

# The Significance of Incorporating On-line Lessons Conducted by Filipino Teachers into University English Curriculum

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## I. Introduction

The Japanese language being predominantly common among local Japanese citizens, English is hardly used for domestic communication in spite of their' enthusiasm to study this additional language at all educational levels under the Mistry of Education. Therefore, it is most important to provide an environment for students to actually use and internalize the language and functionalize what they have learned in classrooms. As one of the ways to create such educational and educative surroundings, the author organized a program for on-line English lessons in which teachers in the Philippines instruct Japanese university students on the Internet.

A substantiative experiment in 2016 with a small number of female students had proven successful: All students who had participated in the experiment made some or great improvement although the 50-minute-long lessons were conducted only once a week for several months. They found the lessons by the overseas teachers quite effective and beneficial to their endeavor to improve their skills. While the lessons were given to individual student by a Filipino teacher, the author was able to understand and supervise every step taken for all the students and give cooperatively technical and psychological support whenever necessary.

Based on the above pilot program, the author further investigated possibilities of fully introducing similar on-line English lessons to the core curriculum as compulsory learning activities. In doing so, several conditions had to be carefully examined and precisely met: the environmental arrangement, both technically and spatially, for a larger number of students simultaneously taking the lessons; securing adequate financial resources; and obtaining receptive attitude and psychological support from her colleagues as well as from senior and authoritative decision-makers of her university.

Sufficient time having been spent before April 2019, the 1st-year-students in one of the two faculties took 50-minute-long on-line English lessons<sup>1</sup> once a week for one semester. The results are yet to be obtained after March 2020, when the Japanese academic year completes, but the program seems to have got off to a good start.

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<sup>1</sup> They are actually a 25-minute-long lesson and another with a 5-minute break in between. The two lessons are usually given by different teachers.

Thus, this paper examines an attempt of introducing on-line English lessons in cooperation with an external educational institution in the Philippines to Japanese university classrooms, and attempts to discuss the significance and possibilities of providing a better and more practical environment for Japanese students of English, especially at the tertiary level, in an effort to close the gap between their levels of reading and writing and of listening and speaking. The author's basic interest is to enhance students' capabilities so that they may work in an international and globalized society immediately after graduating from college, as such competencies are part of the major challenges Japanese universities are required to face.

## II. A Substantiative Experiment

### 2.1. Syllabus

An elective English course was designed by the author for one semester in 2016 for the 3rd- and 4th-year-students enrolled in a women's university in the City of Yokohama. General information about this course described in the syllabus may be summarized as the following.

Theme and Content: To train students partially through on-line lessons so that they could have a better command of English, foster a positive attitude about studying English, and to help them set a clear lifelong objective for using English. Individualized activities will enable students to think about their own attitude toward English(es) and meet their different linguistic needs.

Goal: All students will be asked to recognize their own levels of the four skills and aim at improving comprehensive ability by especially focusing on speaking and also by endeavoring to enhance vocabulary and reading comprehension.

Content: The reasons for infamous Japanese poor ability in English, even when compared to other Asian countries where English is not an official language, include the fact that the opportunities for actually using the language is quite limited within the country despite the well-organized educational system for learning. In order to compensate for such deficiency, this course provides students with opportunities to have intensive (50-minute) and controlled conversation on-line on a one-to-one basis with professional Filipino teachers. In an environment to actually use English, students will address concerns over speaking in English and thus have confidence in utilizing their knowledge in English that they have previously acquired. This will lead to a positive attitude about English as a communication tool and, hopefully, to a better command of the language. A 50-minute-long on-line lesson will be given within each 90-minute-long class, preceded by a warm-up session and followed by a review

and summary session.

Evaluation: Students will be asked to take CASEC<sup>2</sup> twice, before and after the 14 on-line lessons. Students' eagerness and seriousness to improve their skills and the actual improvement manifested in the CASEC scores will be the factors for academic assessment.

## 2.2. An Overview of the On-line Lessons

During the 90-minute-long class, 50 minutes were allotted for the on-line lesson, and this was repeated for 14 times during the semester that lasted for approximately four months. Before the start of each lesson, students had casual conversation in English with the on-site teacher and spent some time reviewing the previous lesson and preparing for the new learning items. After each on-line lesson, students were asked to fill in a questionnaire that consisted of several questions concerning the learning content, and their feelings about the lesson and the teacher.

Lessons were conducted with textbooks written exclusively for the on-line course. Notwithstanding the fact that the students' experiences in studying and using English, not to mention their scores they had obtained in CASEC, all students started with the beginning level and the pacing of the lesson varied depending upon each student's performance.

The lessons proceeded in the following steps.

