# A Final Look At Needs Assessment of English Education At Yamaguchi University 

Michael Leo Higgins

## Introduction

In 1989 a needs assessment (Higgins, 1989a) was done of the English education programs at Yamaguchi University. As was pointed out in that paper, there was a societal expectation of accountability of the English language education programs to produce students with specific practical and functional skills. Given that the students could not apparently effectively acquire these "so-called functional English skills" and the perception by industry and society in general that the university was unable to provide "usable English" necessitated, in this author's opinion, a deeper look into both the curriculum and the perceived needs.

It was further stated that clarity in our publicly stated needs, purposes and goals was necessary if the educational system was to be held accountable. The needs assessment undertaken at that time endeavored to clarify "what kind of English is being taught, what kind of skills the students desire to acquire, what type of English the teachers of English perceive to be the most valuable for the students to learn." The requirements and expectations of the upper grade programs within the university and those of outside employers were also considered. The reasoning was that only when the goals of this diverse set of expectations were clear could those responsible for the English curriculum be fairly held accountable for teaching those skills and meeting the goals (ibid, pg. 243-244).

That study undertook to determine both student and teacher perceptions of what was being taught, what needed to be taught, and the perceived level of skills attained by the students of what was actually being taught.

In responding to the questions in the original study, nearly two-thirds of the 783 students responding stated that they thought that general speaking ability in English would be the most valuable skill to have in the future and $71 \%$ of the students wanted their best skill to be speaking. On the other hand nearly all of the 73 teachers responding felt that a general reading ability would best serve the needs of the students now and in the future. At that time, the majority of English language classes focused on reading skills. The university's idea at the time was to try to create more classes that worked on special purpose speaking or reading skills (i.e., medical English or English for engineering), skills which were considered to be low or non-existent. However, neither the teachers nor the students ranked the need for courses in special English very highly. This result cast some doubt on the viability of such special English classes and in the end, for whatever reason, few were offered by the university. (Higgins, 1989b and Higgins 1989c)

Since that time, the University has undergone more than one reorganization and changed the English language curriculum, including a multi-level four-skills course called Comprehensive English, for students with more than 400 on the TOEIC, a low-level four-skills course called Basic English for students with less than a TOEIC score of 350, English Speaking, Intensive Reading, and many, many TOEIC classes. This seems to be in closer harmony with what Smith (1981) said in relation to teaching/requiring a wider variety of English skills as was being done in other parts of the world at that time. After 22 years, and all of these changes, I thought it might be informative to conduct an updated survey of the students as a type of retrospective.

## Current Survey

In the current survey, I posed six questions and asked the respondents to rank order their answers in a simple 5-step Likert Scale for the first five questions. These questions dealt with:

1. Self-evaluation of English Strengths;
2. Students' view of Curriculum Emphasis;
3. Perceived Needs for the Future;
4. The skills TOEIC classes are helpful in developing;
5. The kinds of courses students feel they would most benefit from.
The sixth question was designed to elicit the students' belief in their "real-world" abilities in English. As an optional and additional question, the respondents were asked to write their purpose in studying English. For those that responded, the responses to this question might offer both verification of the responses to both question 3 and question 5 , as well as perhaps inform the direction of skill acquisition that the students desire from the university curriculum. (See Appendix)

The directions and questions were written in both English and Japanese. (See Appendix)

Two hundred sixty ( $\mathrm{n}=260$ ) students responded to the survey spread out over all faculties except Agriculture. The two questionnaires returned from the School of Agriculture had to be discarded because the respondents failed to follow the directions, scoring multiple items with the same rating rather than using the Likert scaling. Two other questionnaires were also discarded because the respondents did not list their Faculty, year in school or their TOEIC scores. There were only two medical students who responded. Not all respondents answered every question or rated every skill so the $\mathrm{n}=$ can vary on individual items within a particular question. Both the average and median TOEIC scores were recorded. When the average is above the median, it is an indication that some of the higher scores were skewed toward the upper end of the scale. If the average was less than the median, it indicates that there were some scores skewed toward the lower extremes. While the average and median are not robust statistical indicators, for a small-scale local assessment they are enough to point the way.

## Question One

The students were asked to self-evaluate their English strengths from 1 (weak) to 5 (strong). They were asked to rate their writing ability, their speaking ability, understanding (listening skill), their reading ability, and the balance of all abilities.

| Writing | 工学部 | 教育学部 | 経済学部 | 人文学部 | 理学部 | 医学部 | Overall |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $1=$ weak <br> $5=$ strong | 2.08 | 2.2 | 1.93 | 2.52 | 1.97 | 2 | 2.1 |
| Speaking | 工学部 | 教育学部 | 経済学部 | 人文学部 | 理学部 | 医学部 | Overall |
| $1=$ weak <br> $5=$ strong | 2.13 | 2.3 | 1.46 | 2.27 | 2.18 | 2 | 2.2 |
| Listening | 工学部 | 教育学部 | 経済学部 | 人文学部 | 理学部 | 医学部 | Overall |
| l＝weak <br> $5=$ strong | 2.6 | 3.1 | 2.29 | 2.91 | 2.63 | 2 | 2.6 |
| Reading | 工学部 | 教育学部 | 経済学部 | 人文学部 | 理学部 | 医学部 | Overall |
| $1=$ weak <br> $5=$ strong | 2.5 | 3.2 | 2.77 | 3.13 | 2.64 | 2 | 2.7 |
| Balance | 工学部 | 教育学部 | 経済学部 | 人文学部 | 理学部 | 医学部 | Overall |
| $1=$ weak <br> Average | 2.0 | 2.8 | 2.07 | 2.7 | 2.15 | 2 | 2.3 |

Table 1 （Question 1）
At first glance，it would appear that most students feel that their English skills are not very strong and are，at best＂okay＂（neither strong nor weak）．They seemed to appraise their reading abilities as their strongest skill．The second strongest skill was judged to be listening． Neither of these perceptions would seem to be borne out by their average TOEIC scores．We＇ll compare these averages with answers to other questions in more detail later in this paper．

## Question Two

In question two，students were asked，＂What is the curriculum emphasis in your view？＂and asked to rate Writing，Speaking， Understanding（Listening），Reading，and a Balance of All Skills from 1 （little emphasis）to 5 （strong emphasis）．

An average of $59 \%$ of all responses across the board said that Writing was moderately to strongly emphasized in the curriculum．On the other hand， $42 \%$ felt that Writing received only little to slight emphasis in the curriculum，the highest percentage（ $60 \%$ ）coming from the Faculty of Technology．Only $60 \%$ said that Speaking was moderately to strongly emphasized．Listening was believed to be moderately to strongly emphasized by $86 \%$ ．Reading was moderately to strongly emphasized in the curriculum according to $74 \%$ ．Interestingly， $72 \%$ felt that there was
a moderate to strong emphasis on balance between the skill－sets in the curriculum．There will more discussion on this later．

