8, LS9, LS10	3	0.86	1	197	3.04	0.75
				2	190	2.82	0.82
				3	183	3.05	0.83
				Total	570	2.97	0.81
Comp 7: Communicative learning strategies	St8, St9	2	0.79	1	197	3.22	0.67
				2	190	3.15	0.59
				3	183	3.30	0.66
				Total	570	3.22	0.64

A pattern emerged from the descriptive statistics. Overall, the first grade students favored most of the components more than the third or second grade students, except for Comp 6 (comprehend fun content) and Comp 7 (communicative learning strategies). All students showed favor for the communicative learning strategies, especially the third year students ($M = 3.30$). The third grade students mostly rated all composite measures similarly. Perhaps because 2nd year students were struggling in a slump, or unclear about their purpose in school, the 2nd year students did not rate most items as high as the 1st and 3rd year students. The results reflect a tendency among second year students to generally be less motivated at the beginning of the school year. First year students are usually highly motivated and full of expectations at the start of high school life, which was when the survey was administered. Students generally start to have a clear picture of which future course they want to take at the beginning of the third year. It is not until the end of the second year when the students declare whether they want to enroll in the attached university, prepare for entrance exam for other universities, pursue specific skills at vocational schools, or work after high school. At the end of the first semester of the third year, students tend to study harder since they have to compete with peers for a higher grade point average in order to be able to choose the department in which they want to enroll.

In order to explore whether the mean differences are statistically significant or not, the mean scores of the composite measures were compared between groups using Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance⁶ (see Table 12). An *alpha* level of $p < .05$ was used in the analysis. The results showed a significant main effect for grade, $F(2, 567) = 8.95, p = 0.001, \eta_p^2 = 0.03$, and composite measures $F(6, 562) = 169.17, p = 0.001, \eta_p^2 = 0.64$, and a significant grade by composite measure interaction, $F(12, 1124) = 2.99, p = 0.001, \eta_p^2 = 0.03$. The observed power was over 0.97 for all analyses. The partial eta squared (i.e., the proportion of the effect and error variance that is attributable to the effect) indicated that 64% of the overall variation was accounted for by composite measures, but only 3% of overall variation was explained by the interaction effect between grade and composite measure. However, since the interaction effect was statistically significant, a post-hoc Sidak test was used for determination of individual

⁶ Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance was used since the items did not solely load on one component.

group differences on every composite measure (see Table 14). Figure 2 is a visual display of the interaction effect of grade levels and components.

The Holm-Sidak post hoc test revealed that there were no significant differences among grade levels for their view on rote memorization strategies (Comp 5) and communicative learning strategies (Comp 7). For other composite measures, statistically significant differences were found between the 1st grade students and 2nd grade students. The first year students showed higher expectations than the second year students in wanting to be able to perform meaning oriented output tasks (Comp1), use language in a foreign country (Comp2), pass high-stakes testing (Comp3), perform authentic tasks (Comp4), and comprehend entertainment topics (Comp6) by the end of high school. As for the difference between 2nd grade students and 3rd grade students, 2nd grade students rated the necessity of fun topics lower with statistical significance than the 3rd grade students. The first year and third year students' perceptions of English needs and learning strategies were only statistically different from each other for high-stakes testing. Both second and third year students may not be so conscious of high-stakes testing since they do not have to prove their English ability for external purposes. Instead, they have to perform well on the achievement tests (mid-term and final tests) based on class content and course materials, in order to be able to choose the department they want to get into.

Table 13

Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for Grade and Composite Measure

Source	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial η^2	Observed Power
<i>Between Subject Effect</i>					
Grade	8.947*	2	0.001	0.031	0.973
Error		567			
<i>Within Subject Effect</i>					
Composite Measure	169.165*	6	0.001	0.644	1.000
Error		562			
Composite Measure * Grade	2.990*	12	0.001	0.031	0.992
Error		1124			

* $p < .05$

Table 14

Post-Hoc Holm-Sidak Analysis for differences between Groups for Each Composite Measure

Composite Measures	Grade (I)	Grade (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	p	95% C. I. for difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Comp 1: Meaning oriented output tasks	1	2	0.257*	0.002	0.076	0.438
	1	3	0.122	0.298	-0.061	0.304
	3	2	0.135	0.220	-0.049	0.319
Comp 2: Foreign use	1	2	0.328*	0.001	0.131	0.524
	1	3	0.145	0.225	-0.054	0.343
	3	2	0.183	0.085	-0.017	0.383
Comp 3: High-stakes testing	1	2	0.389*	0.001	0.207	0.572
	1	3	0.282*	0.001	0.098	0.466
	3	2	0.108	0.417	-0.078	0.293
Comp 4: Authenticity	1	2	0.225*	0.010	0.043	0.407
	1	3	0.063	0.799	-0.121	0.247
	3	2	0.162	0.106	-0.023	0.348
Comp 5: Rote memorization learning strategies	1	2	0.096	0.262	-0.042	0.233
	1	3	0.126	0.087	-0.013	0.265
	3	2	-0.031	0.937	-0.170	0.109
Comp 6: Comprehend fun content	1	2	0.222*	0.019	0.027	0.417
	1	3	-0.011	0.999	-0.208	0.186
	3	2	0.233*	0.015	0.035	0.432
Comp 7: Communicative learning strategies	1	2	0.075	0.580	-0.081	0.231
	1	3	-0.074	0.593	-0.232	0.083
	3	2	0.149	0.073	-0.010	0.308

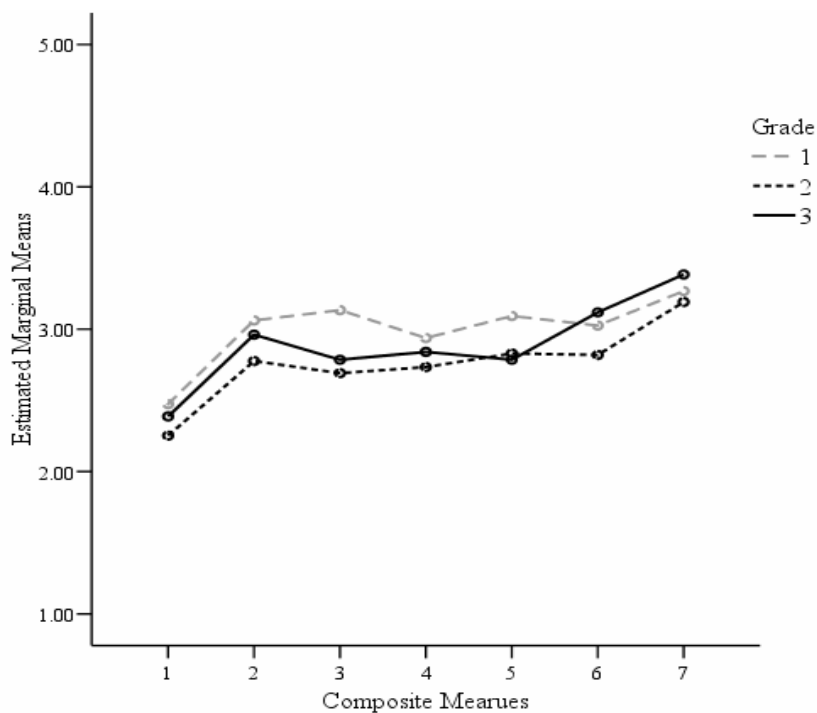


Figure 2. Interaction of grade levels by components

DISCUSSION

Various needs were revealed from the survey results. Students' perceptions and teachers' perceptions of English needs are triangulated with societal needs, and institutional needs in this section. Also, perceptual differences among grade-levels are discussed.

Comparison of Views on English Needs (EQ1)

Overall, there was agreement between the students and teachers that minimal conversation skills (introducing oneself, small talk, etc.) are the most important skills that high school students should possess by the end. This is also in agreement with the government's goal of the action plan that "through instruction, basic and practical communication abilities will be acquired so that the entire public can conduct daily conversation and exchange information in English" (MEXT, 2003a, para.1). However, whereas the MEXT emphasized tasks requiring learners to express their opinion as

important, teachers and students did not view them as necessary. This is a clear inconsistency among the perceptions of the teachers, students, and the MEXT, especially since the English objectives in the Course of Study (MEXT, 2003b) for junior high school even promote the idea that students should be able to speak and write about their thoughts and understand a speaker or writer's intentions in simple English.

The government encourages the importance "for all Japanese people to aim at achieving a level of English commensurate with average world standards based on objective indicators such as STEP, TOEFL, and TOEIC" (MEXT, 2003a, para.1), and every group agreed to a different degree (1st year students were more aware than 2nd and 3rd year students and teachers) that passing high stakes testing is one of the tasks high school students have to deal with. From the survey, since the entrance exam and the STEP test were stated under the same item, it was not clear which test types students want to pass. From the fact that 90% of the students proceed to the attached university without taking an entrance exam, students may be more cognizant of the STEP test. However, some of the 3rd year students noted in the open-ended question that once they get into the university, they have to compete with other high school graduates in English courses.

Reading. Teachers strongly acknowledged the necessity of reading ability whereas students' preferred communication skills. High means for all seven reading tasks by the teachers indicated reading as the most important skill from their perspective. Teachers wanted students to be able to comprehend textbook-level texts, and understand words, expressions, and grammar rules that appear in the textbooks (ranked as the 3rd most necessary task). Students and teachers indicated a difference in preference for the type of reading texts. Teachers promoted the importance of reading all types of texts illustrated in this survey. In contrast, the 1st and 3rd year students preferred easy novels and stories over textbooks. More additional graded readings (other than the textbook) that cover a variety of topics are recommended. The extensive reading program for the first grade students, which had just started at the time of the survey, seems to be well suited for the third grade students as well.

Listening and speaking. The responses from teachers and students revealed similar tendencies. Students and teachers strongly perceived the value of daily communication

ability, but no more so than the ability required for simple daily conversation. The Course of Study emphasizes the development of students' ability to convey information and ideas, but teachers and students did not perceive the opinion exchange tasks as important. Nonetheless, students' positive attitudes towards communication corresponded with the emphasis on communication in the Course of Study.

Upon closer examination, many teachers place greater emphasis on the importance of expressing one's opinion in English than the students did. The students were likely to rate items lower whenever those items required "exchanging opinions and thoughts."

Teachers seemed to perceive the exchange of opinions as important for personal stories or familiar topics, but not for topics that are more difficult for students, such as TV shows, movies, and social problems. Perhaps input on how people express opinions in English and simple opinion exchange tasks, which provide contexts students can relate to, should be incorporated from the first year. In addition, introducing real-world opportunities in which students need to express their opinion in English, such as English bulletin board systems, audioblogs, and podcasts, can motivate them to share their opinion with wider audiences.

Another difference between teachers and students was observed in their perceptions of tasks involving songs. Not many teachers recognized the necessity for understanding the meaning of the songs, whereas a large number of the students felt it necessary. Specifically, the corresponding items, "understanding the message of one's favorite songs" and "singing one's favorite English songs," were rated higher by students than by teachers. Based on these results, one could argue that the use of songs in class may motivate students' learning. A list of songs that correspond with the content or the grammar points for each unit of the textbook may be a useful resource for the school to have.