1. Warm up: The teacher and the student had a casual conversation, checking the audio-visual clarity on Skype;
2. Lesson
  - (1) Review (20 to 25 minutes)
  - (2) Learning new vocabulary items
  - (3) Questions and answers
  - (4) Reading the text aloud/dictating
3. Closing

Figure 1 indicates reports of the on-line teachers about the lessons they gave to the Japanese students, which were uploaded on the website and shared by the lesson takers, and the onsite teacher was able to read them to learn how each on-line lesson proceeded.

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<sup>2</sup> Computerized Assessment System for English Communication (CASEC) is one of the standardized English proficiency tests developed in Japan.

Figure 1: Lesson records kept by Filipino teachers

Students	Teacher	Status <sup>3</sup>	Lesson contents
A	L----	1	TIME STARTED: 11:00 JT TOPIC: Full Book Revision Stage 1 pp. 12-52 and Callan Method Stage 2 pp. 53-62 NEXT TOPIC: Stage 2 p. 65 (About how many things..?) READING: none DICTATION: We did Dictation 2.
B	M----	2 <sup>i</sup>	See you soon.
C	S----	1	TOPIC: CALLAN METHOD Stage 1 p.42- 50 NEXT TOPIC: Stage 1; do Lesson 6 on p. 29 then NEW WORK on p.42 (name) READING: Lesson 5 DICTATION: Dictation 1
D	C----	1	TIME STARTED: 11:00 JT TOPIC: CALLAN METHOD; FULL BOOK REVISION Stage 1 pp. 3-52 and NW Stage 2 pp. 53-59 NEXT TOPIC: Stage 2 p. 60 (PRESENT SIMPLE- QUESTIONS READING: None DICTATION: None
E	J----	1	Time Started: 11:00 AM JT Topic: Callan Method Stage 1 pp. 43-51 Next Topic: Read Lesson 6 on page 29 then, Stage 1 p. 51 (What's the difference...) Reading: We did Lesson 5 Dictation: We did Dictation 1
F	T----	1	Time Started: 11:00 AM JT Topic: Callan Method Stage 1 pp. 50; Full book Stage 1 pp. 1-33 Next Topic: Fullbook revision; Stage 1 p. What colour..? Reading: None Dictation: None
G	C----	1	START TIME: 11:00AM JT TOPIC: CALLAN METHOD: Stage 1 pp. 45-52 NEXT TOPIC: Full Book Revision (Stage 1) Stage 1 page 1 (What's this?) READING: We did Lesson 5, Lesson 6 DICTATION: We did Dictation 1
H	J----	1	Time Started: 11:00 JT TOPIC: Callan Method Stage 1 pp. 26-34 NEXT TOPIC: Stage 1 p. 34 (Are all the books...?) READING: We did Lessons 1, 2 and 3 DICTATION: None
I	F----	1	Time Started: 11:00JT TOPIC: (Callan Method) Stage 1 pp. 45-50 NEXT TOPIC: Do reading Lesson 6 p.29 then Stage 1 on p. 50 (ANY?) READING: We did Lesson 5 DICTATION: We did Dictation 1
J	P----	1	Start Time: 11:00 JT TOPIC: CALLAN METHOD Stage 1 pp. 50-52 AND FULL BOOK REVISION STAGE 1 pp.1-20 NEXT TOPIC: CONTINUE FULL BOOK REVISION ON STAGE 1 p.21 [WHERE'S THE HOUSE?] READING: We did Lessons 6 DICTATION: NONE

The method these Filipino teachers applied included a set of questions and answers in which the teacher repeated questions twice at a very high speed, and the

<sup>3</sup> Status 2 means the student did not take the lesson.

student was supposed to give answers immediately. Whenever the student found it difficult to give answers promptly with fluency, the teacher chimed in so that the student could shadow him/her. The student was required to give answers in full sentences, and so she needed to listen to her teacher very carefully and intensively.

The teacher also explained new vocabulary and grammar items, and the students were led to write down or type out newly learned contents. Therefore, the aim of the on-line lessons was not only to improve the student's speaking skill, but also listening, reading, and writing (mostly through dictation) skills.

The following "conversation" between the teacher and the student may be a good example of the question and answer session.

Teacher : What's the difference between "many" and "much"? What's the difference between "many" and "much"?

Student : The difference between "many" and "much" is that we use "many" with things we can count, and "little" with things we can't count.

Teacher : Give me a sentence with "many" in it, please. Give me a sentence with "many" in it, please.

Student : There are many cars in a large city.

Teacher : Give me a sentence with "much" in it. Give me a sentence with "much" in it.