## Question Three

In this question the students were asked to rate their perceived needs for English skills and abilities in the future from 1 （least needed）to 5 （most needed）．

| Writing | Least Needed to Not <br> Very Needed | Moderately Needed | Strongly Needed to <br> Most Needed |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 工学部 n＝47 | $40 \%$ | $42 \%$ | $17 \%$ |
| 教育学部 n＝75 | $29 \%$ | $20 \%$ | $51 \%$ |
| 経済学部 n＝14 | $36 \%$ | $50 \%$ | $14 \%$ |
| 人文学部 n＝56 | $23 \%$ | $36 \%$ | $41 \%$ |
| 理学部 n＝73 | $47 \%$ | $27 \%$ | $26 \%$ |
| 医学部 n＝2 | $50 \%$ | $0 \%$ | $50 \%$ |
| Speaking | Least Needed to Not <br> Very Needed | Moderately Needed | Strongly Needed to <br> Most Needed |
| 工学部 n＝49 | $4 \%$ | $6 \%$ | $84 \%$ |
| 教育学部 n＝74 | $1 \%$ | $4 \%$ | $95 \%$ |
| 経済学部 n＝14 | $0 \%$ | $7 \%$ | $93 \%$ |
| 人文学部 n＝56 | $11 \%$ | $4 \%$ | $86 \%$ |
| 理学部 n＝73 | $11 \%$ | $12 \%$ | $77 \%$ |
| 医学部 n＝2 | $100 \%$ | $0 \%$ | $0 \%$ |
| Listening | Least Needed to Not Very <br> Needed | Moderately Needed | Strongly Needed to Most |
| 工学部 n＝49 | $4 \%$ | $14 \%$ | $82 \%$ |
| 教育学部 n＝73 | $1 \%$ | $10 \%$ | $88 \%$ |
| 経済学部 n＝14 | $0 \%$ | $21 \%$ | $79 \%$ |
| 人文学部 n＝56 | $7 \%$ | $4 \%$ | $89 \%$ |
| 理学部 n＝71 | $4 \%$ | $14 \%$ | $82 \%$ |
| 医学部 n＝2 | $50 \%$ | $50 \%$ | $0 \%$ |
| Reading | Least Needed to Not |  |  |
| Very Needed | Moderately Needed | Strongly Needed to |  |
| Most Needed |  |  |  |

Question 3 （Continued）

| 教育学部 $\mathrm{n}=75$ | $0 \%$ | $15 \%$ | $85 \%$ |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 経済学部 $\mathrm{n}=14$ | $0 \%$ | $50 \%$ | $50 \%$ |
| 人文学部 $\mathrm{n}=54$ | $11 \%$ | $15 \%$ | $74 \%$ |
| 理学部 $\mathrm{n}=70$ | $24 \%$ | $29 \%$ | $47 \%$ |
| 医学部 $\mathrm{n}=2$ | $0 \%$ | $0 \%$ | $100 \%$ |

Table 2 （Question 3）

There were a few surprises in the perceptions of the students as to what English skills would be least to most needed in the future．Overall， Speaking and Listening were rated as most needed（in that order），although the need for balance was recognized by over half of all students－except for Science students．Nearly half of the Science students did not feel that Writing would be a particularly needed skill in the future．Understandable， perhaps，but not when compared to the Science students＇most commonly stated purpose：＂To attend and make presentations at international conferences．＂Their perceived need for Speaking and Listening skills reflect their purpose．Yet，do they suppose that they will present papers at international conferences that are not written in English？And further，only $45 \%$ indicated that Reading would be particularly important．But without being able to read well in English，how do they suppose that they would be able to understand the literature in their field that would keep them abreast of changes and advances in science that would inform their own research that they presumably would be presenting at the international conferences they anticipate going to in the future？It would seem that their perceptions of future requirements are not complete．

The same could be said for Economics students and the relatively few who perceived a need for strong reading skills in English．Considering that English is the de facto international language for business，finance and science，with only $29 \%$ of the students believing that they will have a strong need for English reading in the future，something seems wrong with this picture．As this is a major emphasis in the TOEIC test，one would think that students would understand that they are expected to have strong reading skills to compete successfully in the world of business or finance．While they strongly believe that Speaking and Listening skills
will be very important to them in the future，certainly reading acumen should not be discounted．

It was interesting that neither of the two Medical students who responded thought that speaking English would be of any real importance to them in the future．This was remarkable to the author mainly because both respondents have stated plans to work for the World Health Organization or Doctors Without Borders in the future．Had they chosen to work in Pathology or to do medical lab work or research，perhaps the need would not be so great．Yet，they have stated that they are patient oriented and feel the need to work＂with the people．＂As there were but two respondents from the School of Medicine，these findings cannot be generalized to the larger population of medical students．Still，their responses were somewhat revealing of the unclear understanding of many students about the need for English skills for their future endeavors．．

That the vast majority thought that Speaking and Listening（73\％ and $70 \%$ respectively overall； $87 \%$ and $84 \%$ respectively if the anomalous responses from the two medical students are not included）were the skills that they would most need in the future was not surprising and is reflected in the answers to questions four and five．

## Question Four

This question asked the respondents to rate the degree of helpfulness of TOEIC classes in developing their abilities from 1 （not helpful）to 5 （very helpful）．The percentage breakouts by skill area and faculty are self－ explanatory．

| Writing | Not Helpful to A Little <br> Helpful | Moderately Helpful | Rather Helpful to <br> Very Heppful |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 工学部 $\mathrm{n}=42$ | $52 \%$ | $26 \%$ | $21 \%$ |
| 教育学部 $\mathrm{n}=78$ | $77 \%$ | $12 \%$ | $12 \%$ |
| 経済学部 $\mathrm{n}=11$ | $25 \%$ | $67 \%$ | $8 \%$ |
| 人文学部 $\mathrm{n}=56$ | $54 \%$ | $21 \%$ | $25 \%$ |
| 理学部 $\mathrm{n}=68$ | $60 \%$ | $27 \%$ | $13 \%$ |
| 医学部 $\mathrm{n}=2$ | $50 \%$ | $0 \%$ | $50 \%$ |

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| Speaking | Not Helpful to A Little Helpful | Moderately Helpful | Rather Helpful to Very Helpful |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 工学部 $\mathrm{n}=42$ | 41\％ | 26\％ | 33\％ |
| 教育学部 $\mathrm{n}=78$ | 77\％ | 15\％ | 8\％ |
| 経済学部 $\mathrm{n}=11$ | 39\％ | 46\％ | 15\％ |
| 人文学部 $\mathrm{n}=56$ | 59\％ | 23\％ | 18\％ |
| 理学部 $\mathrm{n}=68$ | 50\％ | 21\％ | 29\％ |
| 医学部 $\mathrm{n}=2$ | 50\％ | 0\％ | 50\％ |
| Listening | Not Helpful to A Little Helpful | Moderately Helpful | Rather Helpful to Very Helpful |
| 工学部 $\mathrm{n}=42$ | 4\％ | 16\％ | 80\％ |
| 教育学部 $\mathrm{n}=78$ | 0\％ | 11\％ | 89\％ |
| 経済学部 $\mathrm{n}=11$ | 15\％ | 46\％ | 39\％ |
| 人文学部 $\mathrm{n}=56$ | 7\％ | 16\％ | 77\％ |
| 理学部 $\mathrm{n}=68$ | 7\％ | 17\％ | 76\％ |
| 医学部 n＝2 | 50\％ | 0\％ | 50\％ |
| Reading | Not Helpful to A Little Helpful | Moderately Helpful | Rather Helpful to Very Helpful |
| 工学部 $\mathrm{n}=42$ | 5\％ | 30\％ | 66\％ |
| 教育学部 $\mathrm{n}=78$ | 1\％ | 8\％ | 90\％ |
| 経済学部 $\mathrm{n}=11$ | 0\％ | 21\％ | 79\％ |
| 人文学部 $\mathrm{n}=56$ | 2\％ | 25\％ | 73\％ |
| 理学部 $\mathrm{n}=68$ | 9\％ | 21\％ | 70\％ |
| 医学部 $\mathrm{n}=2$ | 50\％ | 0\％ | 50\％ |
| Balance | Not Helpful to A Little Helpful | Moderately Helpful | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Rather Helpful to } \\ & \text { Very Helpful } \end{aligned}$ |
| 工学部 $\mathrm{n}=42$ | 21\％ | 47\％ | 32\％ |
| 教育学部 $\mathrm{n}=78$ | 14\％ | 54\％ | 32\％ |
| 経済学部 $\mathrm{n}=11$ | 14\％ | 57\％ | 29\％ |
| 人文学部 $\mathrm{n}=56$ | 20\％ | 36\％ | 45\％ |
| 理学部 $\mathrm{n}=68$ | 18\％ | 46\％ | 30\％ |
| 医学部 $\mathrm{n}=2$ | 0\％ | 100\％ | 0\％ |