Writing. There was a clear gap between teachers and students in their perceptions of writing needs. Students did not feel a strong need for writing except to pass the high stakes testing, while teachers wanted students to also be able to perform communicative writing tasks. The teachers value the necessity of exchanging opinions on personal stories and familiar topics, but the students do not recognize that necessity as much. It was

interesting to see how teachers preferred texts as input (story, novel, or other people's opinions), over songs, movies, and TV programs, before conducting writing output tasks.

The need for output tasks was also stated in the overall objectives for writing in the Course of Studies: "To accustom and familiarize students with writing in English and to enable them to write about their thoughts etc. in simple English" (MEXT, 2003b, para 2). All teachers thought students will need to write letters/emails and/or chat online in the future, probably reflecting the current trends in technology. Writing can serve various purposes from formal letters, academic writing, online asynchronist communication, to personal writing. The teachers have to clarify the purposes and the conventions of the writing, and better understand MEXT's expectations in order to better prepare their students. Also, to fill the gap between what students expect, and what society and teachers expect for English writing ability, it may be worthwhile to introduce real world writing opportunities (e.g., online e-mail exchange with students from another country, filling in immigration forms, requesting application forms, etc.) to students so that they will appreciate writing tasks given in class and have a clearer purpose for learning how to write in English. Students also need to be aware of and need practice in the different conventions of academic writing.

Use abroad. Seventy-four percent of the students and 100% of the teachers perceived the need to be able to at least cope with English when traveling abroad. Around 7% of the students feel that they do not have to deal with English use abroad at all. Over 60% of the students expressed their needs/wants to go overseas to travel or to study. The existence of the short-term student exchange programs may influence students' perceptions regarding traveling abroad.

It was rather surprising that 52% of the students thought they would either do volunteer work or get a job in a foreign country. In reality, only one or two graduates every year either attend a preparatory school to apply to a foreign university or go abroad to study after graduation. To better prepare students, incorporating more tasks they can utilize when they travel overseas is encouraged. However, in order to gain a fuller understanding of the students' long term perspectives, an alumni survey is needed to track how many graduates actually experience using English overseas.

Comparison of Views on Participation Styles (EQ2) and Learning Strategies (EQ3)

Overall, a clear distinction between teachers and students in the preferences for certain classroom styles by teachers and certain participation styles by students was observed. All students ranked group work as the most preferred participation style, whereas teachers self-reported that individual-work or teacher-centered classes are more frequent classroom styles than pair work or group work. There appears to be a clear mismatch between the teachers' approach and students' expectations. On the whole, the 2nd year students seem more accepting of a teacher-centered class than the 1st and 3rd year students. The discrepancies between the real classroom participation styles and students' preferences may be due to the classroom size, space, and/or teachers' perceptions of how language classes should be. One teacher received pressure from other non-language teachers to make the language classroom controlled and quiet so as not to disturb other classes, which naturally made the English classes less-interactive. The limited number of classrooms available allows only the freshman English conversation class to enjoy reduced class sizes of 20 instead of 40 students per class. On average, there are 40 students in one class, thus it may be hard for the teacher to pay attention and give feedback to all pairs during interaction activities. Setting up clear and easy-to-measure goals for the interaction tasks may help teachers to later assess students. Also, introducing self- and peer-assessments may be another way to promote responsibility in learning.

As for learning strategies, both students and teachers felt that simulating real conversational situation and using English were the most effective ways of learning English. Students in all grade levels believed that memorizing sentences from the textbook is a useless strategy, while teachers believed it is a useful strategy. It is likely that students think that there are few situations where the textbook sentences can be applied in reality.

A slight difference was observed in their perceptions for "accurate translation from English into Japanese" (*yakudoku*). Although 66% of the teachers regarded translation as "not so effective" or "not effective at all," the majority of students (85%) seem to feel that it is either "somewhat effective" or "definitely effective." This divergence may suggest that students were familiar with using *yakudoku* since they started preparing for

the high school entrance exams. The study guide distributed to the first year students stated that “one can prepare for class by reading the text, check the unknown vocabulary, and translate the sentences into Japanese,” which further promotes *yakudoku*. In other words, students may have been engaged in word-by-word translation of the text as a necessary task to prepare for their classes. Although many students may still believe in the effectiveness of translation as an important learning strategy, the 3rd year students seemed to move away from *yakudoku* and prefer more use-focused strategies. There is a need to resolve this discrepancy by raising teachers’ awareness of how students have been learning and how they are approaching language teaching, and re-visiting the study guide they disseminate to students to deemphasize *yakudoku* and promote use-focused strategies.

Students also pointed to a native-speaker-teacher myth in the write-in response. This is somewhat parallel to how the government views the improvement of English language teaching. The government’s solution to cultivating Japanese students’ ability to communicate and express their opinions were to place Assistant Language Teachers, who are native speakers of English, nationwide in junior and high school classrooms to provide native English speakers in English classes. There are two ALTs in the school conducting conversation classes; however, their classes are independent from the rest of the curriculum. There is a need to communicate with the ALTs to integrate their agenda into the existing curriculum.

Comparison of Topic Preference (EQ4)

A gap between what students like to talk about or discuss versus what has been introduced in the class was observed. Topics that are related to their school lives or their personal lives, such as friendship, hobbies, club activities, and the future, were rated high by most students. At the same time, students also appreciated media-related topics such as movies, music, and TV dramas. On the other hand, the topics teachers actually introduced most were those which often appear in the textbooks: language around the world, foreign culture/people, Japanese culture, current world events, Japanese around the world, nature/environment, world history, and music. Teachers also rated light-hearted topics, such as sports, traveling, people in show biz, and food/cooking as highly

engaging for students. From the results, linking the topics in the textbook to students' own lives may help increase students' motivation. Also, using video clips and introducing popular songs in the class is encouraged. However, teaching materials need to be more accessible for busy teachers so they can easily incorporate them into their classes. More sharing of lesson plans and teaching materials would reduce teachers' load and reduce the need to create materials from scratch.

CONCLUSION

The survey results revealed that both teachers and students acknowledge the importance of preparing for high stakes testing as well as having the ability to carry on a daily conversation in English. There was a slight difference in perceptions between the students and teachers with regard to the necessity of communication ability. The teachers seemed to rate the necessity of expressing opinions and thoughts more strongly than the students did. The reasons why many of the students rated the necessity of exchanging opinions lower could be attributed to their assumption that "telling or exchanging opinions" are difficult activities. However, the communication ability that the Action Plan (MEXT, 2003a) is aiming at may not be so difficult for high school students to achieve. According to the Action Plan, high school graduates need to be able to "conduct normal communication with regard to topics, for example, relating to daily life" (MEXT, 2003b, I. Goals). This is in line with the skills needed to pass the pre-second level of the STEP test. The interview for the pre-second level of the STEP test asks for their opinions and feelings about daily issues (see Appendix A for sample interview prompt by Obunsha, 2004). The issues in the interview tests are what students often hear about or even discuss in their daily life, so the interview should not be difficult at all. Moreover, in order to establish friendships with foreigners, which was rated relatively highly by the students, this type of exchanging of thoughts and opinions in daily conversations would be necessary. The students' results for the topics of interest indicate that they prefer casual issues relevant to their daily lives over formal issues such as academic or social problems in the early stages of high school life. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the government goal is plausible, that is, the communication ability that high school

graduates need is the ability to carry out simple daily conversations plus the ability to express or exchange thoughts, feelings, and opinions about daily issues.

In order to accomplish both the teachers' and students' goals for the purpose of communication with respect to achieving grammar knowledge and use, I would suggest a task-based language model. A good task may expose students to rich and comprehensible input, have them use the language to actually do things, and motivate them to listen, read, speak, and write English. A gradual transition from introducing communicative activities in the first year and moving more towards tasks as a unit in the syllabus would reflect the current students' view on learning strategies and participation style. Note that a strict focus on grammar and translation methods was not perceived positively by the 3rd year students. Working through and recycling practical tasks in a spiral manner, fluency and accuracy of English reading, writing, speaking and listening can be built. To meet students', teachers', and societal needs, there is a need to develop tasks in which students exchange (either in speaking and writing) their own thoughts, feelings, and opinions for topics which are relevant to their daily life. On the other hand, we cannot ignore the strong necessity of preparing for examinations expressed in this survey. The entrance examinations and the subsections of the STEP tests are especially focused on reading ability and grammar knowledge. Therefore, developing tasks that involve reading as well as grammar instruction within meaningful content that also require learners to communicate would be ideal. In order to include reading elements in a task, one could provide reading texts for the purpose of expanding content knowledge and thus, helping them to elaborate on their thoughts and strengthen opinions. For grammar instruction, teachers could apply focus on form approaches to shift students' focus from meaning to form in many different ways (e.g., input enhancement, pre-task planning, or recasts). Some suggestions for School A can be summarized as follows.

Stating the goal of the program. Since there is no clear statement of the goals of the English program of the school, aligning administrators', teachers' and students' views on the goals is necessary. The specification of goals and objectives should be negotiated among the faculty to promote ownership of the curriculum. Below are some suggested statements—it is not an exhaustive list.

- Through scaffolding language learning tasks, students will build their confidence in using English and learn how to integrate reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills
- Students will learn how language elements (vocabulary, idioms, grammar) are used in actual situations.
- Through extensive reading, students are introduced to a wide range of genres and text types which will reinforce their vocabulary, structure, and content learning.
- Language is understood to be a tool for communication in social settings. Thus, students will interact with their peers and teachers in English and with various audiences via the internet.
- Students will be able to use socially and culturally appropriate communication strategies, depending on the interlocutor, purpose, and settings, in English.
- Through language learning, students will nurture their views by the promotion of multiple perspectives, values, and global awareness.

Content. A topic can be introduced locally (from the students' view), socially (from the country's view), and globally (from the world's view). This way, students can not only relate the topic to their lives but also build multiple perspectives on the same topic. Some topics that students were interested in were hobbies (music, sports, etc.), school life (school system, friendship, dating), college life (areas of study, college in other countries, etc.), and future jobs. How foreigners view Japanese culture was one of the topics students wanted to discuss with a foreigner (in the write-in response). Students were greatly interested in songs, movies, and TV dramas. These media are rich with social commentary, which can be a springboard for discussions on social problems and intercultural understandings. For 3rd year students, especially, current events/news can be introduced to stimulate their understanding of their own country and the world, since that is one of the frequent topics they will be asked in the Japanese essay test for the entrance exams. jd

Target tasks. Communicative output tasks should be conducted in concrete language-use situations so that students play the role of receivers and senders of information, ideas, etc. In the pre-task and the post-task, focus on form can be introduced. Some of the target tasks identified from the survey include: traveling abroad (ordering food, purpose of

travel, filling out custom form, making reservations, asking/requesting information, asking for directions, negotiating price, etc.), small talk/daily conversation (greetings, self-introduction, hobby, sports, music, movie, gossip, news, life, schedule, appointment, phone conversation, lunch, dinner, cooking, food, time, etc.), and picture-explanation and opinion tasks (for the STEP interview tests).