Student : I do not put much sugar in my tea.

Teacher : What's the difference between "few" and "little"? What's the difference between "few" and "little"?

Student : The difference between "few" and "little" is that we use "few" with things we can count and "little" with things we can't count.

Teacher : Give me a sentence with "few" in it, please. Give me a sentence with "few" in it, please.

Student : There are few tables in this school.

Teacher : Give me a sentence with "little" in it. Give me a sentence with "little" in it.

Student : I drink little milk.

The purposes for the student in this dialog are: 1. to listen twice to the teacher's high-speed questions and understand them; 2. to be able to answer them promptly; 3. to reproduce the expressions used by the teacher without resorting to abbreviations and use of pronouns; 4. to understand grammatical items such as the differences between many and much, and between few and little, and to be able to explain them. This was a new experience for most students because grammar is usually taught in Japanese. Understanding the grammatical items is one thing, and being able to practically use the items is another. The teacher's support in leading the student's answers by asking her to shadow the teacher seemed quite effective and helpful.

How fast was the Filipino teacher's way of giving these questions? It was much faster than native speakers' natural speech, and three times as fast as that of a

native-speaker teacher at a language school who intended to be comprehensible<sup>4</sup>. By speaking very fast, the Filipino teacher aimed at the student's tension and concentration in order to prevent the student from having time to translate the questions into Japanese before responding, and to expect much oral output from the student by giving much input.

### 2.3. The Students

The 10 students who studied in this course varied in their proficiencies and experiences of using English. Figure 2 shows their levels at the start of the course manifested in some English proficiency tests they had taken elsewhere.

Figure2: English Proficiencies of the Students, Their Self-diagnostics and Their Levels of Expectation

Experiences in taking proficiency tests and the results								
A	EIKEN <sup>5</sup> Grade 2, TOEIC 650							
B	EIKEN Grade 2, TOEIC 650							
C	TOEFL 460, TOEIC 685							
D	EIKEN Grade 2, TOEFL 410, TOEIC 440							
E	EIKEN Grade Pre-2, TOEIC 405							
F	None							
G	None							
H	EIKEN Grade 2							
I	EIKEN Grade Pre-2							
J	TOEFL 410							
Present levels (self-diagnostic)					Wishful levels			
	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
A	3	3	4	3	5	5	5	5
B	3	3	2	2	5	5	4	4
C	4	3	4	4	5	5	5	5
D	5	4	4	3	5	5	5	5
E	3	3	3	2	5	4	4	4
F	3	3	3	3	5	5	5	5
G	3	3	4	2	5	5	4	4
H	4	4	3	3	5	5	4	4
I	2	1	3	2	4	4	3	3
J	3	2	3	2	5	5	5	5

<sup>4</sup> According to Sakamoto (2013), the numbers of words produced per minute by native speakers at different situations are: 150 to 180 in natural speeches, 180 to 190 for the TOEIC listening section, and 200 for British TV news programs. These are slower than the Filipino teachers because they have been trained to produce 220 to 240 per minute.

<sup>5</sup> EIKEN is an abbreviation of *jitsuyo eigo gino kentei* (Test in Practical English Proficiency), one of the most widely used English-language testing programs in Japan. It is offered at 7 levels: Grade 1, Grade Pre-1, Grade 2, Grade Pre-2, Grade 3, Grade 4, and Grade 5. The total number of examinees since 1963 exceeds 95 million. EIKEN can be used as a language skills certificate for study abroad as it is recognized in approximately 400 universities and educational institutions in North America, Australia, and throughout the world. The pass level for Grade 2 approximately corresponds to 226 in TEAP, B1 in CEFR, 450 in TOEFL PBT and 45 in iBT.

