English as a Lingua Franca for Students in the College of Humanities and College of Arts and Sciences

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Abstract

In 2013, the Tamagawa University English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) program was expanded to accommodate over a thousand first-year and second-year students in the Colleges of Tourism and Hospitality, International Business, Humanities, and Arts and Sciences. This report first provides a brief overview of the ELF program and then focuses on how students in the College of Humanities (COH) and the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) progressed through the program. We analyze data gathered from an online ELF student questionnaire administered in July 2013, a log of student access to ELF learning support services and the students' scores on the TOEIC IP test. Results indicate that while feedback on the program from the students was very positive, gains in English language proficiency, as measured by the TOEIC IP, were quite limited. In addition, the students' relatively low utilization of the ELF tutor service suggests that COH and CAS students may need to become more proactive in their English language learning.

Keywords: ELF, TOEIC, Curriculum, Tutor, Learner Autonomy

Introduction

The Tamagawa English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) Program works to enable students to communicate appropriately and effectively with people across the world. English as a lingua franca is "any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice" (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 7). In ELF classes, English is the medium of communication. Students who speak Japanese and teachers whose first languages vary agree to use English as a lingua franca. The ELF program is a part of both the College of Humanities (COH) and the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) curriculum. Students in the Department of Comparative Cultures in the COH are required to take 24 credits, while students in the Department of Liberal Arts in the CAS take 12 required ELF credits. This paper has three aims:

1) to briefly introduce the English as a Lingua Franca Program at Tamagawa, 2) to report on how COH and CAS students have perceived the program and how they are progressing, and 3) to describe the ELF Tutor System and report on the access rates by COH and CAS students.

The Tamagawa ELF Program

Piloted in 2012, the ELF Program aims to teach English in a way that emphasizes the use and functions of English. It also seeks to raise the English language competency of students as measured by the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). The program began with 157 first-year students in the Department of Comparative Cultures and 179 in the Departments of International Management and Tourism and Hospitality Management in the College of Business Administration.

In 2013, 180 first-year students from the Department of Liberal Arts in the College of Arts and Sciences, and 108 students from the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management in the College of Tourism and Hospitality joined the program. In addition, 17 students from the Graduate School of Engineering and 7 students from the Department of Software Science and the Department of Management Science in the College of Engineering selected to enroll in the spring ELF classes. In the fall semester, 14 Graduate School of Engineering students and 2 College of Engineering students continued their ELF studies, along with 48 Tamagawa Upper Secondary Division students taking part in a high-school-to-university transition program who were enrolled in ELF 101. When the ELF program is newly established as the Center for English as a Lingua Franca (CELF) in 2014, it will provide instruction for approximately 1,800 students in five colleges across the campus and will include the Department of Human Science in the College of Humanities as well as the Departments of Performing Arts and Media Design in the College of Arts (See Table 1).

Table 1　*Cumulative Enrolment and Required Credits in Each Year of the ELF Program*

College	Departments	Required Credits	2012	2013	2014
Business	International Management	16	171	321	400
Administration	Tourism & Hospitality Mgmt.	24	108	100	100
Humanities	Comparative Cultures	24	157	320	450
	Human Science	4	0	0	90
Tourism &	Tourism & Hospitality Mgmt.	12	0	108	193
Hospitality		(ELF 201–301)			
Arts & Sciences	Liberal Arts	12	0	180	340
Arts	Performing Arts	8	0	0	130
	Media Design	8	0	0	90
Total			436	1,029	1,793

The program's faculty includes seven full-time instructors and 19 part-time teachers of diverse nationalities and backgrounds who speak English as either a first or second language. All are experienced instructors of English at the university level and have earned masters or doctoral degrees, mainly in TESOL, Applied Linguistics, or Education. With the start of the CELF in 2014, the number of teachers is expected to rise to nine full-time and approximately 40 part-time teachers.

