

ESP and the General Education Foreign Language Program

—A Needs Analysis Approach to Program Design—

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Abstract

This paper deals with the issues of curriculum content, objectives and design for foreign language programs in the Faculty of General Education of Japanese universities. Using English language education as an example, it begins by discussing common criticisms of university foreign language programs concerning vague goals, student dissatisfaction and program ineffectiveness.

In order to overcome these problems, a learning-centred ESP (English for Specific Purposes) approach to program design is proposed. After a discussion of the relevance of ESP to general education, a modified version of Hutchinson & Water's 1987 ESP model is introduced and applied to university foreign language education. The 3 parts of the model are : (a) needs analysis (an analysis of the situation, people involved and reasons for the program), (b) curriculum components (the language and content to be taught), and (c) the learning theory underlying the model. This is followed by a discussion of the principles of program design with an analysis of sample general education foreign language programs.

In concluding, it is proposed that more attention be paid to learning need, principled eclecticism and the concept of a multi-component syllabus. More public discussion of university foreign language curricula is also called for in order to create effective language programs which will satisfy the needs and wants of students, teachers, the university and the wider community.

INTRODUCTION

GOALS

What are the goals of education? How can we best organize to achieve them? These are questions that pose themselves at every level of the education system, from the level of national policy to the planning of individual classroom lessons.

Without clear, agreed-upon goals, we go nowhere. Without good organization and coordination, even the best goals cannot be realized. These questions of goals and organization are just as important for university foreign language programs in the Faculty of General Education as they are for all other university programs.

PART I THE PRESENT SITUATION

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

One of the most striking contrasts between foreign language education in Japanese secondary schools and in Japanese universities concerns the specification of the curriculum. Foreign language programs in Japanese high schools are set out in great detail. In addition to overall program objectives, the Ministry of Education also specifies course objectives, language activities, teaching materials and methodology.

By contrast, the university general education foreign language program is almost completely unspecified. The only guideline provided by Mombusho is that the Faculty of General Education should provide "ippan kyōyō" or "general education".

Although this gives university foreign language departments great freedom, it also confers great responsibilities. Foreign language instructors are thus responsible for specifying program objectives and for designing a balanced, integrated, coordinated program of courses which meets the needs and wants of students, teachers, the university and the wider community. They also have a responsibility to evaluate their programs and to discuss among themselves and with others how best to adapt and improve their programs in the changing circumstances of our modern world. It is as part of this public discussion that this paper is presented here.

CRITICISMS

No program is perfect and no program can please everyone all the time. Some level of criticism is therefore natural and should be expected.

What should our response, as foreign language instructors, be to criticism in general? Of course, we can choose to see it as something threatening, to ignore it or to become defensive. Criticism unaddressed, however, does not just disappear. A better approach is to accept criticism positively as an opportunity to review our program and to discuss what can be improved. Only in this way can our programs become more effective.

What, then, seem to be the major criticisms of university foreign language programs? The following points seem representative for general education English programs. Other foreign language programs may feel these comments are valid for them, too.

Iwamura (1978): No distinction is made among the study of literature, language and language teaching.

Hansen (1985): University programs lack conviction, effectiveness, direction. They consist of

a disjointed, even discordant series of courses linked nominally by the term 'English'. There is little incentive to discuss departmental goals, organization or evaluation.

JACET (1983): 43% of college-level English teachers surveyed feel that one of the major problems of English language teaching is ambiguity regarding our exact purpose.

Comments like these point directly at program goals and organization as areas needing critical rethinking. If indeed our foreign language curriculum is in bad shape, this would partly explain the feeling that our students cannot use the English they study and so are awkward at communication (Hansen) and the finding that roughly half of college-level students have a negative attitude to English classes (JACET 1985; Nuibe 1986). Since this issue of curriculum is so important, let us examine it in more detail.

PART II CURRICULUM, SYLLABUS AND PROGRAM DESIGN

DEFINITION

Before we can begin any meaningful discussion of program design, we must first of all define our terms. This is especially important because the terms 'curriculum', 'syllabus' and 'program' are used in different ways by different people. Stern (1984) clarifies the issue by explaining that the term 'syllabus' is a British educational term corresponding to what in North America is called the 'course of study', 'program' or 'curriculum'. All these terms refer generally to a statement of the subject matter to be covered by an educational course or program.

A consensus regarding the nature and function of a syllabus/curriculum is summarized by Brumfit (1984). There, a foreign language curriculum is described as follows :

- (a) it is related to a broader curriculum and occurs in a larger social context
- (b) it is a statement of public planning which specifies what is to be taught
- (c) it involves specifying components which are sequenced using specific criteria
- (d) it implies or specifies particular teaching methodologies
- (e) it must be evaluated in order to be democratically accountable

Another widespread view of this issue is provided by Dubin & Olshtain (1986) who define curriculum as "a broad description of general goals" and syllabus as "a more detailed operational statement of teaching and learning elements leading to defined teaching

objectives". For our purposes, however, we will use Brumfit's definition and will use the terms 'curriculum', syllabus' and 'program' interchangeably following Stern.

NEED FOR NEW APPROACHES

Is a syllabus really necessary for teaching language? This issue has been debated for centuries (Kelly 1969). One of the main arguments for a syllabus is efficiency. Yalden (1984), for example, feels that a syllabus produces two kinds of efficiency: pragmatic efficiency (concerning time and money) and pedagogical efficiency (referring to efficiency of learning).

