Towards a CLIL Syllabus in Japanese Universities

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Abstract

This paper presents the results of a research study of a university English language course which utilizes a Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) framework. CLIL is a burgeoning educational approach which draws on aspects of bilingualism education, second language acquisition theories, and content-based education. The current centralized English education English education policies in Japan have intended to steer secondary and tertiary curriculums towards preparing the citizenry for an increasingly globalized society. Nihon University’s Faculty of Humanities and Sciences English Department draws on the solid theoretical foundations of CLIL, and its success in similar EFL contexts, to create an English curriculum in line with MEXT’s stated goals.

Key Words: Content and language integrated learning (CLIL), Acquisition versus learning, Cognition, Sociocultural theory

1 Introduction

The teaching of subject areas through a foreign language, often referred to as Content-Based Language Learning (CBLL) and Content Language and Integrated Learning (CLIL), is growing in popularity. Through pioneering bilingual immersion programs in Canada and the USA (Cummins & Swain, 1986; Genesee, 1987), there has been a progression of bilingual education worldwide, especially in Europe, where institutions have realized that foreign language learning is not only a means to economic, health and cognitive advancement (Marsh & Mehisto, 2011), but also a route to cohesion and community building (Moreno de Diezmas, 2016). Thus, Europe has seen a rapid expansion of CLIL, considering it to be an effective model of language acquisition.

Although “CLIL has become a highly topical issue due to its substantial increase in
popularity” (Lagasbaster & Zarobe, 2010), it has made few inroads to the Japanese foreign language curriculum. One reason for this may be historical; due to the centuries-long self-imposed isolation of the Edo Period, foreign language learning in Japan did not begin until the end of the 19th century. Since then, English education at the secondary and tertiary levels has primarily been carried out using the Grammar Translation Method or *yakudoku* (Gorsuch, 1998), primarily for the purpose of introducing western knowledge and technology into Japan. The main activity of this method is the verbatim translation of English texts into Japanese, and students are given little opportunity to speak except in instances of rote repetition. As a result, Japan has found itself lagging behind other EFL countries in English proficiency. In fact, recent TOEFL scores rank Japan as at or close to the bottom (ETS, 2009).

This disadvantage has not been lost on the Ministry of Education, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), which has for some time recognized that due to globalization, an increased influx of foreigners into Japan, and most recently the upcoming 2020 Tokyo Olympics, Japan has a growing need for communicative English skills. Thus, MEXT over the years has taken various measures to remedy this situation. These measures included incorporating oral communication into high schools (MEXT, 2002), designating foreign language as a compulsory subject in high schools, emphasizing “practical communicative abilities” (MEXT, 1999), and enacting the Five-year Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities (MEXT 2003), in order that “basic and practical abilities will be acquired so that the entire public can conduct daily conversation and exchange information in English” (p. 1).

Despite good intentions by MEXT, most high school graduates enter the university lacking adequate intercultural, communicative, cognitive and linguistic skills. It is within this context that the present article introduces a case study conducted in a Japanese university which aims to enhance linguistic competence, cultural awareness and cognitive ability as part of an English syllabus within a CLIL framework. The paper reflects on the large potential of authentic literary texts and linguistic content in promoting the above pedagogical skills. With these goals in mind, this paper describes the advantages of using CLIL as a pedagogical approach. The first part of the paper will describe the theoretical underpinnings of CLIL, followed by the description of a CLIL curriculum known as Academic English (AE), and finally the results of a study investigating the efficacy of the AE curriculum will be presented.

2 **Theoretical underpinnings of CLIL**

The development of a CLIL syllabus draws in part on four key aspects of language education: genre based language teaching, task-based methods, the centrality of texts, and continuous assessment (Lorenzo, 2010), as well as the integration of language and content.
2.1 Genre-based language teaching

Language education which focuses on a genre approach draws on influences as wide ranging as functional linguistics (Halliday 1994), and the sociology of language (Bernstein 1971). Halliday’s functional linguistics emphasizes how language is used, rather than its form. As Halliday notes:

Every text – that is everything that is said or written – unfolds in some context of use; furthermore it is the uses of language that, over tens of thousands of generations, have shaped the system. Language has evolved to satisfy human needs; and the way it is organized is functional with respect to these needs (1994, xii).

Bernstein (1971) in his socio-linguistic approach to learning prefers to focus on how the language system is a consequence of the social relations of speakers. In combining these two influences, language policies around the world, but especially in Europe, have designed language programs which incorporate a variety of texts with social and academic value, including minutes, announcement, literary narratives, memos, complaint forms, and power point presentations (Lorenzo, 2011).