Informing students. To enable students to achieve learning targets, they need to be informed of ways to achieve them. At the beginning of the school year, the syllabus should state the learning objectives and provide students a picture of what they are expected to achieve in the course of their studies. Students should also try to articulate aims and objectives of their own so they have clearer goals set by themselves. Teaching students study skills can also help them to become motivated, independent, and responsible for their own learning. These skills will be invaluable throughout their academic lives.

Professional Development. Short of calling for the restructuring of the entire Japanese educational system, which is an unrealistic goal based solely on the results of this study, teachers need to be made aware of their roles as educators, not just textbook re-enforcers. As educators responsible for improving the quality of education and not just responsible for students, teachers may have to expand their repertoire beyond the textbook. They have to look to each other for innovative ideas in activities and materials development. They have to be willing and able to share techniques if they are to be considered a community of learners. Therefore, peer observations and staff meetings with the explicit purpose of improving themselves as teachers within a school made up of teachers *and* students may encourage teachers to think outside the classroom walls. Consequently, teachers need to learn how to create tasks and activities that incorporate students' participation needs, their strengths as teachers, and the technology available to them. Thus, target tasks should also be identified and more importantly, supported by sound theories in learning and SLA, so as to be properly sequenced to correspond with learners' abilities and, if possible, learning outcomes. Teachers can be in charge of this restructuring of curriculum, appropriately giving them a stake in the overall improvement of the school. A restructuring of the curriculum informed by students' concerns and teachers' expertise while utilizing the school's resources is a necessary step toward

creating a unified educational community. However, teachers cannot do this without the voice of the students, and especially not without the help and support of the administration. Therefore, by allowing a few teachers time off to attend professional development seminars with the intentions of presenting the newly acquired information to their colleagues upon their return, the administration would be supporting a responsible and cohesive learning environment.

Resource building. Creating tasks is not easy. Teachers are already overburdened by their daily duties, and do not have the time to continually create new and appropriate tasks. There is then a need for compiling the resources created by individual teachers for other teachers to access. Course materials and additional resources can be compiled little by little. Tasks used in each course can be filed along with the teacher's log and students' feedback to give the next teacher a fuller view of the tasks available. As the next teacher goes through the sequence, modifications can be logged by the teacher and feedback can be continually collected. By the end of the semester, the feedback on how the tasks worked can be incorporated into the task sequencing for the next semester. In preparation for the next semester, teachers can gather and share (with the new teachers) their experiences with the materials.

In addition, since the school moved to a new building in spring 2005, more resources became available, such as internet, computers, computer assisted language learning (CALL) systems, books for extensive reading, and English magazines. The increased use of computers in language learning demands that students gain computer literacy, and use the skills to search for data, write summaries, make presentations, and communicate with other students around the world. Pair work, peer teaching, and peer review can be incorporated into CALL. Online communication can be less face threatening for students allowing them the comfort to take risks and make mistakes. Moreover, students who have different levels of proficiency can accommodate each other without the pressure of time for online projects. Unfortunately, it appears that "The resources are not shared and used effectively among the faculty. The CALL system is not used at all" (personal communication, Teacher B, June, 25th, 2005). In order to take advantage of the newly acquired resources, there is a need for more resource development, teacher training, and technological support with regard to how CALL system can be used.

Suggestion for Further Evaluation Study

In identifying needs, I acknowledge the value of multiple sources and methodologies; however, because of the limited access to the lecturers, it was not possible to collect information from all intended users. To capture more detailed and precise pictures of high school students' needs for studying English, more data collection from the graduates is called for. As Long (2005) advocated, domain experts (for example, for this analysis, recent graduates of high schools in various domains in Japan), can give more detailed information on the target language use, how they are coping in their domains, and retrospective opinions on what they needed to learn in high school to prepare them for life after high school, and suggestions for English education for high schools. Other groups of people both in audience groups (i.e., school administrators) and resource groups (i.e., parents), as well as domain experts (i.e., high school graduates) will clarify and bring in different views that would supplement this study.

As for methods, post-survey interviews can provide important information which can not be obtained from a questionnaire. These sources and methods should be employed when situations permit to be triangulated with the results of the present needs analysis. In terms of the survey instrument, through principal components analysis, several items were found to need improvement. Due to space and time constraints, several components were collapsed into one item. For future use, it would be better to (a) add who the interlocutor is to the communication based tasks, (b) divide the type of input we collapsed (e.g., movie, TV program, and songs), and (c) add parallel content for topic choices, such as internet, and email.

What I have tried to show in this paper is how to identify students' needs from multiple sources, and based on the results, to suggest improvements for the existing language curriculum. However, the real challenge starts after the results of this study are reported to the primary intended users of the evaluation, the full-time teachers. Although the results suggest many curriculum changes, each teacher may have different interpretations, priorities, and agendas. Thus, it is important that the evaluator hold a strategic meeting for planning and implementation for curriculum improvement. In order to create a sustainable curriculum, professional development will be necessary for on-

going curriculum innovation and future self-study. After all, it is the teacher who will be the key decision maker for the daily lessons. The more investment in professional development the school and the regional Private School Association make, and the more urgency the faculty feels for curriculum change and development, the more likely the implementation of the suggested changes will be. By promoting the understanding that English education can be improved, and how it may be changed, this needs analysis can act as a starting point for the school to shift to a more learner-centered paradigm.

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APPENDIX A

Sample STEP Interview Test for Pre-2nd Level

Procedure: (1) Examinee is asked to read the passage silently; (2) After one minute, there will be five questions asked (One question from the passage, two questions from the picture, and two on one's opinion related to the passage and the picture.)

Questions

No. 1: According to the passage, what do people need in order to have a personal theater in their home?

No. 2: Now, please look at the people in Picture A. They are doing different things. Tell me as much as you can about what they are doing.

No. 3: Now, look at the girl in Picture B. Please describe the situation.

Now, Mr. / Ms. ---, please turn over the card and put it down.

No. 4: Do you think young people spend too much time watching TV?

Yes → Tell me more. No → Tell me more.


No. 5: Do you like to watch movies at home or at a theater?

At home. → Why? At a theater → Why?


Flat-Screen Televisions

Today flat-screen televisions sell well. They are preferred because they don't take a lot of room. With a large flat-screen television and some other equipment, people can have a personal theater in their home. So this new kind of television is becoming popular, although it is a little more expensive than others.

A



B



(Taken from Obunsha, p. 31, 2004)

APPENDIX B

Teachers' Survey Used in the Study

(A brief explanation of the goal of this questionnaire was provided here.)

Section I. Please provide us your background information.					
1) The name of your institution:		2) Total number of students enrolled:			
3) Average class size:		4) Number of English teachers	Full time: Part time: ALT:		
5) Which grade level(s) are you teaching right now?		6) The course(s) you are teaching right now:			
7) Teaching experience	() years				
8) Do you think that the university entrance examination influences your teaching?		Not at all	A little	Somewhat	A lot
		1	2	3	4
9) How frequently do/did the students use English in your class? Please rate the % of use for each skill (listening, reading, speaking and writing) according to the class you have taught / are teaching.					
Course	The title of the textbook you are using	listening	reading	speaking	writing
		%	%	%	%
		%	%	%	%
		%	%	%	%
		%	%	%	%
		%	%	%	%

II. Please list the most important things that students should be able to do in English by the end of high school.

III□ Through your instruction, what kind of tasks will students be able to do in English by the end of high school?

English use within Japan: READING	Not at all	Not so much	Some-what	A lot
Students will be able to:				
read a text from a textbook with correct pronunciation	1	2	3	4
understand words, expressions, and grammar rules that appear in the textbook.	1	2	3	4
understand a text equivalent to the level of the textbook.	1	2	3	4
understand the gist of easy stories or novels in English.	1	2	3	4
choose an interesting article from newspapers and foreign magazines and read them.	1	2	3	4
extract necessary information from internet (homepages written in English).	1	2	3	4
answer the questions in the reading section of entrance exams or the STEP test.	1	2	3	4
English use within Japan: LISTENING AND SPEAKING	Not at all	Not so much	Some-what	A lot
Students will be able to:				
engage in a simple daily conversation (e.g., greetings) with foreigners living in Japan.	1	2	3	4
introduce oneself in English	1	2	3	4
establish friendship with a foreigner and talk about what the student is interested in.	1	2	3	4
give direction when asked by a foreigner on the street.	1	2	3	4
introduce Japanese culture and custom in English to an exchange student	1	2	3	4
exchange opinions on personal stories / familiar topics with one's friend	1	2	3	4
exchange opinions on social problems with one's friend	1	2	3	4
understand the main message / ideas of the favorite songs in English.	1	2	3	4
sing one's favorite English song	1	2	3	4
understand the main idea of the favorite TV shows and movies in English.	1	2	3	4
tell the summary of the favorite TV shows, and movies (in English) to one's friend in English.	1	2	3	4
exchange one's feelings and opinions about their favorite TV shows, and movies (in English) with one's friend in Eng.	1	2	3	4
deliver a speech or give a presentation in English.	1	2	3	4

English use within Japan: LISTENING AND SPEAKING	Not at all	Not so much	Some-what	A lot
Students will be able to:				
speak English by paying careful attention to the rhythm, intonation, volume, speed and pronunciation.	1	2	3	4
answer the questions in the listening section of entrance exams or the STEP test.	1	2	3	4
pass the interview portion of the entrance exam or the STEP test	1	2	3	4
English use within Japan: WRITING	Not at all	Not so much	Some-what	A lot
Students will be able to:				
keep a diary in English	1	2	3	4
write English poems.				
communicate with foreigners by writing a letter, online chatting, or exchanging email in English.	1	2	3	4
write a summary of a story, novel, or other people's opinions in English.	1	2	3	4
write one's thoughts or opinions about the content of a story, novel, or other people's opinions one read or listened to in English.	1	2	3	4
write one's thoughts and feelings about the content of one's favorite songs, movies, and TV shows in English.	1	2	3	4
request an application form from an institution abroad (a university or a language school), and to be able to fill in the application forms.	1	2	3	4
answer composition questions in the entrance exams and STEP test	1	2	3	4
answer the grammar and vocabulary questions in the entrance exams and STEP test.	1	2	3	4
English use overseas	Not at all	Not so much	Some-what	A lot
Students will be able to:				
get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad (e.g., at the airport, on a plane, at the hotel, at a restaurant, at a store etc).	1	2	3	4
communicate with the local people while traveling abroad or during a home stay program abroad.	1	2	3	4
communicate with one's host family during a home stay program abroad	1	2	3	4
read the course description and choose a course one wants to take from the university / language school when studying abroad.	1	2	3	4
complete the necessary task/matters at the bank, post office, school office, etc, in a foreign country.	1	2	3	4
communicate with other students in the university / language school abroad	1	2	3	4
go abroad to work or do volunteer work.	1	2	3	4

In order to cultivate students' English ability, what is the most effective way? Please rate the effectiveness of the following strategies.				
Strategies	Not effective at all	Not so effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
To memorize many words and idioms.	1	2	3	4
To understand and memorize grammar.	1	2	3	4
To memorize many English sentences from the textbook.	1	2	3	4
To solve many grammar exercises.	1	2	3	4
To solve many comprehension questions.	1	2	3	4
To accurately translate English into Japanese.	1	2	3	4

IV. Learning Strategies

To accurately translate English into Japanese.	1	2	3	4
To verbalize or write correct sentences using words, idioms, and grammar rules one memorized.	1	2	3	4
To listen and read many English sentences and understand them without paying too much attention to grammar.	1	2	3	4
To simulate real conversational situations and use (read, write, listen, speak) English.	1	2	3	4
If there are any other strategies you recommend to your students, please list them below and rate them according to the criteria.				
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4

V. Teaching styles

Please rate the teaching styles you use in your class.					
Name of the course	Teaching style	Least	A little	Somewhat	Most
	Teacher centered	1	2	3	4
	Individual	1	2	3	4
	Pair work	1	2	3	4
	Group work	1	2	3	4
	Teacher centered	1	2	3	4
	Individual	1	2	3	4
	Pair work	1	2	3	4
	Group work	1	2	3	4
	Teacher centered	1	2	3	4

	Individual	1	2	3	4
	Pair work	1	2	3	4
	Group work	1	2	3	4

V. Interesting topics for students

Please rate students' interest for the topics you have introduced in your class. If you have never introduced the topic, please rate 0. In addition, if you have any other topics that is not listed, please write in the blank.