Although the necessity of a curriculum is almost universally admitted, many foreign language programs are organized the way they are mainly by tradition rather than by any systematic approach to program design. Furthermore, much program design has been carried out with little regard for the learner. This philosophy has been summed up as follows :

"The teacher is at all times the doctor, the student is his patient, the student's illness is his ignorance of the English language, and the remedy is a strong dose of whatever the doctor thinks best."

The result of such a view of program design has naturally led to the kinds of criticism we discussed earlier.

I would like to suggest that what is needed in this situation is for us to consider new approaches to the problem of program design for general education foreign language teaching.

PART III THE ESP APPROACH TO PROGRAM DESIGN

LSP AND ESP

One of the most exciting developments in the field of foreign language program design has been the emergence of the LSP/ESP approach. LSP stands for *L*anguage for *S*pecific *P*urposes while ESP refers to *E*nglish for *S*pecific *P*urposes. People who have heard these terms usually have a typical image for each of these. For LSP, they may think of concepts like 'French for Cooks', 'Russian for Scientists' or 'German for Engineers'. For ESP, they may imagine 'Business English', 'Hotel English' or 'Medical English'.

It is true that LSP/ESP do deal with the specialized languages of certain groups of people. Foreign scientists, for example, do not need to read English novels or English newspapers for their work. Rather, they need a specific ability in reading technical English to understand English research published in international scientific journals. It would be wrong, however, to think that LSP/ESP have no relation to general education language teaching.

LSP/ESP refer more to an approach to language teaching than to any special kind of language topic. This approach is based on learner need. As Hutchinson & Waters (1987) put it, 'The foundation of all ESP is the simple question : Why does this learner need to learn a foreign language? ESP is an approach to language teaching in which decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning.'

Do general education language learners have specific needs for learning a foreign language? This is a valid question. For many years the answer was assumed to be 'No'. The standard joke about general education English, for example, was that instead of using the term TEFL (*Teaching English as a Foreign Language*) it would be better to use the term TENOR (*Teaching English for No Obvious Reason*).

And yet, as Hutchinson and Waters point out, all language teaching must be based on some need, otherwise there would be no language teaching at all. The protest that the needs of general education language learners are not specifiabile they see only as an excuse for institutional inertia. The only difference between ESP courses and general education courses, they argue, is the awareness of a need, not the existence of one.

A MODEL FOR ESP CURRICULUM DESIGN

What, then, does the ESP approach to curriculum design consist of? In this paper, we will follow the model proposed by Hutchinson & Waters illustrated by Figure 1.

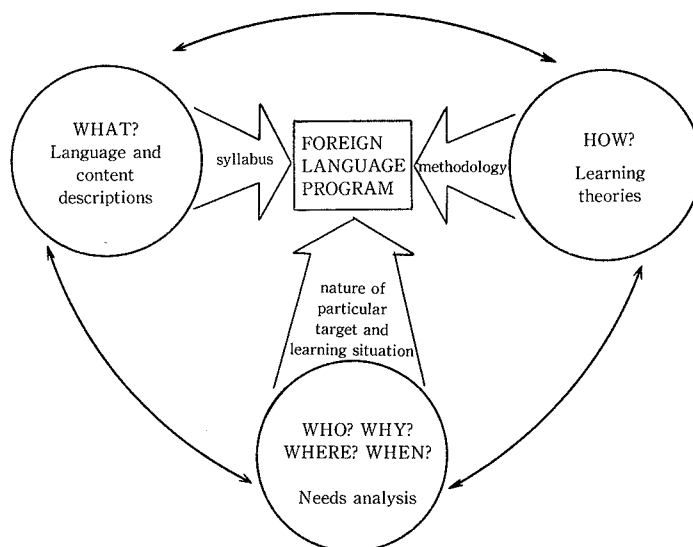


Figure 1 *The ESP Approach to Foreign Language Program Design*
(adapted from Hutchinson & Waters 1987)

The diagram shows that the approach is essentially a question-posing one, requiring answers based on research, theoretical models, teacher intuition and experience. As Hutchinson & Waters put it, "designing a course is fundamentally a matter of asking questions in order to provide a reasoned basis for the subsequent processes of syllabus design, materials writing, classroom teaching and evaluation".

The basic questions, then, are:

(1) **NEEDS ANALYSIS**

WHO is involved in the learning process? This includes not only students but also teachers, sponsors and all people who have some effect on the process.

WHY does the student need to learn?

WHERE is the learning to take place? What are the limitations and potentials?

WHEN will the learning take place? What time constraints exist?

(2) **LANGUAGE/CONTENT DESCRIPTION**

WHAT does the student need to learn? What kind of language to what proficiency?

(3) **LEARNING THEORIES**

HOW will the learning be achieved? What learning theory and methodology will underlie the program?

The answers to these questions will give us the data from which we can design our foreign language program.

NEED FOR RESEARCH

The starting point of an ESP approach to program design is the analysis of learning needs. If we can design our program in such a way as to meet the needs of our learners, our teachers and the other parties to the learning process, then our program will be relevant, effective and satisfying.

What are the needs of the people involved in our Japanese university general education foreign language programs? At present, we don't really know. Though various surveys of university language education have produced some information (JACET 1983 & 1985 ; Nuibe 1986), no systematic needs analysis seems yet to have been done.

Such a study is, therefore, urgently needed. For a comprehensive needs analysis, this would require a great deal of data collection on a scale similar to the kind of mass market research carried out by large business firms. Since such data is not yet available, it is proposed in this paper only to outline the process of needs analysis data collection using intuition, experience

and the little information we do have now.

