Teaching Academic English to Japanese University Students: Development and Quality Assessment of a Blended EGAP Course

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List of Publications and Presentations

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

1. Alizadeh, M., Mehran, P., Koguchi, I., & Takemura, H. (2018). Language needs analysis and internationalization of higher education: The unaddressed factor in Japan. *Kansai JACET Journal, 20*, 156-173. **(Chapter 3)**

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2. Ho, M., & Alizadeh, M. (2018, November). *Encouraging Japanese educators to actively participate in JALTCALL*. Presented at the 44^{th} Annual International JALT Conference, Shizuoka Convention & Arts Center (Granship), Shizuoka, Japan.

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4. Ho, M., Alizadeh, M., & Ho, P. (2018, June). *Encouraging Japanese teachers and researchers for more involvement into the field*. Presented at JALTCALL Conference 2018, Meijo University, Nagoya, Japan.

5. Alizadeh, M. (2018, May). *Pre-service teacher education at Osaka University: A reflective report on the Future Faculty Program*. Presented at the 17^{th} JALT PanSIG Conference, Toyo Gakuen University, Tokyo, Japan.

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9. Mehran, P., Alizadeh, M., & Aryadoust, V. (2016, May). *Looking at innovations in curriculum through the lens of* 21^{st} *century skills*. Presented at the 15^{th} JALT PanSIG Conference, Meio University, Okinawa, Japan.

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2. Mehran, P., & Alizadeh, M. (2017, November). *Multimodal e-feedback in an online English course*. Poster presented at the 43^{rd} Annual International JALT Conference, Tsukuba International Conference Center, Tsukuba, Japan.

3. Mehran, P., & Alizadeh, M. (2017, June). *Osaka University Global English Online: The design and development phases*. Poster presented at JALTCALL Conference 2017, Matsuyama University, Matsuyama, Japan.

4. Alizadeh, M., Mehran, P., & Hawkinson, E. (2017, May). *MAVR (Mixed Augmented Virtual Realities): The future or a fad?* Poster presented at

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1. Alizadeh, M. (2018, August). *Tap your way to increased student engagement: Kahoot in the EFL classroom*. Poster Presented at the 58^{th} National Conference of the Japan Association for Language Education and Technology (LET), Senri Life Science Center, Toyonaka, Osaka, Japan.

Invited Talks

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3. Koguchi, I., Alizadeh, M., & Mehran, P. (2017, August). ネット上のフリー教材を活用する：発音からTEDトーク、発信型活動まで [Making use of free online resources: Pronunciation training, TED Talks, and project-based activities]. Presented at平成29年度・公開講座「教員

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Abstract

This research study is an attempt at designing, developing, implementing, and assessing the quality of a blended course of English for general academic purposes targeting undergraduate Japanese students at Osaka University. The study has been conducted in several iterative stages as explicated below.

Following Michael Allen's Basic Successive Approximation Model (SAM1), the researcher began with carrying out a thorough language needs analysis study to investigate the needs and difficulties of Japanese students as far as learning English at university classes and using it for communicative purposes was concerned. To this end, questionnaire data were collected from 278 Japanese undergraduate students enrolled at Osaka University. In order to further clarify the language needs and difficulties of Japanese learners, twelve instructors teaching Practical English courses were also interviewed. The findings of this stage indicate that students and instructors invariably underline the importance of improving learners' listening and speaking abilities alongside other skills in academia and at workplace so as to help promote the ultimate goal of internationalization and to nurture 21^{st} century global citizens.

Continuing with the next stage, the researcher designed and developed a blended course of English for general academic purposes to replace the old course of "Practical English (e-learning)". Among the major differences of the old versus the new course are the use of a placement test, provision of content at three different levels of proficiency, integration of four language skills, inclusion of speaking and writing tasks, focus on global themes, addition of a group project, and utilization of open educational resources resulting in the course being free of charge for students. The new course, titled Osaka University Global English Online (OUGEO), was hosted on the university learning management system, Blackboard Learn, locally known as CLE (Collaboration and Learning Environment). The entire course content, including syllabus and guidelines, weekly study materials, exercises, and assignments, were uploaded on CLE by March 2017.

Osaka University Global English Online was subsequently implemented in

the spring semester of 2017-2018 with 86 undergraduate students mainly from the Faculties of Law, Letters, and Economics. Similar to other face-to-face courses, OUGEO was also expanded over fifteen weeks, with the exception of having only five face-to-face classes. The remaining ten weeks were run online, during which the students were required to access the designated learning materials for each week on the learning management system and submit the related assignments. Regarding the face-to-face classes, the first session was allocated to orientation and getting the students familiar with the course, how to access the content, and where to submit their assignments as well as informing them of ways to contact the instructor and teaching assistants when need arose. The last session was also spent on giving the final exam, which was created on the learning management system and scored automatically. The second face-to-face class, however, was dedicated to training the students in doing poster presentations and overlaying videos on their posters using an augmented reality (AR) application called BlippAR.

As a group term project, the students created posters on global themes and presented them during two face-to-face classes, with seven groups as presenters and seven others as listeners each time. This poster presentation carousel task required the listener groups to move from one poster station to the next in a circular fashion and to use the BlippAR app to view the AR content created by their classmates. The purpose of this user experience study was to analyze students' views toward the use of BlippAR in language classes and its usefulness. The students' responses to the user experience questionnaire indicated that the majority of the respondents found BlippAR an engaging tool for language learning, which made learning more interesting, yet many believed that the app per se did not contribute to improving their English skills.

In attempt to evaluate the course both internally and externally, two types of quality assessment were administered. First, the students enrolled in the course were asked to fill out an evaluation questionnaire toward the end of the semester, in which they reflected their opinions on the usefulness and pace of the course, quality of teaching, availability of support, and ease of navigation among others. They were also given an opportunity to share any qualitative comments they

had through an open-ended question. Overall, most of the students agreed that the course helped them improve all their skills in particular oral/aural skills, and that they were in general content with it and felt that the course met their language needs to a great extent. Nevertheless, there was a consensus regarding the existence of some technical difficulties, for instance in submitting speaking assignments online.

With regard to external evaluation of the blended course, it was assessed using the Quality Matters™ Higher Education Course Design Rubric (Fifth Edition) both by the researcher first and later by a peer reviewer affiliated with Quality Matters™. Some revisions were made during the self-review prior to getting the course peer reviewed. The first round of peer review yielded a score of 70 out of 99, resulting in failure to meet the Quality Matters standards of course design. Nonetheless, the course currently meets all the standards of the Higher Education Course Design Rubric upon amendment with a new score of 99/99. The researcher believes that there is still room for improving the course by rerunning it with several groups of students, getting it further refined and fine-tuned to the needs of Japanese learners as well as by solving the technical problems which occasionally occurred during the implementation phase.

The current study bears significant implications for online/blended course designers and developers. It explicates examples of best practices and demonstrates potential pitfalls threatening the smooth flow of online language teaching and learning. It also has important implications for faculty development and strongly advocates the need to train faculty to design, develop, and evaluate their courses following mainstream standards while meeting students' needs and preparing them for living in the globalizing society of this century.

Keywords: Blended learning, Needs analysis, Course design, Quality assessment, Augmented reality in language education

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List of Abbreviations

ADDIE Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation. 22, 23, 25, 35, 63

AR Augmented Reality. 50, 53–56, 59–61, 86, 97

CALL Computer Assisted Language Learning. 6, 11, 56

CEFR Common European Framework of Reference. 45, 67

CLE Collaboration and Learning Environment. 51, 68, 71, 76, 81, 82, 88–90

EFL English as a Foreign Language. 2, 6, 66, 91

EGAP English for General Academic Purposes. 8, 33, 34, 36, 42, 54, 63, 66, 67, 89

ELLLO English Language Listening Library Online. 45, 46

ELT English Language Teaching. 6, 9, 30, 53

ITP Institutional Testing Program. 47, 67

KOAN Knowledge of Osaka University Academic Nucleus. 47

L2 second language. 9, 34, 96

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MOOCs Massive Open Online Courses. 66

OER Open Educational Resources. 51, 92

OUGEO Osaka University Global English Online. 12, 28, 30, 33, 34, 52, 58, 63, 67, 89–91, 93

PBT Paper Based Test. 48

PNA Pedagogic Needs Analysis. 34, 35

PSA Present Situation Analysis. 34, 35

QM Quality Matters. 8–10, 62–66, 68–71, 89, 93, 94, 97

QMR Quality Matters Research. 66

REDCap Research Electronic Data Capture. 38, 71

SAM Successive Approximation Model. 23, 25, 27, 28, 35, 36, 63

SAM1 Successive Approximation Model 1. 25, 27, 28, 36, 63, 64, 68

SAM2 Successive Approximation Model 2. 25, 28

TOEFL Test of English as a Foreign Language. 47–49, 67

TOEIC Test of English for International Communication. 47, 49

TSA Target Situation Analysis. 34, 35

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter presents the background to English language education in Japan, with a focus on the internationalization of education, English education reform plans by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT), and the impact of these policy changes on teaching and learning English in this country. The information provided is intended to set the scene for stating the problem and arguing the significance of the current study.

1.1 English Education in Japan

The history of English language teaching in Japan can be traced back to the early 19^{th} century with the British warship movements in the harbor of Nagasaki in 1808. Since then, a variety of ELT methods and approaches have been practiced, yet without much success (Oda & Takada, 2005). In spite of spending billions of dollars on ELT (Hawley Nagatomo, 2016), Japan often ranks among the lowest in TOEFL and TOEIC scores as reported by Educational Testing Service (2018), which implies that English education is more of a business than a profession. In what follows, the major challenges concerning this issue are overviewed.

The first problem is characterized by an overemphasis on the grammar-translation method, also known as *yakudoku* (訳読) in Japanese. As the first known method of foreign language literacy in Japan, *yakudoku* consists of learning a target language by translating a text word for word and reorganizing the elements of a

sentence in accordance with the Japanese rules of word order. There is no need to stress that this method is incapable of developing learners' communicative language skills. Furthermore, regardless of the recent paradigm shift in ELT approaches and methods commenced by MEXT, *yakudoku* still remains as the major foreign language teaching method at schools, where teachers are obliged to prepare their students to take the high-stakes entrance exam (the whole preparation process referred to as *juken*, 受験) in order to get admitted to high-raking universities across the country. As a result, Japanese is in most cases adopted as the main language of instruction, with minimal authentic communication and interaction in English (Mondejar, Laurier, Valdivia, Mboutsiadis, & Sanchez, 2012).

The second major issue concerns teacher training and professional development for both pre-service and in-service teachers. As noted by Nishino and Watanabe (2008), most Japanese teachers of English receive minimal training in language teaching particularly within a communicative approach, suffer from a relatively low level of proficiency especially in spoken English, are apprehensive about making mistakes in front of their students and thus undermining their authority, and tend to believe in the myth that a thorough declarative knowledge of English grammar and intensive reading skills are what Japanese learners are actually in need of. Although MEXT constantly aims at improving the quality of teaching English among other subjects by systematically implementing professional development programs for teachers at secondary and tertiary levels (MEXT, 2015), teacher education programs at universities and the collaboration between secondary schools and universities are still far from meeting most of the needs of the 21^{st} century teachers in a rapidly globalizing society.

Last but not least, there is a set of socio-cultural factors that hinder Japanese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in their efforts to gain fluency and communicative competence in English. In his comparative study, Howe (2000) maintains that according to the Eastern philosophy, there is only one correct answer to any given question and mistakes are frowned upon. In addition, Doi (1973) points out that Japanese way of thinking is not *logical* and is rather *intuitive*, especially compared to the Western thought. Having these in

mind, Laskar (2007) concludes that reasoning is not encouraged on the grounds that it is a potential threat to group solidarity and harmony; this is why Japanese students are not trained in certain skills such as critical thinking, argumentation, debate, and self-expression. As Yamada's (2015) study reveals, Japanese students "freeze" and feel "inferior" and "ashamed" when faced with real life situations where there is not a single right answer to a given question, such as communication in English. Consequently, among other factors, this may lead to students' lack of motivation for learning English (Suzuki & Kuwamura, 2011).

1.2 MEXT Call for Internationalization

MEXT initiated a call for internationalization of higher education in 2009 by launching the Global 30 Project which aims at increasing the number of international students from the current 123,829 to 300,000 by 2020 (MEXT, 2009). In fulfillment of this pivotal goal, 13 core universities were chosen to foster an academic environment in which local and international students can exchange opinions, knowledge, and culture, and make international ties to "live locally and grow globally" . In so doing, Japanese universities have undertaken educational reforms on top of which lie English education policies.

The first stride was the transition of the medium of instruction from Japanese to English. The Global 30 universities have thus begun to offer a selected number of courses and/or programs partially or entirely in English. The purpose of this reform action plan was for Japanese students to be more exposed to the English language and get encouraged to study overseas, and also for international students to study in Japan and complete a degree in English (MEXT, 2012). Among other initiatives started by MEXT (2014c) Japanese universities were spurred on to adopt an integrated approach to English language teaching and learning emphasizing all four language skills in instruction and assessment.

Nevertheless, English as the language of instruction has not yet sufficiently found its way into Japanese universities. The main reason behind this is rooted in the fact that English education in Japan is afflicted by various problems, the most salient of which is the overemphasis upon the grammar-based, translation-

oriented approach hindering Japanese EFL learners from being efficient communicators (Sakamoto, 2012). Other challenges that impede effective English language teaching and learning in Japan include predominant teacher-centered instruction (Hosoki, 2011), lack of teacher training (Steele & Zhang, 2016), teaching to the test (Lowe, 2015), and low learner motivation (Kikuchi, 2013), to name a few.

1.3 English Education vis–à–vis Internationalization

Internationalization of education as an institutional response to globalization has grown in importance in light of recent educational reform policies in Japan of which English language teaching is an indispensable element. To this aim, MEXT (2014a) has initiated a plan through which introductory English classes will be added to the third-grade elementary school curriculum and will be made compulsory from the fifth grade. Moreover, in preparation for the upcoming 2020 Tokyo Olympics, English education in Japan has shifted toward enhancing communication skills. Teacher education has also been subject to change with empowering teachers to improve their teaching skills, practice co-teaching with assistant language teachers (ALTs), and use ICT-based teaching materials in their classrooms. The revised national foreign language curriculum for senior high schools with the new goal of "conducting English classes in English" (英語は英語で in Japanese) was also proposed by MEXT in 2011 and implemented in 2013. The "English-only" initiative, however, was not welcomed, primarily because the new changes were not adhered to by the nationwide entrance exam system (Glasgow, 2014). Moreover, the lack of communicative fluency in English among both Japanese teachers and students to engage in teaching and learning through English seems to be an additional factor.

Despite the recent attempts to improve foreign language education and fulfill the ultimate goal of genuine internationalization, Japanese students still lack communicative competence in English, a key to success in global mobility. This incapability is most evident at tertiary level where students have only been exposed to the former malfunctioning education system. Consequently, the major-

ity of university graduates have been unable to keep pace with the increasingly globalizing Japan (Hammond, 2012).

1.4 The Role of ICT in Foreign Language Education

Digital technology has drastically altered our way of life. We have moved from a world that was bound by analog devices to a world that offers any bit of information we desire with the touch of a screen on a hand-held device. In a similar vein, technology integration has also substantially influenced the provision and practice of education in high-tech settings. To this effect, many universities and institutions of higher education worldwide have established agendas for the use of digital technologies, viewing them as part of their "everyday furniture" rather than an "exotic novelty" (Selwyn, 2013, 2014).

The literature on educational technology regards technology integration as beneficial in that (1) it supports learning and yields successful outcomes, (2) it helps students enhance their digital literacy and skills for future employment, and (3) and it motivates them for life-long learning (Ng, 2015). In addition, using technology in education gives learners access to instructional materials tailored to their interest and the standards set by policy makers. Furthermore, by exceeding the boundaries of time and location, the Internet enables instructors and learners to access materials and communicate with one another both synchronously and asynchronously, in pairs or groups. Since it makes virtual communication possible regardless of time and place, use of the Internet has resulted in a paradigm shift for teaching and learning, to which the stakeholders are still struggling to adapt (Bates & Sangrà, 2011). Altogether, there is ample evidence that e-learning can increase the accessibility and flexibility of education.

However, this by no means denies the role of instructors. As a matter of fact, instructors maintain their centrality, yet they have different role orientations. The model of instructor as transmitter of knowledge is replaced with the model of instructor as facilitator, coach, and mentor. As students grow more autonomous, they need to be advised to move in the right track. For instance, they

have to be taught how to evaluate online resources and access reliable information. Hence, in a context of individualized leaning, teachers play a crucial role in trust filtering the resources for acquiring information (D. M. West, 2012).

Language learning and teaching as a sub-discipline of education has been greatly favored with educational technology for the last two or three decades. In fact, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) (to use the most widely used acronym [Levy & Hubbard, 2005]) was previously considered as a mere specialist interest within the field of language education (Chapelle, 2001, 2003). However, against all odds, CALL has established itself as a consolidated and prestigious field of research and practice.

In accord with the international trend, English Language Teaching (ELT) researchers and practitioners in Japan have displayed a growing interest in the initiation of CALL into language teaching. Readers are referred to JALT CALL Journal, which is a peer-reviewed open-access online journal published by the CALL special interest group of the Japan Association for Language Teaching, available at `http://journal.jaltcall.org/` and a recently published book chapter by Ferreira and Castellano (2019).

As recommended by MEXT (2014c), technology as a potential solution to the shortcomings of ELT in Japan can be employed to more effectively enhance English pedagogy. Also, one of the five proposals suggested by MEXT (2011) to develop proficiency in English for international communication concerns the use of ICT in foreign language classes. The following excerpt quoted from the same source clearly indicates MEXT's advocacy for technology integration to improve the effectiveness of EFL teaching.

> [E]ffective use of ICT is also important to expand opportunities to use English, and to improve students' English skills. Particularly, international exchange with foreign schools and cooperative learning using ICT can provide opportunities to come across practical English that is difficult to acquire in regular classes, thus contributing to deeper understanding of both foreign cultures and own culture, and to stronger motivation for English learning. Moreover, by using audiovisual ma-

> terials, drill materials and other ICT materials, students can be provided with iterative learning, personal training and other important means to acquire English. This can provide learning opportunities according to students' interest and level of proficiency. Besides, lessons can be made more comprehensible and effective if English teachers utilize digital textbooks and teaching aids during class, presenting to students videos and images of native speakers speaking as well as facial expressions and gestures that accompany speaking. (p. 8)

As one of the leading institutions of higher education in Japan, Osaka University is also considering the shift to online education to facilitate learning and teaching, and take the lead in realizing the ultimate goal of internationalization.

1.5 Where Osaka University Stands

According to a report published in the Japan Times (Shimomura, 2013), in response to the Project for Establishing Core Universities for Internationalization, also known as the Global 30 project explained earlier, Osaka University has undergone the process of "Englishization", a term coined by Coleman (2006), and has accordingly established an International College in 2010, through which several credit courses and degree programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels are offered in English, and 15 subjects of these programs are open to local Japanese students to be able to immerse themselves in a global environment, also referred to as "internationalization at home" (Wätcher, 2003). Moreover, significant strides have been made to create supportive environments for international students and researchers by establishing the Support Office in 2007 at Osaka University. The University attempts to train internationally-minded graduates to be the leaders of tomorrow by creating global and diverse campuses. Besides providing English language instruction, Osaka University, therefore, tries to provide its students with global exposure and with an opportunity to develop intercultural awareness, intercultural mindsets, and intercultural communication skills. In spite of all these achievements, there is still more to be done to fully realize the goal of internationalization, and the current PhD project is a

small step in that direction.

1.6 Statement of the Problem and Significance of the Study

As already mentioned, the Japan Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology has established a plan with the aim of helping its national universities grow globally and double the number of Japanese students studying overseas by 2020 (MEXT, 2014b). To achieve this goal, universities in Japan are obliged to reconsider their current practices of teaching English, and Osaka University is no exception.

The present study aims at contributing to the status quo of teaching/learning English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) at Osaka University through systematizing the process of course design, delivery, and evaluation by employing the latest technological and educational tools and platforms. In order to fulfill this aim, the researcher has attempted at developing a blended course of English for undergraduate students. The course has been implemented by having the target group use it, and it has been evaluated using the Quality Matters™ Higher Education Course Design Rubric (Fifth Edition). The Quality Matters (QM) Program (`https://www.qualitymatters.org/`) is a research-based approach to quality assessment and improvement of online and blended learning. Quality assurance is conducted with reference to a set of standards (also known as rubric) for the design of online/blended courses (Legon & Adair, 2013).

To provide the readers with an entry into this study, the research questions stated in the next section have been adapted to three specific purposes which include:

1. Identifying the problems which English instructors and university students in Japan are plagued with as far as teaching and learning academic English are concerned
2. Addressing those problems and solving them in an effective way throughout the design and development phases of the blended course

3. Rating the quality of the blended course using the QM Higher Education Course Design Rubric as well as students' evaluation

1.7 Research Questions

The present study seeks to shed light upon the following research questions:

1. What are the problems and barriers which English instructors and university students in Japan are obliged to deal with as far as teaching and learning academic English are concerned?
2. How are those problems and barriers addressed by the blended course?
3. How is the quality of the blended course rated when compared against the QM™ Higher Education Rubric and also as evaluated by the students?

1.8 Outline of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of seven chapters, each of which will be briefly explained below.

- ✓ Chapter 1, Introduction, begins with the background on English education in Japan and how MEXT's internationalization policies have initiated reforms in Japanese higher education in general and ELT in particular. It also looks at where Osaka University stands with regard to these reforms. Furthermore, the statement of the problem and the significance of the study are presented alongside the research questions and a synopsis of the dissertation chapters.
- ✓ Chapter 2, Instructional Design and Blended Learning, presents the basics of instructional design as well as a historical overview of mainstream instructional design models and their development over time. It also clarifies the concept of blended learning and its significance in higher education.
- ✓ Chapter 3, Needs Analysis Study, presents the initial study conducted so as to examine the second language (L2) needs of Japanese students and the

challenges they encounter while learning English at their home universities. The findings of this phase of the study are intended to inform the next stages of the project.

- ✓ Chapter 4, Course Design and Development at a Glance, is an attempt at clarifying the novelty of the study by comparing and contrasting the old course with the new course developed as a part of this research project.
- ✓ Chapter 5, Course Implementation: AR Study, examines students' experience with an augmented reality app, called BlippAR, which they were required to use for their term project during the implementation phase of the study.
- ✓ Chapter 6, Course Evaluation Study, reports on the quality assessment of the blended course as yielded by students' responses to an evaluation questionnaire as well as the peer review conducted by an external QM reviewer.
- ✓ Chapter 7, Conclusion, is a summary of the major findings and outlines suggestions for future work.

Chapter 2

Instructional Design and Blended Learning

In accordance with the outline presented in Section 1.8, this chapter provides the theoretical background to the study by reviewing the concept of instructional design, mainstream models of instructional design, as well as the literature on blended learning.

2.1 Instructional Design

Smith and Ragan (2005) define instructional design as "the systematic and reflective process of translating principles of learning and instruction into plans for instructional materials, activities, information resources, and evaluation" (p. 4). Instructional design is neither a new term nor is it limited to technology-enhanced learning and CALL. As a matter of fact, the discipline of instructional design can be traced back to the early 20^{th} century when first attempts were made at applying scientific methods to solve educational problems.

The job of instructional designers is said to be similar to that of engineers. Smith and Ragan (2005) refer to the existing literature on educational psychology, theories of learning, and information communication technologies among others to examine the ways and conditions under which people learn more effectively and apply this knowledge to create situations in which learning is more likely to occur.

2.1.1 Essential Roles in the Instructional Design Process

According to Morrison, Ross, Kalman, and Kemp (2013), there are three essential roles in the instructional design process, all of which the author has partially or entirely been involved in.

a) Instructional Designer

   As the name suggests, the instructional designer is primarily responsible for designing the instruction alongside planning, coordinating, and managing all aspects of the instructional design process.

b) Subject-Matter Expert

   Instructors usually serve as subject-matter experts. They are in charge of providing information related to content and resources and reassuring their accuracy and appropriacy.

c) Evaluator

   An evaluator's responsibility involves collecting and interpreting data during the piloting stage, as well as determining the effectiveness of a program once it has been implemented.

In case of designing and developing Osaka University Global English Online (OUGEO), the author has fully assumed the first and the second roles, and partially the third.

2.1.2 Main Instructional Design Questions

There are three main instructional design questions to be asked before embarking on the task of creating an educational program, as introduced by Smith and Ragan (2005, p. 8).

1. Where are we going? (What are the goals of instruction?)
2. How will we get there? (What is the instructional strategy and the instructional medium?)
3. How will we know when we have arrived? (What should our tests look like? How will we evaluate and revise the instructional materials?)

These instructional design questions are then changed into the following statements, which summarize the main tasks that an instructional designer is required to complete.

1. Perform an instructional analysis.
2. Develop an instructional strategy.
3. Develop and conduct an evaluation.

As a matter of fact, the following chapters of the dissertation detail these tasks, with Chapter 3 allocated to analysis, Chapters 4 and 5 to strategy, and finally Chapter 6 to evaluation.

2.1.3 The Relevance of Instructional Design

There are three main lines of argument against the relevance of instructional design in the technological age (Hannum, 2012). Firstly, they are said to be overly time-consuming. In our modern competitive world, course designers and developers do not have the time to strictly follow the steps described in instructional design models since organizations and educational institutions constantly pressure them to develop training programs and courses as quickly as possible. Second, instructional design models are criticized for being inflexible in their steps. In fact, when displayed on paper, many instructional design models tend to follow a seemingly inflexible order and are displayed as flowcharts with steps sequenced in a linear fashion, thus creating the misconception that those steps need to be followed strictly one after another. Lastly, instructional design models are unnecessary when creating an online course, as if merely changing the mode of delivery from face to face to online would somehow increase the effectiveness of instruction. These arguments have erroneously led many to underestimate the value of instructional design and its relevance to their instructional program design and development.

Hannum (2012) discusses the flaws based on which the afore-mentioned arguments have been formed and tries to restore the relevance of instructional design without requiring designers to follow any given model perfectly. He takes

the discussion one step further by introducing shortcuts to applying instructional design models without having to entirely dismiss them. Hannum describes these shortcuts by comparing and contrasting them to the recommended instructional design procedures when undertaking endeavors such as listing tasks, analyzing audience, writing learning objectives, and conducting formative evaluation. In short, despite time constraints and the ever-increasing emergence of competing technologies, instructional design models are still highly valid and relevant.

Hannum is not the sole author to write in defense of instructional design. Smith and Ragan (2005, p. 11-12) have also provided a comprehensive list of the advantages of instructional design as follows.