Students in the program are placed into ELF classes according to their proficiency as measured by a TOEIC Bridge test[1] administered at the start of their first year in April. There are four levels offered in the ELF program. The 101, 201, 301 and 401 classes have been offered in the spring semesters, and 102, 202, 302 and 402 in the fall semesters. In 2013, ELF classes were also held during the summer and winter breaks. Weekly class contact time is equivalent to four 50-minute periods per week and is worth four credits.

The lessons constitute fifty hours of in-class time for each 15−week semester, as well as two hours per week of out-of-class preview and review work required for each credit. All students must take a TOEIC Institutional Program (TOEIC IP) test at the end of each semester. Table 2 shows the average scores for the 2012 and 2013 cohorts.

A statistical analysis of the 2012 test scores of students in the Departments of Comparative Cultures, International Management, and Tourism and Hospitality Management showed that these students, on average, achieved significantly higher scores on the TOEIC IP. The analysis

Table 2 *Average ELF TOEIC IP Scores for 2012 and 2013*

Cohort	2012 Spring	2012 Fall	2013 Spring	2013 Summer	2013 Fall
2012	337 n = 414 range = 165−705	327 n = 387 range = 150−740	362 n = 393 range = 170−785		379 n = 369 range = 155−765
2013			348 n = 585 range = 170−705	380 n = 30 range = 250−480	370 n = 575 range = 155−750

Table 3 *Welch's t-test Summary*

	Humanities	International Management	Tourism & Hospitality Management
Mean	0.15	0.14	0.07
SD	0.06	0.05	0.05
t-value	7.52	7.86	3.36
p-value	0.00	0.00	0.00
N	141	156	110

used Welch's *t*-test and measured whether the increase in scores was zero or not (See Table 3). The statistics for the three departments may perhaps be interpreted to mean that the ELF program has not been ineffective in facilitating the attainment of higher student English proficiency levels as measured by the TOEIC IP.

In order to nurture strong grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension skills, the focus of the curriculum for the ELF program is on all four basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. An extensive reading (free voluntary reading) component helps to promote reading fluency among the students, while a component that emphasizes self-study drills and test-taking strategies aids students in their preparation for the TOEIC IP. Regular homework assignments and assessments in all four skills are required for each student. Evaluation is based on five areas: 1) classroom work, participation and homework (20%), 2) listening and speaking assessment (20%), 3) reading comprehension assessment (20%), 4) writing assessment (20%), and 5) TOEIC IP scores (20%). Each class, ranging from 12 to 24 students in size, meets twice a week with the same teacher. English is the required medium of communication in all ELF classrooms.

College of Humanities and College of Arts and Sciences Students in the ELF Program

A total of 321 (157 second-year, 164 first-year) COH students from the Department of Comparative Cultures in the COH, and 180 students in the Department of Liberal Arts in the CAS were enrolled in the ELF program in 2013. COH and CAS students attend ELF classes together meeting for two periods each on Tuesday and Friday.

How do the COH and CAS students regard the ELF Program?

At the end of the spring 2013 semester an online questionnaire regarding the ELF Program was administered to all ELF students including 321 COH and 180 CAS students. A total of 461 COH and CAS students responded to the questionnaire, for a response rate of 92%. The feedback from the students concerning their experiences in the ELF program was positive (see Table 4). When asked if they were satisfied with the ELF Program, 388 students (84%) strongly agreed or agreed. When asked if they understood the purpose and goals of the program, 369 students (80%) strongly agreed or agreed, and a large majority, 427 students (93%), strongly agreed or agreed that they had learned new things in the program. Students also had a positive perception of their ELF classes; 411 students (89%) either agreed or strongly agreed that their

Table 4　*COH and CAS Student Response to 2013 ELF End-of-Spring-Semester Questionnaire (n = 461)*

Questionnaire Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I'm satisfied with the ELF Program.	173	215	59	11	3
2. I understand the purpose and goals of this ELF Program.	87	282	78	12	2
3. I learned new things in this ELF Program.	202	225	28	5	1
4. The ELF Classes were interesting.	235	176	35	13	2
5. I enjoyed the atmosphere of my ELF class.	238	167	43	11	2

ELF classes were interesting. In addition, 405 students (88%) strongly agreed or agreed that the atmosphere of their ELF classroom was enjoyable.

