

A Report on an Investigation of Global 30 Students' Japanese Learning Needs

BUSHNELL Cade

[Abstract] In 2013, the University of Tsukuba will move from its current trimester-based system to a semester-based one. In this report, based on a survey study, I discuss a number of the issues faced by Japanese language education in the Global 30 (G30) Program in this move to a semester system. In relation to this move, a number of competing proposals have been made by the various parties involved in regard to whether or not to shorten the duration of G30 Japanese classes. A final solution is still in development. Regardless of what kind of a solution is ultimately arrived at, it will fall short of meeting the Japanese language learning needs of G30 students unless it fully provides them with the time they need to develop the practical ability to use Japanese in both daily and employment situations.

[Keywords] Global 30, student needs, Japanese language education, educational standards, career support

グローバル30プログラムにおける学生の日本語学習 ニーズに関するアンケート調査報告

ブッシュネル・ケード

要 旨

2013年度以降、筑波大学では現在の3学期制から2学期制に移行する。本稿では、このような2学期制への移行において、グローバル30 (G30) プログラムにおける日本語教育が抱える問題についてアンケート調査の結果から報告する。学期制の移行により、日本語授業の開講期間を縮小するか否かという問題がある。これに関しては、各関連組織によって競合する案が出されているが、最終的な解決には未だに至っていない。そして、最終的な解決の詳細のいかんを問わず、もしそれがG30の学生の日常生活・就職に必要な実用的な日本語能力の獲得のために十分な日本語学習時間を許さなければ、G30の学生の日本語学習ニーズには合わないと思われる。

【キーワード】 グローバル30、学習者のニーズ、日本語教育、教育スタンダード、キャリア支援

1. Introduction

In 2013, the University of Tsukuba will move from its current trimester-based system to a semester-based one. In this report, I discuss a number of the issues faced by Japanese language education in the Global 30 (G30) Program in this move to a semester system. As I discuss elsewhere (Bushnell, 2012), time is very limited for G30 students trying to learn the Japanese language. Moving to a semester system will potentially intensify problems related to this lack of temporal resources. In particular, it has been indicated that the duration G30 students must spend learning the Japanese language may be shortened by up to 7.5 weeks. Though the G30 Japanese course coordinator and the International Student Center (the administering organization of the G30 Japanese courses) have opposed such a move, shortening the duration of Japanese classes remains one potential method for the procurement of temporal resources to be allocated to study in major courses, and so forth. A number of competing proposals have been made by the various parties involved, and a final solution is still in development. Regardless of what kind of a solution is ultimately arrived at, it will fall short of meeting the Japanese language learning needs of G30 students unless it fully provides them with time they need to develop the practical ability to use Japanese in both daily and employment situations.

2. The place of Japanese language education in a semester-based curriculum

As the University of Tsukuba (UT below) prepares to move to a semester system in 2013, the G30 undergraduate program has been working to migrate its current trimester-based curriculum (1 trimester = 10 weeks) to a semester format (1 semester = 15 weeks). One of the characteristics of UT's approach to a semester system is that each semester will be subdivided into three five-week modules, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: University of Tsukuba semester system

1 st semester (15 weeks)			2 nd semester (15 weeks)		
A (5 weeks)	B (5 weeks)	C (5 weeks)	A (5 weeks)	B (5 weeks)	C (5 weeks)

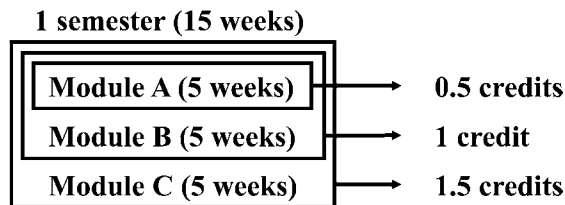
A major issue involved in changing to a semester system is that of determining how to figure the credits associated with each course. In most cases, this has generally been a matter of following the same guidelines established under the trimester system,

which stipulate that, for lecture courses:

$$1 \text{ credit} = 1.5 \text{ class hours (=75 min.)}/\text{week} \times 10 \text{ weeks (15 class hours)}$$

Because UT is employing a module system, subdividing each 15 week semester into three five-week periods, the following three credit allocations become available for classes meeting the usual¹ once per week.

Figure 2: Credit allocations



Of course, there is also the possibility of holding class twice per week for a span of 5 weeks, thus resulting in 1 credit, and so forth.