PART IV ESP FOR GENERAL EDUCATION LANGUAGE PROGRAMS - AN EXAMPLE

What I am proposing here, then, is to outline the steps involved in an ESP approach to program design by doing a sample analysis of the Japanese university English language teaching situation. Though our discussion will be general and subjective, I hope that it will lead to increased awareness of the various features involved in curriculum design.

KINDS OF NEEDS

The first step in our ESP approach is needs analysis - the collection of data on the who, where, when and why of our language teaching situation. Before this, however, we must differentiate between various types of needs. These include :

- * Present vs future needs - learners have language needs which exist now as well as needs that will arise in future. An economics student, for example, may only need to read English textbooks at university but later may need the ability to write English business letters in his company.
- * Potential vs actual needs - learners may have needs that actually exist as well as potential language needs which may arise in future. A government translator may actually need only English translation skills for his job, and yet it is possible that he might have social contact with native speakers and therefore need abilities in social English.
- * Needs vs wants - besides considering what learners need, we must also consider what they want. A learner may need technical reading skills on the job and yet want to learn practical speaking skills for self-satisfaction. Ignoring the wants of our learners leads to frustration and lack of motivation.
- * Target vs learning needs - target needs refer to what the learner needs to know to function adequately in the target situation. Learning needs refer to what the learner needs to learn in order to acquire this competence. An EXPO hostess may have to give spoken explanations and answer questions orally - her target needs. Her learning need, therefore, is

practice in speaking skills, not in reading or writing.

GENERAL EDUCATION NEEDS ANALYSIS

WHO There are at least 4 parties involved in university general education foreign language teaching : the students, the teachers, the university and the community. Each of these parties has a separate set of needs and wants. Let us speculate a bit about each of them.

STUDENTS Even general education students can be seen to have certain language needs. Some needs may be present needs—e. g. the need to read foreign language material for a course s/he is taking now. Some needs may be potential—the need to be able to socialize or communicate with foreign people s/he may meet in future. Other students may have definite future needs and, of course, all students will have language wants. The chart below illustrates some possibilities (Figure 2).

	N E E D S	W A N T S
EDUCATION present & future	Study skills in English (library) Reading skills Basic competence in general English Basic competence in the English of the student's specialized field	Language : Test English (TOEFL, Eiken, etc) English for future overseas study English communication skills Learning : More choice - electives Creative, motivating teaching (JACET 1985) Stress on speaking skills Smaller class size
OCCUPATION future	Special English vocabulary Special English skills of the job e.g. writing telex/business letters international telephone skills face - to - face negotiation skill Skills for dealing with foreign clients/ colleagues/guests	Language learning skills for self-study English skills for special job interests e. g. reading specialist journals listening to English lectures
TRAVEL present & future	English for overseas business trips (planes, hotels, meetings, etc) Survival English if posted overseas	English for tourism and overseas travel (planes, hotels, sightseeing, shopping) Survival English for homestays
SOCIAL present & future	Talking to foreign strangers (tourists, students, teachers) Entertaining foreign people (clients, colleagues, guests)	Socializing with foreign friends/strangers Understanding & enjoying English media (movies, TV, music, newspapers, radio)

Figure 2 *Possible English Needs and Wants of Japanese University Students*

Aside from the learning wants documented by Nuibe, the needs and wants listed here are speculation, yet common sense and our own experience seem to indicate that at least some of these may be valid. Many, though probably not all, of our students may find themselves with one or more of these English language needs in future. A proper needs analysis would collect this kind of data through interviews and questionnaires with both present students and past

graduates now working in the community.

TEACHERS Although the major focus of ESP is the learner, it must not be forgotten that language teachers have various needs and wants too. To ignore this fact is counterproductive, since a successful foreign language program must strive to satisfy the needs of all partners in the learning process.

What are the needs and wants of general education language teachers? Here again we must admit that we don't fully know. Although no comprehensive needs analysis has been done, we do have some information from an excellent survey recently carried out on Japanese college and university English education (JACET 1983). With this information and some reflection, let us try to draw up a needs analysis profile (Figure 3).

N E E D S	W A N T S
Time for own research Support from colleagues Feedback about teaching from students Opportunities to discuss teaching with colleagues	Opportunities to improve language ability Opportunities to improve teaching style Opportunities to study overseas Opportunity to pass on to students one's own specialist academic knowledge Active, well-motivated students Interesting, effective teaching materials Smaller class size Clarification of the purpose of general education foreign language teaching Increased variety of courses to teach More successful language programs

Figure 3 *Possible Needs and Wants of Japanese University Foreign Language Teachers*

These ideas are not, of course, exact or complete. Yet, perhaps they suggest the kind of needs and wants that do exist for foreign language teachers. A proper needs analysis would require extensive data collection from general education language teachers using interviews, questionnaires and other techniques.

THE UNIVERSITY Next, we must consider the needs and wants of the learning institution itself. What language knowledge and skills do our colleagues in the Faculty of General Education, our colleagues in the specialist faculties, the university as a whole and the Ministry of Education require or desire from our students? Surprisingly, we have very little information about this. And yet, this data must also be systematically collected and analysed if we are to have a program which commands the respect and support of the university as a whole.

Falling back upon our intuitions again, let us try to suggest what these needs and wants might be (Figure 4).