2.2 Task-based methods

As children begin to communicate in their first language, they do so without using sentences, often uttering pairs of nouns which can be interpreted in various ways depending on the intonation and context. Thus, it can be argued that grammar is subsidiary to lexis, and it is possible to be meaningful with limited grammar. Task-based language teaching methods, which grew out of communicative language teaching, see meaning as the starting point for language education, and teachers should have students use the language as much as possible to communicate, especially engaging in activities in what Breen describes as

“… a range of work plans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning – from brief and simple exercise types to more complex and lengthy activities…” (qtd. in Willis & Willis, 2007, 12).

Such “work plans” in a CLIL oriented syllabus have students engage in tasks in a closely defined area of study, such as linguistics or literature.
2.3 Centrality of Texts

Authenticity of materials is a defining notion of CLIL. Too often language education engages in a formalist approach that marginalizes texts in the language syllabus. In order to make language meaningful, it is necessary to go beyond the sentence, a language unit without social value or meaning, and draw students’ attention by selecting literary, authentic, and commercial texts, thus getting them involved in language analysis, processing and meaningful engagement with the text.

2.4 Continuous Assessment

CLIL follows a process model of knowledge assessment. While traditional assessments models tend toward evaluating students’ metalinguistic knowledge with final exams, CLIL offers students a continuous assessment technique which evaluates students’ knowledge and performance in smaller increments.

3 What is CLIL?

CLIL is an educational approach in which an additional language is used as the medium of instruction. Education using the students’ second language is hardly new. According to Horace (2011), “Conquered Greece took prisoner her rough conqueror and introduced the arts to rustic Latium” (p 10). That is to say, as far back as ancient Rome, when Greek territory, language and culture was absorbed by the Roman Empire, families educated their children in Greek in order to afford them the linguistic, social and economic benefits such an education would provide (Coyle et al., 2010).

Fast forward to the present day, and we can see, as mentioned earlier, that the demands of globalization influence who learns what language. Although the driving forces of each region affect how languages are taught, wanting to achieve the best results in the shortest time can be a common objective. Thus, CLIL draws on both learning theories and theories of second language acquisition. Learning theories beginning with the cognitive revolution of Bruner (1960), who broke with behaviorism by saying that learners construct their own meaning, and Vygotsky (1986), who focused on mentorism and social interactionism in which knowledge and language is gained through interactions with others, the socio-cultural and constructivist perspectives of learning had a large impact on educational practice. These led to areas such as Gardener’s multiple intelligences (1983), learner autonomy (Bensen & Voller, 1997), and language learning strategies (Oxford, 1989).

Thus, CLIL would appear to straddle both theories of learning and SLA leading to its own
educational approach giving attention to integrating both language and content.

⋯[A]chieving this twofold aim calls for the development of a special approach to teaching in that the non-language subject is not taught in a foreign language but with and through a foreign language. (Eurydice, 2006: 8)

A conceptual representation this can be seen in Coyle et al.’s Language Triptych in figure 1, in which she distinguishes among language of learning, language for learning and language through learning.

**Language of learning** looks at the language needed for the learner to access the concepts and skills of the subject matter. Halliday’s work on functional linguistics is of particular note here, as it points the teacher towards less of a reliance on the progression of grammatical difficulty than “functional and notional levels demanded by the content” (Coyle et al., 2010). In other words, utilizing the past tense authentically in a CLIL class gives the learners opportunities to use the language in a content-specific and meaningful way.

**COMMUNICATION**

\[
\text{Language of learning}
\]

\[
\text{Language for learning}
\]

\[
\text{Language through learning}
\]

Figure 1 The Language Triptych (Coyle; 2000)


**Language for Learning** entails using the language in order to be able to function in a foreign language environment. This requires substantial planning by the teacher in order to give the students the requisite language strategies to be able to do pair work, cooperate in groups, ask questions, chat, debate, memorize and so on (Caraker, 2012). Students need access to language that will allow them to be able to support each other and be supported to maximize learning.

**Language through Learning** puts the focus of the language classroom on the content. In this respect, students need to be able to articulate their understanding of the content. As such, talk, dialogues and interaction among students and teachers about the content leads to a deeper understanding and linguistic development (Mohan and Van Neerson, 1997).

There is seldom enough time in classrooms for language teachers to go beyond the essential linguistic fundamentals: grammar, vocabulary, functions, and so on. Students require opportunities to construct meaning with the nuts and bolts of language. The next section will show how CLIL gives learners a natural environment for language development which builds on other forms of learning.

### 3.1 The 4Cs Framework

CLIL is made up of and integrates four learning blocks: content, communication, cognition

![The 4Cs framework for CLIL (Coyle, 2005)](image)

Figure 2  The 4Cs framework for CLIL (Coyle, 2005)
Towards a CLIL Syllabus in Japanese Universities

and culture. Coyle calls this the 4Cs Framework (Figure 3). The interrelatedness of the four CLIL aspects takes place by progressing through skill areas and the content, engaging in cognitive processing, communicating about the material, and acquiring intercultural awareness (Coyle et al., 2010).