Students were also asked to write their comments, suggestions or questions regarding the program. A total of 211 students out of the 376 students who responded to this questionnaire item had positive things to say about their ELF classes. For example, one student noted, 楽しい従業だった。週2ではなく週4ぐらいで学びたい単元だと思った。(*The classes were really fun. I thought it would be better if we had four classes a week rather than twice a week.*) Another wrote, この従業は，とても英語を身近に感じることができる従業で，英語を話す楽しさなどを学んだ気がする。(*In this class I came to feel much closer to English, and through this experience I came to learn the fun of speaking English.*) In addition to enjoyment of oral communication in English, a number of students also appeared to enjoy the writing component in their ELF classes. For example, 週2回は絶対に英語に触れられ，普段あまり練習する機会のない，ライティングの練習をすることができて良かった。(*I could touch English at least twice a week, and it was good to practice writing, because I normally don't have a chance to do that.*)

A very small minority voiced some disapproval with the ELF program. A total of 33 comments might be categorized as negative. Two examples include: もう少し課題の量を減らして，授業を今より効率よく進めて欲しい。(*I would prefer it if the teacher provided fewer homework assignments, then the class could progress more efficiently.*), and 履修登録の際に授業が強制的に組み込まれていてその時間の他の授業を受けることができなかったため，生徒がクラスと教員を選択できるようにしてほしい。(*When I registered for classes, the forced scheduling of compulsory courses prevented me from choosing a class or time I am happy with. I want to be able to choose class and teacher more freely.*) Based on the limited number of negative comments, the frequency of positive comments and the affirmative nature of student responses to the closed item questions (See Table 4), it was concluded that both COH and CAS students had a positive perception of their ELF classes in the first semester of 2013.

How are the COH and CAS students progressing on the TOEIC?

The average TOEIC IP scores for all COH students in the spring and fall of 2013 were 372 and 393, and the scores for the CAS students were 324 and 350 (See Table 5). While the scores show that students were, on average, able to achieve an increase in the number of TOEIC IP points, comparisons to other benchmarks may be a cause for concern. The average for all ELF students was 354 in spring and 374 in fall. A 2012 report by Educational Testing Service (ETS) on the TOEIC Secure Program (TOEIC SP) scores of Japanese university students indicates that the average score of undergraduate students studying Language or Literature (English major) was 495, with the average score reported as 440 for first-year students and 493 for second year students (ETS, 2012). Students studying Language or Literature (majoring in a language other than English) had an average score of 449, with the average score marked as 425 for first-year students and 447 for second-year students. As many COH and CAS students are interested in becoming teachers, it is worthwhile to consider the average score for students studying Education and Liberal Arts - the overall average for students studying this major was 430 with first-year students averaging 419 and second-year students averaging 435.

Table 5　*Summary of Average TOEIC IP Scores for all ELF Students in 2013*

Colleges Date	Tourism & Hospitality	Humanities	Arts & Sciences	Business Administration	All
July 2013	415 (n = 103)	372 (n = 301)	324 (n = 173)	337 (n = 404)	354 (n = 981)
December 2013	460 (n = 98)	393 (n = 287)	350 (n = 171)	348 (n = 388)	374 (n = 944)

An analysis of all first-year ELF TOEIC IP results raises other points of concern for COH and CAS students. The first-year COH students in 2013 attained an average TOEIC Bridge score of 124, which when converted to a TOEIC score is between 310 and 345.[2] The 2013 CAS students scored lower on the Bridge with an average score of 116, which converts to a score between 280 and approximately 310 on the TOEIC. These first-year students in both colleges appear, on average, to have increased their TOEIC scores by the fall semester. However, when comparing their results with the averages for the entire ELF program, we see that the COH average for fall is only 12 points higher and the CAS score is 20 points lower (See Table 6).