1. Encouraging advocacy of the learner
2. Supporting effective, efficient, and appealing instruction
3. Supporting coordination among designers, developers, and those who will implement the instruction
4. Facilitating diffusion/dissemination/adoption
5. Supporting development for alternate embodiments or delivery systems
6. Facilitating congruence among objectives, activities, and assessment
7. Providing a systematic framework for dealing with learning problems

Piskurich (2015) also has a similar but simpler list of the merits of instructional design. In his view, instructional design brings with it:

- cost-effectiveness
- time-effectiveness
- learning effectiveness
- training effectiveness evaluation
- competitive advantage
- business integration
- and last but not least, consistency.

The next section presents a historical review of several major models of instructional design and development and ends with the model adopted in the current study.

2.2 Mainstream Models of Instructional Design/Development

2.2.1 Dick and Carey's Model

Dick and Carey's Systems Approach Model was first presented publicly at Florida State University back in 1968. The first edition of the model is displayed in Figure 2.1 (Dick, 1996).

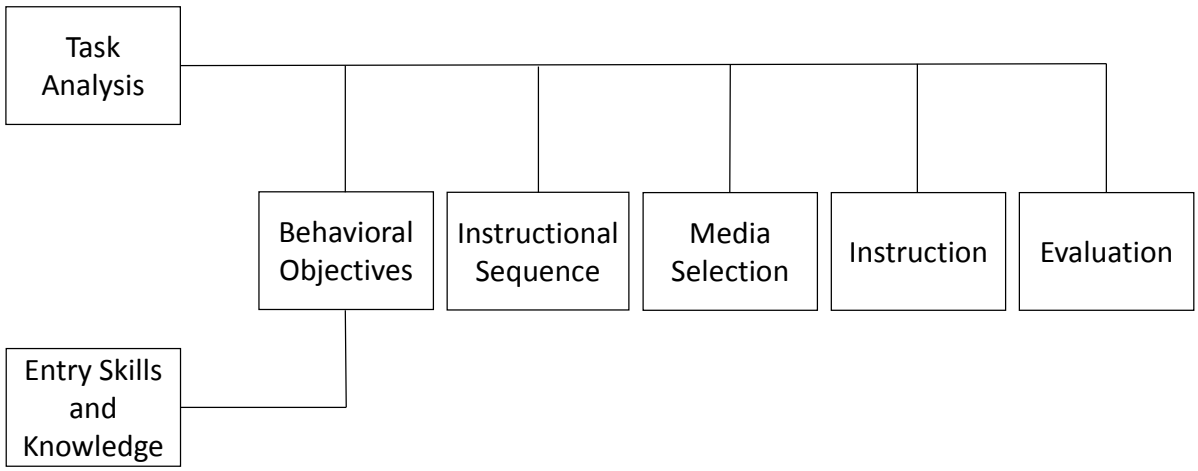

Figure 2.1. First version of Dick and Carey's Model (Dick, 1996, p. 56)

This first version of the model went through minor changes over the first three editions of of Dick and Carey's *The systematic design of instruction* published in 1978, 1985, 1990, respectively. Figure 2.2 presents the models as it appeared in those three editions, as described by Dick (1996).

Dick and Carey's model went through major revisions in 1996 as they published the fourth edition of their book (Dick & Carey, 1996). The 1996 iteration of the model, although similar to the earlier model at first glance, is highly influenced by new concepts emerging back then, including but not limited to performance technology, context analysis, and formative and summative evaluation. This version of the model, displayed in Figure 2.3, underlines "the importance

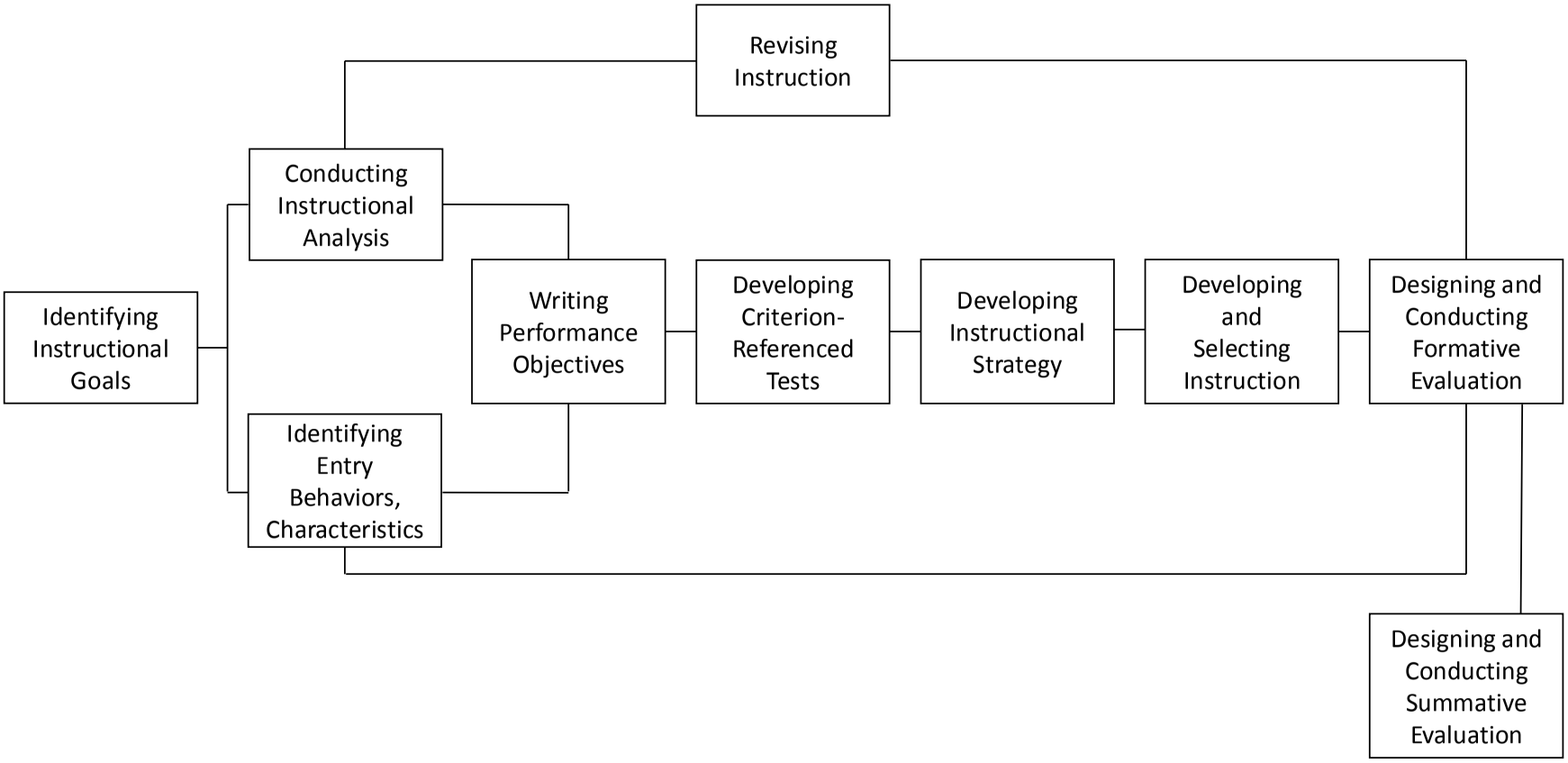

Figure 2.2. Second version of Dick and Carey's Model (Dick, 1996, p. 57)

of planning instruction that will facilitate the transfer of learning to the performance environment, and conducting formative evaluations in the workplace after training has been completed" (Dick, 1996, p. 58).

The Dick and Carey Systems Approach Model is goal-oriented and seeks to improve performance with its ten interdependent components:

1) Assess needs to identify goals
2) Conduct instructional analysis
3) Analyze learners and contexts
4) Write performance objectives
5) Develop assessment instruments
6) Develop instructional strategies
7) Develop and select instructional materials
8) Design and conduct formative evaluation of instruction
9) Revise instruction
10) Conduct summative evaluation

The Dick and Carey model is more commonly used in business and industry instructional design. Over the years, this model has been further revised, and the latest version has been published in 2018 in the eighth edition of their book.

2.2.2 Kemp, Morrison, and Ross's Model

As Morrison et al. (2013) state, there are four fundamental and interrelated components in their instructional design model–learners, objectives, methods, and evaluation–which can be seen in Figure 2.4. Kemp, Morrison, and Ross's instructional design plan consists of nine elements (Morrison et al., 2013). Figure 2.5 graphically represents the model.

1) Identify instructional problems and specify goals for designing instruction.
2) Examine learner characteristics that will influence your instructional decisions.

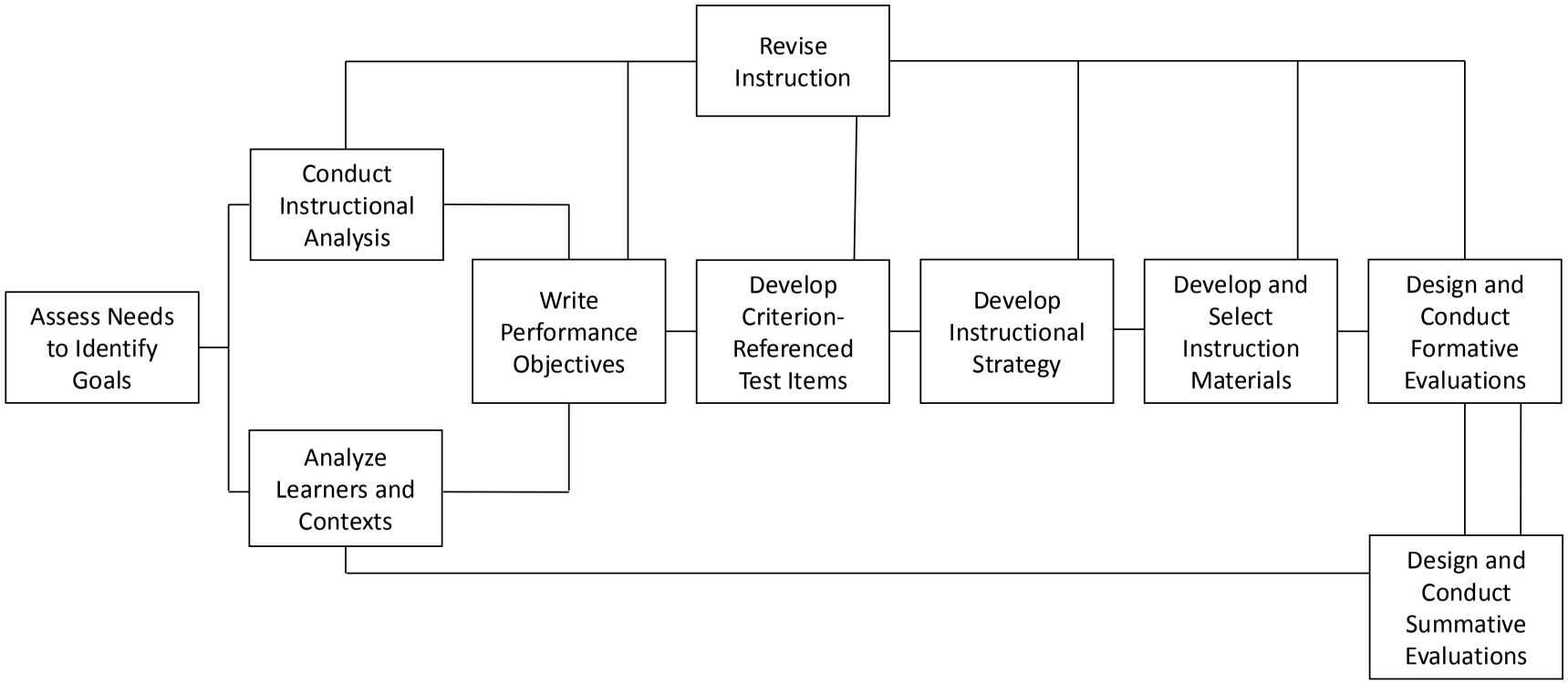

Figure 2.3. 1996 version of Dick and Carey's Model (Dick & Carey, 1996)

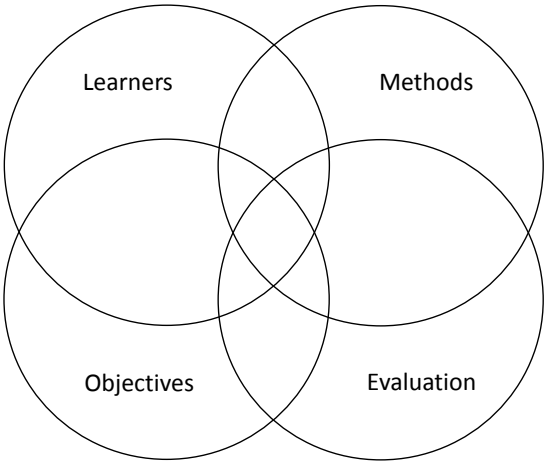

Figure 2.4. The fundamental components of instructional design in Kemp, Morrison, and Ross's Model (Morrison et al., 2013, p. 14)

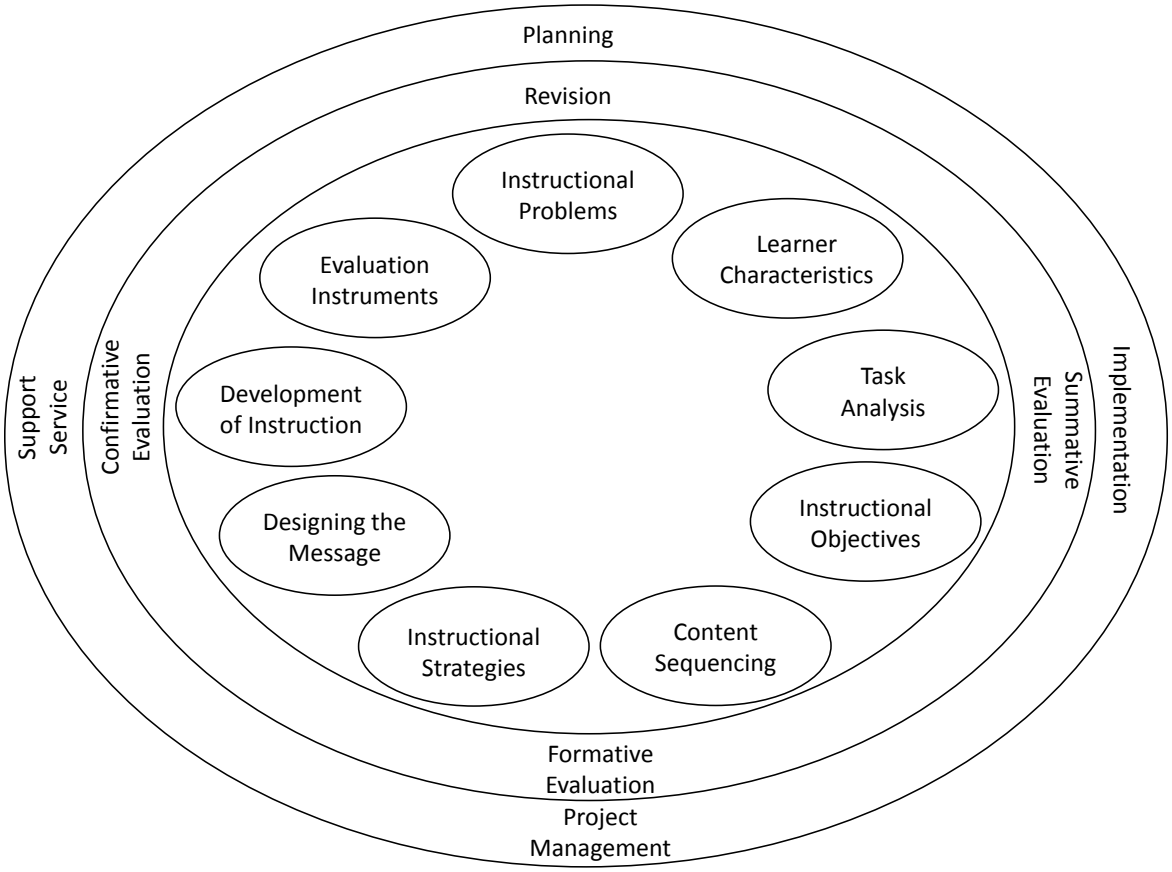

Figure 2.5. Components of the instructional design plan in Kemp, Morrison, and Ross's Model (Morrison et al., 2013, p. 12)

3) Identify subject content, and analyze task components related to stated goals and purposes.
4) Specify the instructional objectives.
5) Sequence content within each instructional unit for logical learning.
6) Design instructional strategies so that each learner can master the objectives.
7) Plan the instructional message and develop the instruction.
8) Develop evaluation instruments to assess the objectives.
9) Select resources to support instruction and learning activities.

The basic components of the design process overlap and are presented in an oval shape to indicate that "there is no one specific sequence or order to completing the steps" (p. 16). Morrison et al. believe that it is logical to start with the instructional problem and proceed clockwise with the design process. However, they also mention that it is equally logical to design the evaluation instruments immediately after specifying the objectives. Readers interested in finding our more about the Dick and Carey's Model and Kemp, Morrison, and Ross's Model are referred to Akbulut (2007), which is a good read on the comparative analysis of these two models of instructional design.

2.2.3 Merrill's Pebble-in-the-Pond Model

Merrill (2002a) examined a number of representative instructional design theories and illustrated how they were all based upon a set of shared principles despite terminological differences. He summarized these instructional principles into Figure 2.6, a conceptual framework that states and relates the *first principles of instruction*.

The Pebble-in-the-Pond Model for Instructional Design, proposed by Merrill (2002b, 2013), "consists of a series of expanding activities initiated by first casting in a pebble" (Merrill, 2002b, p. 40). Merrill uses the pond metaphor in reference to the learning environment and the pebble metaphor in reference to a task or problem that learners are taught to accomplish through instruction.

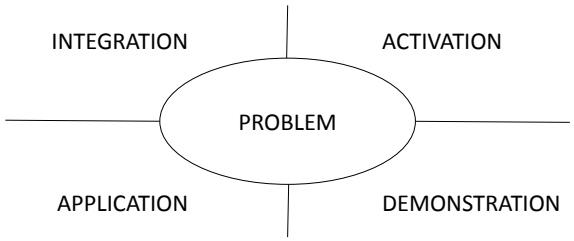

Figure 2.6. Phases of effective instruction (Merrill, 2002a, p. 45)

Figure 2.7 represents all the ripples in the process of instructional design as it appeared in Merrill (2002b). In a revised version of the Pebble-in-the-Pond Model, (Merrill, 2013, p. 249) identifies six design phases as quoted below. This version of the model is displayed in Figure 2.8.

1) Design a problem.
2) Design a progression of problems.
3) Design instruction for component skills.
4) Design instructional strategy enhancements.
5) Finalize the instructional design.
6) Design assessment and evaluation.

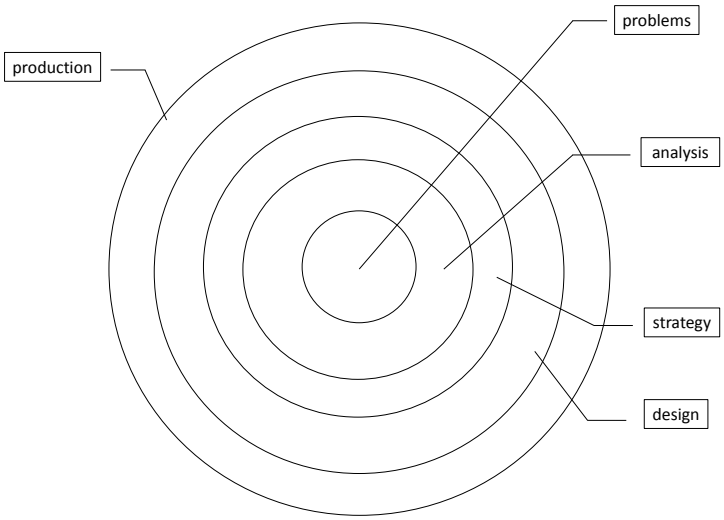

Figure 2.7. Pebble-in-the-Pond Instructional Development Model (Merrill, 2002b, p. 40)

What distinguishes this model from other instructional design models is that

learning objectives are not defined before developing instructional content on the grounds that objectives are subject to change as the instruction is developed.

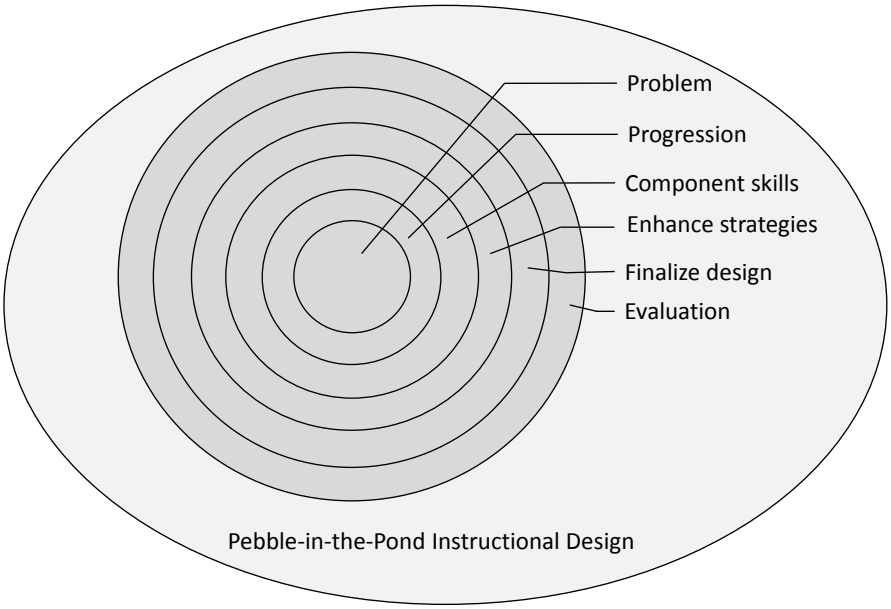

Figure 2.8. Pebble-in-the-Pond Model for instructional design (Merrill, 2013, p. 252)

2.2.4 ADDIE Model

The Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation (ADDIE) model presents a systematic approach to instructional design, and is considered to be a generic instructional design process and an umbrella term for a range of models that follow the same underlying structure. The ADDIE model is often mentioned in the literature on instructional design. Nonetheless, while the origin of the term ADDIE remains unclear (Molenda, 2003a, 2003b), its underlying roots can be traced back to the United States armed forces back in the mid-1970s (Branson, 1978; Branson et al., 1975), where it was first abbreviated as ADDIC standing for Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Control. An early version of ADDIE is depicted in Figure 2.9. Unlike what is claimed in some sources (e.g., Allen & Sites, 2012) about the ADDIE model being linear in process and more of a waterfall approach to instructional design (as shown in Figure 2.10), Clark (2011) holds that the model started as a linear one, yet it has gone through many revisions and has turned into a dynamic model

where all parts are interrelated. Figure 2.11 displays the most recent edition of the ADDIE model released by the United States Department of the Army Headquarters (2018), which "demonstrates the continuing nature of a systems approach to curriculum development and the interdependence of the processes within the five phases of ADDIE" (p. 23).

2.2.5 Successive Approximation Model

Inspired by the tradition of agile development and fast feedback cycles advocated by software developers and engineers (read more about agile development in Shore and Warden (2008)), Michael Allen proposed the Successive Approximation Model (SAM) (Allen & Sites, 2012). Before introducing his model, Allen suggests four criteria for model selection.

- Criterion #1 — The process must be iterative.

  Contrary to a linear or waterfall process, an ideal process allows for recurrent evaluation and correction and takes small steps that can be easily modified or reversed many times.

- Criterion #2 — The process must support collaboration.

  Despite the fact that some design and development projects involve a single individual, more often than not, such projects involve a team of professionals such as sponsors, stakeholders, managers, and learners. An effective collaboration model makes it clear what each member is doing, who makes decisions and when, facilitates work documentation and communication, and shows how the process flows.

- Criterion #3 — The process must be efficient and effective.

  A process is effective only if it can work within constraints and can address the occurrence of unexpected issues. Thus, the model one chooses should clarify the areas in need of focus for maximum benefit. Such a model should also yield products as rapidly as possible while allocating time for improvements.

- Criterion #4 — The process must be manageable.