In the case of the Foreign Language Center (hence FLC), however, rather than equate 15 class hours (10 weeks of one class per week) with one credit, 22.5 class hours (15 weeks of one class per week) is taken to equal one credit. This measure seems to have been taken in order to avoid having to restructure credit requirements within the foreign language curriculum. While the FLC is not the administering institution of the G30 Japanese language courses,² there has been some expectation that the G30 courses would follow en suite with the FLC guidelines, as both are classified as “foreign language education” by UT administration.

For the G30 Japanese courses, however, which, unlike the courses administered by the FLC, meet three times per week, such guidelines pose serious difficulties.³ This is because, following the FLC guidelines, the time allotted to G30 Japanese classes would be reduced by 7.5 weeks, as shown below.

G30 Japanese under the trimester system :

3 classes (1 class=1.5 class hours) × 10 weeks=30 classes (1.5 credits) × 3 trimesters=90 classes resulting in 4.5 credits

Total class hours: 135 class hours (at the University of Tsukuba, 1.5 class hours=75 minutes→ Actual study time: 112.5 hours)

G30 Japanese in the case of adopting FLC credit calculation guidelines :

3 classes (1 class=1.5 class hours) × 5 weeks=15 classes (22.5 class hours, 1 credit) × 4.5 modules=67.5 classes resulting in 4.5 credits

Total class hours: 101.25 class hours (at the University of Tsukuba, 1.5 class hours=75 minutes→

Actual study time: 84.38 hours)

NB: According to data gathered from October, 1992 to October, 2010 by the Japanese Language Education Center (JLEC, 2010), the actual number of hours required to complete elementary Japanese (Level N4 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test) is 375-750 hours, depending on the linguistic background of the learner.

There are wide differences between the FLC courses and the G30 Japanese language courses. One difference is that, while the FLC courses provide *foreign language* education (i.e., they teach languages not necessarily required for or closely related to students' daily lives), the G30 courses are concerned with helping students to become proficient users of Japanese as a *second language* (i.e., Japanese is the language of the community surrounding the students, and a practical ability to use it is vital to many aspects of students' daily lives, and future career options; see below). In this sense, the G30 Japanese courses may be said to be aimed at the acquisition and automatization of practical skills, rather than at knowledge acquisition, per se. Research in cognitive science (e.g., Anderson & Fincham, 1994; Anderson, 1976, 1982) suggests that, among other things, extensive practice is vital for the development and automatization of *procedural knowledge*, which roughly equates to a practical ability to use a skill or skill set (see Anderson, 1976). Researchers in second language acquisition have extended the work of Anderson and his colleagues to the issue of learning an additional language (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). These researchers argue that language learning is commensurate with practical skill development and automatization, and, as such, requires extensive and appropriate practice (e.g., Johnson, 1996; Khatib & Nikouee, 2012). Because the curriculum of the G30 Japanese language courses is based on a conceptualization of language as a practical skill, sufficient time for students to practice while receiving guidance and feedback from trained second language educators is seen as vital to the development of the students' Japanese proficiency. In this case, once or twice per week for 22.5 weeks is simply not sufficient.⁴

On the other hand, shortening the amount of time students must spend learning Japanese may be seen as a welcome possibility by the colleges which administer the

G30 program. Such a viewpoint is related to the timing of the entrance of freshmen into the program. Under the trimester system, freshmen have entered the program with the beginning of the second trimester of the academic year, during which classes run for 10 weeks, from September to the middle of November. In this case, 20 weeks, or two trimesters, were available for use in the freshman-year curriculum. However, with the move to semesters, incoming freshmen will enter the program with the commencement of the Fall semester. This means that only 15 weeks will be available for the freshman-year curriculum. Thus, the G30 program is faced with making the decision of either (a) figuring out how to fit 30 weeks⁵ worth of curriculum into 15 weeks, or (b) pulling the G30 program out of synchronization with the regular non-G30 undergraduate schedule by having G30 students graduate later than non-G30 students admitted into their respective programs during the same academic year. In this way, from the perspective of the administering colleges, shortening the time span of the required G30 Japanese courses may provide one way of procuring scarce temporal resources for students to complete specialized course work within their majors.

In sum, a move to semesters presents a number of challenges and opportunities for the G30 curriculum. Outside of the G30 undergraduate program, a number of curriculum planners preparing for the move to semesters are working to streamline their curricula by eliminating superfluous courses, consolidating those with significantly overlapping areas, and utilizing the module aspect of the UT system to shorten the span of some courses. In the case of the G30 program, because of the above-mentioned temporal restrictions, curriculum planners must carefully discern between what stays, what goes, what gets shortened, and so forth. In doing so, however, I believe that a delicate balance must be maintained between focusing on matters of administrative/academic efficiency, and actual student needs.