	N E E D S	W A N T S
GENERAL EDUCATION FACULTY	Satisfied students Satisfied teachers Successful foreign language programs meeting the goals of 'general education'	Full use of faculty resources (e. g. LL) Teachers : with good foreign language ability with sound academic knowledge teaching effectively producing good research Students : with a command of practical foreign language communication skills with a basic academic knowledge of literature and linguistics with an understanding of culture with an international outlook who can deal with foreign people
SPECIALIST FACULTIES	Students with basic study skills (academic reading & writing) Students with a basic knowledge of the language of their special field	Students who can deal comfortably with the foreign language at the university and in their future jobs Students who are independent learners and can continue language study on their own

Figure 4 *Possible Foreign Language Needs and Wants of Japanese Universities*

These again are only rough ideas but they may suggest the kinds of real needs and wants that exist within the university.

THE COMMUNITY Finally, we must deal with the needs and wants of the wider community from which our students come and into which they will graduate. Within this term 'wider community' can be included :

- * the future employers of our students - industry, companies, hospitals, government
- * the general public - our students' parents, common taxpayers, the media
- * the nation state as a whole - our city, prefecture, Japan
- * the wider community of our world

A survey of the needs and wants of such a large and diverse group regarding foreign language education for Japanese university students is a major undertaking. Using our intuition once more, then, let us guess at what the needs and wants of these groups might be (Figure 5).

These suggestions are naturally highly subjective and therefore reflect my personal biases and perceptions, of course. The problem of bias in needs analysis is admittedly a difficult one and has been treated at some length in Berwick (1984). Since the ESP approach is a public process which encourages compromise for the mutual satisfaction of multiple needs, the problem of bias can be partially neutralised.

We have now completed our discussion of the *WHO* of general education foreign language teaching - the needs and wants of our students, teachers, the university and the community. Let us now move on to the issues of where and when.

	N E E D S	W A N T S
EMPLOYERS	Employees who : have basic practical language skills have a basic knowledge of the special language of the business are active, independent learners	Employees who : can use the foreign language easily can transfer their general education language skills to the workplace
PUBLIC		University graduates who : are competent in language skills are knowledgeable about foreign cultures (Hansen 1985)
NATION	Japanese who are : able to deal with the outside world in the foreign language able to explain Japan and the Japanese viewpoint in the foreign language	Japanese who : know the foreign language understand foreign cultures have not lost their Japanese identity
WORLD	World citizens who : have practical skills in foreign languages who are internationally-minded who care about world problems	

Figure 5 *Possible Foreign Language Needs and Wants of the Wider Community*

WHERE All learning must take place somewhere ; all learning situations create certain opportunities and impose certain limitations. Although all university foreign language programs will be slightly different, they will all have to deal with such issues as classroom availability, location and quality, class size, availability of equipment, staff support, etc. Aside from unfavourable teacher:student ratios as regards class size, most university language programs are probably no worse off than other non - university programs. In terms of budget, they may be better off although there is a constant challenge in finding a balance between spending funds for research and for teaching.

WHEN Time is money. Perhaps, for effective foreign language learning, time is even more important than money. A needs analysis must also take into account this aspect of the learning process as it affects program design.

Some time constraints on university foreign language education are fixed. At the moment, for example, 2 years is the time allotted to university-level English. We must also accept the time spread of the university calendar, with 2 semesters of roughly 15 weeks each.

Other time constraints may be in our power to change. In terms of distributed learning

effectiveness and student concentration and memory abilities, a schedule of one 100-minute class a week is very disadvantageous, for example. A simple move like dividing each 100-minute class into two 50-minute classes a week could prove much more efficient in terms of language learning.

WHY The last item in our needs analysis is the question of why the student needs to learn the foreign language. In the case of university English, the simple answer is because it is compulsory. Most students support this, however. The 1985 JACET survey found that 74% of all students felt English should be compulsory for general education.

We can also look at this question in terms of program objectives and rationale. The question of "Why learn a foreign language?" has always been a key issue in the field of general education and has been discussed at great length (e. g. Chastain 1976 ; Rivers 1968 ; Stern 1983 ; Eisner & Vallance 1974). If we summarize from these sources, we get a list of reasons as follows :

- 1) to develop one's intellect
- 2) to achieve communication skills in the foreign language
- 3) to enrich one's mind through the study of good foreign literature
- 4) to raise one's awareness of language, of the foreign language and of one's own
- 5) to gain an understanding of culture, of the foreign culture and of one's own
- 6) to gain experience and knowledge of how to learn a foreign language
- 7) to stimulate personal growth, self-esteem and self-actualization
- 8) to acquire learning skills and an academic approach which can transfer to other learning situations
- 9) to stimulate concern for social justice, international peace and world problems

A closer look at this list suggests that these reasons can be further condensed into 5 aspects : knowledge (1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8), skills (2, 6, 8), affect (3, 7), social reform (9) and transfer (8). These points will be discussed further in the next sections.

These, then, are the most common reasons given for studying a foreign language as part of general education. Given the diversity of people involved in university foreign language education, it is natural that there is a certain amount of disagreement about which particular goals to follow. This is as true at the international level (UNESCO/FIPLV 1975) as it is at the national level.

At Japanese universities, disagreement on program objectives exists among English teachers themselves as well as between teachers and students. JACET (1983) found that English

teachers can be divided into 3 groups : literature majors (49%), linguistics majors (37%) and TEFL majors (21%). Of these, the literature majors felt that the intensive reading, translation and appreciation of literature was the most important goal of English teaching. The linguistics and TEFL majors, however, felt the main goal should be English for communication focussing on the 4 skills.