An ANOVA test and Tukey HSD test (See Table 7) indicate that average spring TOEIC scores across colleges were significantly different, except for the College of Business Administration and the College of Arts and Sciences. After one semester of study, only the College of Tourism and Hospitality students scored significantly higher, on average, on the TOEIC IP than their peers in

Table 6　*Average TOEIC Bridge and TOEIC IP Scores of First-year Students in 2013*

Colleges TOEIC	Date	Tourism & Hospitality	Humanities	Arts & Sciences	Business Administration	All
TOEIC Bridge	April 2013	127 (n = 108)	124 (n = 162)	116 (n = 178)	113 (n = 159)	119 (n = 607)
TOEIC IP	July 2013	415 (n = 103)	352 (n = 159)	324 (n = 173)	319 (n = 150)	348 (n = 585)
TOEIC IP	Dec 2013	460 (n = 98)	382 (n = 156)	350 (n = 171)	323 (n = 150)	370 (n = 575)

Table 7　*ANOVA Summary (n = 585)*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
Between Groups	711019.8	3	237006.6	28.91	<.0001
Error	47622542.4	581	8197.1		
Total	5473562.3	584			

Tukey HSD
(Humanities = M1, Business = M2, Liberal Arts = M3, Tourism = M4)
M1 vs M2 p < .01　　M2 vs M3 non significant
M1 vs M3 p < .01　　M2 vs M4 p < .01
M1 vs M4 p < .01　　M3 vs M4 p < .01

the other colleges. COH students performed significantly better on the TOEIC than CAS students and College of Business Administration students.

According to the above mentioned end-of-semester spring 2013 questionnaire, a large majority (86%) of the COH and CAS students perceive that taking the TOEIC, one of the goals of the ELF Program, is worthwhile. Given the value students attribute to this TOEIC component and the value placed on higher TOEIC scores by recruiters (Chujo & Oghigian, 2009) and by organizations making promotion decisions (Tsuji & Tsuji, 2006), perhaps more energy needs to be placed on this component in the ELF curriculum.

A study by Saegusa (1985) identified that 100 to 200 hours of instruction are probably needed before meaningful TOEIC gains can be obtained. Saegusa's large-scale study found that 53% of students who received an average of 84 hours of instruction had made gains of less than 50 points, a number which is less than the margin of error.[3] The 50 hours of ELF study, therefore, may not be enough to foster significant gains in TOEIC scores, or enable students to reach the minimum TOEIC score of 730, which is described as indicating the ability to communicate appropriately in most situations (ETS, 2012). As the ELF curriculum evolves, this shortcoming will need to be examined. One factor that may have the potential for positive effects on the ELF students, including the COH and CAS students, is the ELF tutor service.

The ELF Tutor Service

Following Tamagawa educational philosophy, and specifically the third principle of Zenjin education - self-study and autonomy - a tutoring service was launched in conjunction with the ELF Program in 2013. The tutor system was conceived as an important resource for ELF students to access English and receive support for their study of English.

The 'tutor zone' is staffed by twelve part-time teachers and managed by two full-time faculty members. The tutor zone is opened four days a week, from 11:00 to 16:00. Each tutor is responsible for one or two, 50–minute tutorial periods each week. There are three 'appointments' in one tutor period resulting in a total of 78[4] available appointments per week. Students can reserve one or multiple 15–minute appointments by signing up directly, or they may be referred to the tutor service by their teachers. Services offered by the tutors include review of exams and quizzes, presentation practice, TOEIC study, textbook support, extensive reading support, Blackboard support, grammar study, listening and speaking practice, pronunciation practice, and e-learning support.

How are COH and CAS Students Utilizing the ELF Tutor Service?

Tutor attendance logs and the COH and CAS students' responses to the end-of spring semester questionnaire were analysed in order to report on the students' access to this ELF support service. Online attendance logs kept by each tutor indicated that even though COH (31%) and CAS (18%) make up close to half of the ELF student population, students from these colleges were responsible for only a quarter of all tutor visits (See Table 8). A more critical analysis of the tutor attendance logs revealed that only 18 COH students (5% of the COH student body) and 19 CAS students (11% of CAS student body) actually used the tutor service during the spring semester.