Table 3 （Question 4）

## Question Five

In Question Five，the students were asked to determine which type of classes they felt they would most benefit from，rating courses from 1 （least useful）to 6 （most useful）．

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| Writing | Least Useful to Not <br> Very Useful | Moderately Useful to <br> Somewhat Useful | Very Useful to <br> Most Useful |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 工学部 n＝48 | $29 \%$ | $31 \%$ | $13 \%$ |
| 教育学部 n＝81 | $19 \%$ | $60 \%$ | $21 \%$ |
| 経済学部 n＝14 | $57 \%$ | $43 \%$ | $0 \%$ |
| 人文学部 n＝54 | $21 \%$ | $63 \%$ | $16 \%$ |
| 理学部 n＝68 | $37 \%$ | $49 \%$ | $15 \%$ |
| 医学部 n＝2 | $0 \%$ | $50 \%$ | $50 \%$ |
| Speaking Courses | Least Useful to Not <br> Very Useful | Moderately Useful to <br> Somewhat Useful | Very Useful to <br> Most Useful |
| 工学部 n＝48 | $2 \%$ | $48 \%$ | $50 \%$ |
| 教育学部 n＝75 | $3 \%$ | $25 \%$ | $72 \%$ |
| 経済学部 n＝14 | $0 \%$ | $36 \%$ | $64 \%$ |
| 人文学部 n＝56 | $14 \%$ | $41 \%$ | $46 \%$ |
| 理学部 n＝72 | $14 \%$ | $39 \%$ | $47 \%$ |
| 医学部 n＝2 | $50 \%$ | $50 \%$ | $0 \%$ |
| Listening Courses | Least Useful to Not <br> Very Useful | Moderately Useful to <br> Somewhat Useful | Very Useful to <br> Most Useful |
| 工学部 n＝47 | $2 \%$ | $40 \%$ | $58 \%$ |
| 教育学部 n＝75 | $4 \%$ | $47 \%$ | $49 \%$ |
| 経済学部 n＝14 | $0 \%$ | $43 \%$ | $57 \%$ |
| 人文学部 n＝56 | $9 \%$ | $43 \%$ | $48 \%$ |
| 理学部 n＝70 | $7 \%$ | $34 \%$ | $59 \%$ |
| 医学部 n＝2 | $50 \%$ | $0 \%$ | $50 \%$ |
| Reading Courses | Least Useful to Not |  |  |
| Very Useful | Moderately Useful to <br> Somewhat Useful | Very Useful to <br> Most Useful |  |
| 工学部 n＝46 | $2 \%$ | $67 \%$ | $30 \%$ |
| 教育学部 n＝80 | $18 \%$ | $64 \%$ | $19 \%$ |
| 経済学部 n＝14 | $14 \%$ | $64 \%$ | $21 \%$ |
| 人文学部 n＝56 | $13 \%$ | $59 \%$ | $29 \%$ |
| 理学部 n＝69 | $16 \%$ | $51 \%$ | $33 \%$ |
| 医学部 n＝2 | $50 \%$ | $0 \%$ | $50 \%$ |
| $4-$ Skills Courses | Least Useful to Not <br> Very Useful | Moderately Useful to <br> Somewhat Useful | Very Useful to <br> Most Useful |
| 工学部 n＝45 | $13 \%$ | $58 \%$ | $29 \%$ |
| 教育学部 n＝73 | $4 \%$ | $41 \%$ | $55 \%$ |
| 経済学部 n＝14 | $0 \%$ | $29 \%$ | $71 \%$ |
| 人文学部 n＝56 | $7 \%$ | $38 \%$ | $55 \%$ |
| 理学部 n＝70 | $26 \%$ | $54 \%$ | $20 \%$ |
| 医学部 n＝2 | $0 \%$ | $50 \%$ | $50 \%$ |


| Online Courses | Least Useful to Not <br> Very Useful | Moderately Useful to <br> Somewhat Useful | Very Useful to <br> Most Useful |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 工学部 $\mathrm{n}=46$ | $46 \%$ | $46 \%$ | $11 \%$ |
| 教育学部 $\mathrm{n}=75$ | $47 \%$ | $40 \%$ | $13 \%$ |
| 経済学部 $\mathrm{n}=13$ | $39 \%$ | $46 \%$ | $15 \%$ |
| 人文学部 $\mathrm{n}=55$ | $40 \%$ | $47 \%$ | $13 \%$ |
| 理学部 $\mathrm{n}=70$ | $50 \%$ | $37 \%$ | $13 \%$ |
| 医学部 $\mathrm{n}=2$ | $50 \%$ | $0 \%$ | $50 \%$ |

Table 4 （Question 5）
It is interesting in this data set to note that the largest percentage overall of courses that were thought to be most useful to the students was found in the category of＂Listening Courses＂（ $54 \%$ overall）．The second most useful set of courses were considered to be the＂ 4 －Skills （Comprehensive）Courses＂at $47 \%$ overall．A close third was found to be the＂Speaking Courses＂with $46 \%$ of the students in total responding that they felt such courses would be the most useful．

The respondents felt that the least useful courses would be＂Online Courses＂with a large showing of $45 \%$ indicating this perception．In second place as the least useful course，we find＂Writing Courses＂with $27 \%$ ，and in third place，＂Reading＂at $19 \%$ ．

As in any 5 －point Likert scale，as respondents show less certitude in their feelings，there is a strong central tendency or bias．In asking the students to express their beliefs and feelings for＂future needs，＂it is often the case that they stakeout more neutral territory to hedge their bets．

## Question Six

In the final question，Question Six，the respondents were asked to mark the statement that best described their English ability．They were given five choices，each of which corresponded to an actual score／ skill descriptor published by ETS，who produces the TOEIC test．The respondents were unaware of the connection to the TOEIC score／skill descriptor．Here is the breakdown by Faculty：

| TOEIC Skill／Score | 工学部 | 教育学部 | 経济学部 | 人文学部 | 理学部 | 医学部 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 0～220 <br> It is difficult for me to understand even simple，slow English conversation and it is difficult to make myself understood in English． | 28\％ | 0\％ | 7\％ | 5\％ | 20\％ | 0\％ |
| 220～470 <br> If the conversation in English is slow，I can understand some of the conversation and communicate a little in easy English． | 44\％ | 54\％ | 36\％ | 50\％ | 48\％ | 0\％ |
| $470 \sim 730$ <br> I can speak and understand enough English for daily activities and doing basic business． | 17\％ | 24\％ | 43\％ | 30\％ | 23\％ | 50\％ |
| $730 \sim 860$ <br> I can communicate in English in most situations without many mistakes or misunderstandings． | 9\％ | 13\％ | 14\％ | 11\％ | 2\％ | 0\％ |
| 860～990 <br> No problem communicating in English as a non－native speaker． | 2\％ | 9\％ | 0\％ | 4\％ | 6\％ | 50\％ |
| Average \＆Median TOEIC Score | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{Av}=349 \\ \mathrm{~m}=345 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{Av}=543 \\ \mathrm{~m}=550 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{Av}=441 \\ \mathrm{~m}=480 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{Av}=462 \\ \mathrm{~m}=400 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{Av}=335 \\ \mathrm{~m}=345 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{Av}=388 \\ \mathrm{~m}=388 \end{gathered}$ |
| High and Low | $\mathrm{Hi}=620$ | $\mathrm{Hi}=790$ | $\mathrm{Hi}=665$ | $\mathrm{Hi}=820$ | $\mathrm{Hi}=560$ | $\mathrm{Hi}=390$ |
| TOEIC Scores | Lo＝270 | Lo $=255$ | Lo $=400$ | Lo $=295$ | Lo＝180 | Lo $=385$ |
| $\mathrm{n}=260$ | 49 | 82 | 14 | 56 | 73 | 2 |