As for discrepancies between teachers and students regarding university language program goals, JACET (1985) found the following preferences :

	<i>TEACHERS</i>	<i>STUDENTS</i>
1) International communication	47%	60%
2) Gaining knowledge of Western culture	52%	40%
3) Cultural & intellectual training for internationalism	18%	29%
4) Training for specialized technical courses	36%	11%

Since our ESP approach stresses compromise and the negotiation of mutually satisfying solutions to the problem of needs and wants, it is clear that we must avoid the issue of either-or thinking. Designing a successful program does not mean choosing between either literature or TEFL, either international communication or Western culture. Rather, it means finding a principled balance of all 9 aspects on our list above.

THE GENERAL EDUCATION FOREIGN LANGUAGE SYLLABUS-LANGUAGE AND CONTENT

WHAT TO TEACH Having now completed our hypothetical needs analysis, we must move on to the next question in our ESP approach : "What does the learner need to know?" In earlier times, this was an easy question. The traditional answer was that students needed to know grammar, some vocabulary and the skill of reading/translation.

Our ESP approach, however, does not give such an easy analysis. At this stage of our work, we have now completed our needs analysis. From the information we collected about who is involved in our program (the 4 levels of learner, teacher, university and community), where and when our program will take place, and why our students need to learn a foreign language, we now have a data bank which will form the potential components for our curriculum. It is from these building blocks that we will construct our program.

The next process, then, is one of analysing, selecting and weighting our program components from the data we have collected. Again, it must be emphasized that this is a process of negotiation between the needs and wants of the 4 parties involved, aiming at reaching a

compromise which will as far as possible satisfy everyone concerned and which will fit the particular constraints of the program situation.

A MULTI-COMPONENT SYLLABUS

From our discussion so far, it is clear that the kind of program components we must deal with are much broader in scope than just nouns, verbs, tense and voice. Because we are dealing with a broad view of both language and learning needs, the curriculum items we have arrived at are such things as cultural knowledge, academic study skills, international awareness, practical communication ability and literature appreciation.

Our view of what we are teaching must therefore be adjusted. As language teachers, we must consider an expanded view of the content of our discipline which sees language as a complex aspect of communication which includes both knowledge of various content areas (culture, literature, students' own academic fields) and also ability to use language for purposeful communication.

This leads us to what we will call the 'multi-component' syllabus, a concept which is discussed by Swan (1984) among others. He asserts that "a course which aims to meet students' needs in language learning must include a whole set of intertwined syllabuses" and goes on to specify a minimum of 11 components that must be considered in course design : structures/ words/pronunciation, language functions (apologising, agreeing, etc)/notions (location, time, etc)/situations/topics, and the 4 skills of reading/writing/listening/speaking.

The advantage of this kind of multi-component approach to syllabus design is that we are no longer caught in the either-or, all-or-nothing view of language. For too long during the history of language teaching has this exclusionist view held sway, causing great fights between those who advocate structure or function as the basis of language, those who preach fluency or accuracy, language or literature as the goal of language teaching. Indeed, this issue can be seen to have philosophical overtones, being related to issues such as religious monotheism vs polytheism, political totalitarianism vs pluralism, cultural ethnocentrism vs relativism. Once we are liberated from this view, we are free to see that language, learning and teaching are complex systems comprising many interwoven factors each of which should be considered in program design.

A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR GENERAL EDUCATION FOREIGN LANGUAGE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES

Figure 6 shows the kinds of curriculum components that should be considered in our

discussions of program design. This framework is a modified version of curriculum models proposed by Valette (1971) and Stern (1983) which attempts to incorporate the ideas discussed in our hypothetical needs analysis of general education language teaching. Needless to say, this specification is by no means comprehensive. Rather, it should serve as a partial checklist for program designers and as a stimulus for further debate.

COMPONENTS		OBJECTIVES					
		PROFICIENCY	KNOWLEDGE	AFFECT	SOCIAL REFORM	TRANSFER	
COMMUNICATION	L A N G U A G E	STRUCTURE : grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary SKILLS : speaking, listening, reading, writing, translation, interpretation FUNCTION : Macro - expressive, transactional, etc. Micro - agreeing, inviting, greeting, etc. NOTION : time, space, quantity, definiteness, etc. TOPIC : politics, economics, sports, religion, etc. DISCOURSE : rhetoric, coherence, speech acts SITUATION : bank, station, hotel, hospital, etc. COMMUNICATIVE EVENT : air travel, shopping, etc. LANGUAGE VARIETIES : dialects, register, style LANGUAGE LEARNING : skills and strategies					
	C U L T U R E	NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION : gesture, touch, etc. CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION : problems					
CONTENT	ESP	STUDY SKILLS : library research, reports STUDENTS' FIELD : medicine, engineering, etc. SPECIAL FIELDS : business, travel, survival, etc.					
	ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES	LITERATURE : history, genres, style, theme LINGUISTICS : phonetics, syntax, semantics SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY : sociolinguistics					
	C U L T U R E	NATURE OF CULTURE : values, ethnocentrism NATIVE ENGLISH CULTURES : US, UK, Canada, Aust. NON-NATIVE ENGLISH CULTURES : India, Singapore WORLD CULTURES : Chinese, Arab, Russian, etc. JAPANESE CULTURE : religion, customs, values WORLD AFFAIRS : peace, internationalization, etc.					