The 4Cs Framework is central to any CLIL curriculum; although there are lessons to be learned from the framework, and ideas to be emulated and expanded upon, one CLIL size does not fit all. In other words, there is not one universal CLIL model, and thankfully so. There is considerable curricular variation in CLIL, which can be manifested in various ways.

4 Variations in CLIL curriculums

The following explores two issues to be considered when deciding to incorporate a CLIL program at the tertiary level: operating factors and scale. Within these include the availability of teachers, level of the students, allocation of time, integration with other aspects of the department curriculum, assessment issues and the size the program.

4.1 Operating factors

- The importance of teacher availability cannot be understated. The CLIL program described in this paper relies on teamwork and high levels of coordination among the teachers rather than individual implementation.
- The level of the students as well as the teachers.
- Time is another factor, specifically the allotment of time to the curriculum within the whole department. AE makes up only 12.5% of the students’ required English major subjects in the first 2 years.
- How language is integrated with the content: within the course, or separate from the course (before or after). In AE, language and content are fully integrated within the linguistics and literature components, but an academic writing component is separate from the CLIL curriculum.
- Lastly, how the students will be graded influences the type of CLIL program. Is the assessment process oriented throughout the course, or summative at the end of the course? Are both content and language assessed or only one?

4.2 Scale

Coyle et al. (2010) point out two instructional models of the language of instruction: extensive and partial. The AE curriculum comprises only 12.5% of the entire curriculum in the first and
second year, and uses English exclusively as the vehicular language. There are no switches to
the first language, and the focus is on content, language, cognition and culture. Thus, looking
at the Department of English Language and Literature as a whole, the AE model is partial.
Although it is outside of the scope of this paper, other classes in the English department may
be construed as bilingual blended instruction in which the teachers code-switch between
Japanese and English.

5 Classroom Context

The present case study was designed for and conducted in a first-year English as a Foreign
Language (EFL) class called Academic English (AE) as part of a broader context of a revised
curriculum for English majors in the Department of English Language and Literature of the
Faculty of Humanities and Sciences at Nihon University in Tokyo, Japan. The syllabus grew
out of a departmental need to teach all first- and second-year English majors fundamental
English skills of academic writing, group discussion, oral presentation, and reading strategies.
Furthermore, it was deemed necessary to introduce students to the main content areas of the
English department, namely English linguistics and literature. Finally, AE is part of a switch to
a zemi system, where students focus on one area of English linguistics or literature for the final
two years of their study. It was hoped that by incorporating a CLIL curriculum into AE, students
would gain enough proficiency and knowledge to be able to select one of the three full-time
native speakers as their zemi advisor, therefore enabling the students to eventually write their
senior theses in English under the tutelage of these teachers.

AE teaches all 135 first year English majors, employing three full-time and three part-time
native English teachers. Each class has about 25 students and meets for 90 minutes weekly. The
CLIL curricular content, topics, skills, assignments and evaluation procedures are coordinated
across the six sections and teachers.

5.1 Implementation of the Syllabus

The syllabus of the course was organized into a number of didactic units consisting of issues
which were thought to be of interest to the students: regional English dialects, gender and
language, growing up and homesickness. Different literary and expository texts were chosen
for each unit, and pre-, during, and post-reading/listening tasks were designed. Students did
the activities both in and outside of the class.

The main criterion in selecting the literary and linguistic texts for the syllabus was to
describe other ways of life within an English speaking context, as well as to present an
accessible entre to the field of applied linguistics. Furthermore, the texts were chosen because
of the potential they displayed for the development of intercultural awareness, cognitive engagement and communication. Together with this potential, length of the texts was important in the selection process. It was hoped to avoid negative attitudes towards the additional amount of reading the new syllabus introduced. Thus, entertaining texts were chosen which the students could approach without much difficulty. With this in mind, the following short stories were selected from a reader of North American short stories titled Discovering Fiction: Shirley Jackson’s “Charles” (1948), Yoshiko Uchida’s “The Bracelet” (1976), and Sandra Cisneros’s “Eleven” (1990). For the linguistics texts, a listening unit on regional dialects and an expository text on gender and language were selected from the Cambridge NorthStar series.

An example of a unit on literary characterization as developed for the classroom is described below in detail, as is a second unit on applied linguistics which attempts to improve aspects of intercultural fluency through studying regional dialects.