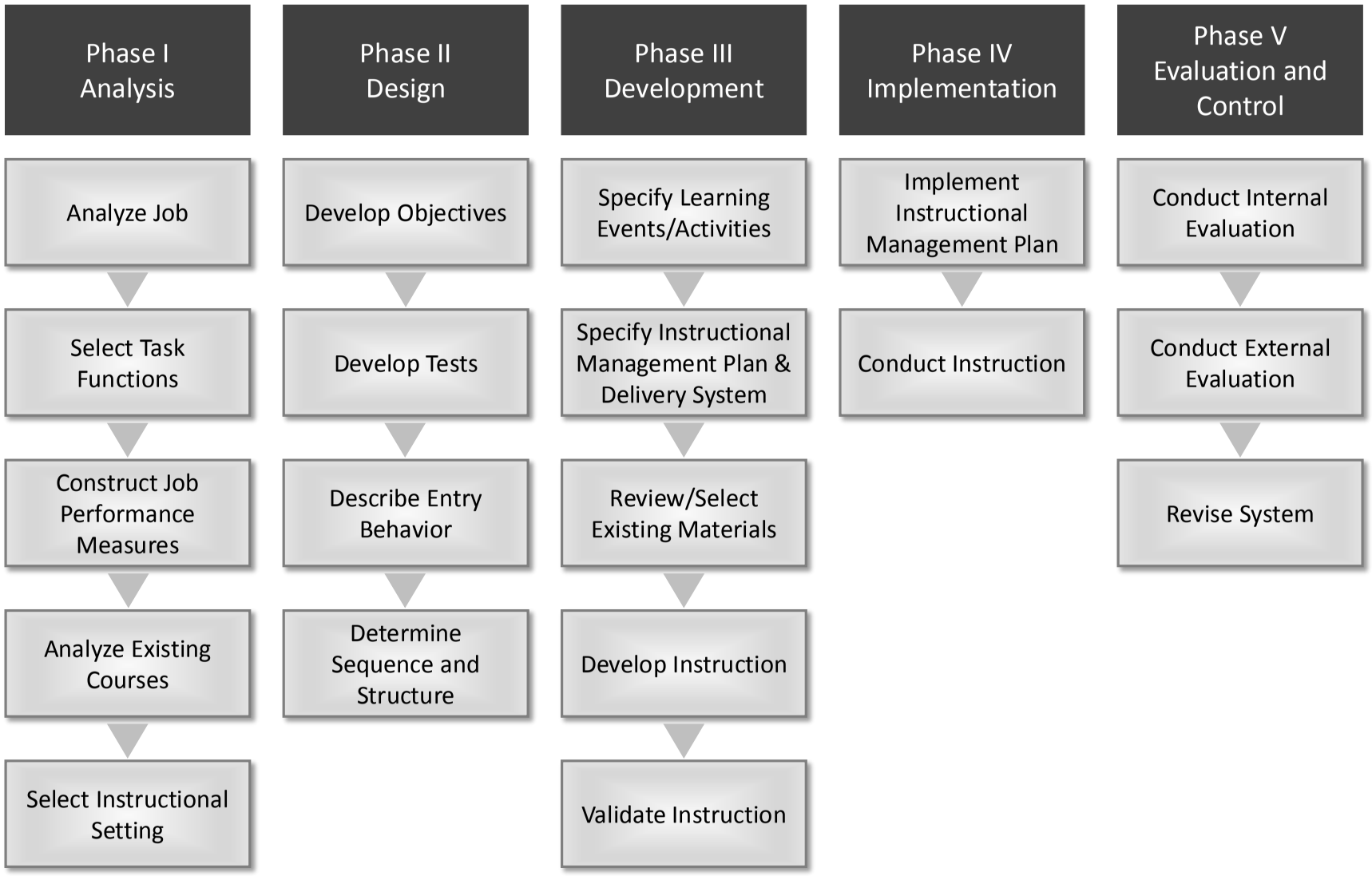

Figure 2.9. Early version of ADDIE: Five phases of instructional systems design (Clark, 2011)

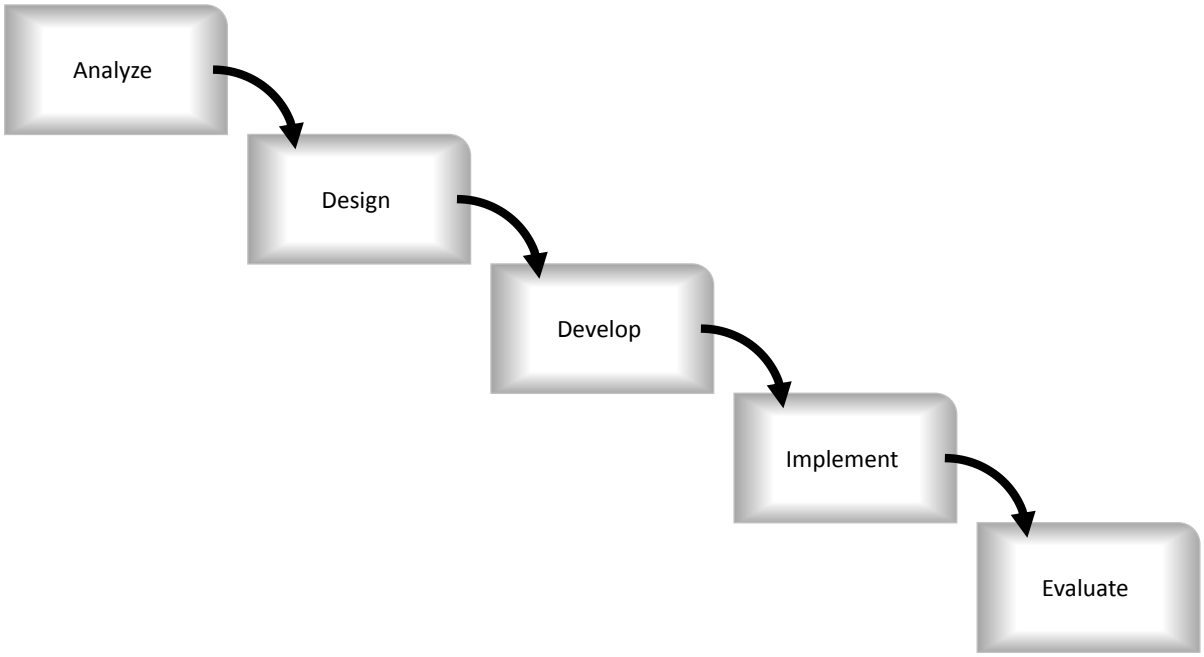

Figure 2.10. ADDIE as a waterfall process (Allen & Sites, 2012, p. 16)

> Finally, the process should be manageable, meaning that it should be possible to complete it within time and budget restraints. Allen believes that manageability is necessary but not sufficient, and adds that not only should a process be manageable, but also it should work well. In his opinion, models like ADDIE seem manageable but do not necessarily work well.

SAM, as Allan maintains, meets all the four criteria in that,

> [t]he model is clearly defined and manageable, and yet encourages creativity and experimentation. It consistently reveals the design as it evolves and it does so in ways that all stakeholders can see and evaluate. It helps all team members communicate with each other, contribute, and collaborate.
>
> (Allen & Sites, 2012, p. 33)

Successive Approximation Model 1

Allen and Sites (2012) define two levels of SAM which they call Successive Approximation Model 1 (SAM1) and Successive Approximation Model 2 (SAM2).

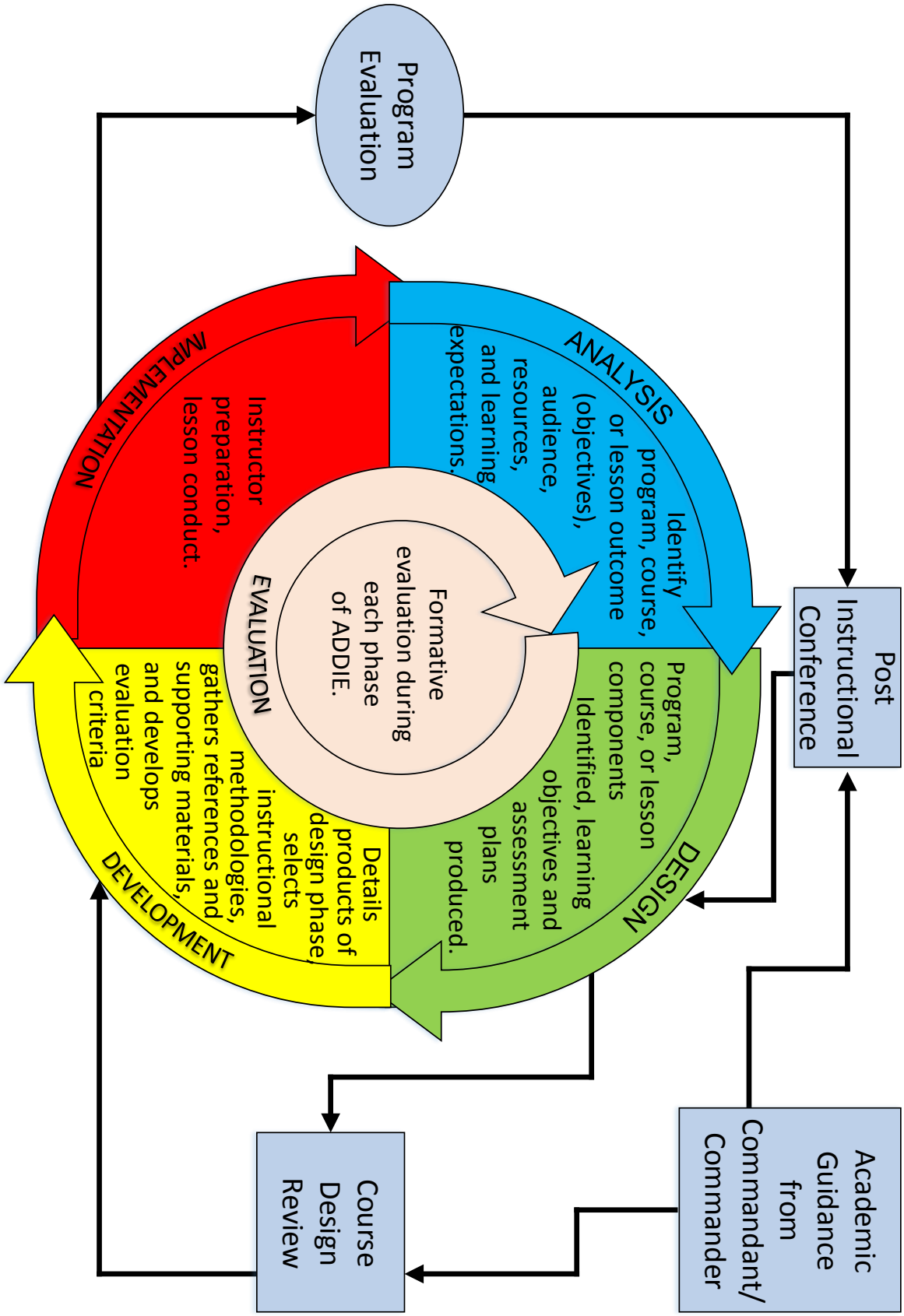

Figure 2.11. Most recent version of ADDIE (United States Department of the Army Headquarters, 2018, p. 22)

SAM1 represents a basic iteration process, as displayed in Figure 2.12. This model, despite its simplicity, is well suited to small projects particularly those that (1) involves a single individual working alone or a small team, and (2) no expertise such as programming and video production require the collaboration of others.

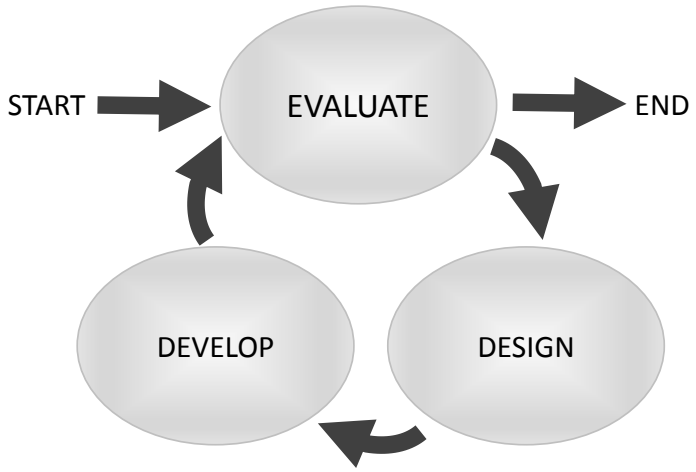

Figure 2.12. Integrated design and development in SAM1 (Allen & Sites, 2012, p. 33)

This version of SAM can be completed in at least three iterations, all of which begin and end with evaluation. Below is an outline of the iterations as described by Allen and Sites (2012).

- **Iteration 1**

  In the first iteration, design refers to merely creating a list of objectives, sketching instructional interventions, and proposing evaluation methods, while development involves preparing representative content for proposed delivery mediums and instructional paradigms. The work will be further refined in breadth and depth over subsequent iterations.

  1. EVALUATE: Begin with a quick evaluation (analysis) of the situation, needs, and goals.
  2. DESIGN: Quickly, but with thought, prepare a rough design for discussion.
  3. DEVELOP: Prepare prototypes using whatever tools can quickly provide a sense of the design idea in application.

- **Iteration 2**

  In the second iteration, the same cycle is repeated, yet this time at a breadth and depth.

  1. EVALUATE: Determine the success of the first iteration.
  2. DESIGN: Sketch new alternatives or refine previous ideas.
  3. DEVELOP: Prototypes need to become more thoroughly representative of the final product.

- **Iteration 3**

  The third round of iteration is similar to the second, and the focus is more on development rather than design.

In spite of its simplicity, Allen and Sites underline the efficiency of SAM1 in producing excellent products in a relatively shorter period of time.

Successive Approximation Model 2

As mentioned earlier, Allen and Sites (2012) propose a second level for their model known as SAM2. This version is an elaboration and extension on SAM1 and is suitable for large-scale projects where design and development cannot be fully integrated. As shown in Figure 2.13, SAM2 includes three phases, namely preparation, iterative design, and iterative development. Both SAM1 and SAM2 models emphasize an iterative approach to creating the final product right from the beginning while constantly analyzing and refining the work as it is being produced. Since the OUGEO project is a relatively small one involving a few individuals working as a team, SAM1 has been adopted as the guiding instructional design model.

Readers interested in learning more about e-learning design and development using SAM are recommended to read Sites and Green (2014) (a field guide with guidelines and templates for developers), Allen (2016) (Allen's guide to e-learning), Allen (2018) (a book chapter on SAM), as well as Allen and Merrill (2018) (a book chapter on Pebble-in-the-Pond and SAM models). Following

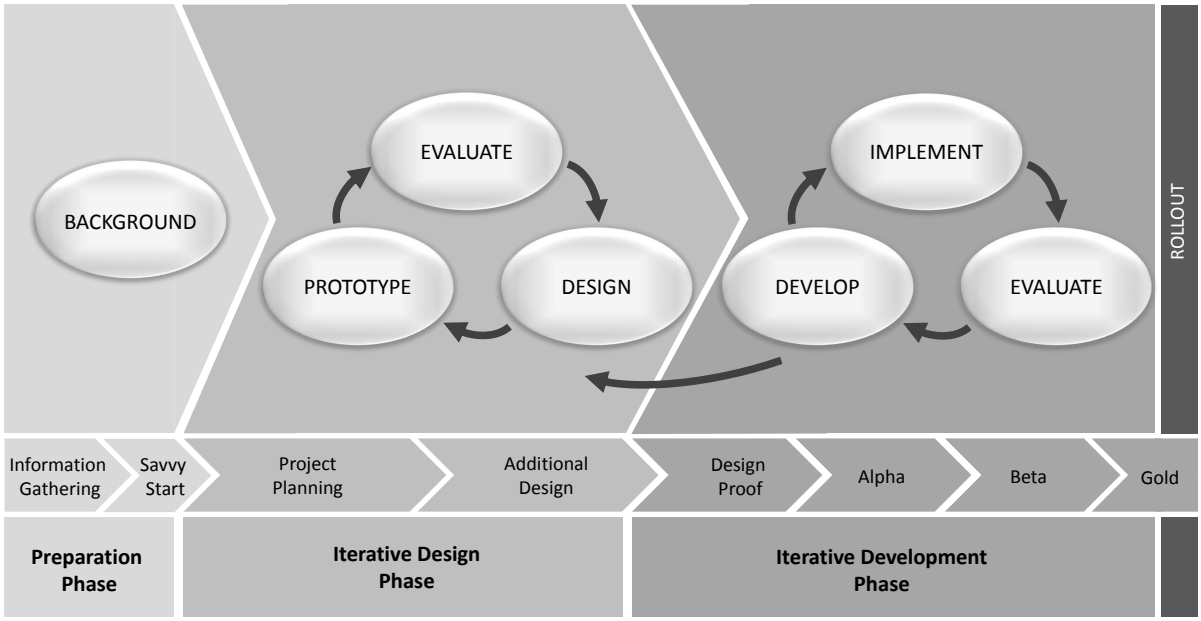

Figure 2.13. Overview of SAM2 (Allen & Sites, 2012, p. 40)

the review of instructional design models, this chapter continues by providing some background on blended learning.

2.3 Blended Learning

Blended learning, also known as hybrid learning, has been a buzz word in higher education over the past two decades. However, there is not much consensus over its definition. Graham (2006) observes that there is vast array of responses to the question of "what is being blended?", and categorizes the most commonly mentioned definitions into the following three groups.

- "Combining instructional modalities (or delivery media)
- Combining instructional methods
- Combining online and face-to-face instruction" (p. 3)

According to Graham, the third definition, i.e. "Blended learning instructions combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction" (p. 4), captures the essence of the concept more accurately than the other two. He maintains that in the past, traditional face-to-face learning environments have

remained separate from computer-mediated learning environments. Nevertheless, thanks to the emergence of technological innovations, face-to-face and distributed (computer-mediated) environments have started to merge. This gradual convergence is displayed in Figure 2.14 and is speculated to grow in the future.

There has been a growing interest in blended learning in higher education (Garrison & Kanuta, 2004; Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). The most commonly recognized reason within the literature as to the popularity of blended learning is that it is believed to combines the best of both worlds by mixing effective elements from face-to-face and online learning, given that it is well designed (Graham, 2006). The field of language learning and teaching has also been abundant with studies on blended learning, 24 of which Grgurović (2017) has reviewed in four categories, (1) comparative studies, (2) teacher perceptions, (3) learner perceptions, (4) Technology tools studies, and (5) course implementation. She concludes that blended learning will most probably remain the preferred approach in ELT in the years to come.

Regarding the dimensions of blended learning, Singh (2003) views blended learning as a combination of one or more of the following five dimensions:

1. Blending offline and online learning:

   At the most basic level, a blended learning experience combines traditional face-to-face learning with online learning on the Internet or Intranet. OUGEO is an example of this dimension of blending.

2. Blending self-paced and live collaborative learning:

   This refers to having learners do some self-paced study individually, for example reviewing the literature on a given topic, and then getting them to collaborate together in the form of online discussion.

3. Blending structured and unstructured learning:

   Not all learning takes place formally within the boundaries of a classroom. This dimension of blended learning attempts to capture unstructured learning events and store them into knowledge repositories available to learners on demand.

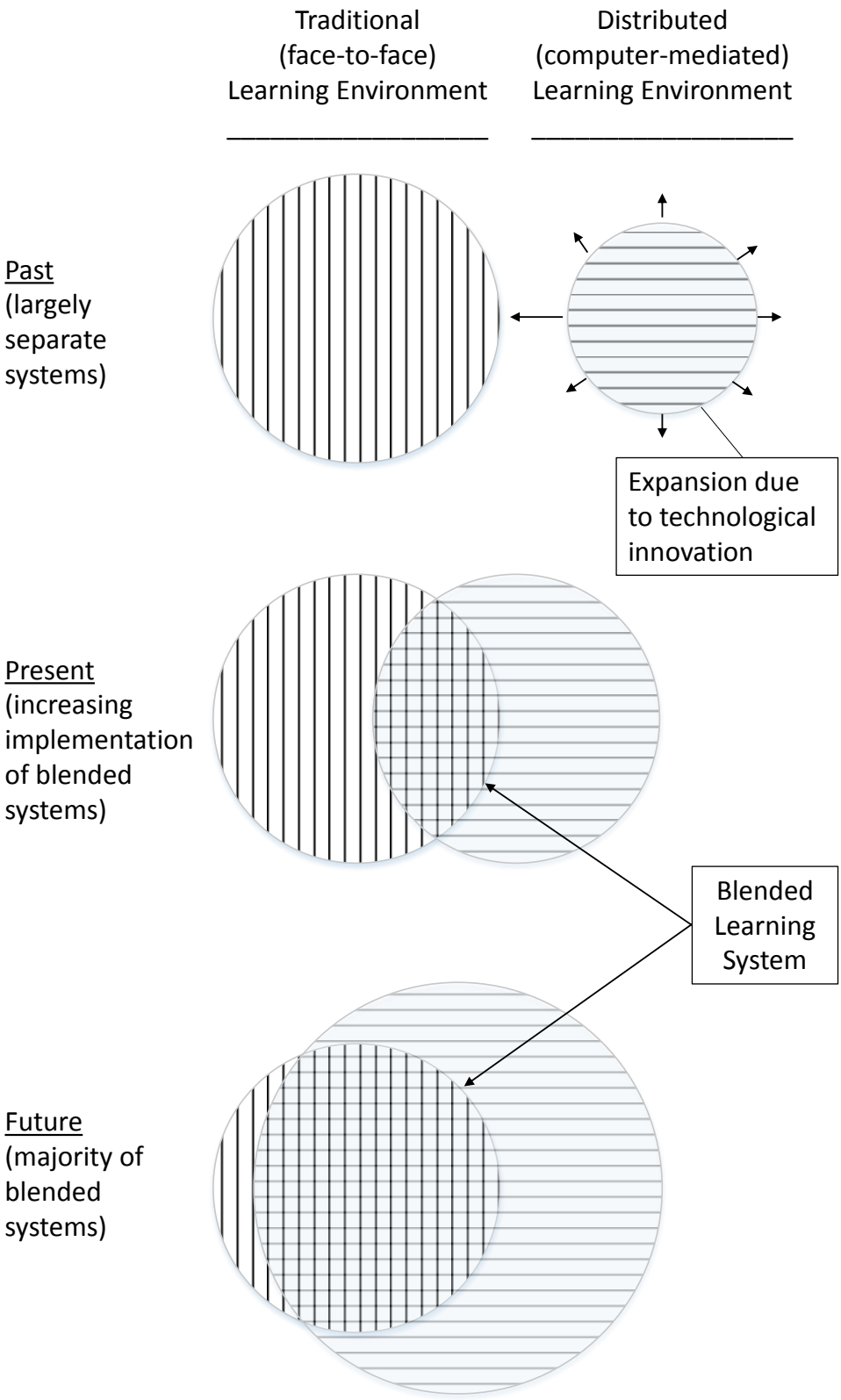

Figure 2.14. Gradual convergence of traditional face-to-face and computer-mediated learning environments (Graham, 2006, p. 6)

4. Blending custom content with off-the-shelf content:

   This level of blended learning looks into combining generic self-paced content with live experiences in the classroom/online or with customized content.

5. Blending learning, practice, and performance support:

   This dimension of blended learning supplements learning with practice, and is considered the most optimal form of blended learning.

Graham (2006) also considers blending to be feasible at different levels, including activity-level, course-level, program-level, and institutional-level blending. The blended course developed in the current study is an instance of course-level blending. To put an end to this section, the author will cite some of the benefits of blended learning as mentioned by Osguthorpe and Graham (2003).

1) Pedagogical richness

   Blended learning approaches allow faculty to use class time more effectively in order to improve student learning.

2) Access to knowledge

   Blended environments increase students' access to information in ways that are impossible to accomplish with textbooks.

3) Social interaction

   Blended learning makes it possible for students to interact with their peers and teachers both in class and online, whereas such interactions are limited in purely online courses.

4) Personal agency

   Blended delivery systems enhance learner control and give them choices as to what to study and how to study it.

5) Cost effectiveness

Blended environments reduce time spent in class and increase an institution's intake of tuition-paying students. They also lower expenses by reducing the costs of employing full-time faculty.

6) Ease of revision

Most blended course contents are developed by teachers and can be easily modified without sophisticated programming skills. The ease of revision can create a more flexible and responsive learning atmosphere.

Given all this, the author has opted for a blended rather than a fully online course.

2.4 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter provides a review of the literature on instructional design and blended learning. Several mainstream models of instructional design such as Dick and Carey's Model and the Successive Approximation model have been described in detail and explicated graphically using figures. Following that, blended learning in the context of higher education and its popularity among academics and students has been explained with reference to seminal books and articles on the topic. The following chapters deal with various phases of designing, developing, and evaluating OUGEO, a blended course of EGAP targeting undergraduate Japanese students at Osaka University.

Chapter 3

Need Analysis Study

As previously explained in Section 1.8, this chapter presents the primary phase of the study in which a needs analysis was conducted. As an initial step in implementing a more ICT-enhanced and globally-oriented environment at Osaka university, the current study reports the results of a thorough L2 needs analysis conducted prior to the design of the blended EGAP course, titled OUGEO. The purpose of this study was to clarify the needs of Japanese students with regards to tertiary English education and the difficulties they had encountered with learning English in university classes.

3.1 The Need for a Needs Analysis

In educational settings, as remarked by Brown (2009), needs analysis or needs assessment is carried out to discover the learning needs of students, which are subsequently shaped into learning objectives. Those objectives are at the core of curriculum development and are closely intertwined with materials development, task design, evaluation, and so forth.

As reviewed by Songhori (2008), several approaches to language needs analysis have been proposed in the literature, including but not limited to (1) Target Situation Analysis (TSA) put forth by Chambers (1980) based on Munby's (1978) concept of Communicative Needs Processor which refers to the variables that influence communication needs, (2) Present Situation Analysis (PSA) introduced by Richterich and Chancerel (1980), and (3) Pedagogic Needs Analysis (PNA) suggested by R. West (1998). The latter is a combination and enhance-

ment of TSA (i.e., identification of what learners are required to know to be able to operate effectively in a target situation) and PSA (i.e., identification of what learners do/not know and can/not do determined by the demands of the target situation). Pedagogic needs analysis is performed in three steps, namely (i) deficiency analysis, which is identifying what learners lack to bridge the gap between TSA and PSA, (ii) strategy or learning needs analysis, which is investigating how learners prefer to learn rather than what they need to learn, and (iii) means analysis which is examining the environment in which the language course will be conducted. In this study, PNA was adopted to investigate the language needs—necessities, wants, and lacks—of Japanese EFL learners, and the practicalities and constraints of the learning and teaching environment in the Japanese context regarding implementing an online needs-responsive EGAP course.

The existing literature (e.g., Brown, 1995; Long, 2005; Nation & Macalister, 2010) suggests that needs analysis is an ongoing process in language course design since learner needs are subject to change over the course of time. Reinvestigating the English language needs of Japanese students is thus a necessity particularly with regard to English educational practices in transition at the moment. Furthermore, according to experts on needs analysis research (e.g., Brown, 2009; Hyland, 2006), the design of a needs analysis study should consider the involvement of different stakeholders into the analysis and the use of different data sources and data collection techniques. Moreover, as remarked by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), the process of needs analysis is cyclical, meaning that it is interdependent and interconnected with the other phases of course design, development, delivery, and evaluation, which is depicted in Figure 3.1. Therefore, following the PNA approach as suggested by R. West (1998), data have been collected from both undergraduate students and English instructors, and an attempt has been made at using the findings of this phase to shape the subsequent stages of course design, development, and evaluation.

As already described in Chapter 2, the mainstream models of instructional design such as ADDIE (Branson et al., 1975) and more recent ones like SAM (Allen & Sites, 2012), also regard analysis as their initial stage. Additionally, in

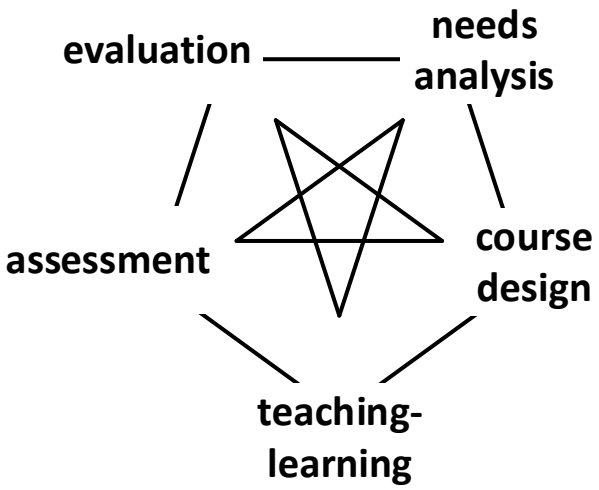

Figure 3.1. Cyclical process of needs analysis (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998, p. 121)

online course design, it is equally essential "to scout the territory" by keeping the student audience in mind as the main stakeholders (Ko & Rossen, 2010, p. 22). The basic SAM, also known as SAM1, was accordingly employed in the current study to iteratively design, develop, and evaluate the online EGAP course.