3. The survey: The Japanese language learning needs of G30 students

3.1 Background and survey questions

In the last week of September, 2012, I administered an email-based survey to G30 undergraduate students currently enrolled in degree programs at UT (n=79). In spite of its email-based methodology (see Sheehan, 2001), the response rate was 65% (n=51). I interpret this fact as being indicative of a generally high degree of interest in the trajectory of the Japanese language education curriculum among G30 undergraduate

students. Indeed, one of the primary factors that led me to conduct the present survey was the concern which I perceived among G30 students themselves in regard to the time allotted within their timetables for studying the Japanese language. As I touch upon above and discuss in more depth elsewhere (Bushnell, 2012), the G30 curriculum requires 4.5 credits (three 1.5 credit trimester-long classes) of Japanese language. Time for these required classes is built into the G30 undergraduate timetable. However, a number of students have expressed that they feel the time allotted for Japanese study is too short to allow them to make adequate progress in learning Japanese. Below are excerpts from several emails I received during the 2010-2011 academic year:

We chose to come to Japan not only for academic study, but also for Japanese language and culture training. ...[W]e'll have to live in Japan for at least four years (some of us may decide to stay here for whole life long)... Though G30 program is totally an English course, we do live in Japan with all Japanese people around. Language is urgently needed for lifeconvenience....

Anonymous G30 undergraduate student

I would like to take more and more Japanese class. Our parents also look forward for us to understanding and communicating Japanese as well when we get back to our countries. It's a great opportunities of us coming here and have a chance to study in a real life Japanese.

Anonymous G30 undergraduate student

I personally think one year is not enough for us international students to learn...Japanese... [I]t would be very helpful if the University extends Japanese Language course to our second year because that will give us enough [time].[Japanese is]very important in our day to day lives.

Anonymous G30 undergraduate student

In order to develop a more generalizable view of G30 undergraduate students' Japanese language learning needs, I conducted the survey whose results I outline in the following subsection. The survey consisted of the following seven questions, the first six of which employed a four-item Likert scale, with the seventh question consisting of a free-response item: 1) Does the G30 Program include enough G30 Japanese classes?; 2) Does the G30 timetable provide enough free time for students to take non-G30 Japanese classes?; 3) How would you feel if the time that G30 students are required to take Japanese were to be reduced to less than 1 school year?; 4) How long should G30 students have Japanese in their timetables?; 5) If Japanese were offered when you had few/no classes (e.g., after the term, etc.), would you take Japanese then?; How important is it for G30 students to learn Japanese? 7) Please write any comments that may help to clarify your answers, especially if you answered 1 or 4 on any of the items.