Topics	Never introduced	Not at all	Not so much	Somewhat	A lot	Topics	Never introduced	Not at all	Not so much	Somewhat	A lot
Language in the world	0	1	2	3	4	Education	0	1	2	3	4
Foreign culture, people	0	1	2	3	4	Psychology	0	1	2	3	4
World history	0	1	2	3	4	Science	0	1	2	3	4
Famous historical sites	0	1	2	3	4	Nature/environment	0	1	2	3	4
Current world events	0	1	2	3	4	Computer	0	1	2	3	4
Japanese around the world	0	1	2	3	4	Animal	0	1	2	3	4
Japanese culture	0	1	2	3	4	Sports	0	1	2	3	4
Domestic news	0	1	2	3	4	Traveling	0	1	2	3	4
Narrative stories (people's experience)	0	1	2	3	4	Food, cooking	0	1	2	3	4
Literature	0	1	2	3	4	Homeroom	0	1	2	3	4
Drama (play)	0	1	2	3	4	Club activity	0	1	2	3	4
Art	0	1	2	3	4	School festivals	0	1	2	3	4
Music	0	1	2	3	4	School work (study)	0	1	2	3	4
Movies	0	1	2	3	4	Future course	0	1	2	3	4
Fashion	0	1	2	3	4	Friendship	0	1	2	3	4
TV drama	0	1	2	3	4	Hobby	0	1	2	3	4
Animation	0	1	2	3	4		0	1	2	3	4
People in show biz	0	1	2	3	4						
If you have introduced topics that students liked, please list them and rate accordingly.											
		0	1	2	3	4					
		0	1	2	3	4					

III. Would you like to be able to do these things below? Please rate each item.

English use within Japan: READING I would like to be able to...	Not at all	Not so much	Some- what	A lot
read a text in a textbook with correct pronunciation	1	2	3	4
understand all the words, expressions, and grammar rules that appear in the textbook.	1	2	3	4
understand a text equivalent to the level of the textbook	1	2	3	4
understand the gist of easy stories or novels in English	1	2	3	4
choose an interesting article from newspapers and foreign magazines and read them.	1	2	3	4
extract necessary information from internet (homepages written in English)	1	2	3	4
answer the questions in the reading section of entrance exams or the STEP test	1	2	3	4
English use within Japan: LISTENING AND SPEAKING I would like to be able to...	Not at all	Not so much	Some- what	A lot
engage in a simple daily conversation (e.g., greetings) with foreigners living in Japan.	1	2	3	4
introduce myself in English	1	2	3	4
establish friendship with a foreigner and talk about what I am interested in.	1	2	3	4
give direction when asked by a foreigner on the street.	1	2	3	4
introduce Japanese culture and custom in English to an exchange student	1	2	3	4
exchange opinions on personal stories / familiar topics with my friends	1	2	3	4
exchange opinions on social problems with my friend	1	2	3	4
understand the main message / ideas of the favorite songs in English	1	2	3	4
understand the main idea of the favorite TV shows and movies in English	1	2	3	4
tell the summary of favorite English TV shows, and movies (in English) to my friend in English.	1	2	3	4
exchange my feelings and opinions about the favorite TV shows, and movies with my friend in English.	1	2	3	4
deliver a speech or give a presentation in English	1	2	3	4
speak English by paying careful attention to the rhythm, intonation, volume, speed and pronunciation.	1	2	3	4
answer the questions in the listening section of entrance exams and the STEP test.	1	2	3	4

pass the English interview test in entrance exams or the STEP test	1	2	3	4
What would you like to talk about with your foreign friend in English. If you think of any, please write topics you may want to talk about.				
English use within Japan: WRITING I would like to be able to....	Not at all	Not so much	Some-what	A lot
keep a diary in English	1	2	3	4
write English poems	1	2	3	4
communicate with foreigners by writing a letter, online chatting, or exchanging email in English.	1	2	3	4
write a summary of a story, novel or other people's opinions.	1	2	3	4
write my thoughts or opinions about the content of a story, novel, or other people's opinions I read or listened to in English	1	2	3	4
write my thoughts and feelings about the content of my favorite songs, movies, and TV shows in English.	1	2	3	4
request an application form from an institution abroad (a university or a language school), and to be able to fill in the application forms.	1	2	3	4
answer composition questions in the entrance exams and the STEP test.	1	2	3	4
answer the grammar and vocabulary questions in the entrance exams and STEP test.	1	2	3	4
English use overseas I would like to be able to...	Not at all	Not so much	Some-what	A lot
get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad (e.g., at the airport, hotel check-in, dining at a restaurant, shopping etc).	1	2	3	4
communicate with the local people while traveling abroad or during a home stay program abroad.	1	2	3	4
communicate with my host family during a home stay program abroad	1	2	3	4
read the course description and choose a course I want to take from the university / language school abroad.	1	2	3	4
complete the necessary tasks/matters at the bank, post office, school office, etc, in a foreign country.	1	2	3	4
communicate with other students in the university or language school abroad	1	2	3	4

IV. What is your favorite learning style? How much do you like these learning styles?

Please rate each learning style according to the degree of your preference.				
Learning style	Least	Not much	Somewhat	Most
Teacher centered	1	2	3	4
Individual	1	2	3	4
Pair work	1	2	3	4
Group work	1	2	3	4

V. What are you interested in?

Please rate your interest for the topics below. If you have any other topics that is not listed, please write in the blank and rate them.

Topics	Never introduced	Not at all	Not so much	Somewhat	A lot	Topics	Never introduced	Not at all	Not so much	Somewhat	A lot
Language in the world	0	1	2	3	4	Education	0	1	2	3	4
Foreign culture, people	0	1	2	3	4	Psychology	0	1	2	3	4
World history	0	1	2	3	4	Science	0	1	2	3	4
Famous historical sites	0	1	2	3	4	Nature/environment	0	1	2	3	4
Current world events	0	1	2	3	4	Computer	0	1	2	3	4
Japanese around the world	0	1	2	3	4	Animal	0	1	2	3	4
Japanese culture	0	1	2	3	4	Sports	0	1	2	3	4
Domestic news	0	1	2	3	4	Traveling	0	1	2	3	4
Narrative stories (people's experience)	0	1	2	3	4	Food, cooking	0	1	2	3	4
Literature	0	1	2	3	4	Homeroom	0	1	2	3	4
Drama (play)	0	1	2	3	4	Club activity	0	1	2	3	4
Art	0	1	2	3	4	School festivals	0	1	2	3	4
Music	0	1	2	3	4	School work (study)	0	1	2	3	4
Movies	0	1	2	3	4	Future course	0	1	2	3	4
Fashion	0	1	2	3	4	Friendship	0	1	2	3	4
TV drama	0	1	2	3	4	Hobby	0	1	2	3	4
Animation	0	1	2	3	4						
People in show biz	0	1	2	3	4						
If you have introduced topics that students liked, please list them and rate accordingly.											
							0	1	2	3	4
							0	1	2	3	4

VI. In order to improve your English, what do you think is effective?

Please rate these strategies.				
Strategies	Not effective	Not so effective	Some-what effective	Very effective
To memorize many words and idioms	1	2	3	4
To understand grammar	1	2	3	4
To memorize many English sentences from the textbook.	1	2	3	4
To solve many exercises (e.g., grammar, reading comprehension exercises)	1	2	3	4
To verbalize and/or write model English sentences in English to memorize them.	1	2	3	4
To listen and read many English sentences or texts to memorize expressions.	1	2	3	4
To verbalize / write correct English sentences using words, idioms and grammar rules one memorized	1	2	3	4
To read / listen to a lot of English and understand the content without paying too much attention to grammar.	1	2	3	4
To use English (read, write, listen, speak) in a situation which simulates real-world communication settings.	1	2	3	4
If there are any other strategies you think effective, please write and rate them.				
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

APPENDIX D

Table D1

Teachers' Perception of Students Needs for Four Skills (In section mean rank order)

