

Bunka to Eigo [Culture and English]

国際理解教育／D.R. ボグダン

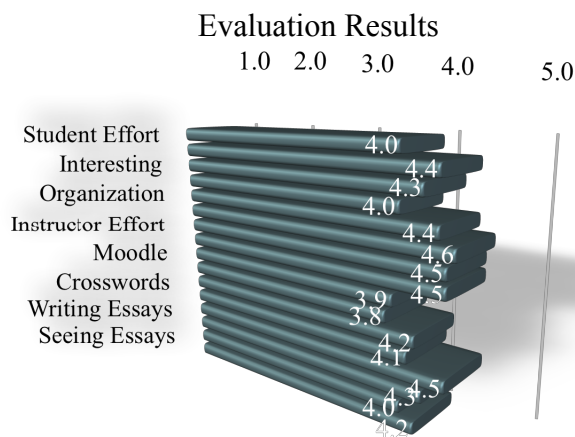
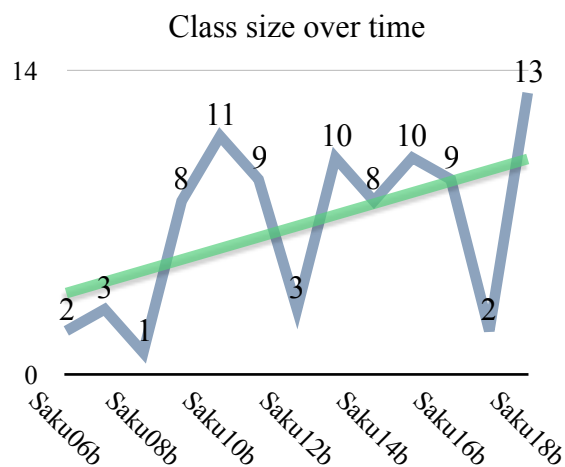
Course Overview:

This class, in various incarnations, has been taught by the instructor each of the 13 years he has worked at the university. It is not a required class and has been listed as being for 2nd-term juniors, but typically some seniors have also joined the class each year.

Until this year, the majority of the students had been EIU (Education for International Understanding) majors, but, with the major curriculum change which ended the EIU Program, the student make-up of the class reflected this with a mix of EFL majors and teacher training majors.

Class Size:

This class can be viewed as being a seminar-type course preparing students to conduct research and write their senior research papers in English, which means the number of students tends to be quite limited. It has also been offered in the same time slot as a main course for EIU/EFL majors, which also limited the class size. However, the numbers have risen for the most part over the years, especially when compared to the first three years, which was right after the instructor had begun teaching here, and the students were getting accustomed to him and his teaching style. The outlier last year—2017—was perhaps caused by it being the final year for juniors in the EIU course before the handoff to the new curriculum this year. The number definitely bounced back this time around.



Evaluation and Comments from the students:

In an informal, anonymously submitted evaluation conducted by the instructor on Moodle, the students gave an average of 4.2 out of 5 on a Likert-scale for the 16 items they rated. Also, below are the comments they provided (in most cases very loosely translated from Japanese by the instructor, with the comments that were given in English left as is and marked by square brackets]).

Positive Points

Writing essays. Reading about other countries, food, health, etc. Learning vocabulary through crosswords.

There was a lot of work every day, but I learned how to write longer passages. I also became accustomed to writing. I always thought that the preparation of the crosswords must've been difficult, and I wondered how this was done. The crosswords were very fun.

The instructor was very nice. Being able to learn about differences in culture and realistic language, both in the writing and homework and in class discussions.

[In these lessons, we were able to improve our English.]

[I was able to learn usage of English grammar and words properly, and get some informations about cultures]

Correcting the essays helped in gaining knowledge about various English expressions, so it was a good learning experience.

It was good that I was able to become aware of my own mistakes during the error correction.

Even though I am not good at English, getting input from the other students and comments and hints from the instructor helped me do the work.

Correcting the essays was really difficult, but I think it really helped me improve. When I become a teacher, I will have to correct my students' English, so I really think this was good practice. Moreover, by reading longer passages on a variety of topics and by actually trying to write myself, I learned how to write.

Talking with the instructor.

Learning how to write in English by writing myself and by correcting essays written by others. In high school, we learn vocabulary and grammar, but not how to write, so this was good to learn.

The crosswords helped me learn vocabulary that I did not know.

Being able to prepare for class activities beforehand made it easier to get a firm grasp of the knowledge in class. In particular, the essay correction activities allowed me to revisit grammar points and vocabulary use that I had forgotten or were not clear. I feel that this was very useful and will come in handy in future studies and when I write my senior research paper.

Suggested Changes

Nothing in particular

Maybe it was a lot of work. Just kidding. It was good to be challenged.

I could have been more active with more opportunities to use English.

Having deadlines for submissions to Moodle announced.

[I would like you to announce deadlines for our assessments on Moodle.]

[I wish I had spoken much more English in this class.]

Nothing special.

[Nothing]

Nothing in particular

I have no complaints! it was fun! !

General Comments

The instructor's classes were always fun. Writing and correcting essays was difficult, but it helped me learn better English.

There was a lot of work, but it was my most enjoyable class this semester.

Thank you for the semester. It was fun. I apologize for causing various problems in class.

[Thank you for giving us a lot of opportunities to learn about English on concentration.]

[I was glad to join this class. I want to join classes conducted by the same instructor when I come back to Japan.]

Thank you very much for everything this semester. Because it was fun learning English, I want to work hard on studying English and become a teacher. [Thank you so much!]

Because of the crossword assignments, we started looking up synonyms. I think correcting everyone's essays was hard, but thank you.

I'm not good at English, but this class helped feel more comfortable with it.

It was fun taking the class. Thank you very much!

[Thank you for this class!!! I enjoyed learning in this class. I am learning English from now on.]

[Thank you for helping and supporting us through all classes. We respect you very much, and want to acquire knowledge like you. We love your cheerful and generous character! Have a good spring vacation! See you!]

Final Thoughts:

The two lowest ratings from the students were for the textbook and the use of Moodle, at 3.8 and 3.9, respectively. As for the former, there was just too much work involved which went beyond the textbook, and, with regard to Moodle, the comments indicate that more care needs to be taken in clarifying the deadlines for assignments.

It will be interesting to see how many sign up for next year's class and what their majors will be.