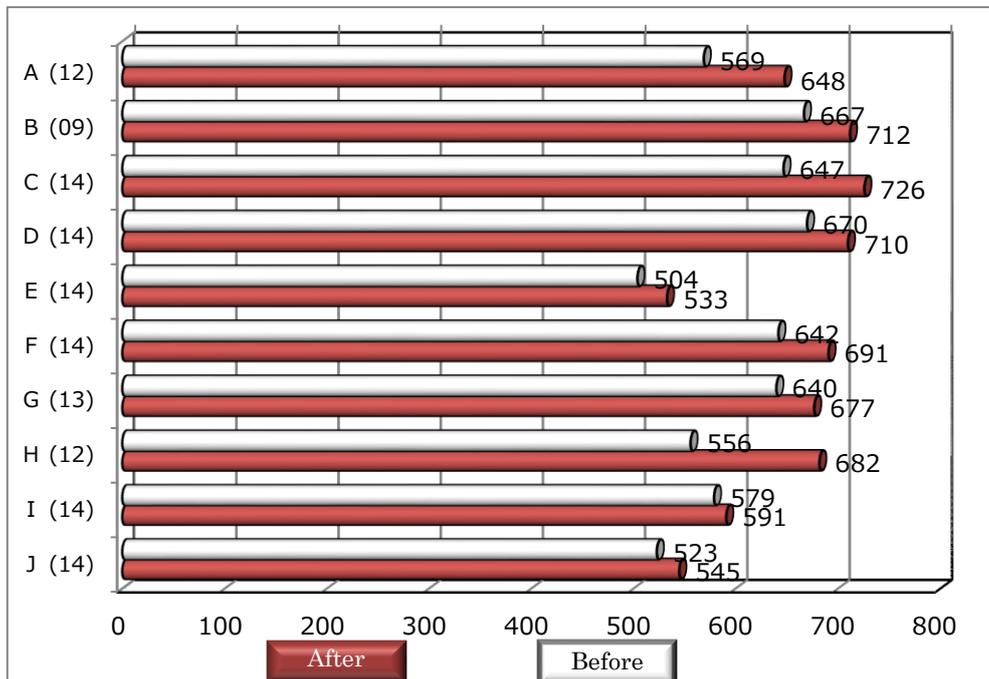
(<https://www.eiken.or.jp/eiken/en/eiken-tests/overview/>)

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. The CASEC Scores

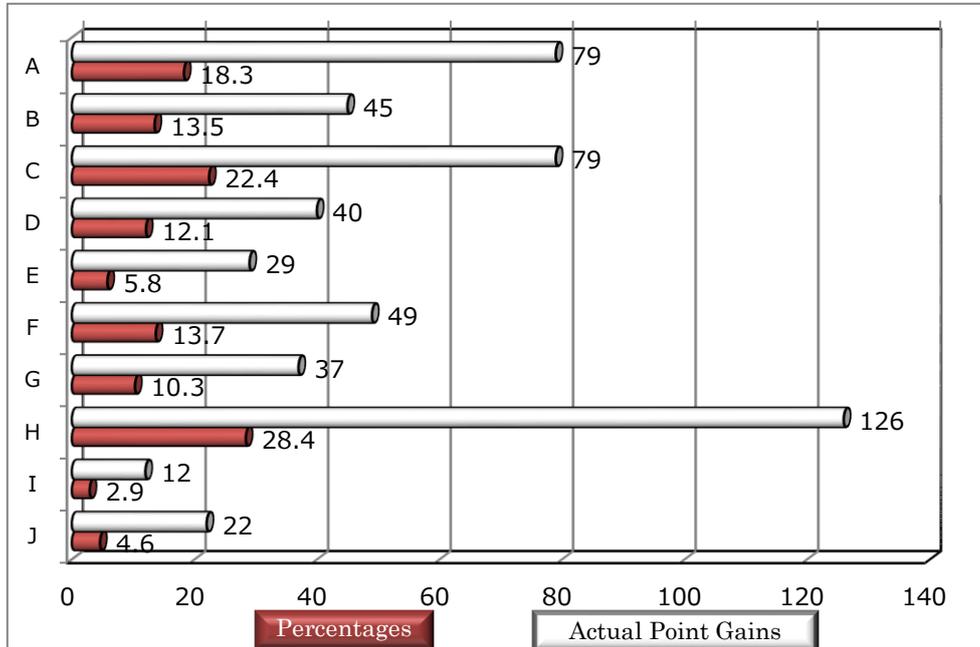
Of the 10 students, six took all the 14 on-line lessons (700 minutes), one took 13 lessons (650 minutes), two took 12 (600 minutes) and the other one took 9 (450 minutes). Figure 3 shows the CASEC scores before and after the on-line lessons. The numbers in parentheses indicate how many times each student completed the on-line lessons.

Figure 3: CASEC Scores Before and After the On-line Lessons



According to Sakamoto, *et al.* (2014), Figure 4 might show a more “accurate” way of looking at the students’ improvement in the two sets of CASEC scores. As the points each students could gain/lose in the second CASEC may depend on what her first score was, *i.e.*, it should get more difficult for a student with a higher first score to gain more points when the full mark is 1000, the changes in students’ scores may be recalculated against the largest possible gain: If a student’s first CASEC score was 500 out of 1000 and her second score was 700, the 200-point increase may be interpreted as 40% gain ( $200/500=40\%$ ). As Figure 4 shows, both Student A and Student C had the actual increase of 79 points, but Student A had 18.3% gain while Student C had 22.4%, which may give a conclusion that Student C showed a bigger improvement in the second CASEC score than Student A.