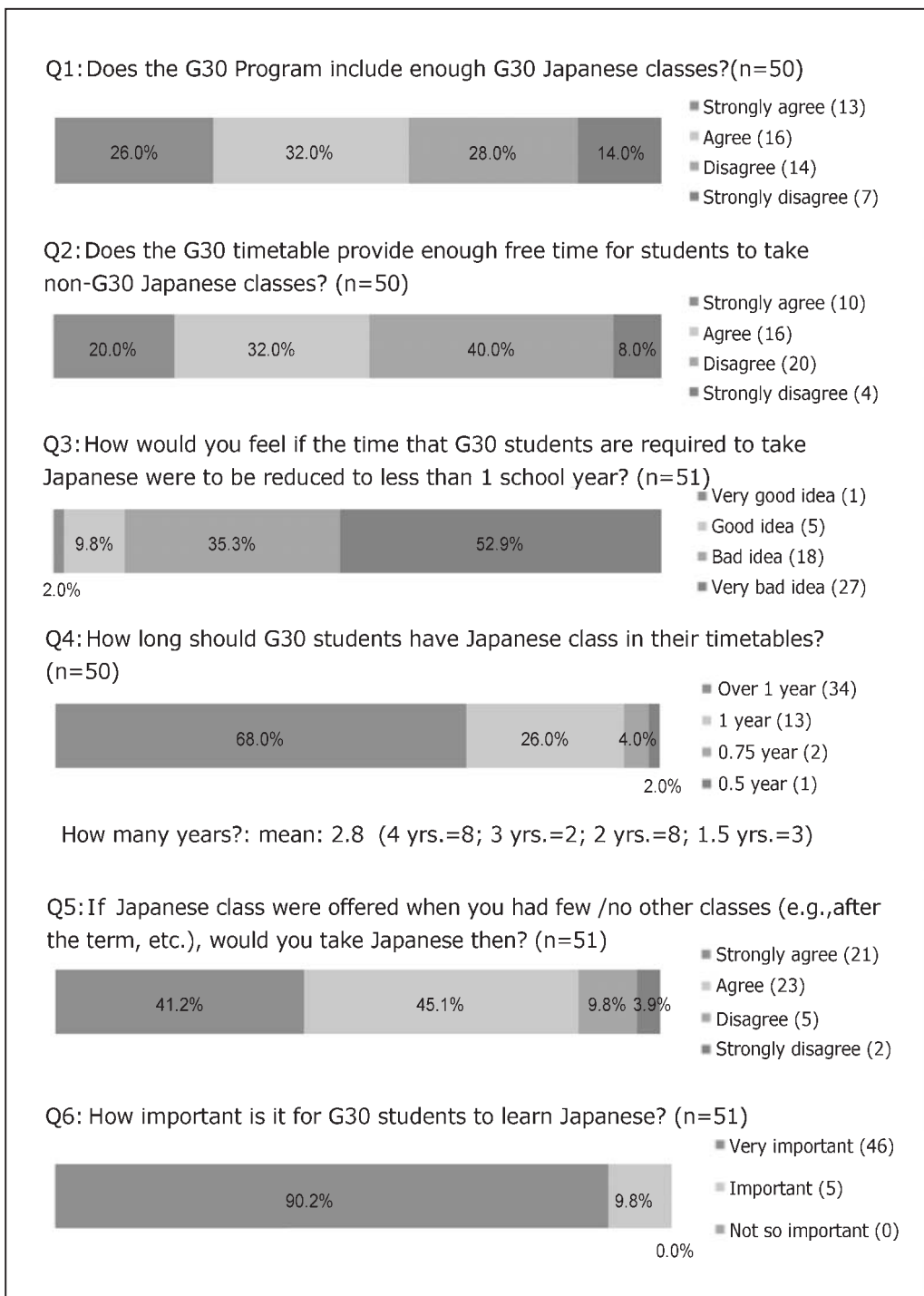
3.2 Results

The results (shown as percentages) for each of the six Likert-scale based survey questions are as shown in Chart 1, next page. The results discussed in the present report are those based on all responses received, regardless of in which of the three colleges the respondents were enrolled. It should be noted, however, that when the results are arranged according to the respective colleges of the respondents, there is a deviation from the overall results of only a few percents on any individual response item.

For questions employing a Likert-scale format, only four scale degrees were given. This was done in order to avoid any ambiguous answers by requiring respondents to answer either negatively or positively, with the first and fourth scale degrees provided in order to specify the strength of the negative or positive response. Each of the scale degrees is shown in the key on the right side of each graph below, along with the number of respondents who chose each degree (i.e., the number shown in parentheses).

Questions 1 and 2 are in regard to the amount of time G30 students have available for study of the Japanese language under the trimester system. There are two major venues available to G30 students for the study of Japanese. The first of these is the G30 Japanese classes, which are built into the G30 undergraduate timetable. These classes are conducted three times per week. The second venue is the Japanese classes offered by the International Student Center, which are conducted from five times to one time per week (depending on the class level and contents), and are open to all international students, including G30 students, at the university. There was a roughly equal split between students agreeing and those disagreeing that sufficient time is available for Japanese study under the current trimester system: In regard to Question 1, 58% (29 respondents) of respondents (strongly) agreed that the G30 program includes sufficient G30 Japanese classes (with 42%, or 21 respondents, [strongly] disagreeing); In regard to Question 2, 52% (26 respondents) (strongly) agreed that enough free time is available for G30 students to attend non-G30 Japanese classes (with 48%, or 24 respondents [strongly] disagreeing).

Chart 1: Graphs of survey results



Questions 3 and 4 are in regard to the duration of the G30 Japanese classes. Question 3 probes students' opinions in regard to the notion that their required Japanese classes might be reduced to less than one academic year. Only 11.8% (6 respondents) felt that this would be a (very) good idea, while an overwhelming 88.2% (45 respondents) (strongly) opposed a reduction of required Japanese class time. Question 4 asks how long G30 students should have Japanese class included as part of their set timetable. An overwhelming 94% (47 respondents) indicated that the timetable should include Japanese class for one or more years. When asked how many years, 18 respondents indicated that a period 2 to 4 years would be appropriate. Respondents who felt that Japanese class should be built into the timetable for less than one year represented only 6% (3 respondents) of the total (50 respondents).