Table 5 （Question 6）

So，what do these percentage breakouts mean？In terms of self－ evaluation，students seem to have a general perception that they can communicate in English much better than their TOEIC scores would predict．Based on direct communication with a significant proportion of the students surveyed，this author has to conclude that they mistakenly think that they communicate much better than they actually do in English and that they think they understand more than，in reality，they understand． This cannot but lead to misunderstandings and errors in the future due to communication failure，and indeed possibly lead at least some students to think that their communicative skills are adequate and do not need further development．

However，we should also compare the results for Question 6
（the＂can do＂list）with the respondents＇answers to Question 1 （the students＇perceptions of their English ability overall）．For the purposes of comparison，the percentage given for each of the five Likert levels of Question 1 under the category of＇balance of all four skills＇in Table 1 were averaged and used in Table 6，below．The totals of the percentages of scores in the four skill areas were compared with the percentages in the area of balance．Less than two－hundredths of a percentage point difference was found between the total average of the four separate skills and the ＂balance＂percentages．This was taken to indicate that the＇balance score＇ generally represents the students＇perception of their abilities overall．

|  | ETS TOEI <br> Descriptors | Level One <br> 0～220 |  | Level Two <br> $220 \sim 470$ |  | Level Three <br> $470 \sim 730$ |  | Level Four <br> $730 \sim 860$ |  | Level Five <br> $860 \sim 900$ |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Average <br> TOEIC <br> Score | Question | 1 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 6 |
| 409 | 工学部 | $30 \%$ | $28 \%$ | $46 \%$ | $44 \%$ | $23 \%$ | $17 \%$ | $0 \%$ | $9 \%$ | $2 \%$ | $2 \%$ |
| 543 | 教育学部 | $5 \%$ | 0 | $30 \%$ | $54 \%$ | $48 \%$ | $24 \%$ | $16 \%$ | $13 \%$ | $0 \%$ | $9 \%$ |
| 441 | 経済学部 | $14 \%$ | $7 \%$ | $64 \%$ | $36 \%$ | $21 \%$ | $43 \%$ | $0 \%$ | $14 \%$ | $0 \%$ | 0 |
| 520 | 人文学部 | $7 \%$ | $5 \%$ | $29 \%$ | $50 \%$ | $54 \%$ | $30 \%$ | $9 \%$ | $11 \%$ | $2 \%$ | $4 \%$ |
| 365 | 理学部 | $27 \%$ | $20 \%$ | $41 \%$ | $48 \%$ | $29 \%$ | $23 \%$ | $1 \%$ | $2 \%$ | $3 \%$ | $6 \%$ |
| 388 | 医学部 | $50 \%$ | 0 | 0 | 0 | $50 \%$ | $50 \%$ | 0 | 0 | 0 | $50 \%$ |
| Overall Percentages | $22 \%$ | $12 \%$ | $35 \%$ | $46 \%$ | $38 \%$ | $27 \%$ | $4 \%$ | $8 \%$ | $1 \%$ | $12 \%$ |  |

Table 6 （Comparison of Table 1 and Table 5）

As we look through this comparison，we can readily see the disparities of the answers given and the student＇s somewhat skewed perceptions of their abilities．The total average TOEIC score was 444 between all of the faculties．When looking at their average TOEIC scores we should see a very strong grouping of scores between Level Two（220－470）and Level Three（470－730），if their perceptions were honest and accurate and if the TOEIC test is really a valid instrument for measuring their ability to communicate in English．Of course，with but two respondents from the medical faculty，the percentages for this faculty are rather skewed and polarized and create a slight general upward tendency that is reflected in the overall percentages，and this is true for all of the Tables in this paper．For example，if the $50 \%$ figure in the＇level 5 －question 6 ＇column
were deleted（especially since the student in question is well－known to the author and only has a TOEIC score of 390，a reading speed of 65 words per minute，and understands a bit less than $50 \%$ of any spoken English， yet feels his English is quite adequate to communicate in English in any situation），we would see an overall percentage of just two percent（2\％）for this column，which is closer to the question 1 overall percentage for this level．

The fact that we see only a modest central tendency in this comparative Table，with the strongest central score of $54 \%$ coming from the School of Humanities，which had the second highest TOEIC score average（ 462 with a high of 820 and a low of 295 ［median $=400$ ， the third highest］），suggests that the majority of the students seem to unconsciously note that their communicative abilities are not as strong as they consciously believe they are．This is perhaps due to the Japanese tendency to self－denigrate their own abilities and this is reflected in their responses to Question 1．This seems to be in direct contrast to the author＇s previous statements on perceived adequacy of communicative skills．Yet， in Question 6，they seem to identify with a slightly higher skill set than they demonstrate either on the TOEIC or in direct communication．On the other hand，it could be that their generally lowered assessments are a more accurate indicator of their real abilities as opposed to their TOEIC scores，which，if anything，are low for the number of years they have studied the language．

We should now take a closer look at any disparity between the individual TOEIC scores and their perceived＂can do＂rating in Question 6. We will look at each faculty separately to investigate the variations within each faculty group．
工学部 n＝49（1＝0～220；2＝220～470；3＝470～730； $4=730 \sim 860 ; 5=860 \sim 990 ; *=$ on the line $)$

| TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |  | TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 355 | 3 | +1 |  | 365 | 2 | 0 |
| 345 | 2 | 0 |  | 310 | 1 | -1 |
| 340 | 2 | 0 |  | 300 | 4 | +2 |
| 340 | 1 | -1 |  | 360 | 5 | +3 |
| 350 | 2 | 0 |  | 300 | 2 | 0 |


| 335 | 1 | -1 |  | 270 | 2 | 0 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 200 | 1 | 0 |  | 380 | 3 | +1 |
| 320 | 3 | +1 |  | 305 | 3 | +1 |
| 350 | 1 | -1 |  | 375 | 1 | -1 |
| 205 | 2 | +1 |  | 345 | 1 | -1 |
| 325 | 1 | -1 |  | 305 | 1 | -1 |
| 390 | 3 | +1 |  | 300 | 1 | -1 |
| 395 | 2 | 0 |  | 390 | 4 | +2 |
| 340 | 2 | 0 |  | 450 | 2 | 0 |
| 300 | 2 | 0 |  | 620 | 2 | -1 |
| 365 | 3 | +1 |  | 385 | 4 | +2 |
| 330 | 2 | 0 |  | 365 | 2 | 0 |
| 270 | 2 | 0 |  | 360 | 3 | +1 |
| 290 | 2 | 0 |  | 375 | 4 | +2 |
| 290 | 1 | -1 |  | 415 | 2 | 0 |
| 360 | 1 | -1 |  | 335 | 2 | 0 |
| 345 | 1 | -1 |  | 350 | 2 | 0 |
| 310 | 3 | +1 |  | 510 | 2 | +1 |
| 295 | 4 | +2 |  | 650 | 3 | 0 |
| 390 | 2 | 0 |  |  |  |  |