3.2 Previous Studies

Although needs analysis is underused in Japan (Kitzman, 2011), some studies have been conducted at Japanese institutions of higher education to inform curriculum developers, instructors, and other staff members involved in EGAP programs about students' English language needs and interests (e.g., Balint, 2004; Fushino, 2003; Nakano, Gilbert, & Donnery, 2009; Parsons & Iwasaki, 2008). At Osaka University, only a few studies have been undertaken to assess the needs of students exclusively majoring in engineering (Nishikawa et al., 2006; Takefuta, 2012) and to the best of the author's knowledge, there is not any study that has been conducted to explore the views of instructors on this issue. In order to be more inclusive of the diversity of student needs and interests, the present study seeks to investigate the current English language needs of Japanese students both from humanities (文系) and engineering/science (理

系) backgrounds.

3.3 Method

3.3.1 Participants

A total of 278 Japanese undergraduate students enrolled at Osaka University participated in this study. There were 183 males and 95 females aged between 18 and 23 (mean age = 19.67). Regarding disciplines and fields of study, 51.1% of the participants belonged to faculties of humanities and 48.9% to engineering/science. The majority of the participants were first-year (37.1%) and second-year (50.4%) students, with 6.5% third-year and 6% fourth-year students. There is no data available on the proficiency levels of the participants, but to give the readers a general idea, the results of a TOEFL ITP Test administered in 2012 to all freshmen at Osaka University has shown that on average the students scored 479.73 with 677 as the highest and 330 as the lowest scores (Kimura & Mori, 2013).

In order to provide a more comprehensive account of the students' English language needs amid the transition to globalization, twelve instructors (8 males and 4 females, 6 Japanese and 6 native speakers of English) affiliated with the Graduate School of Language and Culture and the Center for Education in Liberal Arts and Sciences were also interviewed. All the instructor participants had had experience teaching "Practical English" courses (実践英語 in Japanese), which are aimed at improving the general academic English language skills of first- and second-year students. In-depth interviews were conducted with these instructors about students' difficulties in learning English and their immediate and future needs. Qualitative content analysis has been conducted on the interview transcripts in an attempt to thematically categorize them.

3.3.2 Instruments

A Likert-type questionnaire with five ordered response levels plus an open-ended question has been used to collect data from the student participants. The

questionnaire was abridged and adapted from the "Needs Analysis Questionnaire for Non-English-Background Students" developed by Gravatt, Richards, and Lewis (1997, as cited in Richards, 2001, pp. 80-86), and it asked the respondents about their English language needs, difficulties, and expectations around the four main skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To avoid language barrier, the adapted version of the questionnaire with 42 items (including the open-ended question) was translated into Japanese (See Appendix A). As suggested by Harkness, Pennell, and Schoua-Glusberg (2004), committee or team translation, which is a more efficient translation procedure compared to back-translation, was adopted to assess the quality of the translation. Four translators—a Japanese professor of English, a Japanese master's student majoring in Japanese linguistics, a non-Japanese PhD student, and the author—made independent translations of the questionnaire, and at revision meetings, the translations were compared, amendments were made, and the final version was agreed upon. The questionnaire distribution was done both offline and online via Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap), accessible for free through Osaka University Medical School. Moreover, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the twelve instructors so as to further delve into the learning difficulties Japanese students have been struggling with and their language needs as well as the ways the instructors have tried to approach those problems. The interviews were not recorded to ensure confidentiality and to avoid any reservations on the side of the interviewees.

3.4 Results

3.4.1 Student Responses to the Questionnaire and the Open-Ended Question

The questionnaire initially asked the students about the language skill(s) they were expected to use the most, their difficulties with each of the skills, as well as how important the skills were to success in their course of study and after graduation. Figure 3.2 visually presents the descriptive statistics of the participants' mean responses to the first 16 items of the questionnaire.

According to the self-report data, the students in general believed that they

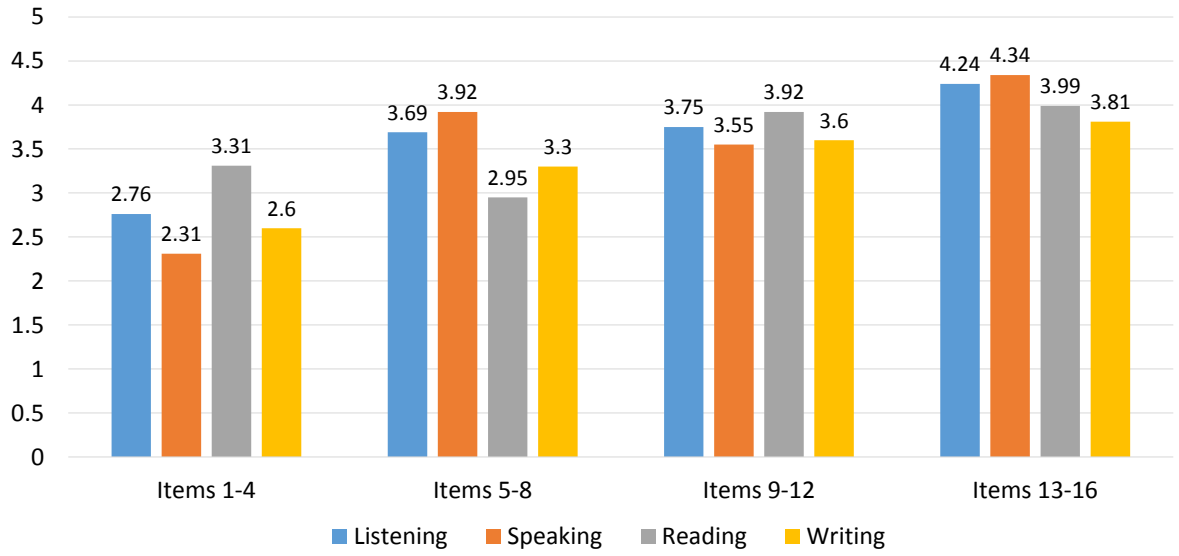

Figure 3.2. Mean responses to items 1–16

were expected to use all the four language skills in their course of study with the most emphasis on reading $(mean = 3.31)$ followed by listening $(mean = 2.76)$. Four independent-samples t-tests were run on the participant responses to the first four items in order to compare the extent to which the students majoring in humanities (hereafter referred to as the H group) were expected to use the four skills with those in engineering/science (hereafter referred to as the ES group). There were statistically significant differences between the means of the H and the ES groups as far as the expected use of all the four skills were concerned, with the H group consistently reporting higher levels of expectation. Details of the group means, standard deviations, t and p values, and the effect sizes (eta^2) are displayed in Table 3.1 .

Looking back at Figure 3.2, items 5–8, it is clear that all the four skills were demanding for the students with reading as the least $(mean = 2.95)$ and speaking $(mean = 3.92)$ as the most arduous undertaking. In order to further delve into the difficulties experienced by the H vs the ES group in relation to the language skills, four other independent-samples t-tests were run on the responses to items 5–8, all of which but one yielded insignificant results. In fact, the only skill which the ES group $(mean = 3.84, SD = 0.90)$ found slightly more difficult

Table 3.1

t-Test Results, Humanities vs Engineering/Science Groups

Items	*Groups*	*mean*	*SD*	*t*	*p*	eta^2
Item 1	H Group	3.08	0.96	5.86	.00*	0.11
	ES Group	2.42	0.90			
Item 2	H Group	2.69	1.07	7.04	.00*	0.15
	ES Group	1.90	0.76			
Item 3	H Group	3.54	0.83	4.60	.00*	0.07
	ES Group	3.07	0.85			
Item 4	H Group	3.01	1.03	7.44	.00*	0.16
	ES Group	2.17	0.84			

than the H group $(mean = 3.54, SD = 0.91)$ was listening, where $t(275) = 2.83$, $p = .005$, $eta^2 = 0.02$.

The remaining items presented in Figure 3.2 asked the participants to rate the importance of the skills for success in their course of study and after graduation. Looking at the means in Figure 3.2, it can be clearly seen that reading has been rated as the most important skill for success in the students' course of study, followed by listening, writing, and speaking. Nevertheless, speaking has been considered as the most significant skill contributing to success after graduation, followed by listening, reading, and finally writing. The results of four paired-samples *t*-tests run on the data have revealed that the respondents rated reading $(t = 1.05, p > .05)$ as equally important for success both in their course of study and after graduation but reported listening $(t = 9.96, p < .05)$, speaking $(t = 11.44, p < .05)$, and writing $(t = 3.08, p < .05)$ as more significant for success after graduation.

The questionnaire also asked the students about various skills they would like to improve and how useful they would find each. Figure 3.3 shows the descriptive statistics for responses to items 17 throughout 41.

The students were willing to improve a variety of their receptive and productive skills, in particular knowledge of vocabulary $(mean = 4.31, SD = 0.84)$, general reading comprehension $(mean = 4.25, SD = 0.81)$, general listening comprehension $(mean = 4.02, SD = 0.88)$, summarizing materials $(mean = 3.98, SD = 0.93)$, participating in discussions $(mean = 3.98, SD = 1.04)$, and giving formal speeches and presentations $(mean = 3.95, SD = 0.96)$, all of

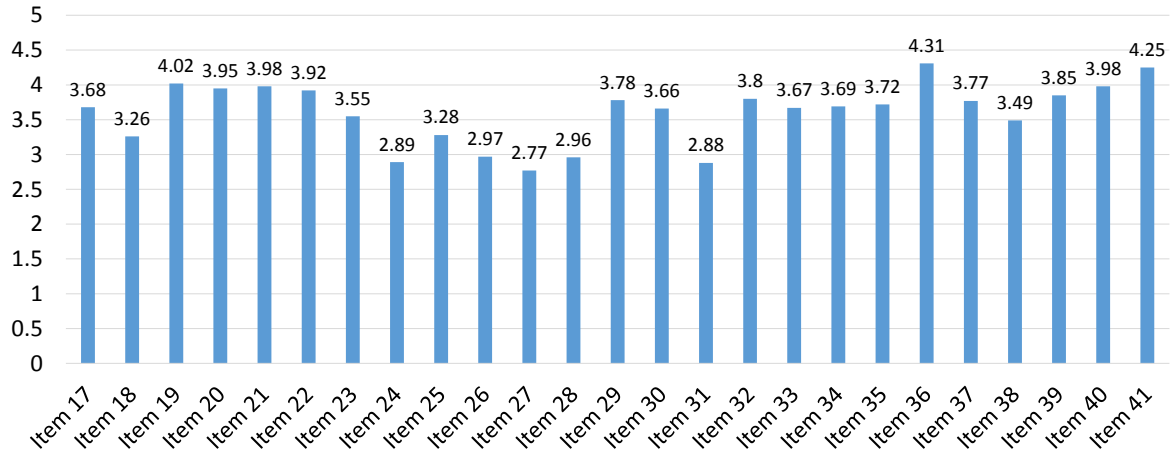

Figure 3.3. Response means of items 17–41 (the skills desired to be improved)

which are skills required for success in academia and the workplace.

The last item on the questionnaire was an open-ended question asking the participants for their comments on learning English at the university and any specific difficulties they had encountered. Out of a total of 278 participants, 50 responded to the open-ended question, and their answers have been classified into the five categories displayed in Figure 3.4. As it can be seen in the figure, many respondents voiced concerns over their low proficiency in oral/aural skills. They expressed a deep interest in developing their listening and speaking skills so as to be capable of participating in discussions and communicating with foreigners. The other components the students demanded more focus on were vocabulary and pronunciation.

Several participants believed that the university classes were inadequate in addressing their foreign language needs due to the limited number of class hours, compulsory credit system resulting in demotivation, use of Japanese as the medium of instruction, absence of placement testing and the problems of mixed-level classes, overemphasis on reading, and unclear learning objectives. Some students also mentioned that they had few, if any, chances of using English outside the classroom, thus struggling with language attrition. Finally, three respondents asked for more emphasis on academic/business English, whereas two expressed interest in improving their conversational English.

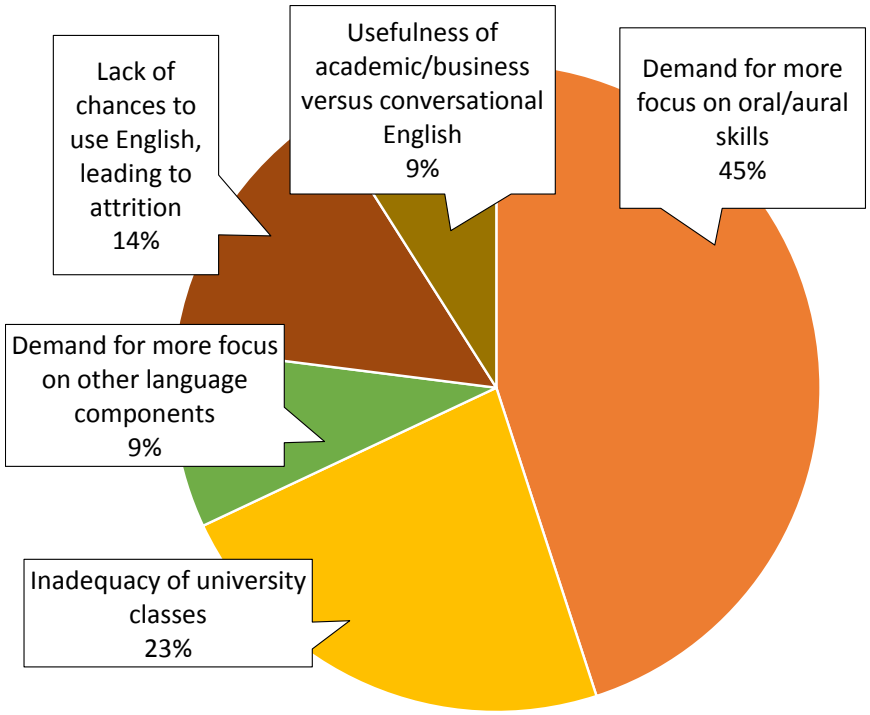

Figure 3.4. Summary of participants' responses to the open-ended question

3.4.2 Interviews with Instructors

The instructors who participated in this study were asked about the needs of undergraduate students at Osaka University, their major difficulties in learning English and the ways they tried to address those needs and difficulties. Before dealing with the instructor responses, it is worth noting that all of them have had experience teaching EGAP courses to undergraduate students, and two of them have taught online courses at this university. The non-Japanese instructors used English as the main language of instruction with zero to minimal use of Japanese. The Japanese instructors used a mixture of both languages, yet in different proportions.

As far as technology use was concerned, a continuum of low to high usage was reported. Examples of technology integration in interviewees' classes include using online collaborative platforms for writing classes, reading online news articles, assigning projects to students in the form of doing research online, and utilizing digital dictionaries. Most instructors used the CALL/iPad

classrooms, but one had to ask the students to bring their own devices.

Three common themes emerged through a qualitative content analysis of the interview transcripts: (1) higher motivation levels among the students, (2) the need for more focus on oral/aural skills, (3) and the importance of four skills integration, each of which will be explained below.

First, the instructors observed that in general Osaka University students' motivation levels have increased considerably compared to about a decade ago. A major reason mentioned was the TOEIC score requirement for those wanting to be distinctive in the highly competitive job hunting process.

Second, all the instructors interviewed agreed that the students needed more training in listening and speaking. They believed these two skills were the ones which most students found difficult but which they had fewer opportunities to practice. According to the instructors, listening was seen as a challenging skill for Japanese students due to their little exposure to normal rates of speech, correct pronunciation, different English accents, expressions, and casual English. Speaking difficulties were also a result of lack of sufficient training alongside low self-confidence and communication skills. The instructors remarked that most students had a fairly good knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar and were trained in reading and to some extent writing, thanks to preparation for the entrance exam; nonetheless, they only occasionally got to practice oral/aural skills in class and almost never beyond that.

The third issue raised by the instructors was the necessity of teaching integrated skills in English classes; however, one instructor believed that despite its utmost importance, the integrative method was not feasible without having enough teaching assistants or co-instructors. Finally, among other concerns noted were insufficient tech support, large class sizes, lack of placement testing, time limit, and using Japanese as the medium of instruction in English classes.

3.5 Discussion

Before discussing the significance of the results for the design of the online course, a summary of the major findings has been provided in Table 3.2, where

Table 3.2

Summary of the Major Findings

QUANTITATIVE	QUALITATIVE
Expected use R > L > W > S H Group > ES Group	**Students** More focus on oral/aural skills Inadequacy of university classes More focus on vocab and pronunciation Scarcity of chances to use English Academic vs conversational English
Difficulty S > L > W > R H Group ≈ ES Group	
Importance to success in course of study R > L > W > S	**Teachers** Increased motivation More focus on oral/aural skills Four skills integration
Importance to success after graduation S > L > R > W	
L, S, W: after graduation > in the course of study R: after graduation ≈ in the course of study	

L, S, R, and W stand for listening, speaking, reading, and writing, respectively.

The results indicate that the instructors and students, irrespective of their fields of study, have highlighted the difficulties with listening and speaking skills. Previous studies at Osaka University and elsewhere in Japan have also reported Japanese students' perception of their poor command of listening and speaking skills, their awareness of the importance of communicative competence, and their desire to improve it (Nakano et al., 2009; Parsons & Iwasaki, 2008; Takefuta, 2012; Yonesaka & Tanaka, 2013). These findings are not exclusive to the 21st century when the internationalization of education became a fundamental objective of MEXT, but listening and speaking proficiency has also been mentioned in older studies such as Sakui and Gaies (1999). These skills have also been rated as highly important for success after graduation; hence, it is time Osaka University started to address its students' urgent need to practice oral/aural skills.

This study yields significant practical implications for the design and development of the prospective online course. Given that the participants majoring in humanities and engineering/science all had equal difficulties with language skills, the following description of the course features applies to both target groups regardless of their majors.

First, prior to the beginning of the course, a placement test will be admin-

istered to classify the students into three proficiency groups, with each group having its own appropriate course materials. The course will thus be offered at three levels (elementary, intermediate, and upper-intermediate) based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Second, the online content will be all in English with bilingual announcements and instructions. Third, using multimedia materials, all four skills will be integrated into a variety of lessons with an emphasis on listening and speaking within the less threatening online environment of the course. The students will also be assigned weekly speaking and writing tasks with feedback provided by the instructors. Fourth, a number of consciousness-raising lessons and activities will be incorporated throughout the course to help students solve common pronunciation problems caused by katakana (one of the Japanese syllabaries) English. A series of activities related to *wasei-eigo* (和製英語, literally Japanese-made English) will be offered as well, which aim to raise students' consciousness towards these forms. Last but not least, responding to the demand of internationalization in Japan, based on Marlina's (2013) suggestions, an attempt will be made to equip students with the ability to communicate in today's international and intercultural world village by including the following as the core teaching and learning elements of the course:

- Learning about and appreciating cultural and linguistic differences
- Raising global awareness and knowledge on worldwide issues
- Knowing about the existence of world Englishes
- Developing critical thinking skills
- Promoting online collaboration and communication

In order to achieve these goals in practice, pieces of news from Breaking News English (`http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/`) will be chosen for reading comprehension. The news articles of this website are roughly categorized based on the CEFR, and can stimulate critical thinking as they are about current social, political, economic, and cultural issues in the world. Listening materials will be selected from English Language Listening Library Online

(ELLLO) (http://www.elllo.org/english/home.htm) including a range of accents such as British, Canadian, American, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, and Persian to expose students to World Englishes. TED Talks (https://www.ted.com/talks) will also be utilized as the course listening materials to cultivate critical thinking and public presentation skills. In addition, the speaking and writing tasks as well as the final project (i.e., poster presentation, delivered face to face) will be designed in a way so as to foster critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity by the use of online affordances and augmented reality technology. It is worth noting that permission has been taken from the owner of Breaking News English to upload its copyrighted news articles on the course learning management system. ELLLO is licensed under the Creative Commons. The TED Talks' links will be embedded; therefore, no copyright issues are involved. In general, all resources will be cited appropriately and linked back to their websites.

3.6 Chapter Conclusion

This study was an attempt to shed light on the English language needs and difficulties of Japanese learners of English at Osaka University. The findings of the current study are conclusive evidence that these needs have so far remained less addressed. They also have important implications for the design of the online course which is to be offered at three levels focusing on all four skills in particular listening and speaking as the most challenging ones. It is hoped that the future course can facilitate promoting the goal of internationalization by helping students in enhancing their English skills with emphasis on listening/speaking and intercultural communication skills, and can serve as a model for educators who are interested in developing Japanese learners' English skills, especially for global understanding and citizenship.

Chapter 4

Course Design and Development at a Glance

This chapter, as explicated in Section 1.8, has been added to set the scene for the following chapters and to give the readers a clear idea of the novelty of this research project as opposed to former methods of teaching and learning English online at Osaka University. In particular, it focuses on Practical English (e-Learning), a blended course targeting undergraduate students. The author will begin by describing what the course was like before and how it was changed through this research study while making comparisons and contrasts across the old and new courses in terms of learning objectives, syllabus and course schedule, learning materials, and delivery platform.

4.1 Practical English (e-Learning) Before

4.1.1 Learning Objectives

According to the course information retrieved on Knowledge of Osaka University Academic Nucleus (KOAN), this course aimed to develop university students' academic English proficiency so that they could obtain high scores on internationally approved tests such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). Upon completing this course, the enrollees were expected to get a score of 490-520 on the TOEFL Institutional Testing Program (ITP). Figure 4.1 is a graphic summary of the course schedule. One other objective of the course was to get

the students prepared for studying in English-speaking countries.

Figure 4.1. Summary of Practical English (e-Learning) course schedule before

4.1.2 Syllabus and Course Schedule

The previous course, also expanded over fifteen weeks, began with an orientation session and a mock TOEFL Paper Based Test (PBT) so as to determine students' level of English proficiency. It was followed by nine weeks of online self-study and four weeks of face-to-face progress tests. The last week was allocated to taking a mock TOEFL PBT (Reading and Listening) in order to measure students' overall progress.

4.1.3 Learning Materials

The students enrolled in the old course would get a paid subscription to a commercial self-study package named as Linc English™. With online learning contents at 18 levels, Linc English (`https://www.lincenglish.org/`) is targeted at junior high, high school, and university students as well as adults. It claims to improve all four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing

and is said to be effective in preparing for the Eiken Test in Practical English Proficiency, the TOEIC, and the TOEFL. The developers hold that it is also useful for entrance exam preparation, business English, and English teacher training programs. Out of the 18 levels, the students were subscribed to level 11, also known as Gold II. More details on the curriculum can be found at `https://www.lincenglish.org/curriculumenglishle/`.

The author was given guest access to the course to be able to view the content. As shown in Figure 4.2, every lesson consists of various components divided into listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary, as well as lesson quizzes. The course also includes guided speaking and writing activities. However, most of them are focused on pronunciation and dictation training instead of real speaking and writing activities that learners usually do in face-to-face classes.

4.1.4 Delivery Platform

The course was hosted on the Linc English website, and students had their personal IDs and passwords to log into the system.

4.1.5 Additional Details

Both English and Japanese were used as the medium of instruction. It was a one-credit course targeting undergraduate students from the Faculties of Law, Letters, and Economics.

4.2 Practical English (e-Learning) After

4.2.1 Learning Objectives

The new course learning objectives can be found in Appendix D, Section D.6. As it can be seen, the new course aims at improving students' four skills in an integrated and less controlled manner, particularly in case of productive skills (i.e., speaking and writing). It can also raise students' awareness toward-https://www.overleaf.com/project/5bc98a0195598278c936b2b3 correct English

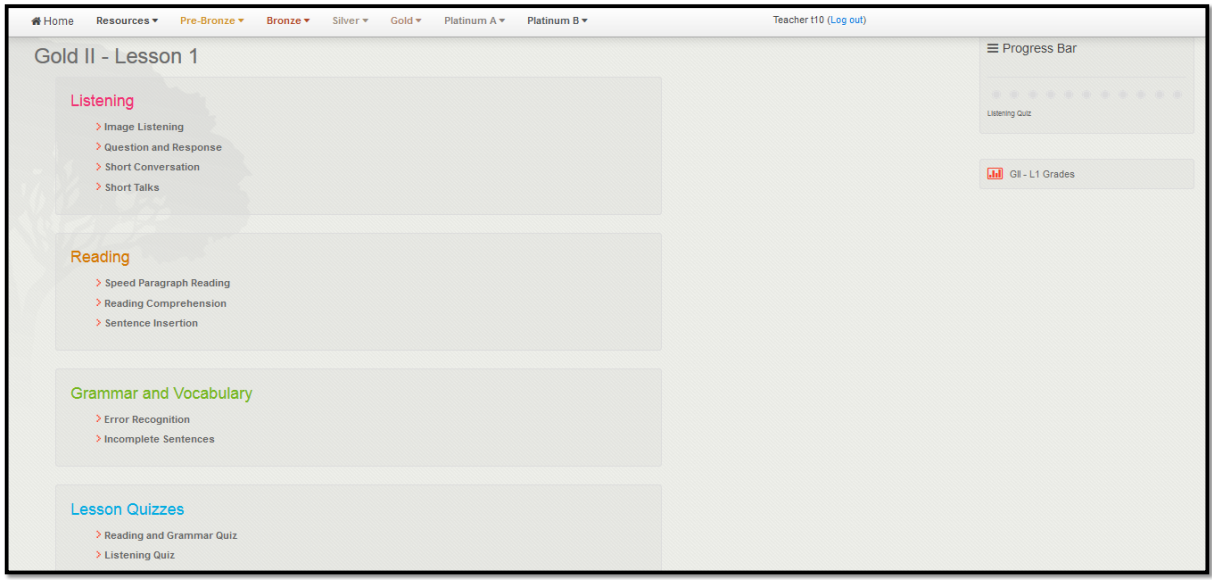

Figure 4.2. Linc English Gold II lesson 1 homepage

pronunciation as opposed to Katakana English as well as their understanding of global issues.

4.2.2 Syllabus and Course Schedule

The full version of the syllabus containing the course schedule is available in Appendix D. Similar to the old course, the new course also consists of fifteen weeks with five face-to-face and ten online classes. However, instead of meeting in class to take progress tests, one out of five face-to-face sessions was allocated to training the students on poster presentation and the use of Augmented Reality (AR) to overlay videos on poster images. Two more classes were spent on getting the students to present their posters in groups.