Question 5 inquires as to whether G30 students would be interested in taking Japanese if it were offered at a time when they had no other classes, or only a few classes.⁶ While only 13.7% (7 respondents) indicated that they would (definitely) not take classes during such a time, an overwhelming 86.3% (44 respondents) answered that they would (definitely) take Japanese classes even after their other classes ended.

Question 6 is in regard the degree of importance G30 students attach to their study of the Japanese language. Notably, 0% indicated that Japanese was not important for them. Conversely, 90.2% (46 respondents) indicated that learning Japanese is very important for G30 students, with 9.8% (5 respondents) answering that learning Japanese is important.

In regard to Question 7, which was a free-response item, 33 respondents provided further explanation and comments in regard to their answers on Questions 1 to 6 (see Appendix 1). While, due to space constraints, I cannot provide a full treatment of each of the individual responses, the following trends may be noted. First, the strongest recurrent theme observable in the responses is that the G30 students feel that, since the Japanese language is vital to their daily lives in Japan (not only for non-academic activities, but also for participating with Japanese students in their various lab activities, getting things done on campus, making friend and maintaining human relationships, etc.), they ardently desire that their curriculum be designed so as to allow for at least one full academic year of Japanese language study (some 17 responses touched upon this theme). Second, a considerable number of respondents are concerned with their prospects for employment both in part time work while they study at the university in

order to defray various academic/living expenses, and after they graduate and seek permanent employment (some 8 responses touched upon this theme).

In the following subsection, I provide a discussion of the results outlined above.

3.3 Discussion of results

To summarize the results reported in the previous subsection, while G30 students seem to be somewhat ambiguous as to whether or not their current trimester-based timetables allow them sufficient time to study Japanese both in G30 Japanese classes and in other Japanese language classes offered by the International Student Center (i.e., responses of satisfaction and dissatisfaction were roughly split in half), they are extremely clear that they do not want the duration of their required classes shortened to less than one academic year. Furthermore, an overwhelming percentage of G30 students feel that time for Japanese class should be built into their timetables for one year or more (notably, 18 students indicated that they desire a period of 2 to 4 years). Furthermore, a large majority of G30 students indicated that they would take Japanese even after their other classes had ended. Perhaps most vividly, all of the students who responded to the survey indicated that learning Japanese is important for G30 students. On the free-response item, students repeatedly indicated that the Japanese language is vital for their lives here in Japan, and that they are concerned that a poor ability with the Japanese language will limit them on the job market.

These results may be generally interpreted to indicate that G30 students feel that learning Japanese is a vital concern for them—regardless of the fact that they are enrolled in undergraduate programs where coursework is conducted entirely in the English language. Furthermore, students are acutely aware that a significant amount of time is necessary for the development of practical abilities in using the Japanese language. Interestingly, a large number of students have indicated that they desire to have Japanese class remain a part of their timetables for 2 to 4 years. This suggests that they have a lay awareness that corresponds roughly to what has been said about time requirements for students to progress to higher levels of Japanese proficiency (see JLEC, 2010).

G30 students' motivations for wanting to be able to devote sufficient time to learning Japanese are practical—a fact that sets their learning needs in stark contrast to the needs of those students learning other languages at the FLC. Not only do G30

students with limited ability in the Japanese language experience significant difficulties with the independent performance of daily activities (such as shopping, obtaining healthcare/communication/recreation services, etc.), they also realize that they may be severely handicapped in seeking for and gaining both part-time supplementary and full-time permanent employment.

In regard to part-time supplementary employment, I am aware of several students already who have struggled to find out about part-time employment opportunities only to then be turned down after interviews where it became clear that their Japanese abilities were limited.⁷ A majority of G30 students are able to enter their programs with the first year of their studies being covered by a scholarship provided by the university. However, selection for continued recipiency of such scholarships is done on a competitive basis, forcing many students to find other means of support after their freshman year. While some of these students may be able to find part-time employment in jobs not requiring Japanese ability, such as teaching English, not all students have a high enough proficiency in English to obtain such employment.

In regard to permanent full-time employment following graduation, it may be noted that a number of the other universities selected by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology to implement the Global 30 Program seem have placed Japanese language education high on their lists of priorities; some universities have developed curriculums requiring students to study Japanese for up to three times the amount of time required by the University of Tsukuba. While it is true that it is not possible to perform a straight comparison of G30 universities, due to significant differences in the scope and goals of the individual programs, and so forth, it is a certainty that students who have only a limited ability in the Japanese language will face drastic limitations in regard to options for employment. Some in the University of Tsukuba G30 program seem to be operating from the assumption that students will return to their own countries and gain employment there following graduation. This may well be the case for some, or even a majority of the students, but, as indicated in the students' responses to Question 7, and in the email correspondence shown in Section 3.1, there are at least some students who desire to remain in Japan after graduation. It is the stance of the G30 Japanese language courses that the curriculum should not put limitations on such students. Even in the case of students who return to their countries, it is likely that poor Japanese language proficiency after having studied for four years at

a Japanese university will be ill-received by prospective employers at home as well.