Table 7a
20 respondents showed no difference； 16 overestimated their ability（ 5 of those by two levels or more）； 13 underestimated their ability（none by more than 1 level）．

教育学部 $\mathrm{n}=82$（ $1=0 \sim 220 ; 2=220 \sim 470 ; 3=470 \sim 730 ; 4=730 \sim 860 ; 5=860 \sim 990$ ；＊$=$ on the line）

| TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |  | TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 610 t | 5 | +2 |  | 425 t | 4 | +2 |
| 580 t | 5 | +2 |  | 495 | 2 | -1 |
| 545 t | 2 | -1 |  | 520 t | 3 | 0 |
| 625 | 2 | -1 |  | 650 | 4 | +1 |
| 615 | 2 | -1 |  | 400 t | 2 | 0 |
| 255 t | 3 | +1 |  | 790 t | 5 | +1 |
| 480 t | 3 | 0 |  | 725 | 4 | +1 |
| 615 t | 2 | -1 |  | 350 t | 3 | +1 |
| 700 t | 4 | +1 |  | 495 | 3 | 0 |
| 505 | 2 | -1 |  | 675 t | 2 | -1 |
| 485 | 3 | 0 |  | 540 | 2 | -1 |


| 550 t | 4 | +1 |  | 540 | 2 | -1 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 560 | 2 | -1 |  | 675 | 2 | -1 |
| 600 | 2 | -1 |  | 765 | 5 | +1 |
| 555 t | 2 | -1 |  | 570 t | 5 | +2 |
| 590 | 2 | -1 |  | 495 | 3 | 0 |
| 580 | 2 | -1 |  | 650 | 2 | -1 |
| 430 | 4 | +2 |  | 350 t | 2 | 0 |
| 790 t | 3 | -1 |  | 710 t | 3 | 0 |
| 410 | 5 | +3 |  | 500 | 2 | -1 |
| 610 | 3 | 0 |  | 610 | 2 | -1 |
| 460 | 3 | +1 |  | 530 | 3 | 0 |
| 470 t | 4 | +1 |  | 400 | 2 | 0 |
| 535 t | 5 | +2 |  | 475 | 2 | -1 |
| 450 t | 2 | 0 |  | 500 | 2 | -1 |
| 585 t | 3 | 0 |  | 595 | 3 | 0 |
| 625 | 2 | -1 |  | 585 t | 2 | -1 |
| 615 | 4 | +1 |  | 550 | 2 | -1 |
| 590 | 2 | -1 |  | 495 t | 2 | -1 |
| 710 | 4 | +1 |  | 725 t | 2 | -2 |
| 675 t | 2 | -1 |  | 520 t | 2 | -1 |
| 350 | 2 | 0 |  | 425 | 2 | 0 |
| 400 t | 2 | 0 |  | 350 | 3 | +1 |
| 575 | 2 | -1 |  | 350 t | 2 | 0 |
| 665 | 2 | -1 |  | 450 | 2 | 0 |
| 665 t | 3 | 0 |  | 565 t | 4 | +1 |
| 560 t | 3 | 0 |  | 550 t | 3 | 0 |
| 400 | 2 | 0 |  | 495 | 4 | +1 |
| 395 t | 3 | +1 |  | 510 t | 5 | +2 |
| 430 t | 3 | +1 |  | 510 | 2 | -1 |
| 450 t | 4 | +2 |  | 685 t | 2 | -1 |

Table 7b
23 respondents showed no difference; 25 overestimated their ability ( 9 of those by two levels or more); 34 underestimated their ability (one by more than 1 level). The respondents planning to become English teachers are marked with a ' t ' after their TOEIC score and their average TOEIC score was 540 . Just two currently have more than the requisite score of 735 (both with 790), and only two of the 4th year respondents planning to be teachers are close ( 710 and 725 ) to the stated requirement.

経済学部 $\mathrm{n}=14$（ $1=0 \sim 220 ; 2=220 \sim 470 ; 3=470 \sim 730 ; 4=730 \sim 860 ; 5=860 \sim 990$ ；＊＝on the line）

| TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |  | TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 665 | 1 | -4 |  | 400 | 4 | +2 |
| 415 | 2 | 0 |  | 480 | 2 | -1 |
| 405 | 4 | +2 |  | 410 | 2 | 0 |
| 430 | 3 | +1 |  | 460 | 3 | +1 |
| 450 | 3 | +1 |  | 485 | 4 | +1 |
| 490 | 2 | -1 |  | 515 | 4 | +1 |
| 525 | 2 | -1 |  | 530 | 5 | +2 |

Table 7c
2 respondents showed no difference； 8 overestimated their ability（ 3 of those by two levels）； 4 underestimated their ability（one by 4 levels）．

人文学部 $\mathrm{n}=56$（ $1=0 \sim 220$ ； $2=220 \sim 470 ; 3=470 \sim 730 ; 4=730 \sim 860 ; 5=860 \sim 990$ ；＊$=$ on the line）

| TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |  | TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 345 | 3 | +1 |  | 460 t | 2 | 0 |
| 365 | 2 | 0 |  | 565 | 3 | 0 |
| 340 | 4 | +2 |  | $720^{*}$ | 4 | +1 |
| 320 | 4 | +2 |  | 545 | 2 | -1 |
| 395 | 2 | 0 |  | 570 | 2 | -1 |
| 385 | 2 | 0 |  | 660 | 3 | 0 |
| 365 | 3 | +1 |  | 545 | 2 | -1 |
| 355 | 2 | 0 |  | $480^{*}$ | 2 | -1 |
| 320 | 2 | 0 |  | 515 | 2 | -1 |
| 297 | 1 | -1 |  | 670 | 5 | +2 |
| 350 | 1 | -1 |  | 640 | 2 | -1 |
| $390 t$ | 4 | +2 |  | 475 t | 1 | -2 |
| 365 | 2 | 0 |  | 600 | 2 | -1 |
| 355 | 3 | +1 |  | 400 | 3 | +1 |
| 395 | 3 | +1 |  | 635 | 3 | 0 |
| 400 | 4 | +2 |  | 350 | 2 | 0 |
| 390 | 3 | +1 |  | 405 | 2 | 0 |
| 350 | 4 | +2 |  | 630 | 3 | 0 |
| 390 | 3 | +1 |  | 560 | 2 | -1 |
| 295 | 4 | +2 |  | 395 | 2 | 0 |
| 320 | 3 | +1 |  | 560 | 2 | -1 |
| 380 | 2 | 0 |  | 500 | 2 | -1 |
| 395 | 2 | 0 |  | 560 | 2 | -1 |
| 305 | 2 | 0 |  | 500 | 2 | -1 |


| 395 | 2 | 0 |  | 770 | 3 | -1 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 400 | 3 | +1 |  | 435 | 4 | +2 |
| 565 | 3 | 0 |  | 820 t | 3 | -1 |
| 550 | 3 | 0 |  | 420 | 3 | +1 |