Figure 6 A Framework for General Education Foreign Language Teaching

CURRICULUM COMPONENTS As can be seen, the model is divided into two parts—a series of objectives on the right and a list of curriculum components on the left. These components are divided into two general areas : (a) content (what will be studied through language) and (b)

communication (of which language is a part). Communication is subdivided into language and non-language communication whereas content is divided into the three sections of culture, ESP and academic disciplines.

The language components of our syllabus should be self-explanatory, given the sample specifications included. In addition to traditional components such as structure, skills, topic and situation, we have also included function (doing things with language), notion (conceptual areas), discourse (rhetoric and the structure of language use), communicative event (macro-activities such as travel which involve many skills and functions and may include different situations : writing customs forms/listening to airport announcements/asking for information at the check-in counter/socializing with one's neighbor on the plane/explaining the purpose of your journey to the immigration official) and language varieties. Also included under language is the skill of language learning which we want our students to acquire.

Culture is a key component of our curriculum which permeates both the study of language and literature. Under this heading we can include the nature of culture (with a broad definition of culture as the values and way of life of people), native English cultures (Britain, the US, Canada, Australia, etc.), and also, to achieve true international awareness, non-native English cultures (Hong Kong, Singapore, India, etc) and other major world cultures (historical : ancient Egypt, China, Greece ; as well as present-day cultures : Latin America, Arab, black African, Eastern Europe, South-East Asia, etc.). Given the need for Japanese to be able to talk about their own culture, we should also include a component on Japanese culture in our foreign language syllabus plus a component on world affairs (peace, energy, trade friction, world hunger, world conflicts, apartheid, etc.).

ESP refers to the specialized language and language skills that our general education students may or will need. This includes (a) academic study and research skills in the foreign language (library skills for researching foreign language materials, academic reading and writing skills, note-taking, dictionary skills, etc.), (b) the special language of the students' own field of study (e. g. the language of Medicine, Education, Engineering, Agriculture), and (c) non-academic specialized language fields covering potential student needs and wants : Business English, Travel English, Survival English (social survival language skills for those living in a foreign country), etc.

The final content component comprises those language-based academic disciplines which language teachers are specialized in : linguistics, literature, sociology/anthropology, etc. If we

accept the validity of the 9 objectives listed earlier for foreign language teaching, then it is natural to expect university students to have at least a general understanding of these disciplines as part of their general education foreign language studies.

CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES Our 5 categories of language teaching objectives have already been mentioned briefly under the subject of why students should learn a foreign language. Let us examine them here a little more closely

- (1) *Proficiency* This refers to the practical ability we want our students to acquire in the skills of each of our curriculum components. This means not only competence in language and communication skills but also ability to handle the various skills demanded by such content areas as culture, literature and academic study. The relevant question here is "What can the student *do*?"
- (2) *Knowledge* This refers to the learning or acquisition of information for each of the curriculum components. Again, this includes both knowledge of and about communication and knowledge of and about content. The question here is "What does the student *know*?"
- (3) *Affect* This refers to the socio-emotional aspect of learning, the issue of values and attitudes related to our curriculum components. It must be stressed that this affective dimension is an integral part of our syllabus. Knowledge and proficiency are of no use if they are taught in a context which promotes negative attitudes. We must stop thinking of learning as something purely cognitive, 'education from the neck up', and must start to consider how our teaching can stimulate interest and enjoyment, self-respect and curiosity, enthusiasm and love of learning, self-fulfillment and positive attitudes. The question here is "How does the student *feel*?"
- (4) *Social Reform* This refers to the moral-political aspect of learning, the idea that the study of communication and content in the foreign language should lead to increased social concern for the welfare of the world's people and stimulate the desire to work for the solution of local, national and international problems. The question here is "What is the learning *for*?"
- (5) *Transfer* This last objective refers to the possibility of the student transferring his knowledge, ability, attitudes and values from the foreign language classroom to his other studies and to the world outside the university. If our 'general education' is in fact effective, then this kind of transfer should naturally occur. The question here is "Is the

learning *relevant?*”

Each of these objectives has been discussed more deeply elsewhere. Our first two, knowledge and proficiency, have been dealt with extensively by Bloom (1956) on a general level and by Valette (1971) as they relate to language learning. Affect as a general concept has been discussed by Bloom (1964), as part of humanistic education by Clark & Kadis (1971), and as related to foreign language education by Moskowitz (1978). Social reform is dealt with by McNeil (1981) and the concept of transfer by Stern (1983) and Mohan (1986).

For each of our curriculum components, then, we must consider what we want our students to know about it, what skills they must be proficient in, how we want them to feel, what social attitudes we want to instil, and how we can help students transfer their learning to other fields. Though not perfect, our chart should at least sensitize us to the kinds of curriculum components and objectives we should be considering.

THE GENERAL EDUCATION FOREIGN LANGUAGE SYLLABUS - LEARNING THEORIES

HOW TO TEACH We come now to the last aspect of our ESP approach—the issue of learning theories. As Hutchinson & Waters point out, too often learning factors are the last to be considered in program design although logically an understanding of how people learn should be the starting point for all teaching.