Figure 4: A Comparison between the Actual Point Gains and Their Percentages Calculated Against the Possible Gains



Following Sakamoto *et al.*'s classification (2014), the author divided the students' performances into five groups depending upon the increase percentages: 1. within 5%, 2. within 10%, 3. within 25%, 4. within 50%, and 5. more than 50%. None of the 10 students belonged to Group 1, two to Group 2, one to Group 3, six to Group 4, and the other one to Group 5.

### 3.2. Students' Reactions to the On-line Lessons

Based on the reflection paper that all students were asked to submit after each lesson, students' satisfaction levels<sup>6</sup> toward the on-line lesson with Filipino teachers may be summarized in Figure 5. The way students evaluated the lessons and rated their satisfaction levels was quite subjective, easily influenced by their past and present experiences with different teachers. Students' satisfaction levels did not necessarily coincide with their levels of improvement in their CASEC scores.

<sup>6</sup> In addition to several open questions about each lesson, students were asked to rate their levels of satisfaction on a 5-point scale, *i.e.*, 5 (very much satisfied), 4 (satisfied), 3 (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied), 2 (somewhat dissatisfied), and 1 (dissatisfied). The students were asked to rate each lesson in comparison with other mandatory English courses that they had taken. Students F and G were not able to do the comparison because, being international exchange students, they had not taken any mandatory English courses at this institution.

Figure 5: Students' Satisfaction toward the On-line Lessons\_1

lessons students	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	average
A	4	4	4	5	4	2	4	5	5	4	5	—	—	—	4.1
B	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	4.3
C	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	—	4.1
D	4	5	2	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4.6
E	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4.0
F	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	—	3.9
G	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	—	—	3.3
H	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	—	—	4.3
I	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4.8
J	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.6

Students had good reasons to rate specific lessons lower than the others such as a sudden change in the teacher without prior notification whose way of teaching the student was not familiar with, communication was not smooth enough due to some mechanical failure, and the lesson went more slowly than she had expected so that she was not able to learn the contents on the pages she had prepared for. The satisfaction levels of Students F and G were comparatively lower than those of the other students because these non-Japanese Asian students did not seem to get along with the Filipino teachers: they preferred freer conversation-oriented lessons rather than a more controlled way in which at most times, they were asked to respond to the teachers' questions.

In response to an open-ended question to give general comments about the on-line lessons, most students, although many mentioned the hardship of facing a teacher on a one-to-one basis, showed a very positive attitude: an awareness of their own improvement in speaking English including pronunciation, an willingness to continue the lessons or to have a similar experience in the future, and a gratitude to the Filipino teachers as well as the author who provided the students with this experience of learning from Filipino teachers on-line.

#### 4. Summary of the Substantiative Experiment

The results of the on-line lessons may be described as follows.

1. The ten students took 450- to 700-minute-long on-line lessons in total rather enthusiastically, and all students showed improvements in the CASEC scores at the end of the 14th lesson.
2. The author as a liaison between the students and the Filipino teachers did not leave everything to the overseas teachers but instructed the students before and after each

50-minute on-line lesson, thus grasping the students' progress and providing them with technical and psychological support.

3. The students felt fairly pleased and satisfied with the program.

It was true that the students made improvement in their English proficiency judged from the CASEC scores. However, the author is well aware of the fact that the main purpose of this substantive experiment was not to improve their scores in a standardized test, and that these students must have studied English elsewhere although none had English as a compulsory subject in 2016 in the university curriculum. Having said this, the author believes that the students attained the goal that had been set for this course in its syllabus. From the students' viewpoint, their positive and comfortable feelings they had during the on-line lessons finally took shape as score gains rather than the on-line lessons improving their English proficiency. Each student made progress in her own way.

The fact that the author as a liaison mediated between the two kinds of actors and gave the students technical and psychological support resulted from her great deal of interest in the on-line lessons and her sense of responsibility toward the learners. In an individualized teaching/learning environment using the Internet, a teacher could easily become an irresponsible onlooker, but because the lessons were conducted only in English, which could drive a student to an intensely nervous situation, occasional short addresses in their native language could offer a great comfort and encouragement.

In terms of students' satisfaction with the on-line lessons, the author's initial anxiety was thoroughly dispelled. Some of the author's colleagues had not hesitated to show suspicion as to whether Japanese students could trust Filipino teachers and successfully learn from them. Others worried that the parents, if not the students, might raise questions about the validity of Filipino teachers. A preliminary survey of these students made it clear that none of the students who showed interest in this course had had experience in studying with a Filipino teacher, and some could have gotten disharmonized in their first experience.