Item	Description	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	Miss	Overall Rank
R 2	Understand words, expressions, & gram rules in the textbook.	6	3.67	0.52	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.67	0.00	6
R 3	Understand a text equivalent to the level of the textbook.	6	3.67	0.52	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.67	0.00	6
R 1	Read a text from a textbook with correct pronunciation.	6	3.50	0.84	0.00	0.17	0.17	0.67	0.00	11
R 4	Understand the gist of easy stories or novels in Eng.	6	3.50	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	11
R 5	Choose & read an interesting article from newspapers/magazines	6	3.50	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	11
R 6	Extract necessary info from internet	6	3.50	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	11
R 7	Answer the reading section of entrance exam s or STEP	6	3.17	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.83	0.17	0.00	21
LS2	Introduce oneself in English.	6	4.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	1
LS1	Engage in a simple daily conversation with foreigners in Japan.	6	3.83	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.83	0.00	2
LS3	Establish friendship w/ a foreigner and talk abt interesting topics.	6	3.67	0.52	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.67	0.00	6
LS6	Exchange opinions on personal stories/familiar topics w/a friend.	6	3.50	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	11
LS15	Answer the listening section of entrance exams or STEP.	6	3.50	0.84	0.00	0.17	0.17	0.67	0.00	11
LS4	Give direction when asked by a foreigner on the street.	6	3.33	0.82	0.00	0.17	0.33	0.50	0.00	18
LS5	Introduce Japanese culture & custom to an exchange student.	6	3.33	0.52	0.00	0.00	0.67	0.33	0.00	18
LS16	Pass the interview portion of the entrance exam or STEP.	6	3.33	1.03	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.67	0.00	18
LS13	Deliver a speech or give a presentation in Eng.	6	3.17	0.75	0.00	0.17	0.50	0.33	0.00	21
LS14	Speak w/attention to rhythm/intonation/volume/speed/pronunciation.	6	3.17	0.75	0.00	0.17	0.50	0.33	0.00	21
LS8	Understand the main message/ideas of the favorite songs	6	2.83	0.75	0.00	0.33	0.50	0.17	0.00	27
LS7	Exchange opinions on social problems with one's friend	6	2.67	0.52	0.00	0.33	0.67	0.00	0.00	32
LS9	Sing one's favorite Eng songs.	6	2.67	0.82	0.00	0.50	0.33	0.17	0.00	32
LS10	Understand the main idea of the favorite TV shows & movies.	6	2.50	0.55	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	34
LS11	Tell the summary of the favorite TV shows & movies to a friend.	6	2.50	0.55	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	34
LS12	Exchange feelings & opinions abt TV shows/movies w/a friend.	6	2.50	0.55	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	34
W 3	Comm w/ foreigners by writing a letter/online chatting/email.	6	3.17	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.83	0.17	0.00	21
W 5	Write thoughts/opinions abt a story, novel, other people's opinions.	6	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	25
W 9	Answer gramm & vocab questions in the entrance exams /STEP.	6	3.00	0.89	0.00	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.00	25
W 1	Keep a diary in English	6	2.83	0.41	0.00	0.17	0.83	0.00	0.00	27
W 6	Write thoughts & feelings abt one's favorite songs/movies/TV.	6	2.83	0.41	0.00	0.17	0.83	0.00	0.00	27
W 7	Request / fill an application form from an institution abroad.	6	2.83	0.75	0.00	0.33	0.50	0.17	0.00	27
W 8	Answer composition questions in the entrance exams & STEP.	6	2.83	0.75	0.00	0.33	0.50	0.17	0.00	27
W 4	Write a summary of a story, novel, or other people's opinions	6	2.50	0.55	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	34
W 2	Write English poems.	6	2.00	0.63	0.17	0.67	0.17	0.00	0.00	39
F 1	Get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad.	6	3.83	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.83	0.00	2
F 2	Comm w/ the local people while traveling/homestay abroad.	6	3.83	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.83	0.00	2
F 3	Communicate w/a host family during a homestay program abroad.	6	3.83	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.83	0.00	2
F 4	Read course descriptions & choose a course when studying abroad.	6	3.67	0.82	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.83	0.00	6
F 6	Communicate w/ students in the university/lang school abroad.	6	3.67	0.52	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.67	0.00	6
F 5	Complete the necessary task/matters in a foreign country.	6	3.50	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	11

Table D3

Overall Students' Perception of Needs for Four Skills (In section mean rank order)

F7 Go abroad to work or do volunteer work.		588	2.57	0.95	0.14	0.32	0.34	0.18	0.02	25
Item	Description	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	Miss	Overall rank
R 7	Answer the reading section of entrance exams or STEP	598	2.88	0.90	0.07	0.27	0.38	0.28	0.00	12
R 4	Understand the gist of easy stories or novels in Eng.	596	2.84	0.84	0.07	0.24	0.47	0.22	0.01	16
R 3	Understand a text equivalent to the level of the textbook.	599	2.81	0.82	0.06	0.27	0.47	0.20	0.00	18
R 1	Read a text from a textbook with correct pronunciation.	599	2.77	0.77	0.05	0.29	0.50	0.16	0.00	19
R 2	Understand words, expressions, & gram rules in the textbook.	599	2.65	0.89	0.10	0.32	0.39	0.18	0.00	23
R 5	Choose & read an interesting article from newspapers/magazines	596	2.48	0.98	0.18	0.34	0.30	0.18	0.01	27
R 6	Extract necessary info from internet	598	2.40	0.96	0.19	0.35	0.31	0.14	0.00	31
LS1	Engage in a simple daily conversation with foreigners in Japan.	596	3.10	0.89	0.06	0.17	0.38	0.39	0.01	1
LS2	Introduce oneself in English.	596	3.06	0.79	0.03	0.18	0.47	0.31	0.01	3
LS8	Understand the main message/ideas of the favorite songs	594	3.05	0.89	0.05	0.20	0.37	0.36	0.01	4
LS9	Sing one's favorite Eng songs.	595	2.99	0.91	0.07	0.22	0.36	0.34	0.01	6
LS16	Pass the interview portion of the entrance exam or STEP.	592	2.95	0.90	0.07	0.22	0.40	0.30	0.01	8
LS4	Give direction when asked by a foreigner on the street.	594	2.93	0.93	0.09	0.20	0.39	0.31	0.01	9
LS15	Answer the listening section of entrance exams or STEP.	595	2.93	0.87	0.07	0.22	0.43	0.28	0.01	10
LS10	Understand the main idea of the favorite TV shows & movies.	595	2.86	0.92	0.09	0.24	0.40	0.27	0.01	13
LS3	Establish friendship w/ a foreigner and talk about interesting topics.	595	2.82	1.06	0.10	0.28	0.31	0.29	0.01	17
LS14	Speak w/attention to rhythm, intonation, volume, speed, & pronunciation.	596	2.71	0.92	0.10	0.30	0.38	0.22	0.01	22
LS5	Introduce Japanese culture & custom to an exchange student.	593	2.64	0.94	0.12	0.31	0.36	0.20	0.01	24
LS13	Deliver a speech or give a presentation in Eng.	595	2.47	0.95	0.17	0.34	0.33	0.15	0.01	28
LS6	Exchange opinions on personal stories/familiar topics w/a friend.	594	2.45	0.93	0.16	0.38	0.31	0.15	0.01	29
LS11	Tell the summary of the favorite TV shows & movies to a friend.	596	2.41	0.93	0.16	0.40	0.29	0.14	0.01	30
LS12	Exchange feelings and opinions about TV shows/movies w/a friend.	595	2.30	0.92	0.20	0.42	0.26	0.12	0.01	36
LS7	Exchange opinions on social problems with one's friend	596	2.18	0.91	0.24	0.42	0.24	0.10	0.01	37
W 8	Answer composition questions in the entrance exams & STEP.	594	2.86	0.93	0.10	0.21	0.42	0.27	0.01	14
W 9	Answer grammar & vocabulary questions in the entrance exams and STEP.	595	2.86	0.92	0.09	0.22	0.41	0.27	0.01	15
W 3	Communicate w/ foreigners by writing a letter/online chatting/email.	594	2.51	0.99	0.19	0.29	0.34	0.17	0.01	26
W 5	Write thoughts/opinions about a story, novel, other people's opinions.	595	2.37	0.89	0.16	0.41	0.31	0.11	0.01	32
W 4	Write a summary of a story, novel, or other people's opinions	595	2.37	0.90	0.17	0.41	0.30	0.12	0.01	33
W 6	Write thoughts & feelings about one's favorite songs/movies/TV.	595	2.37	0.88	0.16	0.40	0.32	0.10	0.01	34
W 7	Request / fill an application form from an institution abroad.	594	2.35	0.95	0.21	0.35	0.31	0.13	0.01	35
W 1	Keep a diary in English	594	2.16	0.89	0.25	0.41	0.25	0.08	0.01	38
W 2	Write English poems.	594	2.03	0.92	0.32	0.40	0.19	0.08	0.01	39
F 1	Get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad.	591	3.08	0.93	0.07	0.17	0.35	0.39	0.02	2
F 3	Communicate w/a host family during a homestay program abroad.	586	2.99	0.93	0.08	0.18	0.38	0.34	0.02	5
F 2	Communicate w/ the local people while traveling and homestay abroad.	587	2.98	0.93	0.08	0.19	0.38	0.33	0.02	7
F 6	Communicate w/ students in the university and language school abroad.	587	2.92	0.93	0.09	0.20	0.39	0.30	0.02	11
F 5	Complete the necessary task/matters in a foreign country.	586	2.73	0.96	0.13	0.24	0.38	0.23	0.02	20
F 4	Read course descriptions & choose a course when studying abroad.	588	2.72	0.91	0.10	0.28	0.39	0.21	0.02	21

Table D4

Overall Students' Perception of Participation Style, Learning Strategy, and Topics (In mean rank order)

Item	Description	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	Miss
Part4	Group work	587	2.55	0.91	0.14	0.30	0.39	0.14	0.02
Part3	Pair work	587	2.43	0.88	0.16	0.34	0.38	0.10	0.02
Part2	Individual	586	2.29	0.83	0.17	0.43	0.32	0.07	0.02
Part1	Teacher centered	587	2.28	0.80	0.17	0.42	0.34	0.05	0.02
S9	Simulate real conversational situations and use (read, write, listen, speak) English.	570	3.29	0.70	0.02	0.09	0.46	0.39	0.05
S8	Listen & read many English sentences & understand them w/o paying too much attention to grammar.	570	3.16	0.72	0.02	0.12	0.51	0.31	0.05
St1	Memorize many words and idioms.	571	3.10	0.71	0.03	0.11	0.55	0.26	0.05
St7	Verbalize or write correct sentences using words, idioms, and grammar rules one memorized.	570	3.05	0.70	0.03	0.14	0.56	0.23	0.05
St5	Solve many reading comprehension questions.	572	2.95	0.77	0.04	0.17	0.52	0.22	0.05
St2	Understand and memorize grammar.	573	2.95	0.76	0.04	0.18	0.52	0.22	0.05
St4	Solve many grammar exercises.	572	2.91	0.78	0.05	0.19	0.52	0.20	0.05
St6	Accurately translate English into Japanese.	570	2.77	0.84	0.08	0.24	0.46	0.17	0.05
St3	Memorize many English sentences from the textbook.	573	2.42	0.81	0.12	0.40	0.36	0.08	0.05
T34	hobby	581	3.29	0.79	0.03	0.12	0.37	0.46	0.03
T33	Friendship	581	3.27	0.70	0.02	0.09	0.47	0.39	0.03
T14	Movies	579	3.26	0.75	0.02	0.12	0.42	0.41	0.04
T13	Music	580	3.23	0.80	0.04	0.12	0.41	0.41	0.03
T32	Future course	581	3.22	0.74	0.03	0.11	0.46	0.37	0.03
T16	TV drama	577	3.15	0.73	0.02	0.14	0.49	0.32	0.04
T25	Sports	575	3.12	0.85	0.05	0.15	0.40	0.36	0.04
T15	Fashion	577	3.11	0.80	0.04	0.15	0.45	0.33	0.04
T27	Food, cooking	574	3.07	0.80	0.04	0.17	0.45	0.31	0.04
T4	Famous historical sites	579	2.96	0.85	0.06	0.19	0.45	0.27	0.04
T31	School work (study)	581	2.95	0.82	0.06	0.17	0.49	0.25	0.03
T26	Traveling	575	2.95	0.85	0.05	0.22	0.42	0.27	0.04
T18	People in show biz	577	2.93	0.81	0.05	0.21	0.47	0.23	0.04
T29	Club activity	581	2.87	1.00	0.11	0.23	0.31	0.32	0.03
T24	Animal	575	2.74	0.88	0.07	0.31	0.38	0.20	0.04
T8	Domestic news	579	2.69	0.75	0.05	0.31	0.48	0.12	0.04
T6	Japanese around the world	581	2.67	0.86	0.09	0.31	0.41	0.16	0.03
T9	Narrative stories	580	2.61	0.84	0.08	0.36	0.38	0.15	0.03
T7	Japanese culture	579	2.58	0.83	0.09	0.36	0.39	0.13	0.04
T1	Language in the world	580	2.57	0.84	0.09	0.37	0.38	0.13	0.03
T20	Psychology	575	2.54	0.89	0.10	0.39	0.31	0.16	0.04
T5	Current world events	581	2.53	0.80	0.10	0.36	0.42	0.10	0.03
T2	Foreign culture, people	582	2.47	0.84	0.11	0.40	0.35	0.11	0.03
T17	Animation	577	2.46	0.85	0.12	0.38	0.36	0.10	0.04
T23	Computer	574	2.46	0.87	0.12	0.40	0.31	0.12	0.04
T22	Nature/environment	574	2.42	0.84	0.12	0.42	0.32	0.10	0.04
T12	Art	576	2.39	0.91	0.15	0.41	0.27	0.13	0.04
T11	Drama (play)	578	2.39	0.89	0.15	0.40	0.30	0.12	0.04
T3	World history	581	2.37	0.88	0.16	0.40	0.30	0.11	0.03
T10	Literature	579	2.35	0.85	0.14	0.46	0.27	0.11	0.04
T19	Education	575	2.31	0.77	0.11	0.50	0.28	0.07	0.04
T28	Homeroom	581	2.23	0.78	0.16	0.48	0.28	0.05	0.03
T21	Science	573	2.15	0.81	0.19	0.50	0.20	0.06	0.05
T30	School festival	582	2.06	0.82	0.25	0.47	0.20	0.05	0.03

