

The 21st Asia TEFL
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
with KICE & Korea TESOL
DCC Daejeon, South Korea
August 17-20, 2023



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Session ID #854

Masashi Koizumi: Koizumi:

**Do Secondary School Students
Need an Extensive Vocabulary
To Communicate?**

**Do secondary school students
need an extensive vocabulary
to communicate?**

**Comparison of Japan's and Korea's
national curricula**

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--- no class this semester
- 2007-22 Professor of TESOL, Tokyo Kasei University
- 2005-07 Professor of TESOL, Kinki University
- 1991-2005 Senior textbook examination officer,
Japan Ministry of Education
- 1974-91 Upper secondary school teacher,
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The objective: comparison of the sizes of English vocabulary Japanese and Korean national curricula expect students to develop

MEXT: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Korea has a long history of primary English.

Chart 1

Implementation \ Grades		Primary	G3·4	G5·6	Middle	Hours	Primary & Middle
			Hours				
The 6th	1995 -97	approx. 500 words	136	136	within 700 words	408	within 1200 words
The 7th	2001 -3	within 450 words	68	136	within 800 words	340	within 1250 words
2008 revision	2010 -12	within 520 words	136	204	within 840 words	340	within 1360 words
2022 revision	2024 - 27	within 600 words	136	204	within 1500 words	340	within 2100 words

One school hour: primary, 40 min.; middle, 45 min. One school year, 34 weeks

At first, Japan made a semi-subject as a prudent take-off before introducing a full-scale subject.

Chart 2

Implementation \ Grades		Primary	G3·4	G5·6	Lower Secondary	Class Hours	Sum Total: Primary & Secondary
			Class hours				
2008 Revision	2011	Foreign Language Activities	(70)		approx 1200 words	420	approx 1200 words
2017 Revision	2020 -21	within 600-700 words	(70)	140	approx 1600-1800 words	420	approx 2200-2500 words

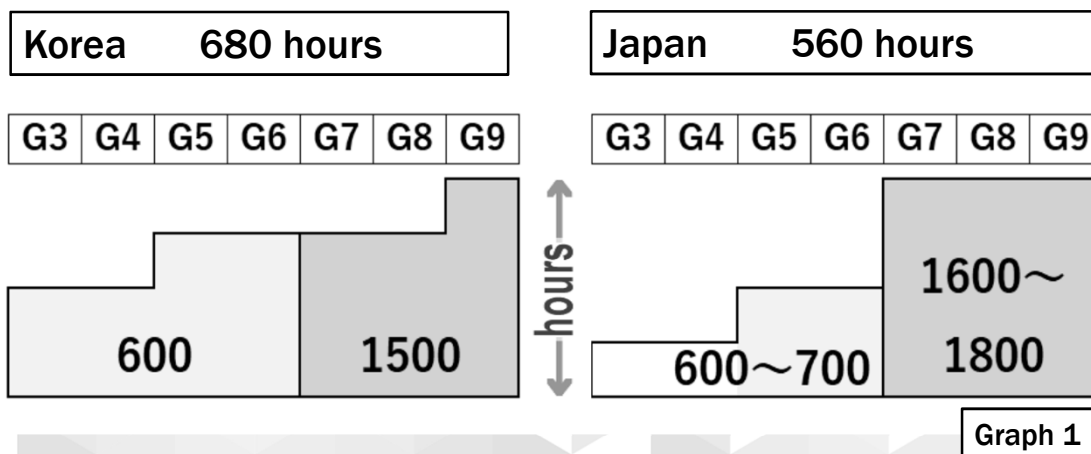
One school hour: primary, 45 min.; middle, 50 min. One school year: 35 weeks

The latest curricula of Japan and Korea.