These concerns about Filipino English teachers, however, derived from native-speakerism or native-speaker supremacy, and those who might complain about Filipinos being English teachers had a negative attitude not because they were Filipinos but because they were not native speakers of English. Eventually, the students had a good time with their teachers in such an international setting, basically enjoyed a fulfilling experience and showed much respect to their teachers.

Not only the two international students but also Japanese students sometimes told the author that they hoped to have more time for free conversation. The author

believes this should be possible upon request to the manager of the language school. The school being run by a Japanese gentleman, the teachers working for this school seemed to be familiar with Japanese culture. If they spent some time in talking about things in the Philippines for the Japanese students to learn about their teachers' country, the lesson could have been meaningful not only linguistically but also inter-culturally.

They have a clear policy about this issue, however, and the author will need careful examinations and discussions with the language school before asking for more time in free conversation:

Although the Callan Method involves a lot of speaking practice, this does not mean chatting (free conversation). When people chat, they only use the words and grammar that they already know, so they do not learn much. In a Callan Method lesson, you are constantly using new words and structures when you speak, so you benefit more. No time is wasted.

(<https://www.callan.co.uk/the-method/>)

Judging from the above, the author concluded in the second half of 2016 that it would be worthwhile to introduce an on-line English program to a Japanese university curriculum. Knowing that a success with 10 3rd- and 4th-year enthusiastic students in an elective course may not guarantee another success with 240 first-year students in a compulsory course, the author started planning for the new curriculum that would feature this Philippine-based on-line program. Many hours were spent in discussions and negotiations with the campus policymakers, persuasions of the officers in the instruction department as well as colleagues responsible for the language curriculum, and business dealings with the Philippine-based language school and a Japanese company to mediate between the school and the university. Everything was in time for the 2019 new curriculum for 240 new students<sup>7</sup> in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

### III. A Full-fledged Introduction of the On-line Lessons into the English Curriculum

As Academic Year 2019 allowed the campus-wide introduction of a new curriculum for students enrolled in April, the on-line English program was included in one of the three required English courses<sup>8</sup> for the 1st-year-students in the two departments in one of the two faculties. The university was responsible for all the expenses for the lessons except for two textbooks students needed for studying in this course. The on-line lessons

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<sup>7</sup> 240 being the admission quota, the actual number of enrollees could be more or less.

<sup>8</sup> The three courses are: Speaking & Listening, Reading, and Writing courses, and the on-line lessons are part of the Speaking & Listening course. The students meet once a week of each of these courses for 90 minutes during the semester.

continued for one semester (15 weeks), and all students were supposed to take the lesson either in the first or the second semester.

As of August 2019, only the first half of the students have taken the on-line lessons while the other half have studied in regular classrooms with one teacher, with the teacher-student ratio of approximately 1:20 or a little less. On the other hand, three classes for on-line lessons were placed in one big computer room with one on-site teacher (the author), who was responsible for the prior and posterior sessions while each student had two 25-minute-long on-line lessons on a one-to-one basis for one semester.

The syllabus was quite similar to that of the substantive experiment mentioned above. The only differences were: 1. The students did not take CASEC as they were required to take TOEIC Bridge as a placement test; 2. The online lessons did not continue for 50 minutes but were divided into two 25-minute-long lessons; 3. Instead of Skype, the students used a different communication application developed by the Philippine-based language school; 4. The students had different Filipino teachers for each 25-minute-long lesson.

### 3.1. The Students

These students had been grouped into three different levels, *i.e.*, Advanced, Intermediate and Introductory, in accordance with their English proficiencies manifested as TOEIC Bridge scores in a placement test they took at the beginning of the semester. As Figure 6 shows, two classes belong to each level for both departments, and Classes 1, 3 and 5 took the on-line lessons in the first semester<sup>9</sup>, thus providing data for this interim report<sup>10</sup>. The total number of students in Classes X was 55, and that of Classes Y was 63.

Figure 6: Class Composition (Number of Students)

	Department X	Department Y
Advanced	Class X1 (18), Class X2	Class Y1 (23), Class Y2
Intermediate	Class X3 (18), Class X4	Class T3 (21), Class Y4
Introductory	Class X5 (19), Class X6	Class Y5 (19), Class Y6

None of these students majored in English, but, as a prior survey showed, most wished to improve their proficiencies for different reasons, and many, especially in

<sup>9</sup> The other half, Classes 2, 4 and 6 in both departments will take the on-line lessons in the second semester beginning in September 2019.

<sup>10</sup> The data of those students who failed the course were excluded from this paper.

Classes Y, were highly enthusiastic about studying English for their future careers and for their interest in intercultural communication.