Table D5

First Year Students' Perception of English Needs for Four Skills(In mean rank order)

Item	Description	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	Miss	Overall rank
R 7	Answer the reading section of entrance exam s or STEP	200	3.09	0.79	0.02	0.21	0.43	0.34	0.00	11
R 3	Understand a text equivalent to the level of the textbook.	200	2.98	0.71	0.02	0.21	0.56	0.22	0.00	15
R 1	Read a text from a textbook with correct pronunciation.	200	2.93	0.72	0.03	0.23	0.55	0.20	0.00	17
R 4	Understand the gist of easy stories or novels in Eng.	199	2.92	0.82	0.05	0.22	0.48	0.25	0.01	18
R 2	Understand words, expressions, & gram rules in the textbook.	200	2.89	0.80	0.04	0.28	0.46	0.23	0.00	22
R 5	Choose & read an interesting article from newspapers/magazines	199	2.60	0.94	0.12	0.37	0.32	0.20	0.01	27
R 6	Extract necessary info from internet	200	2.51	0.91	0.14	0.38	0.34	0.16	0.00	34
LS1	Engage in a simple daily conversation with foreigners in Japan.	199	3.20	0.83	0.04	0.15	0.39	0.43	0.01	2
LS16	Pass the interview portion of the entrance exam or STEP.	199	3.16	0.81	0.03	0.17	0.41	0.39	0.01	3
LS15	Answer the listening section of entrance exams or STEP.	199	3.14	0.73	0.02	0.16	0.49	0.33	0.01	6
LS2	Introduce oneself in English.	200	3.11	0.76	0.03	0.15	0.50	0.32	0.00	9
LS8	Understand the main message/ideas of the favorite songs	200	3.10	0.85	0.04	0.21	0.38	0.38	0.00	10
LS4	Give direction when asked by a foreigner on the street.	200	3.05	0.86	0.05	0.20	0.41	0.35	0.00	13
LS9	Sing one's favorite Eng songs.	200	3.02	0.86	0.04	0.25	0.38	0.34	0.00	14
LS10	Understand the main idea of the favorite TV shows & movies.	200	2.97	0.84	0.05	0.22	0.44	0.29	0.00	16
LS3	Establish friendship w/ a foreigner and talk about interesting topics.	200	2.92	0.94	0.08	0.26	0.34	0.33	0.00	19
LS14	Speak w/attention to rhythm, intonation, volume, speed, & pronunciation.	200	2.90	0.86	0.06	0.24	0.44	0.26	0.00	21
LS5	Introduce Japanese culture & custom to an exchange student.	200	2.76	0.90	0.08	0.31	0.38	0.23	0.00	24
LS6	Exchange opinions on personal stories/familiar topics w/a friend.	199	2.57	0.89	0.12	0.36	0.37	0.16	0.01	28
LS13	Deliver a speech or give a presentation in Eng.	200	2.54	0.88	0.12	0.37	0.37	0.15	0.00	30
LS11	Tell the summary of the favorite TV shows & movies to a friend.	200	2.52	0.89	0.12	0.40	0.34	0.15	0.00	33
LS12	Exchange feelings and opinions about TV shows/movies w/a friend.	200	2.38	0.90	0.16	0.43	0.29	0.13	0.00	36
LS7	Exchange opinions on social problems with one's friend	200	2.34	0.85	0.15	0.48	0.28	0.11	0.00	38
W 8	Answer composition questions in the entrance exams & STEP.	199	3.13	0.79	0.04	0.15	0.47	0.35	0.01	7
W 9	Answer grammar & vocabulary questions in the entrance exams /STEP.	200	3.13	0.76	0.02	0.18	0.47	0.34	0.00	8
W 3	Communicate w/ foreigners by writing a letter/online chatting/email.	200	2.67	1.00	0.14	0.30	0.32	0.25	0.00	26
W 4	Write a summary of a story, novel, or other people's opinions	200	2.55	0.90	0.11	0.41	0.32	0.17	0.00	29
W 5	Write thoughts/opinions about a story, novel, other people's opinions.	200	2.53	0.88	0.12	0.39	0.36	0.15	0.00	31
W 7	Request / fill an application form from an institution abroad.	200	2.53	0.89	0.12	0.38	0.35	0.15	0.00	31
W 6	Write thoughts & feelings about one's favorite songs/movies/TV.	200	2.48	0.90	0.15	0.36	0.37	0.13	0.00	35
W 1	Keep a diary in English	200	2.36	0.90	0.17	0.43	0.29	0.12	0.00	37
W 2	Write English poems.	200	2.10	0.89	0.27	0.47	0.18	0.09	0.00	39
F 1	Get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad.	199	3.23	0.85	0.04	0.15	0.35	0.46	0.01	1
F 3	Communicate w/a host family during a homestay program abroad.	197	3.15	0.86	0.05	0.17	0.37	0.41	0.02	4
F 2	Communicate w/ the local people while traveling and homestay abroad.	197	3.14	0.86	0.05	0.16	0.39	0.40	0.02	5
F 6	Communicate w/ students in the university and language school abroad.	196	3.06	0.85	0.05	0.19	0.41	0.34	0.02	12
F 5	Complete the necessary task/matters in a foreign country.	196	2.92	0.87	0.06	0.25	0.40	0.28	0.02	20
F 4	Read course descriptions & choose a course when studying abroad.	197	2.87	0.84	0.05	0.27	0.42	0.25	0.02	23
F 7	Go abroad to work or do volunteer work.	197	2.72	0.90	0.10	0.30	0.39	0.21	0.02	25

Table D6

First Year Students' Preference on Participation Style, Learning Strategy, and Topics (In mean rank order)

Item	Description	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	Miss
Part4	Group work	198	2.62	0.94	0.15	0.24	0.44	0.17	0.01
Part3	Pair work	198	2.56	0.90	0.15	0.29	0.43	0.14	0.01
Part2	Individual	198	2.36	0.83	0.15	0.41	0.36	0.08	0.01
Part1	Teacher centered	198	2.28	0.77	0.15	0.47	0.34	0.05	0.01
St9	Simulate real conversational situations and use (read, write, listen, speak) English.	197	3.27	0.71	0.02	0.09	0.48	0.40	0.02
St8	Listen & read many English sentences & understand them w/o paying too much attention to grammar.	196	3.17	0.76	0.03	0.12	0.49	0.35	0.02
St4	Solve many grammar exercises.	196	3.09	0.74	0.03	0.14	0.53	0.29	0.02
St5	Solve many reading comprehension questions.	196	3.09	0.76	0.04	0.14	0.52	0.29	0.02
St7	Verbalize or write correct sentences using words, idioms, and grammar rules one memorized.	196	3.08	0.69	0.02	0.14	0.57	0.26	0.02
St1	Memorize many words and idioms.	197	3.05	0.77	0.05	0.12	0.55	0.27	0.02
St2	Understand and memorize grammar.	197	3.03	0.79	0.04	0.17	0.50	0.28	0.02
St6	Accurately translate English into Japanese.	195	2.78	0.84	0.09	0.22	0.51	0.17	0.03
St3	Memorize many English sentences from the textbook.	197	2.49	0.82	0.11	0.38	0.40	0.10	0.02
T33	Friendship	196	3.34	0.66	0.01	0.09	0.45	0.44	0.02
T34	hobby	198	3.32	0.76	0.02	0.13	0.37	0.48	0.01
T14	Movies	196	3.31	0.69	0.01	0.10	0.45	0.42	0.02
T16	TV drama	197	3.23	0.70	0.01	0.12	0.49	0.37	0.02
T32	Future course	198	3.22	0.75	0.03	0.10	0.48	0.38	0.01
T25	Sports	196	3.22	0.80	0.03	0.14	0.40	0.42	0.02
T29	Club activity	198	3.21	0.88	0.04	0.20	0.29	0.48	0.01
T13	Music	197	3.15	0.81	0.04	0.16	0.43	0.37	0.02
T15	Fashion	197	3.07	0.80	0.04	0.17	0.47	0.31	0.02
T31	School work (study)	198	3.04	0.85	0.07	0.14	0.48	0.31	0.01
T27	Food, cooking	196	3.01	0.81	0.05	0.18	0.48	0.28	0.02
T18	People in show biz	197	3.01	0.78	0.04	0.19	0.50	0.27	0.02
T4	Famous historical sites	196	2.99	0.82	0.06	0.17	0.49	0.27	0.02
T26	Traveling	196	2.93	0.87	0.07	0.20	0.44	0.27	0.02
T8	Domestic news	196	2.80	0.70	0.03	0.27	0.55	0.13	0.02
T6	Japanese around the world	197	2.73	0.80	0.06	0.30	0.47	0.16	0.02
T24	Animal	196	2.70	0.87	0.09	0.30	0.42	0.18	0.02
T7	Japanese culture	196	2.62	0.78	0.07	0.36	0.45	0.12	0.02
T5	Current world events	197	2.60	0.77	0.08	0.34	0.47	0.10	0.02
T9	Narrative stories	197	2.60	0.84	0.09	0.36	0.40	0.14	0.02
T23	Computer	196	2.58	0.83	0.07	0.42	0.35	0.15	0.02
T1	Language in the world	197	2.56	0.84	0.09	0.39	0.38	0.14	0.02
T20	Psychology	196	2.51	0.90	0.11	0.43	0.29	0.16	0.02
T17	Animation	197	2.46	0.84	0.12	0.41	0.35	0.11	0.02
T22	Nature/environment	196	2.45	0.86	0.12	0.43	0.32	0.12	0.02
T2	Foreign culture, people	197	2.44	0.83	0.13	0.40	0.37	0.10	0.02
T3	World history	196	2.41	0.92	0.17	0.38	0.31	0.13	0.02
T11	Drama (play)	195	2.39	0.86	0.13	0.45	0.29	0.11	0.03
T10	Literature	196	2.35	0.82	0.12	0.50	0.26	0.10	0.02
T12	Art	195	2.33	0.85	0.14	0.47	0.27	0.10	0.03
T28	Homeroom	198	2.30	0.75	0.12	0.53	0.29	0.06	0.01
T21	Science	195	2.28	0.85	0.16	0.48	0.25	0.10	0.03
T19	Education	196	2.26	0.78	0.14	0.52	0.26	0.07	0.02
T30	School festival	198	2.24	0.81	0.16	0.52	0.25	0.08	0.01