The updated syllabus also includes detailed information on the purpose and structure of the course, requirements and expectations, required and recommended learning materials and resources, response time and feedback schedule, accessibility policies and services, as well as academic support services and resources. Some of these sections, however, were added after the course was peer-reviewed. Further details on the review and evaluation process can be found in Chapter 6.

4.2.3 Learning Materials

The new course mostly made use of Open Educational Resources (OER), with the inclusion of some copy-righted materials reproduced with permission from the owners. The materials were then compiled into an integrated syllabus and thematically classified into fifteen weeks. A complete list of the materials and resources is available in Sections D.9 and D.10.

4.2.4 Delivery Platform

The course was hosted on Osaka University's Learning Management System (LMS), Blackboard Learn, locally known as Collaboration and Learning Environment (CLE). Most of the materials, in particular listening and reading, were directly typed or uploaded onto the system, with corresponding audio or video files. However, in case of YouTube videos for instance, links were provided to the original sources. The students could also submit their speaking and writing assignments via CLE.

4.2.5 Additional Details

Similar to the old course, this one also targets undergraduate students from the Faculties of Law, Letters, and Economics. However, one of its main strengths is its concern with global issues and its attempt at getting the students not only to think about these modern world concerns but also to do so when speaking or writing in a foreign language. The poster presentations, as the term project, further enhance this aspect of the course by requiring the students to select global themes for their posters.

4.3 Chapter Conclusion

In conclusion, the new Practical English (e-Learning) was designed and developed to help the students improve their academic English skills alongside their awareness of global issues. Table 4.1 clarifies the main differences between the two versions of the course.

Table 4.1

The Old and New Practical English (e-Learning) Compared

Course Components/Features	**Old Course**	**New Course**
Placement Test	✗	✓
Different Levels	✗	✓
Integration of Skills	✗	✓
Speaking/Writing Tasks	✗	✓
Focus on Global Themes	✗	✓
Group Project	✗	✓
Free of Charge	✗	✓
Hosted on the University LMS	✗	✓
Quizzes	✓	✓
Audio-Visual Materials	✓	✓
Face-to-Face and Online Sessions	✓	✓

Further information on the new course will be accounted for in the following chapters. Readers are also referred to Mehran, Alizadeh, Koguchi, & Takemura, 2017, a short paper on the design of the OUGEO.

Chapter 5

Course Implementation: AR Study

As mentioned in Section 1.8, this chapter reports on a study conducted during the course implementation phase using an AR application, called BlippAR. It is an exploratory study on students' experience using AR and their attitude toward this form of technology less commonly utilized in educational settings.

5.1 Augmented Reality in Education

Augmented Reality (AR), a technology that allows virtual objects to be superimposed onto the actual world in real time, has emerged as one of the most promising technologies for education, which can edutain students and engage them in their learning. AR applications and platforms, such as HP Reveal (formerly known as Aurasma, `https://www.hpreveal.com/`), Wikitude (`https://www.wikitude.com/`), Layar (`https://www.layar.com/`), and also Augment (`https://www.augment.com/`) to name a few, allow users to overlay digital information onto the physical world in the form of images, texts, audio and/or videos files, 3D models, etc. These applications are gaining popularity among ELT practitioners and researchers (e.g., Bonner & Reinders, 2018; Godwin-Jones, 2016; Hawkinson, Mehran, & Alizadeh, 2017; Holden & Sykes, 2011; Reinders & Lakarnchua, 2014; Reinders, Lakarnchua, & Pegrum, 2015), as AR use is aligned with recent learning theories, for example, constructivist learning, situated learning, game-based learning, and inquiry-based learning.

5.2 AR-Based Exploratory Case Study

A fifteen-week blended course of EGAP, titled Osaka University Global English Online, was designed, developed, and implemented at Osaka University targeting undergraduate students enrolled in "Practical English (e-Learning)". Out of the 15 weeks, ten weeks were run fully online, and five were face-to-face. Poster presentation carousel was selected as the term project, which allowed the students to go around, visit posters, listen to their peers' presentations, ask/answer questions, and develop their oral fluency. An AR app, called BlippAR (`https://www.blippar.com/`), was also selected to be introduced to the learners to create learner-generated AR posters. This app was chosen mainly due its availability to educators free of charge in addition to its relatively user-friendly interface.

Initially, through a technology survey, it was found that all the students owned smartphones. Following that, a face-to-face training session was held on the fifth week of the course to train the students on poster presentation and to teach them how to use the BlippAR website to create Blipps. During this session, the students also formed 14 groups of five to six members each to present at two poster sessions scheduled on weeks eight and twelve. During the first poster session, seven groups presented their posters in three rounds to three different listener groups as shown in Figure 5.1, and the roles were switched across listener and presenter groups during the second poster session.

Each presenting group was asked to select a global theme, create a poster based on the topic using the template provided, and find or make a video related to the content to overlay on an image in the poster using BlippAR. This chapter reports on the past AR experiences of the learners, their views on the use of AR specifically BlippAR, and their opinions on AR use for their future projects. A sample of learner-generated AR content created through BlippBuilder (`https://www.blippar.com/build-ar`) will also be provided in the following section.

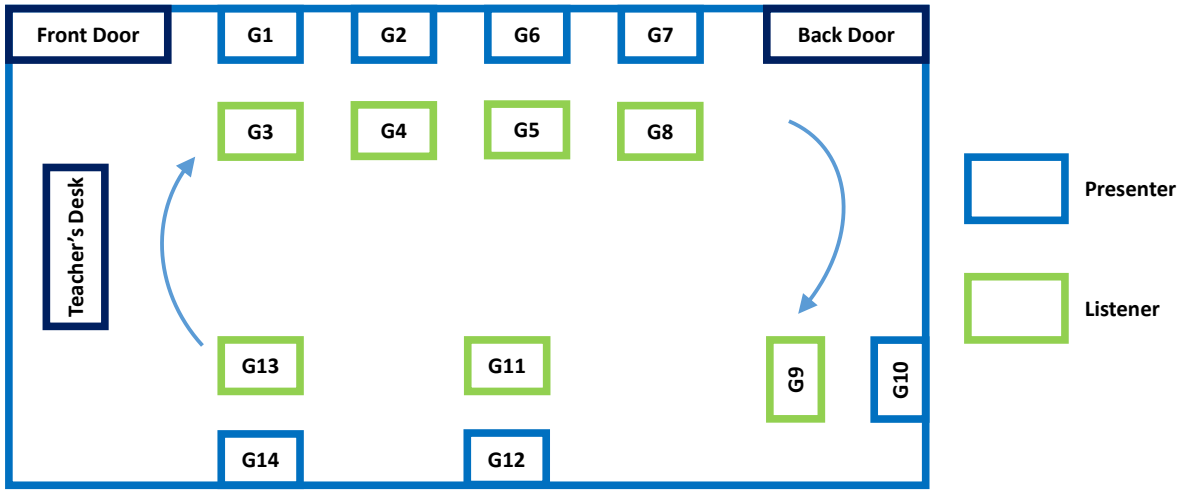

Figure 5.1. Class arrangement for the first poster session

5.3 Method

5.3.1 Participants

A total of 69 students were present during the first poster session, 35 males and 34 females. Fifty-five students out of 69 (79.7%) reported that they had never experienced using AR, and 65 of them (94.2%) said that they had not heard about BlippAR. The first poster session was attended by 33 presenters and 36 listeners. The second poster session, however, was conducted with 67 participants, 37 males and 30 females. Out of the 67 students, 37 were presenters and 30 were listeners. Fifty-nine participants were present in both the first and the second poster sessions. All of them were undergraduate students majoring in humanities, mainly from the Faculties of Letters, Law and Economics.

5.3.2 Instrumentation

A user experience questionnaire, adapted from Davis (1989), Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, and Davis (2003), and Chow, Thadani, Wong, and Pegrum (2015), an open-ended feedback form, and observations were utilized to collect data on respondents' attitude toward the use and experience of AR. The questionnaire and the open-ended feedback form can be found in Appendix B.

Figure 5.2. Photo of groups presenting their AR posters

5.3.3 Procedure

After being trained on Blipp creation, the students designed and generated their interactive AR-based posters collaboratively. Technical support was provided by the instructor and the teaching assistants whenever needed. Figure 5.2 displays a photograph of the students while presenting their posters in CALL Classroom 1 located at the Cybermedia Center in Toyonaka Campus, and Figure 5.3 illustrates a sample of student-generated AR posters. To watch the poster come to life, download and install the mobile application BlippAR, then go to settings and enter the corresponding code 238935, and finally scan the specified image to watch the video overlayed on it. In order to view the Blipp, it is recommended to print the image on a full poster, flyer, or press page rather than a small-sized sheet.

A decision was made to limit the type of overlay to videos on the grounds that the students were just beginners with AR and videos were simpler to find or create compared to other types of content like 3D models, and that videos were linguistically richer than images or texts.

Mother's Day

Group 14

Introduction

Today, we would like to introduce Mother's Day of the world. In Japan, we have the
Mother's Day on second Sunday of May. We give carnation or some gifts for mother and say mother "Thank you." because mothers work and do housework for their family. By the way, in other countries, are their mother's days? When? How? We searched Mother's Day of the world.

BlippAR Code
238935

America

During the Civil War, a woman called Ann Jarvis worked to help the soldiers regardless of enemies or allies. On 12th May,1907,her daughter Anna held a party in memory of her mother and gave the participant white carnations. This is the origin of Mother's Day. In 1914,it is enacted as a national holiday to honor mothers held on the second Sunday in May. These days, people give their mothers various presents including carnations.

France

Date…the last Sunday in May or the first Sunday in July
In 1806, Napoleon I (1769-1821) created a national holiday for mothers. However, he created this holiday to praise the role of giving birth rather than to thank mothers because the population had been decreasing through many wars.
In 1950, Mother's Day is established officially affected by American mother's Day.
French send flowers as same as Japan, but they never send carnations because carnations are regarded as flowers to offer on a grave.
There aren't particular flowers, but people often give roses, Chinese peonies(芍薬 in Japanese) and chrysanthemums(菊 in Japanese) to their mothers.

Egypt

Mother's day in Egypt is on 21st March. It begins in 1956. Mustafa Amin ;she is Egyptian journalist , wrote American Mother's Day in her books. It is origin. On Mother's day, children gives present for mother. In Egypt, children is often dancing for mother on this day.

Background:

Mother's day is generally celebrated on the second Sunday in May in China. It is a holiday that was first celebrated regionally in Hong Kong and Macau. After the Chinese economic reform in 1979, the Chinese mainland began to embrace this holiday. As the imported holiday of Mother's Day aligned with traditions of filial piety in China, it became popular soon during people who are born after 1980s.

Activities:

- Schools and colleges arrange campaigns to raise funds to meet the needs of their mother.
- Project Happiness, one aimed at helping poor mothers, was launched in 1995 by the China Population Welfare Foundation, Family Planning Association of China and China Population News.
- The Meng Mu Culture Festival in Taigu, Shangxi Province, was held on May 12, 2013 to celebrate and promote Mother's Day in China.

Summary

In Japan, the origin of Mother's Day is "Mother's Day" of America. And there are various Mother's Days in the world. The date of Mother's Day and customs are different.
However, many countries have Mother's Day. Although there are some differences, we respect our mother and appreciate mother's hard work.

Figure 5.3. Sample student-generated AR poster

5.4 Findings

After the first poster session was completed, 69 students filled out the questionnaire from Appendix B. Table 5.1 shows the responses to the user experience questionnaire after the first round of poster presentations. As can be seen in this table, nearly half of the students found BlippAR easy to use. The majority of them believed that BlippAR made learning English more interesting, and that working with the app was fun. In order to check for the consistency of responses, a negatively-worded item was also added to the questionnaire, which read as "*I do not like working with BlippAR.*" Most of the students (68.13%) strongly disagreed/disagreed with this statement, showing that they liked working with BlippAR. Generally speaking, more than half of the students' experience with BlippAR was a good one; however, many of them believed that the app per se would not improve their English skills. This might have been caused by the fact that the students did not create their own videos but rather downloaded them from the Internet. The reason why the students were not required to make their own videos was that OUGEO assignments already included many video-making tasks, and asking the students to create one more video for the poster presentations could have been an unnecessary burden imposed to them.

The students were also asked whether they were planning to use BlippAR in the future, the responses to which can be seen in Table 5.2. The majority of the students said they were not intending to use BlippAR again ($N = 19$) or were undecided ($N = 36$).

The same questionnaire was filled out by the students one more time after the second poster session, the responses to which are displayed in Table 5.2 and Table 5.3. A relatively similar pattern was observed in the students' ratings across the two poster sessions, with no major deviations from initial responses.

Besides these Likert-type items, the students also answered some open-ended questions, which can be found in Appendix B, Part B.2. When asked whether they any intentions of using BlippAR again outside of class, the following responses were yielded. As it can be seen in Table 5.2, not many students were interested in using Blippar in the future. Nonetheless, those who expressed

Table 5.1

User Experience Questionnaire Responses, Poster Session 1

Items	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %	Mean $N = 69$
1. I find BlippAR easy to use.	5.80	43.40	45.00	5.80	2.50
2. BlippAR makes learning English more interesting.	4.34	26.08	57.98	11.60	2.76
3. Working with BlippAR is fun.	2.89	23.18	56.53	17.40	2.88
4. I do not like working with BlippAR.	11.6	56.53	27.53	4.34	2.24
5. My overall usage experience with BlippAR is good.	2.89	37.68	56.53	2.90	2.63
6. Using BlippAR would improve my English.	7.24	63.76	26.08	2.89	2.24

their interesting in doing so maintained that BlippAR could be used for entertainment, in the form of social networking, gaming, making Christmas or birthday cards to name a few, as well as marketing. As a matter of fact, many AR companies, BlippAR included, offer marketing and advertisement solutions for enterprises. Last but not least, some students mentioned that they intended to use BlippAR as a tool to augment their future presentations.

Table 5.2

Students' Responses to Using or Not Using Blippar in the Future

Session Number	Yes	No	Undecided	Total
Poster Session 1	14	19	36	69
Poster Session 2	1	41	25	67

The second open-ended item asked the students about their experience using AR. Most of the students stated that AR was interesting and engaging to them; however, there were some technical glitches which affected their positive experience. For instance, some groups created their Blipps and tested it, all working well, yet the Blipp content did not pop up upon subsequent trials. Some of these problems might have been caused by the fact that BlippBuilder is still in Beta

form, and there might be some bugs yet to be fixed.

Table 5.3

User Experience Questionnaire Responses, Poster Session 2

Items	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %	Mean $N = 67$
1. I find BlippAR easy to use.	8.95	40.29	49.26	1.5	2.38
2. BlippAR makes learning English more interesting.	2.98	25.37	61.2	10.45	2.79
3. Working with BlippAR is fun.	1.49	17.91	67.16	13.44	2.92
4. I do not like working with BlippAR.	13.44	61.19	25.37	0	2.11
5. My overall usage experience with BlippAR is good.	4.47	35.82	55.23	4.48	2.57
6. Using BlippAR would improve my English.	1.49	59.70	38.81	0	2.36

5.5 Chapter Conclusion

In recent years, there has been a burgeoning interest in Augmented Reality technologies, especially in educational settings to edutain, i.e. educate and entertain, students and engage them in their learning. This chapter reported the results of the use of an AR application, called BlippAR, to augment poster carousel tasks in the blended English course offered at Osaka University. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through a usage experience questionnaire, an open-ended feedback form, and observations. The implemented AR application was described, and the overall positive user experience was reported, along with displaying a sample of collaborative student-generated AR poster. The rewards and challenges of having students design AR content were also discussed.

Notwithstanding the technical difficulties, by and large, the quantitative findings and the qualitative feedback and observations indicated that the participants

got more engaged in the learning scenario, and that they found AR rather motivating and enjoyable. Therefore, using AR and getting students involved with generating their own AR-based content may improve the effectiveness of language learning if the technical challenges are overcome. With advances in new technologies, it will be increasingly easier to bring more of AR to the classroom in the near future, and interactive, engaging learning environments can be created to enhance learning and meet the needs of students in the 21^{st} century.

Chapter 6

Course Evaluation Study

As outlined in Section 1.8, this chapter presents the final phase of the study in which the course was evaluated. As part of the evaluation process, students' perception on the usefulness of the course was measured quantitatively and qualitatively through an attitudinal survey instrument and open-ended reflection questions. Additionally, to add an outsider positionality, the blended course was peer-reviewed by a certified reviewer from QM. Further details are provided in the following sections.

6.1 Overview

The number of blended courses in higher education across Japan is increasing and expected to grow rapidly (Gruba & Hinkelman, 2012). According to McCarty, Sato, and Obari (2017), blended learning in the Japanese context can provide a more integrated approach for teaching and learning, prevent learner alienation, improve completion rates, decrease dropout rates, and enhance the quality and quantity of interaction. As the prevalence of blended instruction has expanded exponentially in recent years, so has the necessity to evaluate the quality of blended courses; hence, quality evaluation is of paramount importance in blended course design, development, and delivery (Gruba, Cárdenas-Claros, Suvorov, & Rick, 2016).

There are numerous checklists, guidelines, and rubrics for online and blended course design developed by several organizations (e.g., Quality Matters, United States Distance Learning Association, the Illinois Quality Online Course Initia-

tive Rubric, the North American Council for Online Learning, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, the Higher Learning Commission, Blackboard Inc.), many of which mainly focus on the instructional design and development of the course, not on the course delivery and instruction (Piña & Bohn, 2014). Among these checklists, guidelines, and rubrics, the researcher has opted for the Quality Matters Higher Education Course Design Rubric as the main frame of reference. Furthermore, she has adopted an inclusive approach to blended course evaluation. SAM1 proposed by Allen and Sites (2012) informed the design and development of a blended course of EGAP mainly targeting second-year undergraduate Japanese students at Osaka University. In order to ensure the course quality from the outset, besides the Standards Checklist (Vai & Sosulski, 2011), the Fifth Edition of Quality Matters Higher Education Course Design Rubric (Quality Matters, 2014) was also utilized as the major reference. As part of the evaluation process, students' perception on the usefulness of the course was measured quantitatively and qualitatively through an attitudinal survey instrument and open ended reflection questions. Eventually, to add an outsider positionality, the blended course was peer-reviewed by a certified reviewer from QM after having been self-reviewed by the researcher.

6.2 Course Design, Development, and Delivery Revisited

As already indicated, this chapter is a report on the evaluation process of a blended course of EGAP, titled OUGEO. However, to provide a brief review on the previous stages of course design and development, the instructional design, checklist, and rubric utilized in those phases will be shortly explained, and reference will be made to other works within the literature which have made use of similar resources for online or blended course design.

6.2.1 Basic Successive Approximation Model

The agile SAM that benefits from iterative design processes was introduced by Allen and Sites (2012) as a replacement for the traditional ADDIE model. Contrary to ADDIE's five giant sequential steps, SAM consists of repeated,

interwoven small steps called iterations.

To create the blended course in this study, the basic Successive Approximation Model, known as SAM1, was chosen as the guiding instructional design model, which is suitable for small projects that do not require specialized technical skills such as software programming.

The iterative nature of SAM1 allowed for continuous evaluation, and consequently, for corrections, adaptations, mitigations, refinements, and adjustments at the early phases of the blended course design and development (see Mehran et al., 2017 for more detailed descriptions of the design and development phases).

6.2.2 The Standards Checklist

As remarked by online course designers and developers (e.g., Stavredes & Herder, 2014), standards ensure consistency and overall quality throughout the course design and development. Having taken a thoughtfully designed, research-focused, practice-oriented, step-by-step approach to online course design and development, Vai and Sosulski (2011, pp. 189-195) presented a checklist that serves as a standards index and best-practices model for course designers and instructors to consistently use and to reflectively self-evaluate their online courses. This checklist guided the design and development phases of the current study and provided opportunities to iteratively do reflective self-evaluations of the created blended course.

6.2.3 Quality Matters Rubric

What Is It and Why Quality Matters?

Quality Matters (abbreviated as QM) started with this question raised by a small group of colleagues in the MarylandOnline consortium based in the USA: How is the quality of an online course measured and guaranteed? QM is now an international organization that is recognized as a leader in quality assurance for online education in both K-12 and higher education, and aims to promote and improve the quality of online education and student learning nationally and internationally through a variety of ways such as developing research-informed,

and practice-based quality rubrics and standards, providing professional development in the use of evaluation tools to improve the quality of online education, and offering peer review and certification of quality in online education. As mentioned by Wise and Im (2015), QM has been adopted by many educational institutions to review and assess the quality of their online and blended courses.

Applying Quality Matters

While the QM rubric is not so well-known in the realm of foreign language education, it has been widely used and applied to different programs of disciplines, and some of them are briefly explained below.

In her case study, Harknes (2015) documents the results of five academic years of the strategic application of QM to online learning programs at the University of the District of Columbia leading to the establishment of sustainable online education at this institution; for example, passing course grades of A-D increased 19.7%, failing course grades of F decreased 66.6%, and withdrawals from online courses reduced by 23.5%. Hollowell, Brooks, and Anderson (2017) also describe how QM helped their institution, North Carolina Central University, address the increasing rates of Ds, Fs, and withdrawal by students enrolling in online courses.

Martin, Ndoye, and Wilkins (2016) examine how QM standards guide the identification and analysis of learning analytics data, which is "the interpretation of a wide range of data produced by and gathered on behalf of students in order to assess academic progress, predict future performance, and spot potential issues" (Johnson, Smith, Willis, Levine, & Haywood, 2011, p. 28), to monitor and improve learning in a fully online master's program in Instructional Systems Technology at a university in the USA. The study provides a framework which helps instructors see whether their online courses meet the QM standards requirements and consequently enhance the effectiveness of online teaching and learning.

According to Dietz-Uhler, Fisher, and Han (2007), retention rates are reported to be lower in online classes than in face-to-face ones. They thus investigate whether online course design promotes student retention, using QM to

design and review their psychology and statistics online courses. They reported that their retention rate over multiple offerings of both courses is roughly 95%.

Lowenthal and Hodges (2015) use QM to evaluate the quality of six randomly selected Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). Three trained QM peer reviewers analyzed each of the MOOCs using the QM 2011-2013 rubric. Some of the MOOCs scored very well and, with some minor revisions, two of the MOOCs could pass a QM review and, therefore, be considered certified online courses. This suggests that MOOCs have the potential to be high-quality online courses, at least in terms of course design.

Kwon, DiSilvestro, and Treff (2017) utilize the QM standards and they identify strengths as well as weaknesses of their graduate online adult education program. The results revealed that the adult online graduate courses fulfilled the key components of QM standards in general. Moreover, students' evaluations of the courses were quite consistent with the peer instructors' evaluations, and areas identified as needing improvement were information about accessibility, technical support, course orientation, and descriptions of instructional materials.

The author has found one study within the literature which has investigated the use of the QM rubric within an EFL setting. In his study, Al Zumor (2015) scrutinizes the standards of the QM rubric, 2011-2013 Edition. The findings indicated that the rubric has the potential for enhancing online foreign language education in general and can in particular make EFL learning process more humanized by increasing the instructors' and learners' sense of online presence. Similarly, in the present study, the QM rubric has been utilized as the major reference to evaluate the blended course of EGAP.

It is worth noting that Quality Matters Research (QMR) is a term which comprises research that supports the QM rubric and process, discusses its use, and focuses on its impact. Readers are referred to the curated resources on QMR (available at `https://www.qualitymatters.org/research/curated-research-resources`) where they can find more theoretical and practical studies on QM.

6.3 Evaluating OUGEO

6.3.1 Participants and Case Description

A total of 86 undergraduate students from Osaka University were enrolled in a blended course of EGAP collaboratively designed and developed by the researcher. The majority ($N = 83$) of the students were from the faculties of Letters, Law, Economics, and Human Sciences, whereas only three were from science and engineering backgrounds. Fifty-six percent ($N = 48$) of the enrollees were males and 44% ($N = 38$) were females. Most of them ($N = 75$) were in their second year, while there were seven junior and four senior students.

The blended course, officially titled "Practical English (e-learning)", was first offered in 2012 with the aim of helping university students improve their academic English proficiency, getting them prepared for studying in English-speaking countries, and enabling them to gain a score of 490 to 520 on TOEFL ITP®. The students would typically go through 12 weeks of online self-study using a commercial package called Linc English™ and an online library of video lessons known as English Central. Although one of the course objectives was to get the students prepared for study-abroad programs, it did not sufficiently include practice on language production in spoken and written forms and mostly focused on receptive skills.

In an attempt to enhance the back-then-existing course, the researcher participated in designing and developing a new blended course to replace the old one, already referred to as Osaka University Global English Online (OUGEO). OUGEO aimed at developing students' practical English language skills, in particular speaking, in an integrated way so that they could advance to higher levels of conversational and general academic English (up to B2 and C1 levels on the CEFR), as well as gain skill and confidence when speaking. The course was offered at three levels to accommodate for different proficiency groups. It started with a face-to-face orientation session, during which the students were introduced to the course and were informed about the course schedule, requirements, access to online materials, assignment submission, grading policy, etc. In total, there were five face-to-face and ten online study sessions.

The online component of the course was hosted on the Osaka University learning management system, Blackboard Learn, locally known as CLE. Details about the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of the course have been documented at *OUGEO: Behind the Scenes* webpage (`https://sites.google.com/view/ougeo`).

6.3.2 Evaluation Instruments

As recommended by SAM1, evaluation is an indispensable component in the course design and development cycle. In order to evaluate the quality of the blended course, the following instruments were utilized: (1) QM self and peer review, and (2) a course evaluation questionnaire.

Quality Matters Self and Peer Review

The Fifth Edition of the QM Higher Education Course Design Rubric (Quality Matters, 2014) was accessed and used via a paid institutional subscription due to two main reasons: QM is research-supported (Legon, 2006, 2015) and recommended by online course design experts (e.g., Boettcher & Conrad, 2010; Ko & Rossen, 2010), and the rubric is flexible to be used to evaluate the design and development of both online and blended courses. It consists of a set of eight general standards and 43 specific review standards to gauge the quality of online or blended courses. Annotations explain the applications of the standards and their interconnectedness. The rubric has a weighted scoring system used by the review team to determine whether a course meets the standards. Standards with three-point values are considered essential, and all must be satisfied for a course to meet the QM standards overall. It is worth noting that a minimum score of 84 out of 99 (nearly 85%) is required for a course to be QM-certified. The eight general standards of the rubric are listed below.

1. Course Overview and Introduction
2. Learning Objectives (Competencies)
3. Assessment and Measurement

4. Instructional Materials
5. Learning Activities and Learner Interaction
6. Course Technology
7. Learner Support
8. Accessibility and Usability

The non-annotated version of the rubric is available for free on the Quality Assurance Resources section of the website. It is worth mentioning that the fifth edition of the rubric had been available until July 1, 2018 before the sixth edition was released. The current link thus takes viewers to the most recent version of the Higher Ed Rubric, i.e. the sixth edition, instead of the fifth which was utilized in this study. The new edition features the same general standards, yet there are some modifications made to sub-standards, with the total score changed from 99 to 100.