Among the students' responses to the author's questionnaire, one fact was distinct about their experiences of studying English. When asked with whom they had studied, the students mentioned a variety of national origins including the Philippines. None of the students in the substantive experiment in 2016 had been taught English by a Filipino teacher. The English learning environment at the secondary educational level as well as students' experiences of learning English elsewhere inside and outside Japan might gradually be getting more diversified.

Figure 7: The National Origins of Teachers in the Students' Experiences  
(Number of Teachers)

Class	Native Speakers	Non-native Speakers
X1	USA (6), England (4), Canada (3), Australia (2), South Africa (1), Ireland (1), New Zealand (1), Scotland (1), Unidentified (1)	Philippines (3), Russia (2), China (1), Thailand (1)
X3	USA (14), England (8), Canada (4), Australia (4), New Zealand (2)	France (2), China (1), Philippines (1), Malaysia (1), Singapore (1), Country in Africa (1)
X5	USA (8), England (8), Canada (3)	Spain (1), Philippines (1), Netherlands (1), China (1), Unidentified (1)
Y1	USA (12), Canada (11), England (2), Australia (2)	Philippines (11), China (3), France (2), Germany (1), Bangladesh (1), India (1), Korea (1), Sweden (1)
Y3	USA (12), Australia (4), Canada (4), England (1)	Philippines (6), China (1), Germany (1), Costa Rica (1)
Y5	USA (9), Canada (4), England (2), Australia (2)	Philippines (5), India (1)

What was interesting about the students' responses was that not a few mistakenly categorized Filipino teachers as native speakers of English although none considered those from east-Asian countries (China, Thailand and Korea) as such. The author will investigate into the cause of their misinterpretation about Filipino teachers' linguistic background.

### 3.2. Students' Levels Before and After the On-line Lessons

On the first day of the on-line lessons, students took an oral test to check their proficiencies according to the criteria set by the Filipino language school (See Level Check Criteria in Appendix). As Figure 8 shows, students in all classes except for Class Y5 showed improvements after the last on-line lesson in July. For students in Department X, the TOEIC Bridge scores and the Filipino level check seemed relevant,

Class X1 showing the highest level scores both in April and July. On the other hand, those in Department Y indicated interesting results: Class Y5 (Introductory judged by TOEIC Bridge scores) scored higher in April than Class Y3 (Intermediate), and Class Y3 scored higher than Class Y1 (Advanced) in July. In both departments, the intermediate students (Classes X3 and Y3) had the biggest level score gains.

Figure 8: Students' Levels before and after the On-line Lessons

Class	April	July	+ -
X1	2.471	2.844	+0.413
X3	2.063	2.733	+0.670
X5	2.000	2.556	+0.556
	Average: 2.160	Average: 2.711	Ave. +0.546
Y1	2.591	2.782	+0.191
Y3	2.190	2.816	+0.626
Y5	2.316	2.225	Ave. -0.091
	Average: 2.366	Average: 2.608	+0.242

After all, TOEIC Bridge is one way to look at students' performances, and the Filipino level check is another. TOEIC Bridge does not focus on students' speaking ability. In addition, in spite of the criteria on which all Filipino teachers base their evaluation, it is likely that differences in making judgment of students' performances in person-to-person communication may occur.

### 3.3. Students' Satisfaction

The author is well aware of the fact that neither the TOEIC Bridge scores nor the level check scores can indicate the students' psychological aspects during the on-line lessons. Therefore, at the end of each class, students were asked to submit a short reflection paper, just as in the substantive experiment, in which they rated how much they were satisfied with the lessons of the day. From the students' satisfaction levels indicated in the reflection paper, their attitude toward studying English in this on-line course may become evident and help the author consider the effect of the lessons that she may not be able to fathom by levels and scores.

Figure 9 merely shows the average of all the data collected during the course: some 20 students in each class scoring their satisfaction level on a 5-point-scale for 14 weeks. Lower ratings were often due to mechanical and environmental reasons rather than educational and instructional, but sometimes due to poor compatibility that the students somehow felt toward the instructors.

Figure 9: Students' Satisfaction toward the On-line Lessons\_2

Class	Satisfaction (5-point-scale)
X1	4.423
X3	4.166
X5	4.225
Y1	4.342
Y3	4.506
Y5	4.269

Some students kept rating 5 even when some unexpected misfortune occurred such as a blackout in the school district, and their poor health conditions because of a cold they had caught. Others kept rating 3 all the time, and still others vacillated between 2 and 5 depending upon internal and external conditions. However, the author considers the overall figures above were quite high, thus manifesting that the students were happy and fairly motivated to study in the on-line courses, and that they enjoyed the lessons on a one-to-one basis.