Table 7d
20 respondents showed no difference； 19 overestimated their ability（8 of those by two levels）； 17 underestimated their ability（one by more than 1 level）．There were four respondents that indicated that they wanted to become English teachers，one of whom has surpassed the required 735 TOEIC score，though that individual seems to have a lower opinion of his abilities than his TOEIC score would seem to warrant．

理学部 $\mathrm{n}=73$（ $1=0 \sim 220 ; 2=220 \sim 470 ; 3=470 \sim 730 ; 4=730 \sim 860 ; 5=860 \sim 990 ;$＊$=$ on the line）

| TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |  | TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 360 | 3 | +1 |  | 300 | 3 | +1 |
| 360 | 1 | -1 |  | 340 | 1 | -1 |
| 285 | 2 | 0 |  | 375 | 1 | -1 |
| 200 | 2 | +1 |  | 250 | 1 | -1 |
| 280 | 1 | -1 |  | 350 | 5 | +3 |
| 380 | 2 | 0 |  | 385 | 2 | 0 |
| 360 | 5 | +3 |  | 370 | 1 | -1 |
| 395 | 3 | +1 |  | 350 | 3 | +1 |
| 305 | 3 | +1 |  | 315 | 1 | -1 |
| 240 | 4 | +2 |  | 395 | 3 | +1 |
| 325 | 2 | 0 |  | 380 | 3 | +1 |
| 295 | 2 | 0 |  | 330 | 2 | 0 |
| 240 | 3 | +1 |  | 320 | 2 | 0 |
| 375 | 3 | +1 |  | 365 | 2 | 0 |
| 180 | 3 | +2 |  | 365 | 2 | 0 |
| 395 | 3 | +1 |  | 345 | 2 | 0 |
| 375 | 1 | -1 |  | 395 | 2 | 0 |
| 235 | 1 | -1 |  | 350 | 2 | 0 |
| 375 | 1 | -1 |  | 340 | 4 | +2 |
| 335 | 3 | +1 |  | 340 | 3 | +1 |
| 395 | 2 | 0 |  | 235 | 2 | 0 |
| 270 | 5 | +3 |  | 390 | 2 | 0 |
| 345 | 2 | 0 |  | 370 | 2 | 0 |
| 385 | 3 | +1 |  | 280 | 2 | 0 |


| 280 | 2 | 0 |  | 340 | 2 | 0 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 390 | 2 | 0 |  | 330 | 3 | +1 |
| 370 | 2 | 0 |  | 300 | 1 | -1 |
| 325 | 2 | 0 |  | 375 | 2 | 0 |
| 330 | 2 | 0 |  | 395 | 5 | +3 |
| 360 | 1 | -1 |  | 375 | 5 | +3 |
| 280 | 2 | 0 |  | 560 | 3 | 0 |
| 300 | 2 | 0 |  | 355 | 4 | +2 |
| 310 | 2 | 0 |  | 195 | 3 | +2 |
| 390 | 3 | 0 |  | 200 | 3 | +2 |
| 390 | 3 | 0 |  | 380 | 3 | +1 |
| 215 | 4 | +3 |  | 395 | 2 | 0 |
| 390 | 4 | +2 |  |  |  |  |

Table 7e
32 respondents showed no difference； 29 overestimated their ability （ 13 of those by two levels or more）； 12 underestimated their ability（one by more than 1 level）．This group from the Faculty of Science had the lowest average TOEIC score

The final group shows more confidence in their English ability than either their scores or their actual abilities demonstrate．

医学部 $\mathrm{n}=2$（ $1=0 \sim 220 ; 2=220 \sim 470 ; 3=470 \sim 730 ; 4=730 \sim 860 ; 5=860 \sim 990 ; *=$ on the line）

| TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |  | TOEIC | Q 6 Rating | Difference |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 390 | 5 | +3 |  | 385 | 3 | +1 |

Table 7f

Table 7 （a through f）shows us that $38 \%$（99）of the students overestimated their ability，while $31 \%$（80）underestimated their ability to communicate in English．That leaves but 97 students（37\％）whose assessment of their abilities matched their TOEIC score．This may tell us that there is either a great deal of confusion about both their ability level and what their TOEIC score means in the real world of English communication，or that the TOEIC is not a good indicator of actual ability． This would then seem to be an area in which a more detailed explanation of the＇can do＇differentiation of the TOEIC score breakout by ETS would benefit the students to be more reality based in relation to their actual
communicative ability.
What did the majority of the students express as their purpose in learning English? While most of the students replied that they wanted to use English for "overseas travel/communicating with foreigners/working and living overseas", 95 students (35\%) replied that their purpose in studying English was "to get [or improve] a TOEIC score."

This brings us to the idea that up to now, the TOEIC classes have seemed to focus on raising scores rather than raising abilities and that the score is the goal. From the student responses, this seems to be true at least in the minds of many of the students (though this author rather suspects that it is true for at least some teachers, as well as some government/administrative officials). Rather than the TOEIC score being seen as the goal, I believe that the students would be better served if the TOEIC was understood to be just what it was designed to be: an assessment tool to give some idea of an individual's overall ability to communicate in English in the business world.

Many of the students interviewed by the author indicate that they have a conflict between wanting to get a higher score on the TOEIC and wanting to travel overseas or work in international business and communicate in English. They feel that putting in the required number of hours to raise a TOEIC score by 100 points is counter-productive to their communicative and personal future goals/desires.

Indeed, it does seem to take a significant number of hours of instruction to increase TOEIC scores by 100 points. Saegusa (1985) did a study of how many hours of TOEIC instruction are needed for Japanese university students to exhibit score gains. He suggests 150 hours of instruction (100 university 90 -minute class sessions or nearly seven terms) are generally required for most students to progress from a score of 300 to 400 , but that 250 hours of instruction (five and a half years of university course work!) are necessary to move from a score of 500 to 600 . On the other hand, anecdotal reports by students of increasing their TOEIC scores by between 100 and 150 points just from taking the one term Comprehensive English courses (for students with more than 400 on the TOEIC), also exists. Due to cited 'privacy' concerns by the
university officials, the author was unable to corroborate the reports. In all, approximately half of the Comprehensive English 'graduates' have reported to the author that they have increased their scores by a minimum of 100 points. This is largely due, they report, to their increased reading speed, increased vocabulary, and integrated use of English. This remains to be tested. However, in support of the reported increases, ETS has stated numerous times that the key to the reading section of the TOEIC is reading comprehension at a minimum speed of 150 words per minute. Without being able to read at 150 words per minute, it is not possible to completely read through that portion of the test. Reading comprehension is based on vocabulary development, as well as the ability to synthesize seemingly disparate bits of information into a coherent whole. Recognizing this, Dr. Judith Johnson (Yamaguchi University, retired) developed her online Reading Master program as ancillary materials to the Comprehensive English for Global Understanding textbook series (Johnson and Higgins, 2007). Once signed into the Reading Master site (see Bibliography) the user chooses a reading, sets the reading speed, and upon completion takes a comprehension test. The default reading speed is set at 65 words per minute. The user can adjust this speed up to 1000 words per minute to train the eye and brain in faster movement and understanding. Online programs like the Reading Master can assist the students to improve their reading speed and comprehension, and thus raise their TOEIC scores much more quickly and to higher levels than have been reported as possible with traditional classroom TOEIC courses.