As was the case with language content and objectives, here too we must acknowledge that learning is a complex process with multiple components, all of which have a role to play in foreign language education. A comprehensive learning theory must thus take into account the key factors proposed by each of the major historical learning theories. Following the discussion in Hutchinson & Waters, let us imagine what such a multi-component learning theory might

<u>THEORY COMPONENT</u>	<u>MAIN PROPONENTS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>FOCUS</u>
Mentalism	Chomsky	learning = knowing rules	knowledge
Behaviourism	Pavlov, Skinner	learning = habit formation	skills
Cognitive code	Ausubel	learning = problem solving	learner involvement
Humanism	Dewey	learning = personal growth	affect
Language acquisition	Krashen	learning = maximum exposure to comprehensible language input	language exposure

Figure 7 *A Model for a Comprehensive Multi-component Learning Theory*

look like (Figure 7).

Since learning theories and learning objectives are closely related it is no surprise that our learning theory components happen to coincide with our curriculum objectives to some extent. Aside from knowledge, proficiency/skills and affect, which we have already dealt with, we also have the cognitive code view of learning as active problem-solving using tasks and the language acquisition view which sees language learning as a natural process occurring from exposure to comprehensible natural language. Thanks to our 'multi-component' view of language and learning, we are not forced to decide which of these theories is 'right' but can instead see them all as different aspects of the complex process of learning.

PART V ESP PROGRAM DESIGN FOR GENERAL EDUCATION FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

From our discussion on curriculum content and curriculum objectives, we devised a check-list of program components based on the ESP needs analysis which we carried out for general education foreign language teaching. As we now go on to designing our language program, it is perhaps worth stressing the importance of considering each of our components as we put together our program. If, as we look over our checklist in Figure 6, we decide to ignore the components of language structure or topic, this does not mean that we have eliminated these from our syllabus, only that we have chosen not to organize them. Whatever form our curriculum takes, it will still be full of topics and grammatical structures. Similarly, to ignore content components such as culture or world affairs does not mean that we are free of these dimensions. It only means that for these components, we are teaching ignorance instead of knowledge.

This is equally true when we consider other aspects of our program such as our curriculum objectives or learning theory components. A successful language program cannot afford to omit consideration of any one of these. This point can be seen quite clearly in Figure 8, where different foreign language programs have been evaluated according to criteria taken from both our objectives and learning theories. From the chart, it is clear that only Program #5 can be termed a completely successful program.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAM	KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	LEARNER INVOLVEMENT	AFFECT	LANGUAGE EXPOSURE	SOCIAL ACTION	R E S U L T
1	✓	not taught	✓	✓	✓	✓	Students unable to use the language
2	✓	✓	✓	boring	✓	✓	Students unmotivated ; no learning
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	too little exposure to language	✓	Students unable to acquire a good command of the language
4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	not taught	Students feel learning is irrelevant to social problems and to life ; they become passive and apathetic
5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Successful, balanced language program

Figure 8 *Example Evaluation of Foreign Language Programs Using Learning Theory & Program Objective Criteria*

PROGRAM DESIGN - APPROACH, ORGANIZATION, FORMAT

Once we have an inventory of curriculum components and a theory of the learning process, then it is time to decide how to organize our program. First, we must think about what kind of approach we shall take. Hutchinson & Waters propose 4 types of approach to program design.

- (1) Content-centred : the content determines the program. In this approach, we first analyse the nature of communication and our content areas and let this determine our foreign language program.
- (2) Skills-centred : in this approach, we must look behind the surface structure of our curriculum components, communication and content, to discover the deep-structure skills which enable people to perform.
- (3) Learning-centred : this approach states that we must go beyond both content and underlying skills because what we really want to discover is not the content or the competence but how our learners can acquire these. This approach, therefore, focusses on learning and requires that learning factors such as interest, learner involvement and enjoyment must all influence our program design.
- (4) Post-hoc design : this involves designing a program on no criteria or else undefined

criteria and then writing a cosmetic curriculum afterwards to satisfy sponsors, teachers, students, etc.

Obviously, the kind of syllabus we are interested in for our programs is (3).

After a consideration of our approach, we must decide on an organizing framework for our program. Any of the components we specified in Figure 6 can be used for this as can various pedagogical factors. The following chart gives us a few examples of how programs can be organized (Figure 9).

<u>BASIS OF ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>ORGANIZING FEATURE</u>	<u>EXAMPLE COURSES</u>
LANGUAGE	Skills Structure Situation Topic Variety	reading/writing/listening/speaking/translation pronunciation/grammar/vocabulary at the university/in the city/in the US/in the UK current events/world problems/politics/economics American English/British English/business English
CONTENT	Discipline ESP Culture	linguistics/literature/cultural anthropology English study skills/medical English/engineering English western cultures/south-east Asian cultures
TEACHING	Proficiency Activities	elementary/intermediate/advanced video/LL/drill/discussion/lecture/project
AD-HOC	(no principle)	unorganized collection of unrelated courses

Figure 9 *Sample Frameworks for Organizing Foreign Language Programs*

In addition to organization, Dubin & Olshtain also mention the format or 'shape' of the syllabus as a factor that must be decided. They list 4 major types of program format :

- (a) Linear : elements of the syllabus are sequenced in a logical linear order. This format works best with items which have an inherent order.
- (b) Modular : different syllabus items are divided into different blocks which can be arranged flexibly. This format suits combinations of very different components as well as thematic or situational content.
- (c) Cyclical : syllabus elements are recycled but each time they are dealt with at a more complex or sophisticated level.
- (d) Matrix : Syllabus elements are organized according to two separate features in a matrix pattern.

Examples of each of these design formats are given in Figure 10.