4. Moving forward: Japanese language courses in a semester-based system

The issue of the duration and credits of the Japanese classes under a semester system was raised for deliberation at the G30 Coordination Meeting held in October of 2012. The members of this meeting were charged with deciding whether or not a) the Japanese language classes should be allowed to calculate credits not according to the FLC's approach of one credit equaling 22.5 class hours, but according to an original guideline which takes one credit as being equal to 30 class hours (this would allow the Japanese classes to avoid the 7.5 week loss of class time described above), and b) whether or not Japanese classes should be conducted during Module C of the first semester. As a result of deliberations at this meeting, it was decided that the Japanese classes should follow the same credit calculation system as the FLC, and that there should be no *required* Japanese classes scheduled for Module C of the first semester, though elective classes will be allowed. This configuration is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: G30 Japanese under the semester system (current proposal)

1 st semester (15 weeks)		2 nd semester (15 weeks)	
AB: 2 credits	First half of C: 0.5 credits	AB: 2 credits	C: 1 credit

However, a further examination of the policy decided upon at the Coordination Meeting revealed that there may still be a number of issues that need to be resolved before the semester-based schedule for G30 Japanese classes can be finalized. One major issue is concerned with the treatment of students who end up failing a class. In such a case, it seems that it may be quite difficult for those students to obtain exactly 4.5 credits (rather, they would end up with 5, 5.5, or even 6 credits, etc.). These and other issues are currently under discussion by the coordinator of the G30 Japanese language classes and the Education Planning Division of the university. One tentative proposal for a solution is to create a 0.5 credit “Freshman Seminar” for the G30 Japanese classes to be held in September (the month prior to the beginning of the first semester of classes

for incoming freshmen). Then, Module A and B of the first and second semesters would have required Japanese courses, each worth 2 credits, with 1 credit elective courses in Module C of the first and second semester. Credits gained from elective classes would not be available for application to the required 4.5 credits of Japanese language. In this way, assuming that incoming freshmen would be able to pass the Freshman Seminar, students would ultimately end up with 4.5 credits of Japanese, regardless of whether or not they failed a class along the way.

Figure 4: G30 Japanese under the semester system (solution proposal)

Freshman Seminar	1 st semester (15 weeks)		2 nd semester (15 weeks)		
0.5 credits	AB: 2 credits	C: 1 credit	AB: 2 credits	C: 1 credit	
Required		Elective		Required	
		Elective			

5. Conclusion

This report has outlined several of the issues faced by the G30 Japanese courses in the move to a semester system. Time is a scarce commodity for G30 students trying to learn the Japanese language. In spite of entry into their respective programs one semester later than non-G30 students, the G30 Program currently requires that they maintain a synchronization with the non-G30 students such that there is a need to allocate 30 weeks worth of curriculum into a mere 15 week period. Though the G30 Japanese course coordinator and the International Student Center (the administering organization of the G30 Japanese courses) have made efforts to avoid having the duration of the Japanese classes shortened in relation to moving to a semester system, opposing concerns seem to have been prioritized by the administering colleges of the G30 Program. The schedule proposed by the G30 Coordination Meeting adopts the FLC's credit calculation system, which results in the duration of the Japanese classes being shortened by 7.5 weeks. Furthermore, this proposal fails to take into account the issue of students who might end up failing one of their Japanese classes. A solution to such issues is currently under discussion. However, it is notable that because of administrative restraints placed upon any proposal made (i.e., 4.5 credits required at 22.5 class hours [18.75 actual hours] per credit, equaling a total of 101.25 class hours [84.37

actual hours]), none of the current proposals are able to systematically provide the time required for students to complete even elementary level Japanese (i.e., 375~750 hours; see JLEC, 2010). Regardless of what kind of a solution is ultimately adopted, it will fall short of meeting the Japanese language learning needs of G30 students unless it fully provides them with time they need to develop the practical ability to use Japanese in both daily and employment situations.

Notes

¹ Though undergraduate classes meeting once per week may seem unusual from the perspective of, for example, an American university curriculum, where it is more typical for classes to meet 2 or 3 times per week.