However, it should be stated that this perception of conflict between working on increasing the TOEIC score and increasing their ability to communicate in English for travel or work may change as more students take the TOEIC SW (Speaking/Writing) sections of the test. But the critical paradigm shift that has to occur is the concept of TOEIC as an assessment tool, rather than the score itself being the goal. The goal should be the development of solid communicative skills in English. I believe this holds some importance for the development of the university English language learning curriculum, as well as that for primary and secondary programs.

## Conclusion

Since the original study, many positive changes have occurred in the English language curriculum and the basic thrust of education at Yamaguchi University has moved closer to student-centered and communicative-based instruction. We now have a graduation requirement. While it is true that most educators in Asia would consider the graduation requirement at Yamaguchi University (in general, between 300 and 400 on the TOEIC for most Faculties and up to 500 for those going on to advanced studies in Medicine or who are trying to become English teachers) to be extremely low, as a minimum score of 450 on the TOEIC is reportedly required to enter some Malaysian, Taiwanese, and Chinese junior high schools, still we have a graduation requirement that we did not have before. And there is nothing that says that the graduation requirement cannot or will not be raised significantly in the future.

Just having the requirement has a positive effect. Iwabe (2005) stated that many teachers at Yamaguchi University also believe that adopting a minimum TOEIC score as a graduation requirement sends an unambiguous message that students need to learn something during their years of English study. "Before adopting TOEIC score graduation requirements, students were pretty much expecting to pass a class just by attending the lessons. Now it has become clearer that they also need to learn something." (Iwabe in Newfields, 2005) While agreeing with this statement, this author firmly believes that having a higher standard for graduation would send an even stronger message to the students and elevate the general quality of the university.

Professor Iwabe (2005) also mentions a study in which students reported how much time they spent on homework before and after a TOEIC program was implemented at one Yamaguchi University faculty. The majority of the students claimed that their study time for English increased an average of $300 \%$ and that the time spent studying for other courses also rose. He conjectured that once students acquire positive study habits in one field, it washes back into other fields, and this is quite likely the case. Many studies have shown that student participation, study,
knowledge acquisition, and motivation increased as standards increased, because students tend to work to the standards imposed. A low standard creates a low expectation and lowered self-esteem and students perform only to that level or below.

In comparing the studies done 22 years ago with this current study, the same general tendency and perception of the students can be found: the students want and feel they need to have more classes that focus on speaking and listening. They want a balance of skills (i.e., 4 -skills classes) and seem to be less enthusiastic about Reading and Writing classes. Yet, how many of our course offerings are in Reading as opposed to Speaking/ Listening or 4 -skills courses? What type of Reading? How many courses are now related to TOEIC including the Basic English course (an entrylevel 4 -skills course for students below 350 on the TOEIC) with the main emphasis on raising the TOEIC score to a minimal level to begin other English coursework? In other words, what is the balance of the English language curriculum in 2011? It was considered to be out of balance in 1989 with the classes heavily weighted towards Reading and Writing. How has the balance changed in the intervening years? If a score of 450 was required for entry into the university, how would that change the English language curriculum? How would it change the learning environment? I cannot help but think that it would change it in a positive direction.

If one were to do a general comparison of the curricular offerings in English between now and 22 years ago, the current curriculum would seem to represent forward progress. Yet, the curriculum as a whole is not yet well integrated and depends to a large extent on the students to intuit their own needs. While we now have syllabi that are supposed to delineate the skills that will be gained in each course, there does not yet seem to be a coherent and integrated scope and sequence to the English language curricula as a whole, whereby the skills to be gained in one course flow directly into the skills demanded in another course, and what that linked course will provide in terms of skill growth. Nor is the totality of any integration accessible to the students or the faculty in any meaningful way, as yet. Perhaps this current assessment has created a way to share some final thoughts and considerations (as well as useful data) for those
who will carry the important task of English language education at Yamaguchi University into the future．

Accountability begins with assessment．Assessing the curriculum as it exists and how it meets both the current and future needs of the students and their place in a globalizing society is a continual and on－going process． As I leave the university，I pass this particular torch on to the next generation of educators，remembering that，as stated in the initial study in 1989 （Higgins，1989a），＂The world and the complex needs of society are always changing，and we，at the university cannot afford to remain static， unmoved by the needs of the community around us，and unmoving in our attempts to meet the challenge．This is the basic underlying principle of accountability：to know what the needs are，how we are meeting those needs，and what we are changing＇to，and from，and why．＂（Thurber，1969）

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## Appendix（Questionnaire）

Please fill in the boxes according to the instructions on the left：

| 学部 |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| 学年 |  |
| TOEIC Score |  |

Q：What is your purpose in studying English？英語の目的は何であるか。
1．英語の強さの自己評価

| Self－Evaluation of <br> English Strengths | Writing <br> Ability | Speaking <br> Ability | Understanding <br> （Listening） | Reading <br> Ability | Balance of All <br> Abilities |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $1=$ weak <br> $5=$ strong |  |  |  |  |  |

2．大学英語のカリキュラムでどのようなクラスが最も強く強調されてますか？

| What is the Curriculum <br> Emphasis in Your View？ | Writing | Speaking | Understanding <br> （Listening） | Reading | Balance of All <br> Skills |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $1=$ little emphasis <br> $5=$ strong emphasis |  |  |  |  |  |

3．将来，どんな英語の能力を最も必要としますか？

| Perceived Needs for <br> the Future | Writing <br> Ability | Speaking <br> Ability | Understanding <br> （Listening） | Reading <br> Ability | Balance of All <br> Abilities |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $1=$ least needed <br> $5=$ most needed |  |  |  |  |  |

4．TOEICは，自分の英語の能力のどの部分を一番延ばしますか？

| TOEIC classes are <br> helpful in developing $\cdots$ | Writing <br> Ability | Speaking <br> Ability | Understanding <br> （Listening） | Reading <br> Ability | Balance of All <br> Abilities |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $1=$ not helpful <br> $5=$ very helpful |  |  |  |  |  |

5．どのようなコースがあなたは最も有用と考えますか？

| Which kinds of <br> classes would you <br> most benefit from？ | Writing <br> Courses | Speaking <br> Courses | Understanding <br> （Listening <br> Courses） | Reading <br> Courses | 4－Skills <br> （comprehensive） <br> Courses | Online <br> Courses |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $1=$ least useful <br> $6=$ most useful |  |  |  |  |  |  |

6．最も良い英語の能力を記述する文に円を書きなさい。

| Mark the statement that best describes your English ability with a circle in the box below it． | It is difficult for me to understand even simple， slow English conversation and it is difficult to make myself understood in English | If the conversation in English is slow，I can understand some of the conversation and communicate a little in easy English | I can <br> speak and understand enough English for daily activities and doing basic business | I can communicate in English in most situations without many mistakes or misunderstandings | No problem communicating in English as a non－native speaker |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Michael Leo Higgins

