INTRODUCTION, RELEVANT RESEARCH, AND PURPOSE

Introduction
- English education in Japanese elementary schools has been introduced since 2002.
- The last Course of Study issued in 2006 included a compulsory period of "Foreign Language Activities" for 5th and 6th graders, and was put into effect in 2011.
- The Course of Study for elementary schools was revised in 2017, and will be put into effect in 2020.
- "Foreign Language Activities" in the 3rd and 4th grades will form the foundation of pupils' communication abilities through sounds and basic expressions in foreign languages.
- "Foreign Language" in the 5th and 6th grades will foster basic communication abilities through language activities that use the four skills.
- A methodology and a content course were set up for the national core curriculum as part of the undergraduate elementary school teacher's certification program in 2019.

Purposes of This Project (JSPS KAKENHI project)
- to examine the core curriculum
- to propose a concrete and comprehensive model program for the pre-service teacher training course based on the core curriculum

Purposes of This Research
- to examine the establishment of items in the core curriculum for the methodology course
- to provide data on the effectiveness of the core curriculum for elementary school teachers

RELEVANT STUDIES ON THE CORE CURRICULUM
- Sakai and Uchino (2018) conducted a questionnaire survey to university students who attended the course on teaching English to elementary school pupils.
- Six issues, such as insufficient time to cover the curriculum and heavy workload, were found to be obstacles to implement the core curriculum.

METHODS
- Participants
4 universities in Japan (3 national, 1 private) 255 undergraduate students

- Procedures
A pretest-treatment-posttest design
Tests were administered online using Google Forms
Data were collected in the class with (written) consent from the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Core Curriculum for Teaching English in Pre-service Training & Test Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Categories</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest Ave (SD)</td>
<td>2.9 (1.58)</td>
<td>3.0 (1.59)</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest Ave (SD)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.29 (.45)</td>
<td>.23 (.40)</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s α</td>
<td>.445</td>
<td>.656</td>
<td>.636</td>
<td>.715</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Test items (see Results)
A total of 35 items based on 4 categories (A, B, C, D) regarding the core curriculum (see Results)
The test consisted of 35 multiple-choice questions, each with 4 choices including the answer "I don't know".
One point was given for each correct answer.
Pilot-tested in September 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ave (SD)</th>
<th>Ave (SD)</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>2.9 (1.58)</td>
<td>3.0 (1.59)</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>2.19 (.63)</td>
<td>2.17 (.62)</td>
<td>small</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.17 (.62)</td>
<td>2.16 (.61)</td>
<td>small</td>
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<td>2.16 (.61)</td>
<td>2.15 (.60)</td>
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Item Categories A B C D

Categories A: Knowledge and understanding of elementary school foreign language education

- How to cope with diversity among pupils and schools
- How to introduce written language and conduct reading and writing activities
- Providing aural input based on pupil's developmental stage
- Communicating well with others depending on the purpose, context, and situation
- The process of language learning: from input to output and from sounds to letters
- Understanding the importance of enhancing awareness of interesting aspects and the richness of languages, in connection with other subjects such as Japanese

Category B: Knowledge about children's second language acquisition and its applications to teaching

Category C: Teaching techniques

Category D: Lesson planning

REFERENCES

Is the National Core Curriculum for Teaching English in Pre-service Training Effective? : A Validation of Elementary School Teacher Courses

Kyoko KASUYA, Tetsuo BABA, Osamu TAKEUCHI, Noriko KAWAKAMI, Wataru SUZUKI, Shunsuke UCHINO, Yoshiaki TAKAYAMA, Motoko ABE, Misato USUKURA, Ryuchi YOROZUYA, Koichi ANO, Hiroshi OTA, Tatsuya NAKANO, & Hideki SAKAI

a. Tokyo Gakugei University, b. Kansai University, c. Kagoshima Junshin University, d. Miyagi University of Education, e. Hokkaido University of Education, f. Bunkyo University, g. Tokyo Kasei University, h. Komazawa Women’s College, i. Shinsyu University

Correspondence: Kyoko KASUYA (kasuya1111@kagakuryo.ac.jp)

Acknowledgement: This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 18H00687.

Data were collected in the class with (written) consent from the participants.

The Course of Study for elementary schools was revised in 2017, and will be put in connection with other subjects such as Japanese.

Participants
- A methodology and a content course were set up for the national core curriculum as part of the undergraduate elementary school teacher's certification program in 2019.

Self-assessment by the students was generally low at the beginning of the course.

Six issues, such as insufficient time to cover the curriculum and heavy workload, were found to be obstacles to implement the core curriculum.

One point was given for each correct answer.

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Pilot-tested in September 2019

Pretest (online) October 2019
- Taking a methodology course based on the core curriculum (90 min x 15 weeks)

Posttest (online) January: February 2019
- The process of language learning: from input to output and from sounds to letters
- How to introduce written language and conduct reading and writing activities
- Providing aural input based on pupil's developmental stage
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Category A: Knowledge and understanding of elementary school foreign language education

The process of language acquisition through language use

The process of inferring meaning from aural input

Providing aural input based on pupil's developmental stage

Category B: Knowledge about children's second language acquisition and its applications to teaching

How to cope with diversity among pupils and schools

How to introduce written language and conduct reading and writing activities

Category C: Teaching techniques

Effective ways of talking to pupils in English

How to interact with pupils and eliciting utterances from them

How to introduce written language and conduct reading and writing activities

Category D: Lesson planning

Lesson planning

Selecting and studying teaching materials

Setting learning goals and making lesson plans (including annual class plans, unit plans, and one-hour lesson plans)

Designing and conducting team-taught lessons with an assistant language teacher such as a native speaker of English or a Japanese English teacher

Utilizing ICT in teaching

Assessment of learning (including conducting performance tests and utilizing achievement goals)

- Scores of categories C and D more likely increased than those of categories A and B.

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Item Categories A B C D

Category A: Knowledge and understanding of elementary school foreign language education

The Course of Study (government curriculum guideline)

Coordination among elementary, junior high, and senior high schools and the role of elementary schools

How to introduce written language and conduct reading and writing activities

Providing aural input based on pupil’s developmental stage

Communicating well with others depending on the purpose, context, and situation

Category B: Knowledge about children’s second language acquisition and its applications to teaching

The process of language learning: from input to output and from sounds to letters

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- Scores of categories C and D more likely increased than those of categories A and B.

Effect size threshold

- small<|.50|
- medium<|.80|
- large<.80|

Participants
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Reference