Responses to the end-of-semester spring questionnaire from COH and CAS students provided

Table 8　*Tutor Visits by Students in Spring Semester, 2013*

College	Students	Percentage of ELF population	Tutor Visits	Percentage of Total Visits
Business	421	41	165	41
Tourism	108	11	133	33
Humanities	320	31	67	17
Liberal Arts	180	17	35	9
Total	1,029	100	400	100

Table 9   *CAS and COH Student Perceptions of the Tutor Sessions*

Questionnaire Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. *Tutor experiences were useful.* (n = 165)	25	54	70	7	9
2. *The tutor schedule was convenient.* (n = 456)	19	91	281	46	19

some insight into why the ELF tutorial services were underutilized by this population of ELF students. Only 24% of students strongly agreed or agreed that the tutor schedule was convenient for them (See Table 9). Furthermore, when asked to comment or make suggestions about the tutor service, some students noted, もっと行きやすいようにしてほしいと思う。(*I want it to be easier to receive tutorial services.*); 使える時間帯をもっと自由にしてほしい。(*I want there to be more freedom with the scheduling of ELF tutor sessions.*); 授業とかぶっていてなかなか利用することが出来なかったけれどチューター制度に行った時の感想は役に立ったと思う。(*Even though I think the tutorial service is useful, I couldn't attend tutor sessions because the tutor timetable clashed with my other classes.*) These responses indicate that more consideration needs to be given to when ELF tutorial services are offered. In particular, it appears important to open the service and provide more teachers at times when first and second-year COH and CAS students are free to go to the tutor zone.

A second potential reason why COH and CAS students were less inclined to use tutor services was perhaps because the ELF tutor service is mainly staffed by speakers of English as a first language and tutorial sessions are conducted in English. This tutoring in an English context appears to be a little daunting to some students who noted, 少し入りづらい雰囲気があった気がする。(*The ELF tutor rooms had an atmosphere which made it difficult to enter.*); 話す相手が外人の先生方なので，利用してみたいが，自分が上手く話せるかどうかなど，やはり少し不安もあるのが現状。(*As the tutor is a foreigner, I was worried about whether I could explain myself effectively in English, and this makes me feel uncomfortable.*) Some students, however, appeared to appreciate the opportunity to meet a variety of English speakers and solve problems using English. For example, 受けてはいないが外国の方の先生の英語で会話をすることは大事であると思うので必要だと思う。(*Although I haven't used it, the tutor service gives me the opportunity to speak to teachers from other countries, which is very important for developing my language skills.*); ネイティブの先生と話ができるのでとても良い機会でした。(*The tutor service was a great opportunity to talk with native speakers.*) Even though many students appear to value the current ELF tutor system, student feedback from the spring questionnaire has highlighted that more support needs to be provided to enable students to overcome their anxieties about using the ELF tutor service.

One solution for encouraging COH and CAS students to use the service could be creating a

culture where COH and CAS students use the service regularly. A student commented, 周囲の学生もあまり利用していないよこともあり，なんとなく行きづらい雰囲気があるように感じた。 (*As the students around me were not using the service, it created an atmosphere where I didn't want to use the service myself.*) A good solution to solving this problem is developing a framework in which ELF teachers introduce and promote tutor services to their students. In addition, all ELF teachers who are responsible for teaching CAS and COH students could require students to make a reservation for at least one tutor session at the start of each semester. This policy proved to be successful for the COH tutoring service in 2012 (Furuya, 2013) and could serve to overcome the misunderstanding this group of students appears to have about the service.