## 工学部



## 教育学部

| Question 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Average | Average TOEIC |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Writing | 17 | 15 | 37 | 10 | 3 | 82 | 2.2 | by Year |
| Speaking | 9 | 22 | 27 | 9 | 1 | 68 | 2.3 | $1549 \mathrm{n}=32$ |
| Listening | 2 | 22 | 27 | 17 | 7 | 75 | 3.1 | $2577 \mathrm{n}=25$ |
| Reading | 1 | 14 | 39 | 17 | 6 | 77 | 3.2 | $3560 \mathrm{n}=19$ |
| Balance | 4 | 22 | 35 | 12 | 0 | 73 | 2.8 | $4487 \mathrm{n}=6$ |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Total Average |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | $543 \mathrm{n}=82$ |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |  |
| Writing | 8 | 22 | 25 | 24 | 2 | 81 | $60 \%$ mod influence |  |
| Speaking | 10 | 11 | 16 | 19 | 17 | 73 | $71 \%$ mod to strong |  |
| Listening | 6 | 14 | 14 | 27 | 14 | 75 | $73 \%$ mod to strong |  |
| Reading | 8 | 16 | 18 | 19 | 16 | 77 | $31 \%$ little \＆ $68 \% \mathrm{~m}$ | d to strong |
| Balance | 4 | 13 | 39 | 12 | 8 | 66 | $6 \%$ weak； $12 \%$ stro | g： $59 \%$ mod |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Question 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |  |
| Writing | 8 | 14 | 15 | 24 | 14 | 75 | 19\％needed |  |
| Speaking | 0 | 1 |  | 16 | 54 | 74 | $78 \%$ needed |  |
| Listening | 0 | 1 | 7 | 17 | 48 | 73 | $66 \%$ needed |  |
| Reading | 8 | 9 | 10 | 29 | 17 | 73 | 23\％needed |  |
| Balance | 0 | 0 | 11 | 30 | 34 | 75 | $45 \%$ most needed |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |  |
| Writing | 30 | 30 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 78 | 77\％not helpful to a little helpful： $5 \%$ very helpful |  |
| Speaking | 45 | 12 | 11 | 0 | 6 | 74 | $61 \%$ not helpful |  |
| Listening | 0 | 0 | 8 | 20 | 48 | 76 | 63\％very helpful |  |
| Reading | 1 | 0 | 6 | 26 | 39 | 72 | $54 \%$ very helpful |  |
| Balance | 2 | 8 | 39 | 18 | 5 | 72 | 54\％mod helpful： $2 \%$ not helpful； $7 \%$ very helpful |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |
| Writing | 5 | 10 | 27 | 22 | 15 | 2 | $8182 \%$ mod to very useful |  |
| Speaking | 2 | 0 | 6 | 13 | 37 | 17 | $7597 \%$ mod to very useful： $2.5 \%$ no benefit |  |
| Listening | 1 | 2 | 11 | 24 | 27 | 10 | $7581 \%$ mod to very useful |  |
| Reading | 2 | 12 | 27 | 24 | 13 | 2 | $8034 \%$ mod； $2.5 \%$ very： $2.5 \%$ no benefit |  |
| 4－Skills CE | 2 | 1 | 8 | 22 | 24 | 16 | $7354 \%$ rather helpful to very： $85 \%$ mod to very |  |
| Online | 19 | 16 | 19 | 11 | 4 | 6 | 75 46\％little to no， $25 \%$ mod；7．5\％very |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 6 | ， | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ |  |  |
|  | 0 | 41 | 18 | 10 | 7 | 76 |  |  |
|  | 0 | 54\％ | 24\％ | 13\％ | 9\％ | Scoring |  |  |

## Michael Leo Higgins

## 経済学部

| Question 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | n＝ | Average | Average TOEIC |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Writing | 4 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 14 | 1.93 | by Year |
| Speaking | 9 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 13 | 1.46 | $2482 \mathrm{n}=13$ |
| Listening | 5 | 4 |  | 1 | 1 | 14 | 2.29 | （hi＝665； $\mathrm{lo}_{\mathrm{o}}=405$ ） |
| Reading | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 13 | 2.77 | $4400 \mathrm{n}=1$ |
| Balance | 2 | 9 | 3 |  |  | 14 | 2.07 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Total Average |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | $441 \mathrm{n}=14$ |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | n＝ | Scoring |  |
| Writing | 1 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 12 | 67\％mod emphasis；25\％little to slight emphasis |  |
| Speaking | 1 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 13 | 46\％mod emphasis；39\％little to slight emphasis |  |
| Listening | 0 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 13 | 46\％mod emphasis；39\％slightly strong to strong |  |
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 12 | $33 \%$ mod emphasis； $42 \%$ slightly strong to strong |  |
| Balance | 0 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 14 | $57 \%$ mod emphasis； $29 \%$ slightly strong to strong |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |  |
| Writing | 2 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 14 | $36 \%$ little to none：64\％mod to strong future need |  |
| Speaking | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 14 | 64\％strong need；36\％mod to slightly strong need |  |
| Listening | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 14 | $36 \%$ strong need； $43 \%$ slightly strong：21\％mod |  |
| Reading | 1 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 14 | 14\％little to none：57\％modi29\％slightly to strong |  |
| Balance | 0 | 0 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 14 | 50\％mod need； $43 \%$ slightly strong． $7 \%$ strong need |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |  |
| Writing | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 11 | 55\％\％little to no help：36\％moderately helpful |  |
| Speaking | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 12 | 67\％no help：17\％little help：17\％mod to a little |  |
| Listening | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 14 | $29 \%$ mod help：71\％a little helpful to very helpful |  |
| Reading | 0 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 14 | $21 \%$ mod help．79\％a little helpful to very helpful |  |
| Balance | 0 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 14 | $14 \%$ not very $57 \%$ mod：29\％a little to very helpful |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |
| Writing | 2 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | $1457 \%$ not very to not useful：43\％mod useful |  |
| Speaking | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 4 | $1436 \%$ mod helpful； $64 \%$ very to most useful |  |
| Listening | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 3 | $1443 \%$ mod helpful： $57 \%$ very to most useful |  |
| Reading | 1 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 0 | $1414 \%$ not very to not usefulif6\％mod to very |  |
| 4－Skills CE | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 6 | $1457 \%$ rather to very useful： $33 \%$ most useful |  |
| Online | 5 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 | $1339 \%$ not usefuli46\％mod to rather：15\％very |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 6 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ |  |  |
|  | 1 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 14 |  |  |
|  | 7\％ | 36\％ | 43\％ | 14\％ |  | Scoring |  |  |

## 人文学部



## Michael Leo Higgins

## 理学部



A Final Look At Needs Assessment of English Education At Yamaguchi University

| Question 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | n= | Average | Average TOEIC |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Writing |  |  | 1 | 1 |  | 2 |  | by Year |
| Speaking |  |  |  | 1 | 1 | 2 |  | $1387.5 \mathrm{n}=2$ |
| Listening |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 2 |  | (hi=390; $10=385$ ) |
| Reading | 1 | 1 |  |  |  | 2 |  | Total Average |
| Balance | 1 |  | 1 |  |  | 2 |  | $388 \mathrm{n}=2$ |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |  |
| Writing |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 2 |  |  |
| Speaking | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 2 |  |  |
| Listening |  |  | 1 |  | 1 | 2 |  |  |
| Reading | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 2 |  |  |
| Balance |  | 1 | 1 |  |  | 2 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 3 |  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |  |
| Writing | 1 |  |  |  | 1 | 2 |  |  |
| Speaking |  | 2 |  |  |  | 2 |  |  |
| Listening | 1 |  | 1 |  |  | 2 |  |  |
| Reading |  |  | 1 |  | 1 | 2 |  |  |
| Balance |  |  |  | 2 |  | 2 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |  |
| Writing |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 2 |  |  |
| Speaking | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 2 |  |  |
| Listening |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 2 |  |  |
| Reading | 1 |  |  |  | 1 | 2 |  |  |
| Balance |  |  | 2 |  |  | 2 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | $\mathrm{n}=$ | Scoring |
| Writing |  |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  |
| Speaking | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Listening |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |
| Reading | 1 |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |
| 4-Skills CE |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Online |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Question 6 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\mathrm{n}=$ |  |  |
|  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 | 2 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Scoring |  |  |