Table D7

Second Year Students' Perception of English Needs for Four Skills(In mean rank order)

Item	Description	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	Miss	Overall rank
R 7	Answer the reading section of entrance exam s or the STEP test.	199	2.75	0.90	0.07	0.35	0.34	0.24	0.01	10
R 3	Understand a text equivalent to the level of the textbook.	200	2.73	0.80	0.07	0.28	0.51	0.15	0.00	13
R 4	Understand the gist of easy stories or novels in Eng.	198	2.72	0.81	0.08	0.28	0.49	0.15	0.01	15
R 1	Read a text from a textbook with correct pronunciation.	200	2.66	0.75	0.06	0.34	0.50	0.11	0.00	19
R 2	Understand words, expressions, & gram rules in the textbook.	200	2.48	0.85	0.14	0.36	0.41	0.10	0.00	23
R 6	Extract necessary info from internet	199	2.30	0.92	0.22	0.35	0.33	0.10	0.01	28
R 5	Choose & read an interesting article from newspapers/magazines	199	2.29	0.96	0.24	0.35	0.30	0.12	0.01	30
LS1	Engage in a simple daily conversation with foreigners in Japan.	199	3.02	0.88	0.06	0.20	0.41	0.34	0.01	1
LS2	Introduce oneself in English.	199	3.01	0.77	0.03	0.22	0.49	0.27	0.01	2
LS8	Understand the main message/ideas of the favorite songs	199	2.89	0.91	0.09	0.22	0.42	0.28	0.01	4
LS9	Sing one's favorite Eng songs.	198	2.83	0.96	0.11	0.24	0.38	0.28	0.01	5
LS16	Pass the interview portion of the entrance exam or STEP.	199	2.77	0.92	0.11	0.24	0.43	0.23	0.01	8
LS4	Give direction when asked by a foreigner on the street.	198	2.75	0.97	0.14	0.20	0.42	0.23	0.01	11
LS10	Understand the main idea of the favorite TV shows & movies.	199	2.74	0.91	0.11	0.26	0.42	0.21	0.01	12
LS15	Answer the listening section of entrance exams or STEP.	199	2.72	0.89	0.10	0.28	0.43	0.20	0.01	14
LS3	Establish friendship w/ a foreigner and talk about interesting topics.	199	2.71	1.21	0.13	0.30	0.34	0.22	0.01	16
LS14	Speak w/attention to rhythm, intonation, volume, speed, & pronunciation.	199	2.58	0.92	0.13	0.33	0.38	0.17	0.01	20
LS5	Introduce Japanese culture & custom to an exchange student.	196	2.46	0.91	0.16	0.33	0.37	0.12	0.02	24
LS13	Deliver a speech or give a presentation in Eng.	199	2.36	0.93	0.19	0.39	0.30	0.13	0.01	27
LS6	Exchange opinions on personal stories/familiar topics w/a friend.	198	2.30	0.87	0.17	0.47	0.25	0.11	0.01	29
LS11	Tell the summary of the favorite TV shows & movies to a friend.	199	2.28	0.88	0.19	0.44	0.28	0.10	0.01	31
LS12	Exchange feelings and opinions about TV shows and movies with a friend.	198	2.19	0.86	0.22	0.43	0.28	0.07	0.01	36
LS7	Exchange opinions on social problems with one's friend	199	2.04	0.86	0.29	0.45	0.21	0.06	0.01	37
W 8	Answer composition questions in the entrance exams & STEP.	199	2.69	0.97	0.15	0.22	0.42	0.21	0.01	17
W 9	Answer grammar & vocabulary questions in the entrance exams & STEP.	199	2.68	0.97	0.15	0.25	0.39	0.22	0.01	18
W 3	Communicate with foreigners by writing a letter/online chatting/email.	199	2.42	0.98	0.22	0.27	0.38	0.13	0.01	25
W 6	Write thoughts & feelings about one's favorite songs/movies/TV.	199	2.25	0.83	0.18	0.45	0.30	0.07	0.01	32
W 4	Write a summary of a story, novel, or other people's opinions	199	2.23	0.85	0.20	0.46	0.27	0.08	0.01	33
W 5	Write thoughts/opinions about a story, novel, other people's opinions.	199	2.22	0.83	0.19	0.49	0.25	0.08	0.01	34
W 7	Request / fill an application form from an institution abroad.	199	2.21	0.96	0.27	0.35	0.28	0.10	0.01	35
W 1	Keep a diary in English	198	1.99	0.85	0.32	0.39	0.25	0.04	0.01	38
W 2	Write English poems.	199	1.94	0.87	0.36	0.39	0.20	0.05	0.01	39
F 1	Get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad.	198	2.92	0.94	0.10	0.19	0.41	0.30	0.01	3
F 3	Communicate w/a host family during a homestay program abroad.	197	2.82	0.90	0.10	0.20	0.47	0.22	0.02	6
F 2	Communicate w/ the local people while traveling and homestay abroad.	198	2.81	0.90	0.09	0.24	0.43	0.24	0.01	7
F 6	Communicate w/ students in the university and language school abroad.	198	2.76	0.90	0.10	0.25	0.44	0.21	0.01	9
F 4	Read course descriptions & choose a course when studying abroad.	198	2.57	0.86	0.11	0.36	0.39	0.14	0.01	21
F 5	Complete the necessary task/matters in a foreign country.	198	2.53	0.93	0.17	0.26	0.43	0.14	0.01	22
F 7	Go abroad to work or do volunteer work.	198	2.41	0.93	0.17	0.38	0.30	0.14	0.01	26

Table D8

*Second Year Students' Preference on Participation Style, Learning Strategy, and Topics
(In mean rank order)*

Item	Description	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	Miss
Part4	Group work	196	2.40	0.90	0.17	0.35	0.36	0.11	0.02
Part1	Teacher centered	196	2.32	0.80	0.15	0.43	0.35	0.06	0.02
Part2	Individual	196	2.30	0.81	0.16	0.44	0.33	0.06	0.02
Part3	Pair work	196	2.26	0.85	0.20	0.41	0.32	0.07	0.02
St9	Simulate real conversational situations and use (read, write, listen, speak) English.	189	3.20	0.68	0.02	0.09	0.53	0.31	0.06
St1	Memorize many words and idioms.	191	3.14	0.64	0.02	0.09	0.60	0.26	0.05
St8	Listen & read many English sentences & understand them w/o paying too much attention to grammar.	190	3.09	0.64	0.01	0.12	0.59	0.23	0.05
St7	Verbalize or write correct sentences using words, idioms, and grammar rules one memorized.	190	2.97	0.65	0.03	0.14	0.62	0.17	0.05
St5	Solve many reading comprehension questions.	192	2.90	0.74	0.05	0.18	0.56	0.18	0.04
St2	Understand and memorize grammar.	192	2.88	0.71	0.04	0.19	0.59	0.15	0.04
St4	Solve many grammar exercises.	192	2.83	0.77	0.06	0.21	0.54	0.16	0.04
St6	Accurately translate English into Japanese.	191	2.76	0.78	0.06	0.25	0.50	0.15	0.05
St3	Memorize many English sentences from the textbook.	192	2.43	0.80	0.12	0.39	0.39	0.07	0.04
T13	Music	196	3.21	0.82	0.05	0.10	0.43	0.41	0.02
T34	Hobby	195	3.19	0.83	0.04	0.14	0.40	0.41	0.03
T32	Future course	196	3.15	0.76	0.02	0.16	0.46	0.35	0.02
T14	Movies	196	3.15	0.79	0.04	0.14	0.46	0.35	0.02
T33	Friendship	197	3.13	0.72	0.03	0.13	0.53	0.31	0.02
T16	TV drama	195	3.03	0.72	0.03	0.17	0.55	0.24	0.03
T15	Fashion	195	3.01	0.82	0.05	0.17	0.48	0.28	0.03
T27	Food, cooking	193	2.97	0.79	0.04	0.21	0.48	0.25	0.04
T25	Sports	194	2.96	0.87	0.07	0.19	0.44	0.28	0.03
T18	People in show biz	195	2.86	0.82	0.06	0.23	0.48	0.21	0.03
T31	School work (study)	196	2.83	0.80	0.07	0.22	0.52	0.18	0.02
T26	Traveling	194	2.80	0.83	0.05	0.30	0.41	0.21	0.03
T4	Famous historical sites	196	2.79	0.85	0.08	0.24	0.47	0.19	0.02
T29	Club activity	196	2.65	1.00	0.16	0.26	0.34	0.23	0.02
T24	Animal	194	2.64	0.86	0.08	0.37	0.36	0.17	0.03
T8	Domestic news	196	2.54	0.77	0.08	0.39	0.43	0.09	0.02
T6	Japanese around the world	196	2.52	0.88	0.13	0.35	0.37	0.13	0.02
T20	Psychology	194	2.51	0.86	0.10	0.43	0.31	0.14	0.03
T9	Narrative stories	196	2.51	0.81	0.08	0.44	0.35	0.12	0.02
T1	Language in the world	194	2.50	0.82	0.09	0.42	0.34	0.12	0.03
T23	Computer	193	2.44	0.85	0.12	0.43	0.31	0.12	0.04
T7	Japanese culture	195	2.43	0.82	0.13	0.40	0.37	0.09	0.03
T5	Current world events	196	2.41	0.81	0.12	0.42	0.36	0.08	0.02
T17	Animation	195	2.40	0.79	0.13	0.40	0.39	0.06	0.03
T2	Foreign culture, people	196	2.39	0.83	0.13	0.45	0.32	0.10	0.02
T22	Nature/environment	193	2.37	0.79	0.11	0.48	0.31	0.08	0.04
T12	Art	195	2.32	0.87	0.15	0.47	0.25	0.11	0.03
T3	World history	196	2.31	0.83	0.15	0.45	0.30	0.08	0.02
T11	Drama (play)	196	2.30	0.87	0.17	0.45	0.27	0.10	0.02
T10	Literature	196	2.27	0.79	0.14	0.51	0.26	0.07	0.02
T19	Education	194	2.21	0.69	0.13	0.54	0.28	0.03	0.03
T28	Homeroom	196	2.13	0.76	0.19	0.52	0.24	0.04	0.02
T21	Science	193	2.13	0.75	0.17	0.56	0.19	0.05	0.04
T30	School festival	196	1.93	0.74	0.27	0.54	0.15	0.03	0.02