² The G30 Japanese language courses are organized and administrated not by the Foreign Language Center, but rather by the International Student Center.

³ These difficulties, which I go on to outline presently, would be considerably compounded were G30 Japanese to follow the general UT guidelines.

⁴ In fact, based on the JLEC data (see JLEC, 2010), students would conservatively need approximately 300 75 minute class periods (375 actual hours) in order to complete elementary Japanese. This would require five classes per week for 2 academic years under the semester system (60 weeks).

⁵ Since the freshman-year curriculum is supposed to cover a set of contents equal to that of the regular non-G30 freshman-year curriculum, there are 30 weeks worth (3 ten-week trimesters) of contents that must be considered. Of course, figuring out how to fit this 30 weeks worth of contents into a 20-week span was one of the challenges faced by the G30 program at its outset.

⁶ This particular question was asked because one of the three administering colleges of the G30 program has pushed strongly for the avoidance of scheduling classes during Module C of the first semester. One reason for this push is that it was agreed at the Undergraduate Educational Committee Meeting that scheduling classes for Module C, first semester would be avoided. This decision seems to be primarily related to the fact that the university is moving to encourage undergraduate Japanese students to study abroad for a short period as part of their undergraduate education, and that it was felt that clearing Module C of the first semester should allow students an opportunity to do this. However, it may be noted that, due to the fact that such study abroad generally does not apply to G30 students (who are, of course, already studying abroad by coming to Japan in the first place) the other two G30 colleges are choosing not to follow this guideline. However, it was thus a concern for some that, were Japanese class to run for the entire academic year, it would end up being the only class students had during Module C of the first semester, and, since Japanese is a required class, students would be forced to take it even though they had no other classes.

⁷ On the other hand, I am also aware of G30 students who entered their programs already having gained a functional ability in Japanese through studying prior to coming to Japan who have been able to gain part-time employment. This would seem to potentially present issues of inequality among the student body members.

Appendix 1

Q7: Please write any comments that may help to clarify your answers, especially if you answered 1 or 4 on any of the items.

1. For school of life and environment, I expect another Japanese teacher who can teach us 専門用語 [*senmon yougo* "specialized terminology": CB] at least, teach us some vocabulary and manners that allow us to survive in lab"

2. I think there should have more Japanese classes.

3. I think it's really important for us to learn Japanese, not only for our school lives but also our future.

4. Japanese class is very important for me, since I have learnt no Japanese, and thus I want to take it for full year.

5. I think Japanese is very important for G30 students, since I am now a third year student, I entered a lab, but everyone in the lab speaks Japanese, it's hard for me to talk with them. So Japanese classes are important.