There are several QM review types ranging from self-review to official course review. In the present study, the self-review tool was used to informally evaluate the quality of the designed blended course. Self-reviews are confidential, and the reports are not available to anybody except for the individual conducting the review. A preparatory review was then selected to benchmark the course. This paid review is an informal review process carried out by a master reviewer who is also a content expert to determine if a course has met QM standards, which results in a report that provides insight on where to focus course improvements — specific areas not meeting QM standards, for example — and can help highlight professional development needs. Figure 6.1 adapted from Adair (2014) summarizes the QM quality assurance process.

Course Evaluation Questionnaire

Despite being a comprehensive rubric for online or blended course design, the QM rubric is in fact not capable of detecting problems that are likely to occur during the course implementation such as potential technical glitches. An evaluation questionnaire was, therefore, administered to the students over the

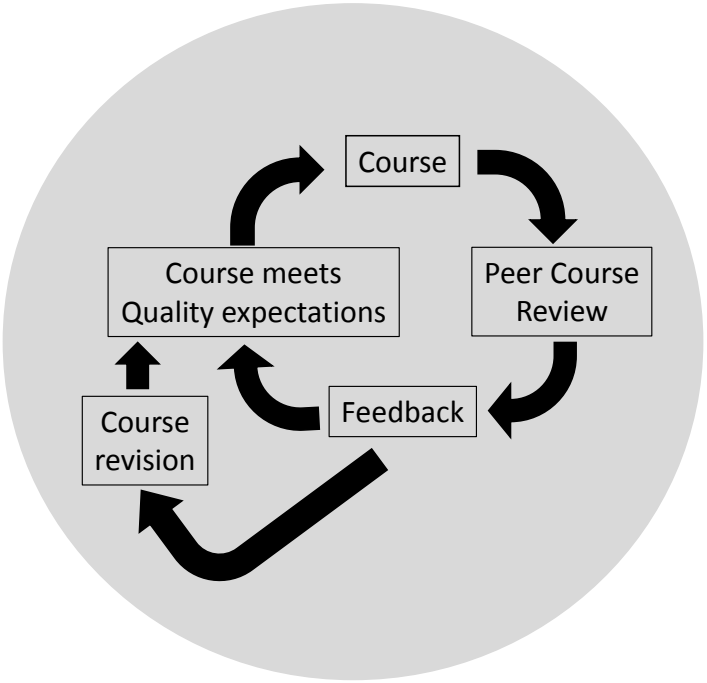

Figure 6.1. The QM quality assurance process adapted from Adair (2014, p. 84)

last week of the course so as to quantitatively and qualitatively measure their satisfaction with blended instruction and to identify areas in need of improvement. The questionnaire was adapted from Harker and Koutsantoni (2005) who evaluated the effectiveness of a web-based program for learning English for academic purposes. The adapted version of the questionnaire included 81 Likert-type items followed by several open-ended questions all translated into Japanese (refer to the Appendix C for a bilingual version). The course evaluation questionnaire was responded on a voluntary basis by 71 students, 37 males and 34 females, out of a total of 86 enrollees.

6.3.3 Evaluation Procedure

The researcher had a thorough look at Vai and Sosulski (2011) checklist and the QM annotated rubric before embarking on designing and developing the course while attempting to take into account as many standards as possible. After the course was implemented, a self-review was conducted using the worksheet available on the QM Course Review Management System. The self-review was a reflective aid to facilitate making further amendments to the course before

proceeding to the peer review. For the preparatory peer review, a certified QM reviewer was given guest access to the course to both score it and give comments on the areas in need of amelioration. The first round of review yielded a score of 70 out of 99, insufficient to meet the standards. The course was later revised based on the comments of the peer reviewer and a second application for review was started.

Moreover, the evaluation questionnaire was created on REDCap and distributed to the students via CLE. Since this questionnaire is quite lengthy and analyzing responses to all the items is beyond the scope of this chapter, only data from items which asked the participants to evaluate the course in general will be considered for analysis. Those items are in bold within Appendix C. Students' responses to the remaining items are also available within the same appendix.

6.4 Results

6.4.1 QM Review: Round 1

The first round of the QM peer review yielded a score of 70 out of 99, meaning the course did not meet the QM standards. The researcher then revised the course in accordance with the reviewer's comments and suggestions. Table 6.1 contains a list of the six essential sub-standards which were not initially met. It is worth mentioning that STANDARD 3.3 was evaluated as "not met" although the course included rubrics for scoring speaking and writing assignments. This is mainly due to the fact that the rubrics on CLE are visible only once users attempt at submitting an assignment, and therefore the reviewer failed to notice them. This fact was mentioned in the amendment worksheet and was addressed during the second round of review.

6.4.2 QM Review: Round 2

After making amendments to the course in accordance with the recommendations of the QM peer reviewer, the course was reviewed once again by the same reviewer, and it currently meets all the requirements of the Higher Education

Table 6.1

QM Rubric Essential Standards Not Met in the First Round of Review

Standard No.	**Standard Description**
STANDARD 1.1	Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.
STANDARD 2.4	The relationship between learning objectives or competencies and course activities is clearly stated.
STANDARD 3.3	Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work and are tied to the course grading policy.
STANDARD 5.3	The instructor's plan for classroom response time and feedback on assignments is clearly stated.
STANDARD 7.2	Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and services.
STANDARD 8.2	Information is provided about the accessibility of all technologies required in the course.

Course Design Rubric (Fifth Edition) with a score of 99/99. More details on the problems found with the course and the ways in which the reviewer's comments were addressed are explicated below.

STANDARD 1.1 Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.

According to the reviewer, the instructions were available, but they were not readily seen by the students. To address this issue, a welcome page was created and set as the course entry page, in which information about navigating the course menu and content was provided through written instructions and screenshots. Figure 6.2 displays a screenshot of the course homepage including a welcome message and instructions on website navigation.

STANDARD 2.4 The relationship between learning objectives or competencies and course activities is clearly stated.

Previously, the course activities were not clearly linked to the course objectives and learning outcomes mentioned in the syllabus. The connection was clarified by assigning each type of activity to the corresponding learning outcome in the syllabus (refer to Appendix D for a copy of the syllabus). Table 6.2 is an instance of the connection established between the learning outcomes and learning activities associated with each of the four language skills.

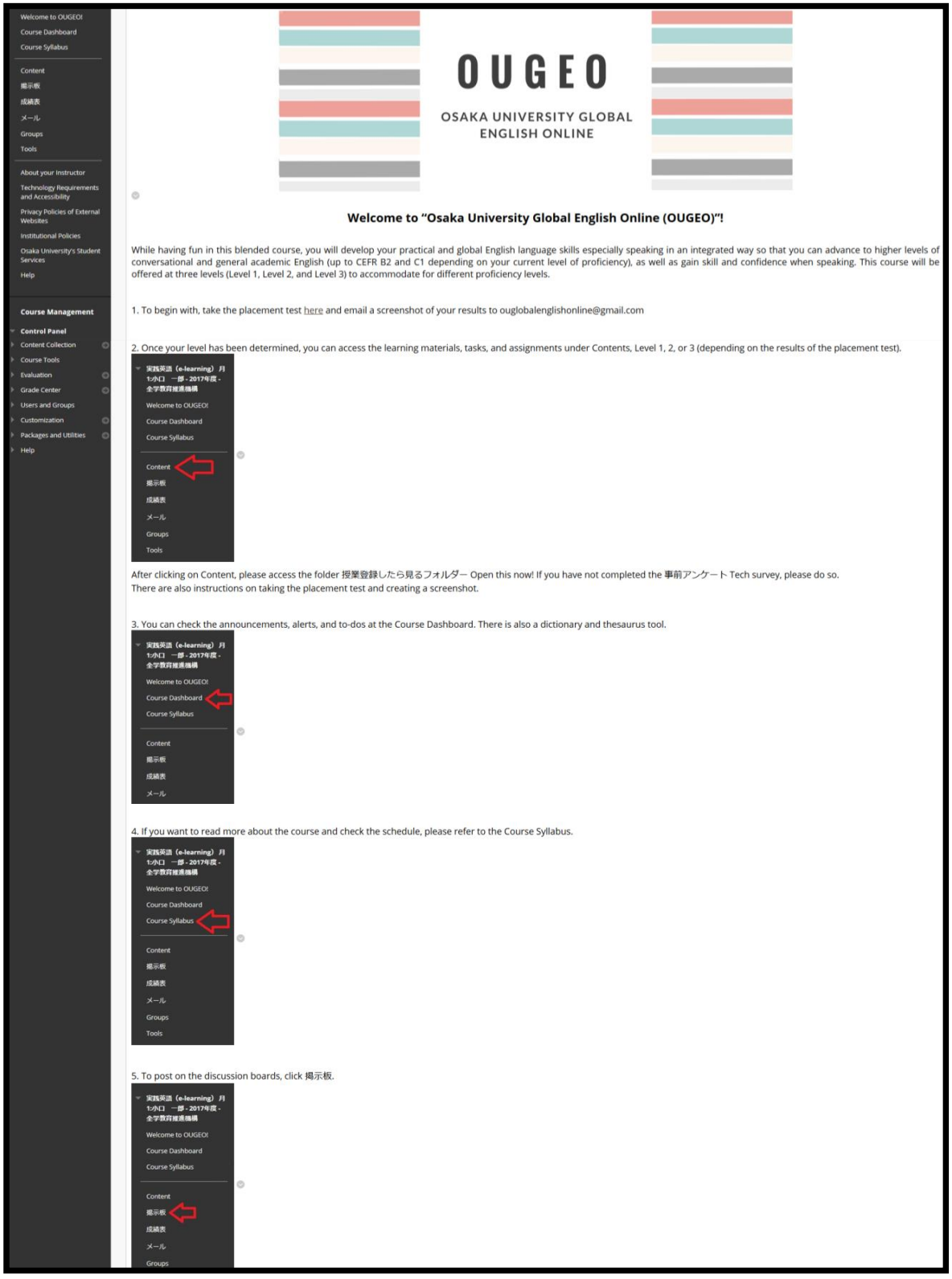

Figure 6.2. Screenshot of OUGEO homepage on CLE

Table 6.2

Connection Between Learning Outcomes and Learning Activities in OUGEO

Learning Outcome	**Learning Activity**
Identify main ideas and details of news articles of 100 to 300 words	Reading assignments from Breaking News English
Write short essays (about 200 words for Level 1 and 400-500 words for Level 2 and Level 3)	Writing assignments
Identify main ideas and details of conversations/presentations on familiar topics	Listening assignments from `http://www.elllo.org/` and Ted talks
Give short speeches and presentations on familiar topics through prior preparation	Speaking assignments

STANDARD 3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work and are tied to the course grading policy.

As already stated, this standard was met by sharing the evaluation rubrics for speaking and writing tasks with the students. Every writing and speaking assignment included a link to its respective rubric in order to assure consistency in evaluating and scoring students' work. These rubrics were not immediately visible to guest viewers, and therefore the course was evaluated as lacking this essential component. However, the score for this standard was restored during the second round of review through writing a note to the reviewer on the amendment worksheet. Figures 6.3, 6.4, and 6.5 show how to access a sample assignment and view the corresponding rubric before making a submission.

STANDARD 5.3 The instructor's plan for classroom response time and feedback on assignments is clearly stated.

This shortcoming was rectified by adding a new section to the syllabus titled "Response Time and Feedback Schedule" in which a rough schedule was provided for responding to inquiry emails and grading assignments (refer to Appendix D for a copy of the syllabus).

STANDARD 7.2 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and services.

To address this issue, a new section was added to the syllabus titled "Accessibility Policies and Services", which explains Osaka University's accessibility policies and services (refer to Appendix D for a copy of the syllabus).

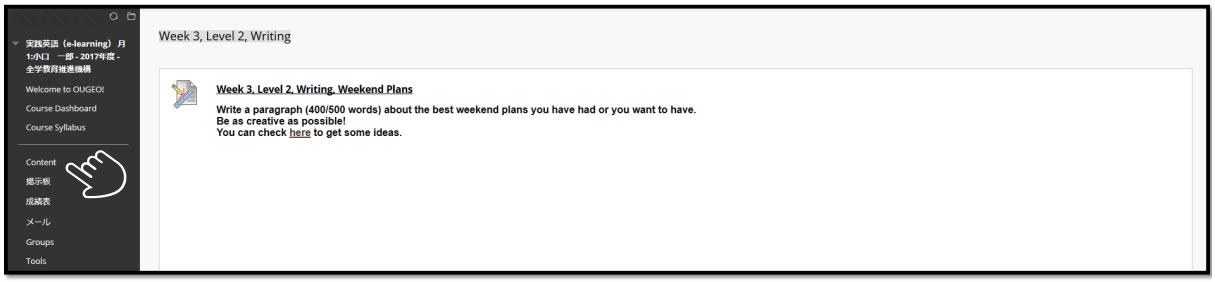

Figure 6.3. Sample assignment page on CLE

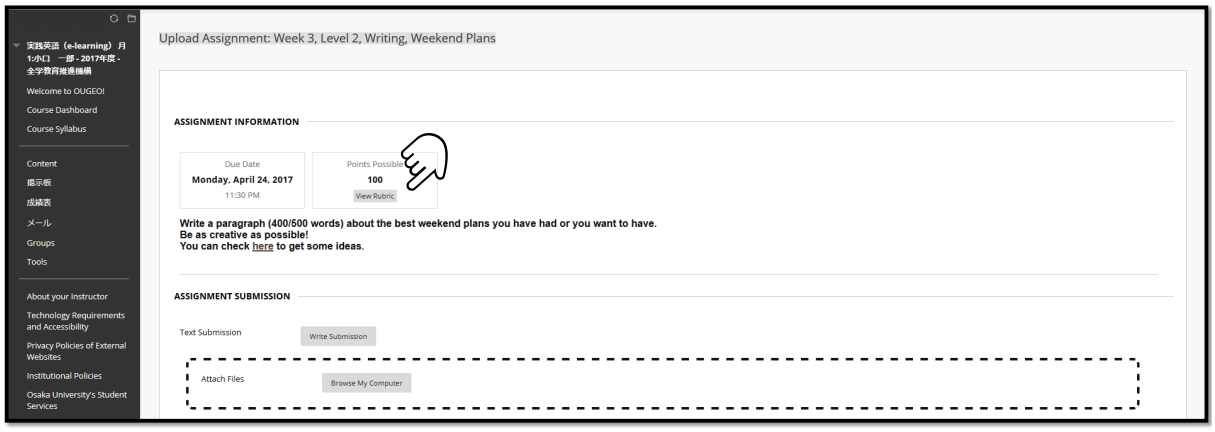

Figure 6.4. Sample assignment submission page on CLE

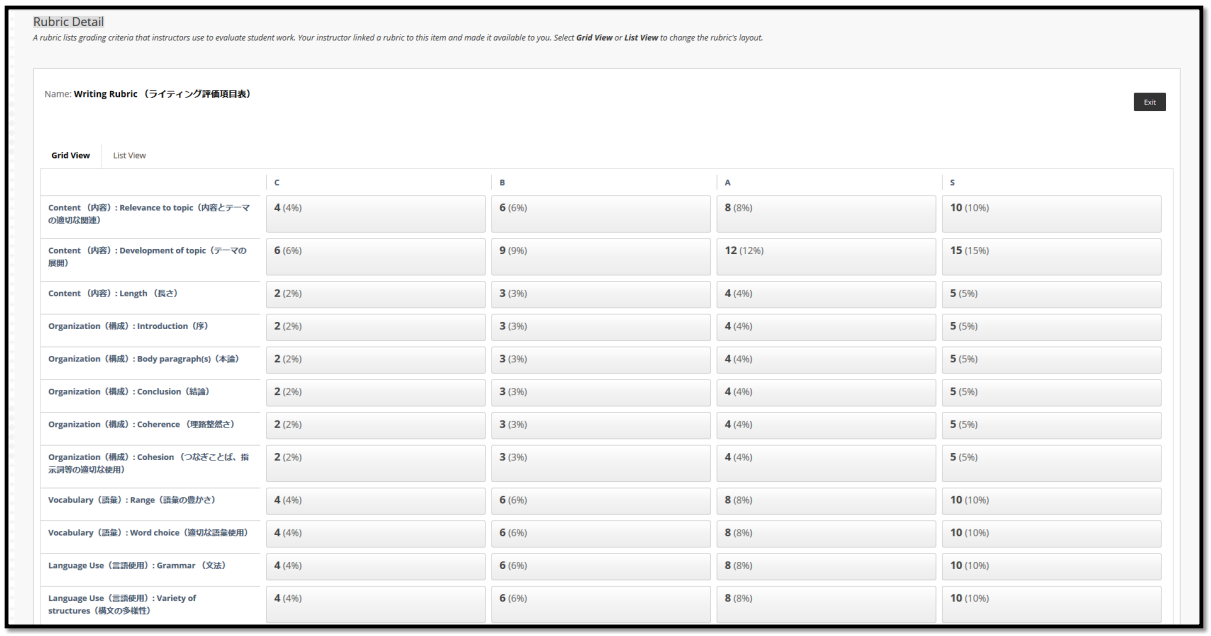

Figure 6.5. Sample rubric for a writing assignment on CLE

STANDARD 8.2 Information is provided about the accessibility of all technologies required in the course.

In order to meet this standard, a new page was created on the course website which contained information on the technologies required in the course, for instance a computer with a standard browser, and links were provided to the accessibility pages of the websites introduced to the students, for instance Blackboard Inc. (`http://www.blackboard.com/accessibility.html`). Figure 6.6 is a screenshot of the page as available on CLE.

By making revisions in accordance with the reviewer's comments, the course was evaluated as meeting all the essential standards after amendment. There were seven additional standards that were not met in the first round of review but were also rated as met upon amendment. These additional standards will be explicated as follows.

STANDARD 1.4 Course and/or institutional policies with which the learner is expected to comply are clearly stated, or a link to current policies is provided.

This standard worth two points was met by adding a page to the course menu which directs the students to find relevant information on Osaka University's policies, as shown in Figure 6.7.

STANDARD 1.5 Minimum technology requirements are clearly stated and instructions for use provided.

In order to meet this standard, also worth two points, the minimum technology requirements for successful completion of the course were added to the course, as displayed in Figure 6.8.

STANDARD 1.8 The self-introduction by the instructor is appropriate and is available online.

This one-point standard was met by adding a new page, "About your Instructor", with photos of the instructor and the two teaching assistants and their contact information, as can be seen in Figure 6.9.

STANDARD 5.4 The requirements for learner interaction are clearly stated.

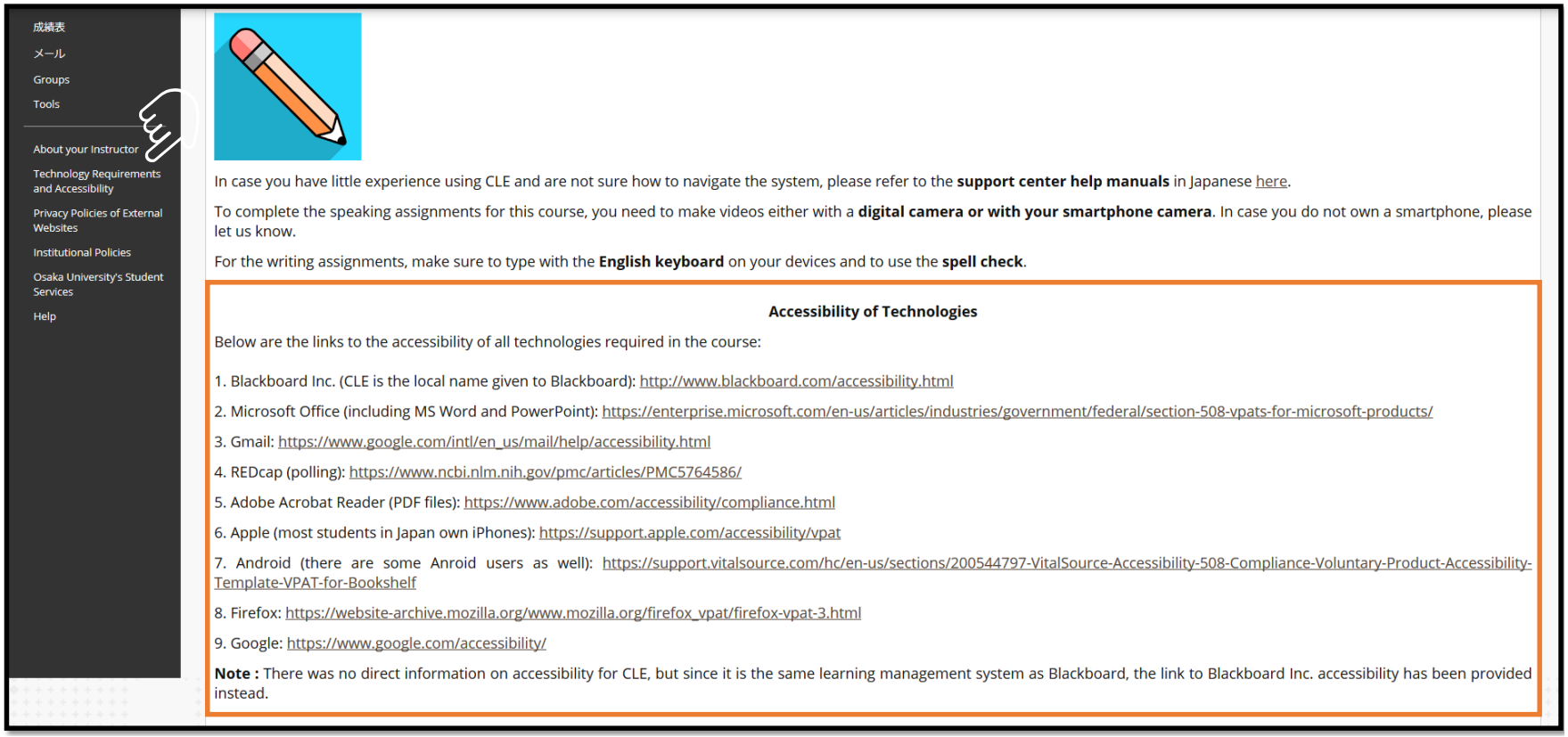

Figure 6.6. Accessibility of technologies on CLE

Figure 6.7. Osaka University's institutional policies on CLE

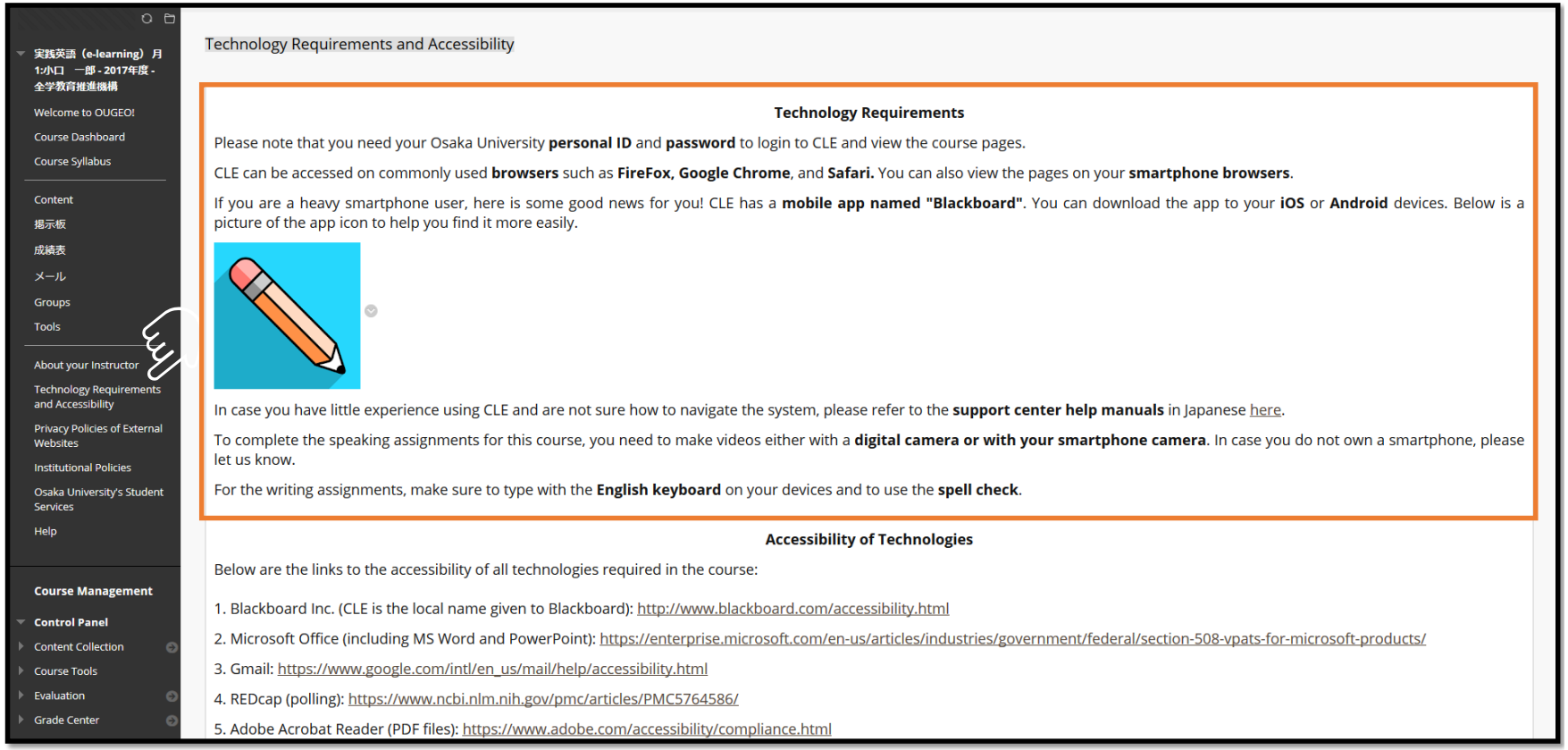

Figure 6.8. Minimum technology requirements for course completion on CLE

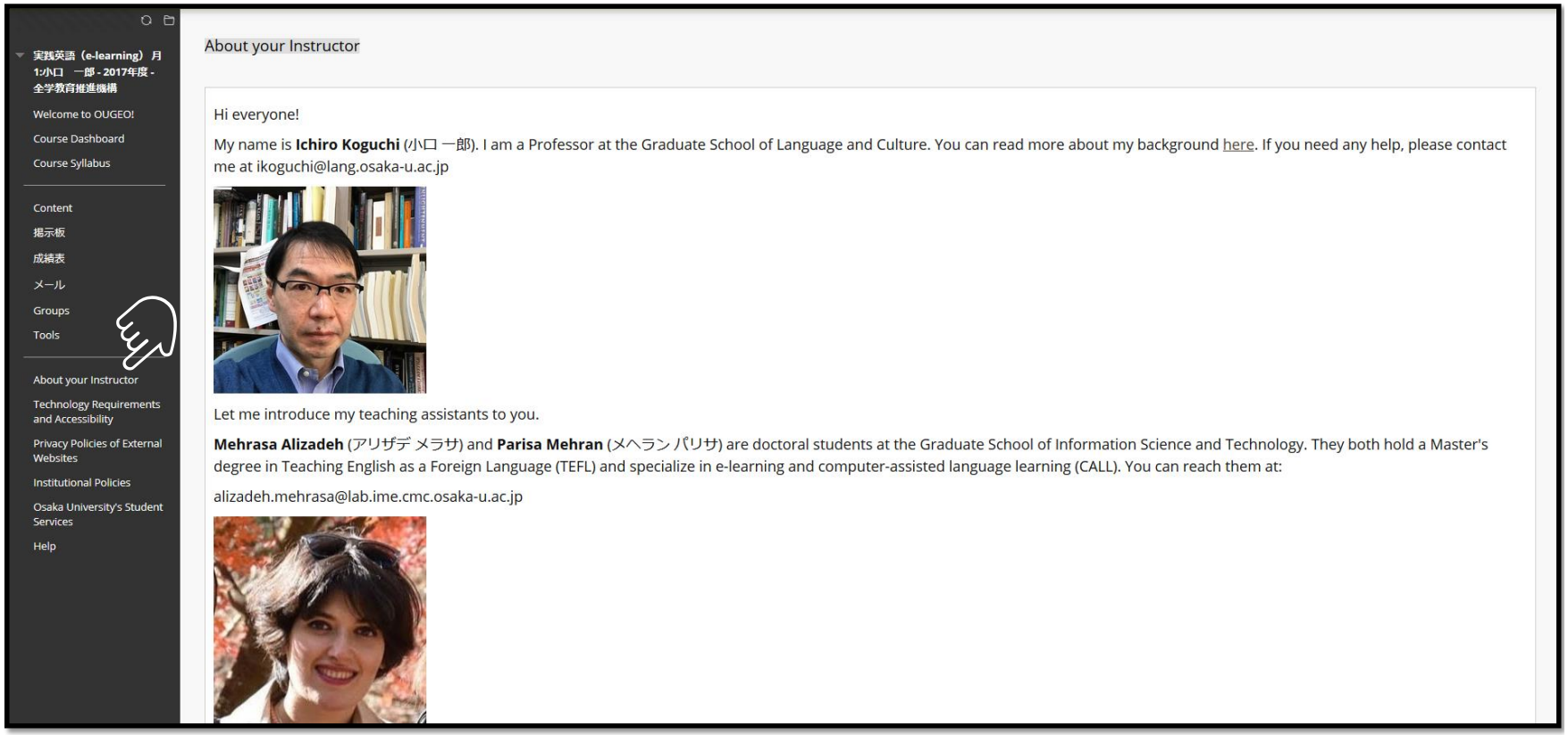

Figure 6.9. Instructor and teaching assistants' self-introduction on CLE

In an attempt to meet this standard, the following descriptions were added to the discussion boards to clarify the requirements for learner interaction.