#### 3.4. Summary of the On-line Lessons in the First Semester

As the on-line courses introduced in the university's curriculum as a compulsory subject is only halfway through, its whole picture cannot be obtained yet. The same procedure will be repeated in the second semester with the other half of the 1st-year-students, and those who have finished the course as well as those who have not will be taking another TOEIC Bridge toward the end of the second semester as a placement test for their second-year English courses. The author will continue to observe and instruct the remaining students to see if their learning experiences with the on-line lessons show a similar tendencies while she pays much attention to the development of the first group of students.

In the meantime, it may be temporarily concluded that the on-line lessons in the first semester provided many students with a good opportunity to use English extensively and learn new grammatical and vocabulary items intensively in English. Such a learning environment had not been possible in regular English classes in which one teacher was responsible for more than a dozen students and the time allotted to each student for speaking in English should be drastically limited in comparison.

Such an intensive and concentrated communication from which one is not allowed to escape may have been painstaking for some rather than pleasant and comfortable. It is also true, however, that many students reported in their reflection papers how

difficult and stressful the lessons might have been while the same students' satisfaction ratings were quite high.

What was most encouraging to the author was the fact that some of the students had already been familiar with Filipino teachers, and that no students complained about those teachers instructing English to them. The concern and anxiety previously held by the author's colleagues and university policy makers were not only dispelled in the substantive experiment; they were proven to be unfounded in the first step of the full-fledged introduction of the on-line lessons.

#### IV. Conclusion

Although most Japanese university students, regardless of their majors, study English with different enthusiasm, it should be difficult for them to imagine how much English proficiencies they might need and in what situations they will be asked to use English after graduation. Whatever possibilities in whichever walks of life they may have in the future, acquiring basic command of English and communication skills in the language should definitely be sought after. In addition, university students should be well aware of the present situation and status of the English language in the globalized world that many people are using different Englishes for various purposes. Such awareness of and knowledge about English(es) today will help students, not only technically but also psychologically, to practically use the language as their own.

When viewed from such a perspective, the author finds it very fortunate and promising that these Japanese students did not appear to be allergic or aversive to the Filipino English, one distinct variety of Asian Englishes. It should be considered educationally effective and significant for the students' practical use of English in the future to have an opportunity to experience communicating with non-Japanese Asian teachers who use qualitatively superior English such as the Filipino instructors they had in the on-line lessons. Those teachers helped the Japanese students not only practice and improve their English skills but also to have clearer awareness of the existence of speakers of different Englishes.

It needs to be emphasized again that this paper only partially discusses the significance of incorporating on-line lessons into Japanese university English curriculum in the middle of the academic year. More detailed discussions with more data from the second half of the year will be presented when the author gets prepared for that.

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## Appendix

LEVEL CHECK CRITERIA					
OVER-ALLRATING	False Beginner	Beginner	High Beginner	Intermediate	High Intermediate
RATINGS	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
CONTENT	has difficulty relating his/her answers to the topic	answers have some relevance to the topic given, but with incorrect usage of words and expressions that affect the content	answers have relevance to the topic, but with some inconsistencies	answers are relevant to the topic given; lapses didn't affect the whole content	answers show deep understanding of the topic being talked about
GRAMMAR	has difficulty constructing simple to complex sentences correctly	can construct some simple to complex sentences with apparent errors.	can construct some simple to complex sentences with some errors.	can construct simple to complex sentences correctly with less errors	can construct simple to complex sentences with great precision
PRONUNCIATION	has difficulty pronouncing some words that sometimes affect understanding	manages to use pronunciation attributes with apparent lapses	manages to use pronunciation attributes but with some lapses	uses pronunciation attributes efficiently but not sustained	uses flexible pronunciation attributes accurately and effortlessly
VOCABULARY	can talk about common topics but with limited lexis	can share about the specific topics using some lexis clearly with noticeable inappropriacies	can share about the specific topics using some good lexis and expressions clearly with some inappropriacies	can share about various topics and uses lexis precisely but has never use any good expressions	can fully talk about discussed topics and uses some high level expressions accurately
TIME	takes 10-20 seconds before answering the questions	takes 10 seconds before answering the questions; pauses are noticeable	takes 5 seconds before answering the questions but with frequent pauses	quick in answering the questions but with frequent pauses	can answer the questions directly and fluently
ATTITUDE	answers the questions asked with hesitation all throughout the whole class	actively tries to answer the questions but sometimes with noticeable hesitations	answers the questions with confidence but sometimes with hesitation	answers with confidence without hesitations but not sustained	answers with conviction and politeness