6. Japanese language is very important for me. for instance I cannot get a job just because i can t speak Japanese. I have to communicate in daily life which i can t.I cannot even order for food in a restorant just because of the language. If I have to talk about this in details, i can write more than a hundred pages
7. Learning Japanese will let us know the Japanese culture better and live in Japan much more convenient.
8. I really prefer the Japanese time period not being shorter!
9. We G30 students should learn Japanese and try to speak Japanese as much as possible when in Japan. However, I do not think requiring passing grades in classes is an effective way for us students to learn, especially since the critical period has long passed. Our self-study and intrinsic motivations should determine to a greater extent, if not to the only extent, how much we learn. Grades in courses required by the University or even placement tests do not accurately indicate the extent to which we students can understand or respond in a Japanese conversation. Some of us students may only want to focus certain areas of vocabulary, such as biology for example, that are more pertinent to our careers.
10. it's difficult to speare the time for Japanese in ISC since we got lots of lectures. However, as i think, it's really important to learn some Japanese, and Japanese people usually would feel more relax when you talking to him with Japanese.
11. I think Japanese classes maybe taken 4 or 5 times a week is better, but after the first year, it maybe be reduced to once or twice a week, such as this.
12. i think learning Japanese is important not only for living in Japan but also for knowing more about Japanese culture.
13. Japanese classes should be more evenly spread out on the timetable
14. Japanese Classes must be taken for more than a year period and when the semester period comes in, we will have difficulty in focusing Japanese because the semester would reduce our chances of learning the language to a higher level. We are interested in taking the language for job purposes after we graduate. Furthermore, when we advance to a higher level, we might have no time to built in Japanese into our semester timetables as we will have only a shorter time to 3/4 year or 1/2 year. We need to be more proficient in our language skills and this is very important for all students who wish to carry on their language ability in Japanese. We seek your assistance in this matter.
15. Especially for students in the lower levels of Japanese language. Learning it is vital, since we'll be here for 4 years (or more). We'll need it for communication, jobs, among other things."
16. Japanese is not critical to learn, but it is very useful to know to make friends, get part time job, etc.
17. I think Japanese is very important for international students who study in Japan. Because Japanese is not only benefit on their daily life but also on their job after graduation.
18. Certainly I want to have at least 2 years for Japanese language learning classes because living in Japan without their language is very difficult, but the current way of teaching should be change.
19. Because we now live in Japan, why can't we learn enough Japanese for us too stay in this country?
20. The current Japanese classes are not enough already. I don't think reducing Japanese classes is a good idea.
21. Personally, I am very naive to learning Language. I therefore recommend that enough time be given to the study of Japanese Language.
22. Language is not that easy to learn in a short period. Each student has a different Japanese level, and they start Japanese study from the first level where they in. What if they start it from J100 and study it 3 trimesters (or less), they never use Japanese even in a common daily life. I think students should take Japanese classes until they graduate, but they also should do time management wisely as they go grade up.
23. I feel it is essential for Japanese to be taught throughout our degree program. With more time to learn the language it provides us with the ability to make the most of our stay in Japan. And learning the language throughout the year in order to have greater discipline.
24. Communication is the most important facet in the academic discourse community, and in Tsukuba, the Japanese language is very vital to carry out everyday activities. I personally thin that, students are to be given enough time to study the language. This is due to the fact that, most students including myself are experiencing the new language for the first time.
25. One of the most crucial reasons I choose Japan to further my study is because I could have the best environment to study Japanese, if there is few or even no Japanese class in the following year, I would be pretty disappointed. So, I hope that the university can rethink about it, and give us more free time and classes on Japanese.
26. It's important to learn Japanese if you are going to study and live in Japan for more than 4years. I have a friend who can not speak Japanese at all here and she cannot do anything herself, for example, paying for the insurance, or dorm fee because ATM and post bank office all works in Japanese.
27. I personally think that it is necessary for the G30 student to be offered a sufficient amount of Japanese classes

because learning a language on your own can be challenging and requires a lot of discipline. We are mostly surrounded by English the whole day (classes, talking to friends etc.) so it might be hard to find motivation to sit down or go out and learn Japanese. Though we can learn a certain amount of Japanese through social interactions there are much we can't learn as well.

28. We should study Japanese until students can speak sufficient enough so they can get a job after they graduate

29. International students especially those from outside Asia, and those that have never learnt Japanese needs to be given ample time by enabling them to take Japanese language in their second year.

30. Japanese language is very important, especially for G30 students, to communicate with Japanese people in daily life, get a part-time job in Japan and have more opportunity to get a job in the future. However, it is very difficult to understand how to speak, write and read in Japanese for short period.

31. One of my main reasons for coming to Tsukuba was to study Japanese and become fluent. If our schedules were changed so that we would not be able to take Japanese classes after our first or second year, I would likely leave.

32. Japanese language is really important for foreigners residing in Japan to be used in day to day life, and if have to learn the culture then we must learn the language first, student must allowed to study for more than 1 year.

33. i think more time is needed to over come the difficulty in studying Japanese language

Works cited

Anderson, J. R., & Fincham, J. M. (1994) "Acquisition of procedural skills from examples," *Journal of experimental psychology: learning, memory, and cognition*, 20(6), 1322-1340.

Anderson, John R. (1976) *Language, Memory, and Thought*. New York: L. Erlbaum Associates.

Anderson, John R. (1982) "Acquisition of cognitive skill," *Psychological Review*, 89(4), 369-406.

Bushnell, Cade C. (2012) "Eigo de oshieru nihongo • nihonjijo [Teaching Japanese and Japanese Issues in English: A report on the Global 30 Japanese and Japanese Issues Course]," *Nihongo Kyoiku Ronshu* [Journal of Japanese Language Teaching], 27, 35-55.

Japanese Language Education Center (JLEC) (2010) JLPT Study Hour Comparison Data 1992-2010. Retrieved from <http://www.studytoday.com/JLPT.asp?lang=EN>

Johnson, K. (1996) *Language Teaching and Skill Learning*. Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell.

Khatib, M., & Nikouee, M. (2012) "Planned focus on form: Automatization of procedural knowledge," *RELC Journal*, 43(2), 187-201.

Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2010) *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (4th ed.). Harlow: Longman.

Sheehan, Kim (2001) "E-mail survey response rates: A review," *JCMC*, 6(2). Retrieved from <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol6/issue2/sheehan.html>