- Discussion Board, Level 1

  This discussion board has been created for Level 1 students with the aim of fostering interaction among you, your classmates, the instructor, and the teaching assistants (TAs). The TAs moderate the discussions by raising questions related to the topic of each week. You are asked to contribute to the discussions by responding to those questions, asking your own questions, and responding to others' questions.

- Discussion Board, Level 2

  This discussion board has been created for Level 2 students with the aim of fostering interaction among you, your classmates, the instructor, and the teaching assistants (TAs). The TAs moderate the discussions by raising questions related to the topic of each week. You are asked to contribute to the discussions by responding to those questions, asking your own questions, and responding to others' questions.

- Discussion Board, Level 3

  This discussion board has been created for Level 3 students with the aim of fostering interaction among you, your classmates, the instructor, and the teaching assistants (TAs). The TAs moderate the discussions by raising questions related to the topic of each week. You are asked to contribute to the discussions by responding to those questions, asking your own questions, and responding to others' questions.

- Discussion Board, All Levels, Technical and General Support

  This discussion board has been created for all students to let them ask any questions they have regarding technical issues or difficulties they face using CLE. If you think there is anything wrong with the system or some part is not working properly, please write it here. Questions related to general support are also welcome.

STANDARD 6.5 Links are provided to privacy policies for all external tools required in the course.

This one-point standard was met by adding a page to the course menu containing links to privacy policies of external websites, as can be seen in Figure 6.10.

STANDARD 7.3 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's academic support services and resources can help learners succeed in the course and how learners can obtain them.

To comply with this two-point standard, information about "Academic Support Services and Resources" has been added to the syllabus, as can be seen in Section D.15 in Appendix D.

STANDARD 7.4 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's student services and resources can help learners succeed and how learners can obtain them.

Finally, an extra one point was earned by adding a new page to the course menu titled "Osaka University's Student Services", as shown in Figure 6.11.

6.4.3 The Evaluation Questionnaire

The evaluation questionnaire asked the participants to evaluate the course content and website as well as write any comments or suggestions they had for improving the course. Table 6.3 displays the students' responses to items 1 through 10.

It is evident that in general, the students had a relatively high opinion of the course website; however, they rated item 4 as the lowest since during the semester, there were technical issues regarding the submission of videos on the website, and many students had difficulty uploading their video speaking assignments to CLE. Some of the students also believed that the website was not mobile-friendly and that the audio files were occasionally low in sound quality. Regarding task difficulty (item 9), there were various opinions. Some respondents desired for more challenging reading tasks, rating the current reading passages as too short and easy. Others believed that the speaking tasks were ex-

Figure 6.10. Privacy policies of external websites on CLE

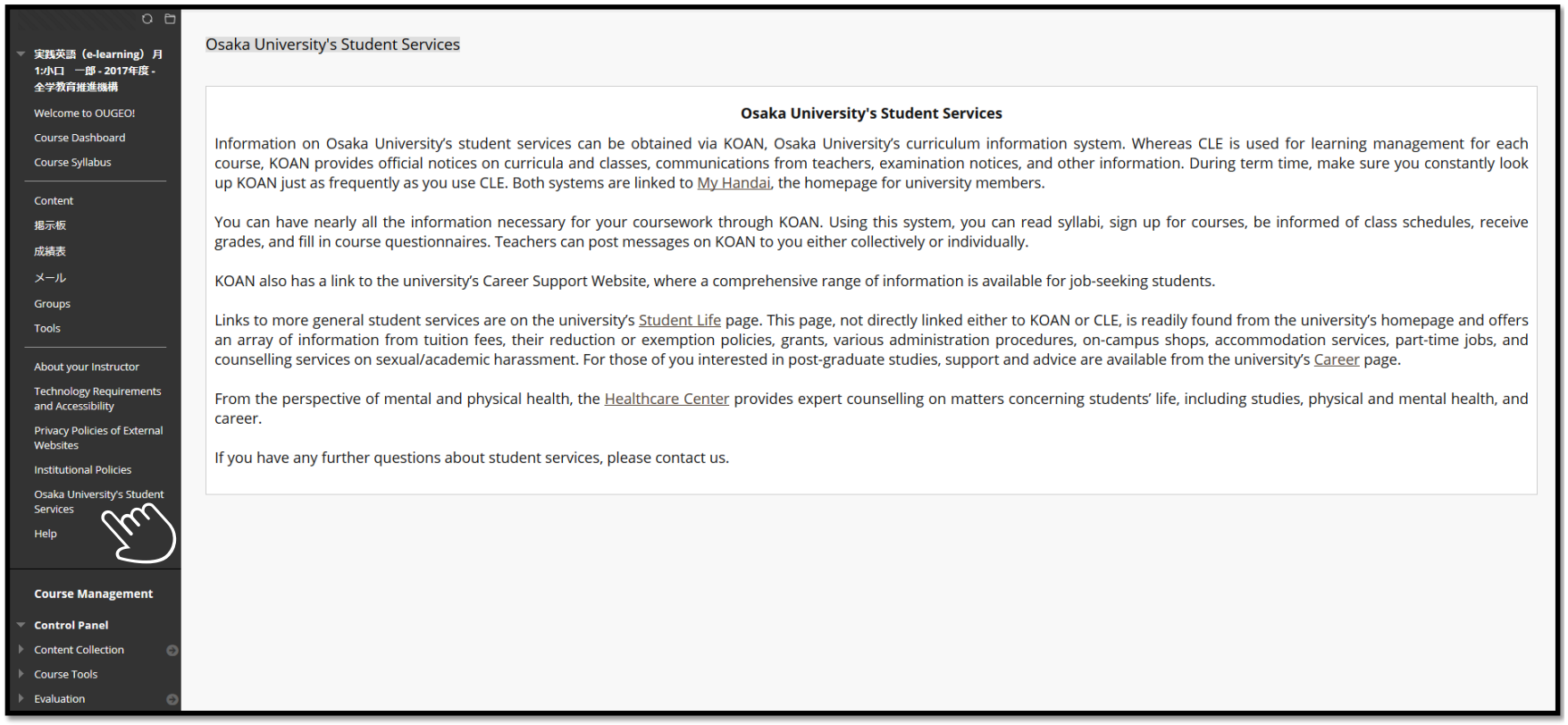

Figure 6.11. Osaka University's student services on CLE

Table 6.3

Students' Responses to Items 1-10

Items	(1) Strongly Disgaree %	(2) Disagree %	(3) Agree %	(4) Strongly Agree %	Mean ($N = 71$)
1. The content of the website is useful.	2.8	7.0	70.4	19.8	3.07
2. The content of the website is relevant to my needs.	2.8	12.7	71.8	12.7	2.94
3. The website is easy to use.	0.0	19.7	73.2	7.1	2.87
4. The website works well.	1.4	29.6	54.9	14.1	2.83
5. The website is easy to navigate.	0.0	5.6	76.1	18.3	3.12
6. The instructions are easy to follow.	0.0	0.0	80.3	19.7	3.19
7. I like the order of tasks in each week.	0.0	7.0	76.1	16.9	3.09
8. I like the layout of tasks in each week.	0.0	5.6	77.5	16.9	3.11
9. The tasks are of appropriate difficulty level.	0.0	18.3	66.2	15.5	2.97
10. The electronic feedback I get on the tasks is helpful.	0.0	1.4	76.1	22.5	3.21

tremely difficult and time-consuming.

The students also evaluated the course by responding to the seven items displayed in Table 6.4. The responses to these items equally indicate that the students had a rather positive attitude toward the course despite the occasional technical difficulties caused by the malfunctioning of the learning management system.

6.4.4 Students' Responses to the Open-ended Questions

The content analysis of the student' responses to the open-ended questions revealed their overall satisfaction with the course. The students were content with the integration of four language skills, i.e., reading, listening, speaking, and writing. They believed that the integrated approach was well-balanced, and they were pleased to have the opportunity to speak and write in English as they reported that productive skills had been overlooked to a great extent in their previous English courses. Here are two comments about the course in general:

I am very satisfied with this course, as it gave me the ability to improve

Table 6.4

Students' Responses to Items 41-47

Items	(1) No %	(2) To a certain degree %	(3) Yes %	Mean ($N = 71$)
41. Has the course met your English language needs?	1.4	28.2	70.4	2.69
42. Do you feel that you have learned useful English skills?	4.2	31.0	64.8	2.60
43. Do you feel that in general your English has improved because of this course?	8.5	21.1	70.4	2.61
44. Was the pace of the course appropriate for you?	1.4	19.7	78.9	2.77
45. Did you find the face-to-face classes useful?	5.6	28.2	66.2	2.60
46. Was the standard of the teaching good?	1.4	29.6	69.0	2.67
47. Did you receive enough support regarding technical issues?	14.1	32.4	53.5	2.39

my English in an interactive and productive way.

Before taking this course, I had written only 70-word paragraphs in English, and I had few opportunities to speak English, but in this course I had the chance to write 400-word essays and give 4-minute presentations in English.

A number of students pointed out that offering the course at three levels provided them with the opportunity to learn English at their own level. The students also commented on the poster presentations they gave at the face-to-face sessions. They were trained how to use an AR app, BlippAR, to overlay videos on their posters (see Alizadeh, Mehran, Koguchi, & Takemura, 2017 for more details). They found the activity fun, interesting, and engaging, and they stated that they enjoyed the group work. One of the students said:

I think it is a fun and innovative way of learning, and it provides access to more content outside of regular classroom materials.

Some of the students remarked that the reading and listening topics were

interesting to them especially because of their recency and relevance to global issues. The TED talks also interested the majority of students. Moreover, they were satisfied with instructor presence and responsiveness as they found it easy and quick to communicate with the instructor and teaching assistants. One of the students stated:

> *I hope that more Japanese people will be able to use English to show the charms of Japan to the world, argue their opinions, listen to others' opinions, and to interact with them. Instead of leaving it to translators, one should be able to express their opinion in their own words and directly understand their conversation partners speaking in English. I strongly hope that with classes like this one, which strengthen all our four skills in English, there will be more internationalized Japanese people.*

Another aspect of the course that the students felt satisfied with was the feedback they received on their speaking and writing tasks. They said that the feedback was polite, easy to understand, and accessible at any time especially on their mobile devices. More comments are as follows:

> *I found the feedback given on my assignments clear and constructive.*

> *I was able to see the grammar mistakes I made, which helped me recognize the gaps I have in my knowledge of English.*

> *Unlike feedback on paper, we can look back on the feedback whenever we want to and we do not have to worry about misplacing the feedback paper. We can review our mistakes at any time.*

> *I am not so confident about my speaking and writing skills, but pointing out to the strengths of my assignments and the points needing improvement have given me a new sense of self-confidence.*

It is worth mentioning that a few students preferred to receive face-to-face feedback on their speaking tasks. A student elaborated on the reason:

> *In general, it [the feedback] was good, but I wish I could get face-to-face feedback on the speaking assignments. That is because it is easier to immediately understand the problem, correct myself, and receive feedback again.*

Notwithstanding, some of the students found the online environment less threatening which enabled them to express their thoughts more confidently in English. Below is a comment made by one of the students that summarizes her opinion about the online, individual submission of speaking tasks:

> *I am not confident enough to speak in the presence of others, but since the speaking assignments were submitted online, I was able to express myself freely.*

One student did not feel confident filming himself; however, he was satisfied with the feedback he was provided with. He wrote:

> *To be honest, I was not confident to show my face in the videos and felt embarrassed to do so, but I felt that receiving advice on my assignments was easy. There was no ambiguity, and in my opinion the quality was high.*

In addition, the students stated that the online course allowed them to learn at their own pace, anywhere, anytime, using mobile devices. The students found the weekly instructions, "Read Me First" in both Japanese and English, helpful. They also believed that structural format of the course folders was easy to navigate. Last but not least, some students wrote that they felt their English had improved.

Regarding the difficulties that the students encountered in the course, failing to upload the speaking assignments on CLE was mentioned by many students. One of the students suggested that the speaking assignments could have been submitted in audio format. This technical problem caused delay in sending feedback to the students, and a number of students said that the feedback should have been provided more quickly. The students asserted that they were satisfied with the help they received to solve this problem and despite having difficulty

in uploading the videos online, they could submit their videos face-to-face or in some other fashion.

Some of the students reported the low sound quality of a few listening audios. It should be noted that for some students the content of the course was too easy, while for some it was too demanding due to weekly writing and speaking tasks. One student also mentioned that he was not informed of the feedback as CLE does not send notifications to the users when they receive feedback on the tasks. Lastly, CLE does not have spelling and grammar checker which made the writing tasks challenging for some students, and they preferred to use Microsoft Word to submit their assignments as attachments.

6.5 Discussion

This chapter reports on a study conducted at Osaka University which involves the evaluation of a blended course of EGAP, referred to as OUGEO. The course was peer-reviewed using the Quality Matters Higher Education Course Design Rubric (Fifth Edition), and it currently meets all the standards of this rubric upon amendment. The findings of the evaluation phase also indicate that despite the occasional technical problems, the majority of the students felt content with the course and believed that it met their language needs and helped them improve their English skills.

This study underlines the significance of continuous improvement in online/blended course design and development. The QM peer review has aided in improving the course design and development process in light of establishing clear links between learning objectives and learning activities as well as bringing more ease and convenience to students in course navigation. The course needs to be rerun before more conclusions can be drawn on the effectiveness of the changes made; however, the literature on the application of QM to online/blended learning programs—studies such as Harknes (2015) and Hollowell et al. (2017)—bears sufficient evidence to the effectiveness of the QM rubrics and peer review in assuring excellence in online/blended learning programs.

Not only does quality assurance in online/blended learning rely on scrupu-

lous attention to design and development, but it is also related to students' level of satisfaction with their online experience. Young and Norgard (2006) have identified several factors contributing to student satisfaction with online instruction. The factors include interaction among students and between student and professor, consistency in course design, provision of technical support, and flexibility of online courses, each of which will be discussed below.

Regarding interaction among students, the students enrolled in OUGEO were connected with their classmates either via the online discussion boards or other communication tools such as LINE for a term project entailing poster presentations. More details on this phase of the study can be found in Alizadeh et al. (2017). They were also in touch with the instructor and teaching assistants via email and discussion boards. A constant attempt was made to respond to student inquiries as soon as possible, the majority of which were related to submitting speaking assignments. As some studies (e.g., Rush, 2015) have shown, lack of connection, interaction, and responsiveness in online courses can make students feel isolated and disconnected.

According to studies on blended learning experiences (e.g., Tuapawa, 2016), inconsistency in online course design can cause frustration among students. The course design in the present study was consistent in that all the contents were classified based on proficiency levels week by week and were saved into distinct folders for listening, speaking, reading, writing, pronunciation, etc. In addition, there were clear instructions on study materials and assignments for each week provided in English and Japanese. Moreover, the face-to-face orientation session contributed greatly to the course consistency.

As Young and Norgard (2006) remarked, technical assistance is vital to satisfaction with online courses, and studies (e.g., Yang & Cornelius, 2004; Zeng & Perris, 2004) have reported that limited technical support can lead to students' dissatisfaction with online courses. In this study, technical support was provided by creating a shared folder on Google Drive where students were able to upload their speaking videos in case they could not upload it to CLE. If it was impossible for a student to submit their video online, neither on CLE nor on Google Drive, an appointment was made to meet them face to face and receive

the video file directly through AirDrop or on a USB Drive.

Finally, with regards to flexibility, the students were given one week's time to complete the online study portion and assignments for each week, while they had to attend face-to-face classes only five time out of a total of fifteen weeks. Given all this and also regarding students' positive responses to item 44, it is evident that the course was sufficiently flexible in comparison to traditional language classes. Flexibility is in fact the reason for greater satisfaction with learning online as reported in Romero and Barbera (2011) and Pardo-Gonzalez (2013).

6.5.1 Challenges

A major challenge with implementing this course was the large number of enrollees, which translated into a large burden for the teacher and teaching assistants in view of dealing with technical problems due to insufficient manpower. In a study exploring learners' perceptions on the usefulness of a blended EFL program, Kobayashi and Little (2011) have found that the interface of the online component is a determining factor correlated with students' satisfaction with such programs. Online learner satisfaction has been demonstrated to be in close relation to the operability of the technology deployed. In case of OUGEO, the submission of speaking assignments caused problems for some students, which was partially resolved by providing alternative ways for submission as explained above. The dissatisfaction with the submission of videos was also reflected in the students' responses to the questionnaire as well as in their written comments. This technical issue should be resolved before rerunning the course.

6.5.2 Lessons Learned and Advice

Here are some lessons learned during the design, development, and delivery of the current blended course:

- Be ready to change – Designing and developing an online/blended course is an ongoing process. It requires constant evaluation and reflection so as

to improve future courses. In fact, the ability to make changes is one of the merits of online courses.

- Do not forget about OER – Instead of constantly reinventing the wheel, look for freely available resources. It not only saves you a tremendous amount of time but also adds more variety to your course.
- Consider time demands – Developing effective online resources is often much more time-consuming than creating classroom learning materials. Be prepared to invest time and energy into this lengthy yet valuable process.
- Always keep your course objectives in mind – Your objectives are the core component leading all your actions and decisions. Make sure they are well-aligned with your learning activities and assessment.
- Check for course organization and navigation – No matter how professionally you have developed and compiled your online resources, they will not be effective as long as they are not well-organized. Make sure your course is clearly organized and easy to navigate. Also, take measures to enhance screen readability and responsive design.
- Be clear as to what your requirements are – Be explicit in communicating your expectations to your students. Tell them clearly what your requirements are with respect to interaction with instructor, peers, and course content.
- Set evaluation criteria – Provide clear-cut criteria for how students' work will be assessed. Inform the students of your grading policy and any rubrics you utilize for evaluating their assignments.
- Care about course accessibility and usability – Ensure that the course is accessible and usable for all the students. Include information on accessibility support as well as technical and academic support services provided by your institution.
- Foster social presence – An easy way to create a sense of social presence in your course is to allow the students to build a learning community with

their peers through simple activities such as introducing themselves to the class.

- Be ready to deal with technical glitches – No matter how hard you have attempted at designing and developing your course, there are things that will not work occasionally or constantly. Think of alternative solutions to deal with technical difficulties and ask technical staff for help.

6.6 Limitations and Implications

This evaluation report is based on the data collected during the first round of implementing the blended course. Running the course several times with various groups of students could add to the validity of the findings and also aid in further improving the shortcomings of the existing course. After all, quality assurance is an ongoing process rather than a one-shot procedure (Adair, 2014). A second limitation relates to the fact that QM rubrics and peer reviews can only assess the quality of the course in terms of design and do not necessarily guarantee the success of implementation. As an example, through a post-hoc analysis of statistics reports generated by the learning management system, the researcher found that against the presumed usefulness of discussion boards, the students enrolled in OUGEO hardly ever used them to interact with their peers or to ask for technical help and instead had a preference for email or LINE messages (Alizadeh, 2018). Yet another limitation has been caused by a lack of sustainability and continued practice. The course was designed and developed to fulfill the requirements of a doctoral program that the researcher is enrolled in. Nevertheless, other instructors may not be willing to adopt it to their contexts since it requires a great amount of dedication on the part of the instructor.

The current study has implications for online or blended course designers and developers as well as teachers. It introduces methods and resources to evaluate such courses. The researcher also recommends designers to take a look at an evaluation rubric before embarking on the task of course design so as to assure the appropriacy of their choices and decisions from the outset. This latter point further highlights the significance of faculty development in using rubrics

such as the QM rubric. In fact, QM provides professional development courses and workshops for faculty who wish to learn about effective online course design as well as those who aim at becoming QM peer reviewers. Roehrs, Wang, and Kendrick's (2013) study on preparing faculty to use the QM Model is a recommended source to refer to for universities and institutes of higher education which are considering the adoption of this model.

6.7 Chapter Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to examine the quality of a blended course of English for general academic purposes targeting Japanese undergraduate students at Osaka University. In order to assess the course quality, two courses of action were taken: (1) having the course peer-reviewed by a trained Quality Matters reviewer, and (2) conducting a survey study to measure the satisfaction of the students enrolled in the course. The main findings of the study are as follows:

1. The first round of peer review based on the QM Higher Education Course Design Rubric (Fifth Edition) yielded a score of 70 out of 99. The review process rigorously demonstrated areas in need of improvement. The course was further revised in accordance with the reviewer's comments and suggestions and was evaluated as meeting all the standards upon amendment with a new score of 99 out of 99.
2. Students were in general satisfied with the course and believed that it met their language needs and helped them improve their practical English skills. Some of them reported struggling to submit their speaking assignment caused by the malfunctioning learning management system and unstable Internet connection.

Despite the technical problems, the researcher holds that the course has met its predefined objectives to a great extent, i.e. getting the students to practice all four language skills in an integrated manner and aiding them in improving their practical English skills within a course which meets their language needs. In order to further refine the course design, development, and delivery, there is

a perceived need to rerun the course with various groups of students so as to further ameliorate it in the future.

As a final word, like many institutions of higher education worldwide, Osaka University is adopting online and blended learning more than ever before. As suggested by Roehrs et al. (2013), more online courses will be implemented from now on, and this stresses the increasing need for more faculty development opportunities to assure quality in online education and student satisfaction.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

As described in Section 1.8, this final chapter presents a summary of the main findings of this research project and provides some suggestions regarding future studies.

7.1 Summary of Major Findings

This section recapitulates the findings of chapters three, five, and six to give readers a glimpse of what was accomplished through conducting this research project.

7.1.1 Chapter 3: Needs Analysis Study

As reported in Chapter three, the need analysis study was carried out to shed light on the L2 needs and difficulties of Japanese university students and instructors' views on them in order to develop a course reflecting the voices of both groups while complying with Osaka University curricular regulations. Through this stage, the author found that the students' language needs had not yet been addressed well and that the students assess their listening and speaking as lower than other skills. They also would like to improve their oral/aural skills so as to be able to use English in meaningful communicative situations. The instructors also underline the importance of meeting these perceived yet less addressed needs, which is in line with the internationalization policy.

7.1.2 Chapter 5: AR Study

Chapter five accounted the results of a user experience study in which the students made use of an AR application, called BlippAR, to augment poster carousel tasks as a collaborative term project in the blended course. The quantitative and qualitative data collected through a questionnaire, an open-ended feedback form, and observations indicate that the students had in general a positive experience and felt more engaged in the learning activity despite some technical issues. In brief, the rewards of this experience weighed over the challenges.

7.1.3 Chapter 6: Evaluation Study

Chapter six reported the findings of the last stage of the project, i.e. course evaluation. This phase assisted in improving the course particularly in terms of design by having it examined by a QM peer reviewer. The course currently meets all the standards of the Quality Matters™ Higher Education Course Design Rubric (Fifth Edition) upon amendment. Considering students' evaluation of the course, it can be said that the course has met its goals to a large extent by assisting the students in practicing all their language skills.

7.2 Suggestions for Future Work

There are two suggestions to propose with regard to future work as explained below. One has to do with organizing faculty development courses, and the second one is related to creating online course templates for instructors.

7.2.1 Organizing Faculty Development Courses

Osaka University has an institutional subscription to QM, which means that the annotated version of the latest rubric is available to all faculty members and can be utilized by all of them. However, mere access to the rubric is not sufficient since training is required to familiarize faculty with best practices in online/blended course design and development. To this aim, faculty development

courses could be organized to train faculty in using the rubric to self-evaluate their courses and to conduct peer reviews for the courses developed by their colleagues.