In the spring semester student questionnaire, many students commented that they did not understand what the service was or how to use the service. For example, one student commented in English, *I want to explain about Tutor Program in classroom, Tutor program started from this semester. So I would have liked to know how to do in this program and when to use. In starting next semester of this class, I would like to have an explanation about this class,* and another wrote, 誰に何を言えば予約を取れるのか。(*I do not know with whom or how I can reserve tutor services.*) Some other solutions for instructing students on how to use the service and helping students to overcome their anxiety include: providing a thorough instruction on the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS); providing guidance in Japanese about how students can use the tutor service outside of the tutor zone; sharing stories about students who have enjoyed a marked improvement after using the service regularly; and asking COH and CAS homeroom teachers to promote the service.

Table 10 provides a summary of the areas where COH and CAS students sought a tutor's support. Students (40) most frequently visited a tutor for Listening and Speaking Practice. TOEIC related concerns (24 visits) and Writing Support (19 visits) were the other major reasons for students using the tutor service. These trends in student concerns are being closely followed

Table 10　*COH and CAS Student Visits to Tutors in Spring Semester 2013*

Reason	CAS	COH	Total
Presentation Practice	1	1	2
Writing	8	11	19
TOEIC Study	11	13	24
Listening and Speaking Practice	14	26	40
Extensive Reading Support	1	1	2
Textbook Support	0	3	3
Grammar Review	0	2	2
Review of Exams/Quizzes	0	5	5
Other	2	7	9
Total	37	69	106

by the ELF tutor coordinators and tutors, so that effective decisions can be made about how to invest in learning resources and how to focus tutor support and training.

Concluding Remarks

In 2013 the COH and CAS students appeared to be very satisfied with the ELF program and their experiences inside the ELF classroom. However, while average TOEIC scores for both colleges have shown a slight improvement during the 2013 academic year, they are below or equal to the average for the entire ELF program. Furthermore, when compared to the average scores for similar faculties at other Japanese universities, the average score for COH students is about 50 points lower, while that of CAS students is close to 80 points lower. The students' limited use of the ELF tutor service suggests that one reason for the students' poorer proficiency scores may be a lack of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. From a program perspective, we need to take steps to encourage students to take greater ownership of their English learning and be more pro-active in their English studies. We need to consider ways to promote the ELF tutor service to COH and CAS students more effectively, as well as establish a framework which makes it easier for students to access tutor services. We look forward to building on the lessons learned from this evaluation of the 2013 ELF program and we hope that the English level of students in both colleges in 2014 will show improvement.

Notes

1) The average TOEIC Bridge score for the 2012 cohort was 124 (n = 434; range 72–170) and for the 2013 cohort, it was 119 (n = 607; range 50–176).

2) The Educational Testing Service (ETS) TOEIC Bridge and TOEIC Score Comparisons chart shows TOEIC Bridge scores of 120 to 130 corresponding to TOEIC scores of 310 to 345 (ETS, 2006).

3) ETS (n.d.) reports a Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) of 25 scaled score points for both the TOEIC Listening and Reading sections.

4) There were 78 appointments per week in the Fall Semester, 2013–2014. There were only 72 appointments per week in the Spring Semester, 2013.

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文学部・リベラルアーツ学部における ELF プログラム

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要　　約

　玉川大学における ELF プログラムは，2013年度に観光学部，経営学部，文学部，リベラルアーツ学部の1，2年生を合わせ1000人を超える規模に拡大した。本稿では，まず ELF プログラムの概要，そして，文学部とリベラルアーツ学部の学生が ELF プログラムを通してどのように英語を向上させているかに着目した。2013年7月にオンライン上で実施した学生アンケート結果のデータ，チューター制度の利用記録，TOEIC IP スコアを基に分析した。考察の結果，当該学部生は，ELF プログラムに対して肯定的な反応を示していたが，TOEIC IP の結果からみる英語習熟度の進歩はわずかであった。その上，相対的に文学部とリベラルアーツ学部の学生はチューター制度の利用頻度が低く，当該学部生が英語学習をより積極的に取り組めるように指導していく必要性を示していた。

キーワード：ELF, TOEIC, Curriculum, Tutor, Learner Autonomy