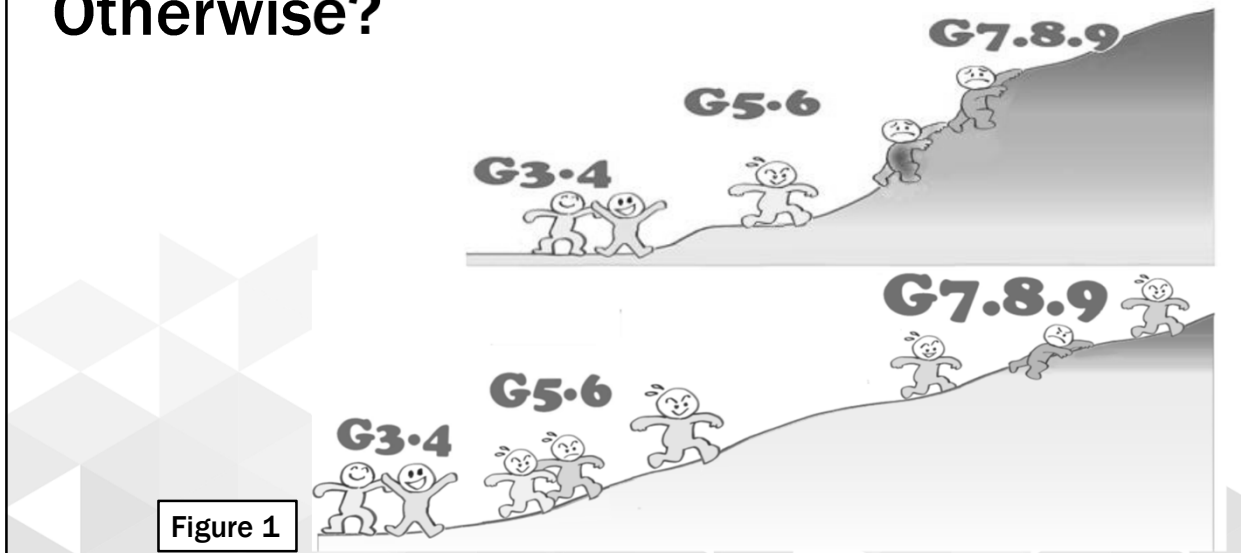
Chart 3

Implemen- -tation	Grades	Primary	G3·4	G5·6	Lower Secondary	Hours	Primary & Secondary
			Hours / 2y				
Japan 2017 Revision	2020 - 2021	approx 600-700 words	(70)	140	approx 1600- 1800 words	420	approx 2200- 2500 words
Korea 2022 Revision	2024 - 2027	within 600 words	136	204	within 1500 words	340	within 2100 words

To make the charts look simpler...



Would you like a tougher route? Otherwise?



MEXT seems to be trying to fulfill the requirement of “Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education” via the National Curriculum, in 5 years time:

- 60 % of lower secondary school graduates with English ability equivalent to or higher than A2 level of CEFR by the time they finish the upper secondary level
- 60 % of upper secondary school graduates with English ability equivalent to or higher than A1 level of CEFR by the time they finish the lower secondary level

My argument:

- 1. The national curriculum requires primary students to encounter new English words through listening rather than reading. That is, the major part of their primary-level vocabulary would be likely to remain receptive unless they had enough chances to try their knowledge in communicative situations.**
- 2. Teachers might need to provide students with abundant opportunities to try their skills in communicative situations, so that their vocabulary will be activated and turned to part of their productive skills.**
- 3. Acquiring proficiency in English is the first thing to think about among aims stated in the curriculum. An extensive vocabulary wouldn't be a direct goal of language learning, but is something to be acquired in the process of developing proficiency.**

My argument 2

- 4. If Japanese Ministry of Education really require 60 % of Japanese to get to A1 or A2 level of CEFR, full-scale primary English education should start earlier, and take time for students to get accustomed to using English in activities in communicative situations, and have their vocabulary activated.**
- 5. Introduce early-start curriculum and reduce academic burden in the secondary education level. Don't ask for higher level of merit-oriented achievement. Otherwise, forget the official CEFR-oriented goal and rely on private efforts of individuals.**
- 6. Positive attitude toward communication could be enhanced by any second language. English is not the only lingua franca. Let secondary students choose among various languages with various approaches.**

Thank you very much for listening.

If you're interested in this topic, let's talk more over the Internet.

I look forward to your response.

Write to me:

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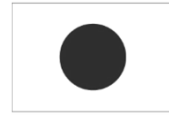
Reference: NCIC (National Curriculum Information Center)

<https://ncic.re.kr/mobile.kri.org4.inventoryList.do#>



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Reference: MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)

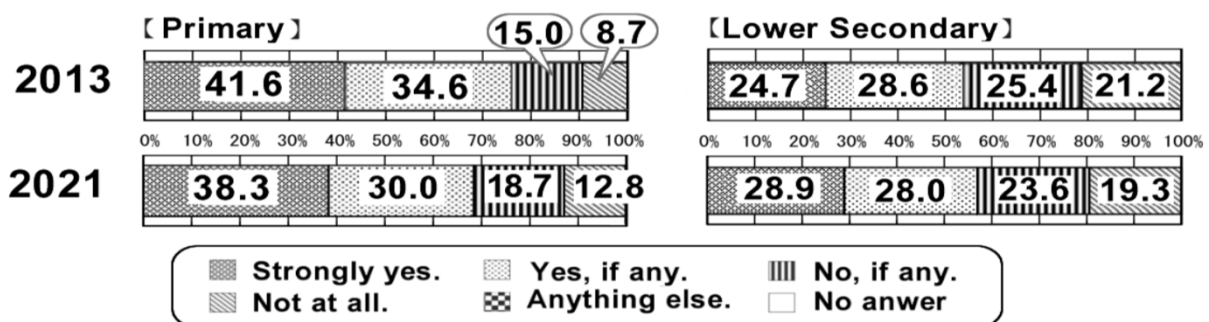


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Are primary students beginning to hate studying English?

Q: Do you like studying English?

Graph 2



2021: <https://www.nier.go.jp/21chousakekkahoukoku/report/data/21qn.pdf>
 2023: <https://www.nier.go.jp/13chousakekkahoukoku/data/13-questionnaire.html>