7.2.2 Creation of Templates for Instructors

To make the design and development of online or blended courses easier for faculty with less experience, the author recommends the creation of templates for online course design. These templates should be sufficiently generic and user-friendly to be utilized by faculty regardless of their field of study and expertise. Taking this idea a step further, each faculty or graduate school could develop their own specialized templates which meet the needs of their professors and students.

7.3 Final Word

The author hopes that this study can inspire instructors and researchers at Osaka University and other universities across Japan to consider the benefits and affordances of blended learning and to enrich their students' experience through integrating edutainment into their practice.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Needs Analysis Questionnaire

Needs analysis questionnaire responded by students

性別： □ 男性 □ 女性 □ その他
年齢： ———— 母語： ————
所属： ———— 専攻： ————

大学では, 以下の言語スキルをどれくらい利用しますか? (まるをつけて下さい)

	全然ない	ほとんどない	時々	よく	いつも
リスニング	1	2	3	4	5
スピーキング	1	2	3	4	5
リーディング	1	2	3	4	5
ライティング	1	2	3	4	5

以下の言語スキルについて、どれくらい困難を感じたことがありますか? (まるをつけて下さい)

	全然ない	ほとんどない	時々	よく	いつも
リスニング	1	2	3	4	5
スピーキング	1	2	3	4	5
リーディング	1	2	3	4	5
ライティング	1	2	3	4	5

以下の言語スキルは、あなたの専攻にとってどれくらい重要ですか?

(まるをつけて下さい)

	全然ない	ほとんどない	時々	よく	いつも
リスニング	1	2	3	4	5
スピーキング	1	2	3	4	5
リーディング	1	2	3	4	5
ライティング	1	2	3	4	5

卒業後、以下の言語スキルはどれくらい重要となると思われますか?(まるをつけて下さい)

	全然ない	ほとんどない	時々	よく	いつも
リスニング	1	2	3	4	5
スピーキング	1	2	3	4	5
リーディング	1	2	3	4	5
ライティング	1	2	3	4	5

英語のスキルを向上させるための講義を受ける場合、以下のことはどれくらい役立つでしょうか？(まるをつけて下さい)

	役立たない		まあまあ		役立つ
1. 英語の発音、イントネーション、アクセント(ストレス・強勢)パターンを聞くこと	1	2	3	4	5
2. 講義中にメモを取ること	1	2	3	4	5
3. 英語を聞いて、全体的に理解すること	1	2	3	4	5
4. フォーマルなスピーチやプレゼンをすること	1	2	3	4	5

5. 積極的にディスカッションに参加すること	1	2	3	4	5
6. 少人数グループ、協同プロジェクト、授業外の勉強会でディスカッションする中で、積極的にメンバーとコミュニケーションをとること	1	2	3	4	5
7. 授業内外で先生と積極的にコミュニケーションをとること	1	2	3	4	5
8. 図書館の利用スキルや情報検索スキルを身に付けること	1	2	3	4	5
9. レポートを書くこと	1	2	3	4	5
10. 実験レポートを書くこと	1	2	3	4	5
11. 小説や詩などのクリエイティブな作文を書くこと	1	2	3	4	5
12. ケーススタディーのレポートを書くこと	1	2	3	4	5
13. 物や手順について説明すること	1	2	3	4	5
14. 論説文のイントロダクションや結論を書くこと	1	2	3	4	5
15. 参考文献や引用文を書くこと	1	2	3	4	5
16. 一貫した議論を立てること	1	2	3	4	5
17. 事実に関する情報をまとめること	1	2	3	4	5

18. 複数のソースから得た情報を統合すること	1	2	3	4	5
19. 資料を分析すること	1	2	3	4	5
20. 語彙力をつけること	1	2	3	4	5
21. 速く読むこと	1	2	3	4	5
22. 批判的に読むこと	1	2	3	4	5
23. 筆者の考え方を理解するために読むこと	1	2	3	4	5
24. 資料を要約すること	1	2	3	4	5
25. 英語を読んで全体的に理解すること	1	2	3	4	5

大学で学び身に付ける英語力に関して、他に何かコメントがありますか？もしくは、他に困難を感じたことがありますか？もしあれば具体的に記述して下さい。

Appendix B

AR User Experience Questionnaire

AR利用経験アンケート
AR User Experience Questionnaire

B.1 Part 1 AR Background

1. 拡張現実（Augmented reality）を今までに使った事がありますか。
   How much experience do you have using augmented reality?
   □ 今日が初めて。 Today is the first time.
   □ 一度使った事がある。 I have used AR once before.
   □ ２～３回以前に使った事がある。 I have used AR a few times before.
   □ 何度も使った事がある。 I have used AR many times.
   □ 日頃、大変よく使う。 I use AR very often.
2.「Blippar」というアプリは聞いたことがありますか。
   Did you know about Blippar?
   □ はい Yes
   □ いいえ No

B.2 Part 2 Blippar Experience

性別： □ 男性 □ 女性 □ その他
役割： □ 発表者 □ 聞き手

項目	全くそう思わない	そう思わない	そう思う	強くそう思う
1. Blipparは使いやすいと思う。 I find Blippar easy to use.	1	2	3	4
2. Blipparを使うと英語の勉強はさらに楽しくなる。 Blippar makes learning English more interesting.	1	2	3	4
3. Blipparを使うことは楽しい。 Working with Blippar is fun.	1	2	3	4
4. Blipparを使うことに興味がない。 I do not like working with Blippar.	1	2	3	4
5. 全体的にBlipparに満足している。 My overall usage experience with Blippar is good.	1	2	3	4
6. Blipparを使うと英語が上手になると思う。 Using Blippar would improve my English.	1	2	3	4

これから授業外でもにBlipparを使いたいですか。 Are you going to use Blippar again outside of class?

☐ はい Yes
☐ いいえ No
☐ よく分からない Undecided

「はい」の場合は、具体的にどのように使いたいですか？ If yes, please

specify how and in what way.

拡張現実の体験についてはどう思いますか？
What is your experience using Augmented Reality?

拡張現実によって英語が上手になると思いますか？「はい」の場合は、そう答えた理由、そして、どのように上手になると思うかを書いてください。
Do you consider that Augmented Reality will improve your English? If yes, why and how?

Appendix C

Course Evaluation Questionnaire

Student Course Evaluation Questionnaire in Japanese and English

以下の項目にしたがって、CLEコンテンツなどのOUGEOのサイトと内容についてあなたの意見に該当するものをチェックしてください。このアンケートの回答は成績には反映されません。
For each of the items below, please check the answer that reflects your opinion of the OUGEO website and content. Your answers to the questions will not be evaluated and will not affect your grade in any way.

C.1 Part 1 Website Evaluation

4段階評価で判断してください。
Please rate your agreement with the following statements. Indicate your answer on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

項目	(1) 全くそう思わない	(2) そう思わない	(3) そう思う	(4) 強くそう思う
1. サイトの内容は役に立つ。 **The content of the website is useful.**	2	5	50	14

2. サイトの内容は自分の学習ニーズに合致している。 **The content of the website is relevant to my needs.**	2	9	51	9
3. このサイトは使いやすい。 **The website is easy to use.**	0	14	52	5
4. 問題なくこのサイトを使える。 **The website works well.**	1	21	39	10
5. サイトのナビゲーション（学習手順など）が分かりやすい。 **The website is easy to navigate.**	0	4	54	13
6. 指示は従いやすい。 **The instructions are easy to follow.**	0	0	57	14
7. 各週の課題の順番が適切。 **I like the order of tasks in each week.**	0	5	54	12
8. 各週の課題のレイアウトが適切。 **I like the layout of tasks in each week.**	0	4	55	12
9. 課題の難度が適切。 **The tasks are of appropriate difficulty level.**	0	13	47	11
10. 課題のフィードバックは役に立つ。 **The electronic feedback I get on the tasks is helpful.**	0	1	54	16

4段階評価で適切性を判断してください。

Please rate the appropriateness of the following. Indicate your answer on a scale

of 1 (not appropriate) to 4 (very appropriate).

項目	(1) 適切ではない	(2)	(3)	(4) 適切である
11. Arialフォントの使用 Arial font	1	4	36	30
12. 文字のサイズ Font size	0	0	34	37
13. 文字の色 Font colors	0	2	30	39
14. 太字 Bolding	0	0	32	39
15. イタリック Italics	0	0	35	36
16. 画像 Images	0	2	31	38
17. 動画 Videos	1	8	30	32
18. 音声 Audios	1	9	35	26
19. PDFファイル PDF files	1	4	36	30
20. 全体のレイアウト Overall layout	0	1	35	35

OUGEO授業のサイトの各種機能の使用頻度について、あてはまるものをチェックしてください。

How often have you used the following functions of the website for this course (OUGEO)?

機能	(1) 一度もない	(2) 一度	(3) ときどき	(4) いつも

21. 掲示板 Discussion Boards	30	13	24	4
22. メール Email	13	11	37	10
23. カレンダー Calendar	44	5	20	2
34. KOAN掲示板 Course Messages	10	2	33	26
25. 成績表 My Grades	2	4	39	26
26. ヘルプ Help	36	9	24	2
27. その他 (具体的に: ____) Others (if any, please write the name of the function: ____)				

以下の携帯アプリの使用頻度について、あてはまるものをチェックしてください。

How often have you used the following mobile apps?

アプリ	(1) 一度もない	(2) 一度	(3) ときどき	(4) いつも
28. Mobile Learn	36	8	21	6
29. Bb Student	32	12	22	5

4段階評価で、使った機能の有用性を判断してください。

Please rate the helpfulness of the following functions if you have used them. Indicate your answer on a scale of 1 (not useful) to 4 (very useful).

機能	使ったことはない	(1) 役に立たない	(2)	(3)	(4) 非常に役に立つ
30. 掲示板 Discussion Boards	22	2	16	26	5

31. 最も役に立った掲示板は？
Which discussion board did you find the most useful?
• 機材操作・ソフトウェア使用等サポート掲示板：28
Technical and General Support
• リーディング：19
Reading
• リスニング：10
Listening
• スピーキング：12
Speaking
• ライティング：13
Writing
• 週の始まりの画像とそのキャプション掲示板：13
About each week's photo and its message
32. その他 (具体的に): _____
Others (please specify): _____

33. メール Email	19	1	13	26	12
34. カレンダー Calendar	37	1	16	15	2
35. KOAN掲示板 Course Messages	9	0	12	36	14

36. 成績表 My Grades	3	1	8	33	26
37. ヘルプ Help	26	0	17	19	9
38. その他 (具体的に: ____) Others (please write the name of the function: ____)					

4段階評価で以下のアプリの有用性を判断してください。
Please rate the usefulness of the following apps on a scale of 1 (not useful) to 4 (very useful).

アプリ	(1) 役に立たない	(2)	(3)	(4) 非常に役に立つ very useful
39. Mobile Learn	11	18	38	4
40. Bb Student	11	21	35	4

C.2 Part 2 Course Evaluation

OUGEOの授業についてあなたの意見に該当するものをチェックして下さい。このアンケートの回答は成績には反映されません。
Please check the answer that most accurately reflects your opinion on the OUGEO course. Your answers to the questions will not be evaluated and will not affect your grade in any way.

項目	(1) そう思わない	(2) どちらも言えない	(3) そう思う

41. この授業はあなたの英語学習のニーズを満たした。 **Has the course met your English language needs?**	1	20	50
42. 役に立つ英語力が身についた。 **Do you feel that you have learned useful English skills?**	3	22	46
43. この授業によってあなたの英語力は向上した。 **Do you feel that in general your English has improved because of this course?**	6	15	50
44. 授業のペースは適切。 **Was the pace of the course appropriate for you?**	1	4	56
45. face-to-face授業（教室授業）は役に立った。 **Did you find the face-to-face classes useful?**	4	20	47
46. 授業の質は優れている。 **Was the standard of the teaching good?**	1	21	49
47. システムに関するトラブルの支援は十分に受けた。 **Did you receive enough support regarding technical issues?**	10	23	38

以下の項目の有用性について適切なものを選んでください。可能であればその理由も書いてください。 How useful did you find the following? Please check the appropriate box and explain your reasons wherever possible.

項目	(1) 役に立たない	(2)	(3)	(4) 非常に役に立つ

48. プレイスメントテスト Placement test	3	14	32	22
49. 事前アンケート Technology survey	5	18	35	13
50. 受講ガイド Read Me First	0	6	26	39
51. リーディングの文章 Reading texts	1	11	29	30
52. リーディングの音声 Reading audio files	3	14	31	23
53. リーディングの練習問題：選択肢問題 Reading tasks: Multiple choice questions	1	11	29	30
54. リーディングの練習問題：穴埋め問題 Reading tasks: Fill in the blanks questions	1	11	32	27
55. リスニング教材 Listening passages	2	10	26	33
56. リスニングの音声 Listening audio files	2	14	31	24
57. リスニングの練習問題：選択肢問題 Listening tasks: Multiple choice questions	0	12	31	28
58. リスニングの練習問題：穴埋め問題 Listening tasks: Fill in the blanks questions	0	9	34	28

59. テッドトーク TED talks	5	20	22	24
60. テッドトークの課題 TED talk tasks	5	21	29	16
61. スピーキングの課題 Speaking tasks	4	12	27	28
62. スピーキングのサンプル Speaking samples	5	20	28	18
63. スピーキング評価項目表 Speaking rubric	2	16	28	25
64. スピーキングのフィードバック Feedback on speaking tasks	2	8	24	36
65. ライティングの課題 Writing tasks	2	9	30	30
66. ライティング評価項目表 Writing rubric	3	9	32	27
67. ライティングのフィードバック Feedback on writing tasks	1	5	30	35
68. リーディングの単語脚注 Vocabulary glosses of the reading texts	2	8	31	30
69. リスニングの単語脚注 Vocabulary glosses of the listening passages	1	9	29	32

70. リーディングの文法脚注 Grammar notes of the reading texts	2	13	28	28
71. リスニングの文法脚注 Grammar notes of the listening passages	2	13	29	27
72. 発音練習のビデオ Pronunciation resources	3	15	34	19
73. 自主発展学習 Supplementary resources	5	15	37	14
74. 英語学習のヒント（週の始まりの画像とそのキャプション） English learning tips (the photos and its captions at the beginning of each week)	0	15	32	23
75. ポスター発表 Poster presentation	2	13	34	22
76. ポスター発表のサンプル Poster presentation samples	2	7	38	24
77. 拡張現実（Blippar）のチュートリアル Augmented reality (Blippar) tutorial	5	15	31	20
78. 拡張現実の経験 Augmented reality experience	6	16	30	19

79. “Skills for Success”発展学習 “Skills for Success” resources	8	17	34	12
80. オンラインリソース Recommended online resources	3	15	37	16

81. 授業について変更してほしいことやコメントがあれば、ポジティブでもネガティブでも自由に書いてください。
What would you change on the course if you had the chance? Please feel free to write any comments you have about the course, whether they are positive or negative.

Appendix D

Course Syllabus – Spring 2017

Below is the course syllabus, but before looking at it, please read the message below:

You may have taken English courses before, but you might not be confident about your speaking skills. Learning a new language is a marathon, not a sprint. It takes time and effort, and it is OK to make mistakes. Be brave, take this course, and you will see how fun it is to learn English! :)

In this course, we will support you in different ways along the way, for example by providing feedback and using Japanese when it is necessary, to help you become confident learners of English. It is not just your English skills that matter to us. We value your creativity and individuality. We will be thrilled to have you with us, and we will try to help nurture your academic strengths, encourage your personal growth, and inspire your creativity.

We believe that English is the key to global citizenship, and we want to expand our perspectives and become global citizens together. Hope to see you next semester! Good luck!

D.1 Test

D.2 Course Information

Course official title: Practical English e-Learning (実践英語 e-Learning)

Other title: Osaka University Global English Online (OUGEO)
Course credits: 1
Classroom: CALL1, Cybermedia Center, Toyonaka Campus
Time: Monday 1st period, 8:50 - 10:20 a.m.
15 weeks, April 10th - July 24th (an optional extra Week 16, July 31st)
Class size: 80 - 90
Keywords: English, Integrated skills, Pronunciation, Oral communication, Presentation
Language of Instruction: English and Japanese

D.3 Instructor Information

Name: Ichiro KOGUCHI, PhD
Office address: Room 407, Graduate School of Language and Culture, Toyonaka Campus
E-mail: ikoguchi@lang.osaka-u.ac.jp

D.4 TA Information

Name: Mehrasa ALIZADEH (Information Science and Technology, D2)
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Name: Parisa MEHRAN (Information Science and Technology, D2)
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D.5 Purpose and Structure of the Course

Welcome to Osaka University Global English Online (OUGEO)! While having fun in this blended course (mainly online with five face-to-face sessions), you will develop your practical and global English language skills especially speaking in an integrated way so that you can advance to higher levels of conversational and general academic English (up to CEFR B2 and C1 depending on your current level of proficiency), as well as gain skill and confidence when

speaking. This course will be offered at three levels (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3) to accommodate for different proficiency levels. You will improve your English by participating in weekly discussions and using online tools, and keeping track of your progress with quizzes, a final exam, and poster sessions.

D.6 Learning Outcomes

This course seeks to improve your English skills by accomplishing the following objectives. By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Identify main ideas and details of news articles of 100 to 300 words [demonstrated by reading assignments from Breaking News English]
- Write short essays (about 200 words for Level 1and 400-500 words for Level 2 and Level 3) [demonstrated by writing assignments]
- Identify main ideas and details of conversations/presentations on familiar topics [demonstrated by listening assignments from `http://elllo.org` and Ted talks]
- Give short speeches and presentations on familiar topics through prior preparation [demonstrated by speaking assignments]
- Distinguish Katakana English from real English pronunciation [demonstrated by pronunciation training and awareness-raising videos]
- Identify, define, and use related vocabulary [demonstrated by the vocabulary gloss added to reading and listening activities]
- Recognize and use related grammatical structures [demonstrated by the grammar explanations and supplementary materials provided within reading and listening activities]
- Examine your perspectives as you work towards becoming a global citizen [demonstrated by the choice of topics for speaking and writing assignments]

D.7 Requirements

You are required to:

- Take the placement test and the computer literacy survey (before the course registration deadline)

  For those of you who register in March, please take the placement test and complete the computer literacy survey by April 2. However, if you register for the course after the beginning of classes, please take the test and complete the survey as soon as possible.
- Cover the required online materials for each week
- Do weekly assignments and submit them by the deadlines through CLE
- Revise your written assignments based on the feedback you receive and resubmit them
- Take online quizzes
- Make videos and upload them on CLE for speaking tasks

  Video recording and uploading is very easy if you have a smartphone. But please consult us if you do not have a smartphone.
- Present a poster as a team project
- Fill out feedback questionnaires

D.8 Expectations

To be successful in this course, you will:

- Attend all face-to-face classes with no more than two absences.
- Participate fully in face-to-face class activities.
- Submit assignments on time.
- Do your best in completing speaking/writing tasks.

D.9 Learning Materials

The materials for this course are mainly based on Open Educational Resources (OERs). Some copy-righted materials are also used with permission. All the teaching materials are available for free on CLE. The main references are as follows:

a) Breaking News English: https://breakingnewsenglish.com/

b) ELLLO: http://elllo.org/

c) engVid: https://www.engvid.com/

d) British Council – Learn English: http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en

e) Perfect English Grammar: https://www.perfect-english-grammar.com/index.html

f) キックスタート英語勉強 English Kickstart: https://www.youtube.com/user/EnglishKickstart

g) English Pronunciation for Japanese Learners by James Rogers: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCh9O2hwEKshmr2WRGXsTepA

h) TED Talks: https://www.ted.com/

i) RealLife English: https://reallifeglobal.com/

j) Fluent in 3 Months: https://www.fluentin3months.com/

k) FluentU: https://www.fluentu.com/

D.10 Recommended Online Resources

a) Oxford Learner's Dictionaries: https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/

b) English Anyone: http://englishanyone.com/

c) Espresso English: https://www.espressoenglish.net/

d) ESL Café: http://www.eslcafe.com/

e) ESL Lab: https://www.esl-lab.com/

f) VOA Learning English: https://learningenglish.voanews.com/

g) BBC Learning English: http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/

h) Apps4EFL: https://www.apps4efl.com/

i) Simple English Videos: https://www.simpleenglishvideos.com/

j) English Central: https://www.englishcentral.com/videos

k) English Class 101: https://www.englishclass101.com/

l) English Pod 101: http://englishpod101.com/

m) Listen a Minute: https://listenaminute.com/index.html

n) English with Jennifer: https://www.englishwithjennifer.com/

o) ESL Video: https://www.eslvideo.com/

p) Rachel's English: https://rachelsenglish.com/

D.11 Course Schedule

Weeks	**C**ontents	**A**ssignments
Week 1 (f2f) April 10	Introduction to the course	None

Week 2 (online) April 11 – 17	**Reading:** Studying with news in English class is useful **Listening:** Best way to learn English **Pronunciation:** Katakana English (1) and Japanese-made English *__Ted Talk:__ Breaking the language barrier	**Speaking:** Introduce yourself and talk about why and how you learn English.
Week 3 (online) April 18 – 24	**Reading:** Nintendoland to open in Japan **Listening:** Plans for weekend **Pronunciation:** Katakana English (2) *__Ted Talk:__ 10 top time saving tech tips	**Writing:** Demonstrate your learning with writing about your best weekend plans.
Week 4 (online) April 25 – May 8	**Reading:** Pokémon Go is the next big thing **Listening:** Video games **Pronunciation:** ER vs AR *__Ted Talk:__ Go ahead, make up new words!	**Speaking:** Share what you have learned with speaking about your gaming experiences.

Week 5 (f2f) May 9 – 15	Exploring Augmented Reality (AR) Poster presentation training	AR questionnaire part 1
Week 6 (online) May 16 – 22	**Reading:** More people to stick to New Year's resolutions **Listening:** Future goals **Pronunciation:** B vs V *__Ted Talk:__ Inside the mind of a master procrastinator	**Writing:** Demonstrate your learning with writing about setting life goals like New Year's resolutions. **Quiz**
Week 7 (online) May 23 – 29	**Reading:** Discount for bringing own cup to Starbucks **Listening:** Clean freak **Pronunciation:** L vs R *__Ted Talk:__ Our campaign to ban plastic bags in Bali	**Speaking:** Share what you have learned by talking about your country's biggest environmental problem and what you can do about it.
Week 8 (f2f) May 30 – June 5	Poster presentation	AR questionnaire part 2

Week 9 (online) June 6 – 12	**Reading:** Texting while walking is dangerous **Listening:** Tech devices **Pronunciation:** OR *__Ted Talk:__ Let's use video to reinvent education	**Writing:** Demonstrate your learning with writing about texting in class.
Week 10 (online) June 13 – 19	**Reading:** Video games should be in Olympics **Listening:** Sports **Pronunciation:** Th (voiced & voiceless) *__Ted Talk:__ Special Olympics: Let me be myself	**Speaking:** Share what you have learned by talking about Japan as the 2020 Olympics' host.
Week 11 (online) June 20 – 26	**Reading:** A billion people on Facebook in one day **Listening:** Social networks **Pronunciation:** Sh vs S *__Ted Talk:__ A 12-year-old app developer	**Writing:** Demonstrate your learning with writing about your social networking habits. **Quiz**

Week 12 (f2f) June 27 – July 3	Poster presentation	e-Feedback questionnaire AR questionnaire part 2
Week 13 (online) July 4 – 10	**Reading:** An apple a day keeps the doctor away **Listening:** Vegetarian **Pronunciation:** Syllable stress and schwa *__Ted Talk:__ How to live before you die	**Speaking:** Share what you have learned by speaking about staying healthy. Communication and groups work questionnaire
Week 14 (online) July 11 – 24	**Reading:** Robots smarter than humans by 2029 **Listening:** Technology **Pronunciation:** Y & W *__Ted Talk:__ 4 reasons to learn a new language	Retaking the placement test
Week 15 (f2f) July 25 – 31	Final exam	Evaluation questionnaire

Note 1: You will be trained how to do the speaking tasks and poster presentation.

Note 2: You will do your poster presentation with your group mates as a team project.
Note 3: You will submit your speaking task for the final exam one day before the exam.
*__Note 4:__ Ted talks are required only for Level 3 students and are optional for Level 1 and Level 2.

D.12 Response time and Feedback Schedule

If you have any questions or need help, you can reach the instructor and TAs via email. We do our best to respond to you as soon as possible; however, due to other engagements, it might take 24 to 48 hours before we can get back to you.

You will also receive feedback on your speaking and writing assignments at most two weeks following the due dates. Feedback will be in written form. When checking your grades for each assignment, remember to click the feedback box and carefully read the message addressed to you. Those notes are meant to help you perform better in upcoming assignments and to avoid making the same mistakes over and over again.

D.13 Grading Policy

Weekly assignments → 35%
Quizzes → 15%
Poster presentation → 15%
Course feedback questionnaire → 5%
Final exam → 30% (includes items on reading, vocabulary, grammar, writing, and speaking)

D.14 Accessibility Policies and Services

Issues concerning accessibility are handled by Osaka university's Counselling and Support Division. Please find information about the policies and services

for learners with disabilities on the webpages of the Accessibility Support Section (http://hacc.osaka-u.ac.jp/ja/), a subsection of this division. To obtain support services, one can visit the office for a face-to-face meeting. Contact can also be made via email or phone. Contact information, including the location of the office, is available form the division's website.

D.15 Academic Support Services and Resources

You can obtain academic support via several different paths:

a) The principal place that provides such services is Learning Commons of Osaka University Library (https://www.library.osaka-u.ac.jp/ta/), open on weekdays during the term. Global Commons, a subsection of Learning Commons, specializes in foreign language learning, and its "Learning Supporters" provide individual advice daily. In addition, Global Commons holds extracurricular classes on four languages including English for two hours every weekday. One of their focuses is academic writing in English, which is directly relevant to this course. Learning Commons is conveniently located on the ground level of University Library, and you must have heard about its academic support services advertised in orientation sessions and other meetings during the first day of your entrance to Osaka University.

b) Support for foreign language learning is also available in the form of online study material and language support systems. Net Academy 2, courseware for English learning, is open for online use for all university members. Electronic dictionaries and pronunciation assessment programs are installed on the PCs of the CALL labs, where we meet for face-to-face classes. Feel free to make use of them any time when the PC labs are open.

Note 5: A shorter version of the syllabus has been translated into Japanese and is available in a sub-folder named "授業計画 Course Syllabus and Calendar" within the "Content" folder.