Table D9

Third Year Students' Perception of English Needs for Four Skills(In mean rank order)

Item	Description	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	Miss	Over all rank
R 4	Understand the gist of easy stories or novels in Eng.	199	2.86	0.88	0.08	0.24	0.44	0.25	0.01	13
R 7	Answer the reading section of entrance exams or STEP	199	2.81	0.96	0.11	0.25	0.37	0.27	0.01	15
R 1	Read a text from a textbook with correct pronunciation.	199	2.73	0.82	0.07	0.31	0.45	0.17	0.01	19
R 3	Understand a text equivalent to the level of the textbook.	199	2.72	0.92	0.09	0.32	0.36	0.23	0.01	20
R 2	Understand words, expressions, & gram rules in the textbook.	199	2.60	0.97	0.14	0.34	0.31	0.21	0.01	24
R 5	Choose & read an interesting article from newspapers/magazines	198	2.56	1.02	0.17	0.32	0.28	0.23	0.01	26
R 6	Extract necessary info from internet	199	2.40	1.02	0.22	0.34	0.26	0.18	0.01	31
LS8	Understand the main message/ideas of the favorite songs	195	3.16	0.88	0.04	0.19	0.33	0.43	0.03	1
LS9	Sing one's favorite Eng songs.	197	3.11	0.91	0.06	0.18	0.34	0.41	0.02	2
LS1	Engage in a simple daily conversation with foreigners in Japan.	198	3.09	0.94	0.08	0.17	0.34	0.41	0.01	3
LS2	Introduce oneself in English.	197	3.08	0.84	0.05	0.18	0.43	0.34	0.02	5
LS4	Give direction when asked by a foreigner on the street.	196	3.00	0.94	0.08	0.21	0.34	0.36	0.02	7
LS16	Pass the interview portion of the entrance exam or STEP.	194	2.92	0.91	0.07	0.25	0.36	0.30	0.03	10
LS15	Answer the listening section of entrance exams or STEP.	197	2.91	0.94	0.09	0.21	0.38	0.31	0.02	11
LS10	Understand the main idea of the favorite TV shows & movies.	196	2.88	0.98	0.10	0.23	0.34	0.32	0.02	12
LS3	Establish friendship w/ a foreigner and talk about interesting topics.	196	2.82	1.01	0.11	0.29	0.26	0.33	0.02	14
LS5	Introduce Japanese culture & custom to an exchange student.	197	2.69	0.98	0.13	0.29	0.34	0.24	0.02	22
LS14	Speak w/attention to rhythm, intonation, volume, speed, & pronunciation.	197	2.66	0.96	0.12	0.33	0.32	0.23	0.02	23
LS13	Deliver a speech or give a presentation in Eng.	196	2.53	1.01	0.19	0.28	0.33	0.19	0.02	27
LS6	Exchange opinions on personal stories/familiar topics w/a friend.	197	2.48	1.00	0.19	0.33	0.30	0.18	0.02	28
LS11	Tell the summary of the favorite TV shows & movies to a friend.	197	2.44	1.00	0.19	0.37	0.26	0.18	0.02	29
LS12	Exchange feelings and opinions abt TV shows/movies w/a friend.	197	2.31	1.00	0.22	0.40	0.20	0.17	0.02	35
LS7	Exchange opinions on social problems with one's friend	197	2.17	1.00	0.30	0.35	0.23	0.12	0.02	37
W 8	Answer composition questions in the entrance exams & STEP.	196	2.76	0.95	0.12	0.25	0.38	0.24	0.02	16
W 9	Answer grammar & vocab questions in the entrance exams/STEP.	196	2.76	0.96	0.12	0.25	0.37	0.25	0.02	16
W 3	Communicate w/ foreigners by writing a letter/online chatting/email.	195	2.43	0.98	0.21	0.30	0.33	0.15	0.03	30
W 6	Write thoughts & feelings about one's favorite songs/movies/TV.	196	2.37	0.89	0.16	0.41	0.30	0.11	0.02	32
W 5	Write thoughts/opinions about a story, novel, other people's opinions.	196	2.36	0.92	0.19	0.35	0.33	0.11	0.02	33
W 4	Write a summary of a story, novel, or other people's opinions	196	2.33	0.93	0.20	0.37	0.30	0.11	0.02	34
W 7	Request / fill an application form from an institution abroad.	195	2.31	0.97	0.23	0.34	0.29	0.13	0.03	36
W 1	Keep a diary in English	196	2.13	0.91	0.26	0.42	0.22	0.09	0.02	38
W 2	Write English poems.	195	2.07	1.00	0.34	0.34	0.19	0.11	0.03	39
F 1	Get minimal things done in English when traveling abroad.	194	3.09	0.98	0.09	0.17	0.30	0.42	0.03	4
F 3	Communicate w/a host family during a homestay program abroad.	192	3.02	1.01	0.11	0.16	0.31	0.39	0.04	6
F 2	Communicate w/ the local people while traveling/homestay abroad.	192	2.98	1.01	0.11	0.16	0.33	0.37	0.04	8
F 6	Communicate w/ students in the university/language school abroad.	193	2.95	1.02	0.12	0.18	0.32	0.36	0.04	9
F 5	Complete the necessary task/matters in a foreign country.	192	2.73	1.05	0.16	0.21	0.33	0.27	0.04	18
F 4	Read course descriptions & choose a course when studying abroad.	193	2.72	0.99	0.15	0.22	0.38	0.23	0.04	21
F 7	Go abroad to work or do volunteer work.	193	2.59	1.00	0.17	0.27	0.33	0.20	0.04	25

Table D10

*Third Year Students' Preference on Participation Style, Learning Strategy, and Topics
(In mean rank order)*

Item	Description	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	Miss
Part4	Group work	193	2.62	0.89	0.11	0.32	0.39	0.16	0.04
Part3	Pair work	193	2.47	0.87	0.14	0.33	0.40	0.10	0.04
Part1	Teacher centered	193	2.23	0.85	0.21	0.37	0.34	0.05	0.04
Part2	Individual	192	2.22	0.84	0.19	0.44	0.27	0.07	0.04
St9	Simulate real conversational situations and use (read, write, listen, speak) English.	184	3.39	0.69	0.01	0.08	0.37	0.46	0.08
St8	Listen & read many English sentences & understand them w/o paying too much attention to grammar.	184	3.21	0.75	0.03	0.11	0.45	0.35	0.08
St1	Memorize many words and idioms.	183	3.11	0.72	0.03	0.12	0.51	0.27	0.09
St7	Verbalize or write correct sentences using words, idioms, and grammar rules one memorized.	184	3.09	0.75	0.03	0.13	0.49	0.27	0.08
St2	Understand and memorize grammar.	184	2.94	0.79	0.04	0.20	0.47	0.22	0.08
St5	Solve many reading comprehension questions.	184	2.87	0.79	0.05	0.20	0.49	0.18	0.08
St4	Solve many grammar exercises.	184	2.79	0.80	0.06	0.23	0.48	0.16	0.08
St6	Accurately translate English into Japanese.	184	2.77	0.89	0.08	0.26	0.39	0.20	0.08
St3	Memorize many English sentences from the textbook.	184	2.33	0.81	0.13	0.43	0.29	0.07	0.08
T34	Hobby	188	3.35	0.79	0.03	0.10	0.34	0.48	0.06
T33	Friendship	188	3.34	0.71	0.03	0.06	0.44	0.42	0.06
T13	Music	187	3.33	0.77	0.03	0.10	0.37	0.45	0.07
T14	Movies	187	3.32	0.76	0.02	0.11	0.36	0.45	0.07
T32	Future course	187	3.30	0.72	0.03	0.07	0.45	0.40	0.07
T15	Fashion	185	3.26	0.77	0.03	0.11	0.39	0.41	0.08
T27	Food, cooking	185	3.22	0.79	0.03	0.12	0.39	0.39	0.08
T16	TV drama	185	3.18	0.75	0.02	0.15	0.42	0.35	0.08
T25	Sports	185	3.18	0.85	0.05	0.13	0.37	0.39	0.08
T26	Traveling	185	3.12	0.82	0.04	0.16	0.40	0.34	0.08
T4	Famous historical sites	187	3.12	0.84	0.05	0.15	0.40	0.35	0.07
T31	School work (study)	187	2.98	0.81	0.05	0.16	0.48	0.25	0.07
T18	People in show biz	185	2.91	0.82	0.05	0.22	0.44	0.23	0.08
T24	Animal	185	2.88	0.89	0.06	0.25	0.36	0.26	0.08
T6	Japanese around the world	188	2.75	0.88	0.08	0.29	0.38	0.20	0.06
T8	Domestic news	187	2.74	0.77	0.05	0.28	0.47	0.14	0.07
T29	Club activity	187	2.74	1.01	0.13	0.24	0.31	0.26	0.07
T9	Narrative stories	187	2.73	0.87	0.08	0.29	0.39	0.19	0.07
T7	Japanese culture	188	2.70	0.88	0.07	0.33	0.35	0.19	0.06
T1	Language in the world	189	2.64	0.86	0.10	0.30	0.41	0.15	0.06
T20	Psychology	185	2.62	0.91	0.10	0.32	0.34	0.17	0.08
T2	Foreign culture, people	189	2.60	0.85	0.09	0.35	0.38	0.14	0.06
T5	Current world events	188	2.58	0.81	0.09	0.32	0.43	0.11	0.06
T17	Animation	185	2.52	0.91	0.13	0.33	0.33	0.14	0.08
T12	Art	186	2.52	1.01	0.17	0.29	0.29	0.19	0.07
T11	Drama (play)	187	2.48	0.95	0.16	0.31	0.33	0.14	0.07
T19	Education	185	2.48	0.81	0.08	0.45	0.30	0.11	0.08
T10	Literature	187	2.45	0.93	0.15	0.37	0.28	0.15	0.07
T22	Nature/environment	185	2.44	0.89	0.14	0.35	0.33	0.11	0.08
T3	World history	189	2.40	0.90	0.15	0.38	0.30	0.12	0.06
T23	Computer	185	2.35	0.93	0.18	0.36	0.28	0.11	0.08
T28	Homeroom	187	2.26	0.82	0.17	0.40	0.32	0.05	0.07
T21	Science	185	2.02	0.81	0.25	0.46	0.18	0.05	0.08
T30	School festival	188	1.99	0.87	0.31	0.37	0.22	0.05	0.06