SEMESTER	LINEAR	MODULAR	CYCLICAL	M A T R I X		
				Description	History	Contrast
4th	20th Century Literature	Student's own specialization	Greetings : dialect varieties	My country		
3rd	19th Century Literature	Literature & Linguistics	Greetings : levels of politeness/formality	My city		
2nd	18th Century Literature	Culture and Society	Greetings : written & spoken	My Family		
1st	17th Century Literature	Basic language skills	Greetings : introduction	Me		

Figure 10 *Examples of Foreign Language Program Design Formats*

PROFESSIONAL CHOICES

Program design, like life, is a series of choices. The results of our choices determine how successfully we achieve our goals. Throughout this paper, we have tried to avoid a view of language, learning (and life) which claims one particular feature to be the only 'right' one and all others wrong. Rather than dogma, we have proposed a kind of 'principled eclecticism' in which any concept or principle which seems to accord with our experience of language and increase the effectiveness of our students' learning should be integrated into our foreign language program.

The end result of our learning-centred ESP approach to syllabus design is that we are faced with a large amount of data on the language learning process which we must skillfully arrange into an effective program which will satisfy the needs and wants of our students, teachers, the university and the community. This stage is crucial, since what we choose for our program, how we arrange it and how we teach it can either make or break the program. To see how these choices affect program quality, let us carry out a brief analysis of three sample foreign language programs (Figure 11).

It should be clear from the chart that all aspects of a program are interrelated. To achieve our goals, we must consider all levels and all features of our curriculum. If one of our goals is to stimulate student motivation to study the foreign language, it's not enough to make our curriculum content stimulating. Rather, all three levels of content, methodology and program design must be involved. Similarly, if one of our goals is for students to acquire ability in spoken English, we can't have all the courses being taught solely in Japanese.

GOALS FOR ALL 3 PROGRAMS																																																																											
1 Teach major disciplines (MD) : Literature (LIT), Linguistics (LIN) Culture (CUL), Students' Fields (ESP) 2 Teach practical language skills (PLS) 3 Stimulate students' motivation for studying English (M) 4 Teach social concern for world welfare (SC)																																																																											
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Figure 11 Analysis of Sample General Education Foreign Language Program Designs

In our program designing, then, we must be very careful about this issue of form and substance, of appearance and reality, of 'honne' and 'tatemaie'. To take an example from politics, it is a well-known 'fact' that the United States is a capitalist country and that India is a socialist country. Yet, if we look behind the surface of these words, we see that the U. S. spends a greater amount of its national budget on social welfare than India does. Which country is 'socialist'? In the same way, we can have foreign language courses with quite inspiring titles such as 'Intercultural Communication Skills', 'Literature Discussion Seminars' or Video Listening Skills', yet if the reality of each of these courses is only translation of uninteresting passages, then we are just misleading our colleagues and deceiving our students.

PART VI SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Let us review briefly what we have done. In considering the criticisms made of Japanese university-level general education foreign language programs, we identified the issue of program design as a topic needing rethinking. Since program aspects such as content, methodology, objectives and design seem to be the way they are largely because of tradition, we decided to see if a more systematic approach to program design might help us solve our problems.

We then introduced a learning-centred ESP approach to syllabus design, focussing on the concepts of learning needs and wants. Using a modified version of Hutchinson & Water's model, we outlined the three stages of this approach : needs analysis, a description of the language and content we want to teach, and a discussion of the learning theory underlying our program design. Throughout our discussion, we attempted to apply our approach to general education foreign language teaching in Japanese universities and illustrated each step with conjecture about what data might arise.

For our needs analysis, we discussed 3 issues : (a) learning constraints imposed by time and location, (b) learning objectives and (c) the 4 participants in the learning process. Since confusion about program goals was mentioned as one criticism of university foreign language education, we attempted a synthesis of key language teaching aims and arrived at a list of 9 objectives for general education language programs, which we classified into the 5 categories of proficiency, knowledge, affect, social reform and transfer. We noted that no systematic analysis has been carried out for the language learning needs and wants of Japanese university students, teachers, the university or the wider community. In order to illustrate the needs analysis approach, we sketched out some possible language learning needs and wants for each of the 4 parties above and stressed the necessity of doing proper needs analysis for general education language learning in Japan.

After our needs analysis, we went on to discuss the components for our curriculum and the learning theory underlying our program. In discussing these two issues, we deliberately chose not to think in dogmatic terms but rather to use the concept of principled eclecticism. Based on a broad view of language and on the results of our needs analysis, we were able to draw up a sample multi-component framework for our curriculum. This framework was broadly divided into two parts : communication (including language) and content (what is communicated

about). For each of these components, we proposed consideration of our 5 objectives of proficiency, knowledge, affect, social reform and transfer. After a discussion of different learning theories, we opted here also for a multi-component approach including aspects from each theory into a general learning theory on which to base our program.

Finally, following our discussion of needs analysis, program components and learning theories, we moved onto the topic of program design. Here we discussed the issues of program approach, program organization and program format. We ended our discussion with an analysis of several sample programs and stressed the importance of making professional choices concerning content, methodology and design in order to arrive at successful foreign language programs which meet the needs and wants of students, teachers, the university and the wider community.

At the beginning of this paper, we started our discussion with two basic questions. What are the goals of education? How can we best organize to achieve them? Though we cannot claim to have provided definitive answers to these questions as they relate to university-level general education foreign language teaching, it is hoped that this paper will at least have stimulated thinking regarding foreign language program design and will contribute to producing an atmosphere of public discussion within which we can work together to develop more satisfying and more effective foreign language programs at Japanese universities.

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