5.2 Literary Characterization Unit

The Shirley Jackson short story “Charles” presents a humorous vehicle to highlight its main message which is that one way boys face the tensions of becoming masculine is to learn to hide their fears by acting tough when, in reality, they may not be so strong after all. As part of the entrance to the unit, students discussed classroom culture in American and Japanese classrooms, especially as it relates to poor behavior. The literary focus on the unit was on characterization, or how an author creates characters based on “physical descriptions, speech, thoughts, action, and observations from other characters” (Kay & Gelshenen, 2013: 60). In addition, students were asked to discuss how the story being told from the point of view of the mother leads to a surprise ending. Finally, students exhibited their understanding of the different characters of the story by crafting original dramatizations of various characters in the story. The aim of these activities was for students to become aware of the literary tool of characterization, engage in interactive tasks to boost their communicative competence, enhance their cross-cultural awareness, and develop their cognitive skills. Some of the activities from the unit are described in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Reading</th>
<th>While Reading</th>
<th>Post-Reading</th>
<th>Dramatization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss differences in classroom culture</td>
<td>Take notes on the main characters’ behaviors</td>
<td>Analyze how characters are developed</td>
<td>Present a short skit in pairs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1
5.3 Regional Dialects Unit

This unit focuses on sociolinguistics, especially how regional dialects affect language and identity. The unit draws attention to both the positive and negative consequences of how cultural stereotypes are assigned due to differing regional dialects. In order to analyze the differences in regional dialects, a recording from NorthStar’s “Separated by the Same Language” was chosen in which a college student from St. Vincent, BWI was interviewed. The recording highlights differences in pronunciation between Caribbean English and standard North American English, paying special attention to sentences such culturally loaded sentences as, “Oh, I love your accent; it’s so musical,” and “You speak slowly, so you must think slowly, too” (Schmidt & Solórzano, 2009: 203). Furthermore, a university lecture on code-switching between teenage dialects and standard English was used. The following activities were suggested, as shown in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Listening</th>
<th>While Listening</th>
<th>Post-Listening</th>
<th>Oral Presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enumerate the characteristics that are determined by accent</td>
<td>Take notes on accent and identity</td>
<td>Consolidate info from teen dialects and regional dialects through role play interviews</td>
<td>Deliver a short oral speech on a regional, or social dialect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 The context of the study

This section describes the participants of the study, the instrument used to collect the students’ opinions and the research procedure.

6.1 Teachers’ and students’ profile

The teachers in charge of implementing AE of the CLIL program were 5 native English speakers with graduate degrees in both applied linguistics and English literature. They had between 10 and 25 years of teaching experience in both North American and Japanese universities. With regards to teaching experience in CLIL curriculums, the teachers taught Occupational Therapy English, English for Medical and Nursing students, applied linguistics, classics and post-colonial English literature.

One hundred and thirty four first-year English majors from Nihon University’s Department of English Language and Literature took part in the study. The students were enrolled in AE 1 and 2, which met once a week for one hour and thirty minutes. There were approximately 25 students in each class. English was the language of instruction for all the classes.
6.2 Questionnaire and procedure

In order to ascertain the participants’ opinions about the implementation of the CLIL program, a twelve-item questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was designed by the researcher, which consisted of closed-ended questions. The first part of the questionnaire used a Likert scale, in which students could choose from five options, and the second part included questions with four options. The questionnaire was completed in class, and the students worked individually for 15 minutes. The teachers were present to address any queries by the students.

The different sections of the close-ended questionnaire elicited information about the participants’ impressions of:

- The course, the learning materials and the teachers (items 1, 2 and 3);
- Learning, language skills, and content improvement (items 4 and 5)
- Self-evaluation of skills (items 6-12)
- Topics (item 13);

Open-ended questions were also used to assess what the participants liked about the course, how to improve the course, and what they expected from the course. The open-ended questions will be examined in another study (Caraker, Forthcoming). The data was analyzed using quantitative measures.

7 Results

Most notable is the positive impression of the CLIL course. As can be seen in figure 1, 93 students (70%) were either very satisfied or satisfied (item 1). Regarding the learning materials (item 2), 64 students (48%) were either very satisfied or satisfied, as seen in figure 2. Although this is less than the majority, 79 students (60%) felt the materials were at just the right level of difficulty (item 2a). Figure 3 shows students’ impressions of the various pedagogic activities in AE; sixty four students (48%) felt that the interactive activities (group and pair work) were the most valuable, followed by 54 students (40%) appreciating the writing assignments. Twenty students (15%) acknowledged the value of the oral presentations (item 4). Only ten students (7.5%) suggested changing the content of the texts (item 5).
Towards a CLIL Syllabus in Japanese Universities

Figure 1

Satisfaction with AE

- completely unsatisfied: 1%
- unsatisfied: 3%
- neither satisfied nor unsatisfied: 36%
- satisfied: 32%
- very satisfied: 28%

Figure 2

Satisfaction with AE materials

- completely unsatisfied: 1%
- unsatisfied: 2%
- neither satisfied nor unsatisfied: 19%
- satisfied: 42%
- very satisfied: 36%

Figure 3

Most valuable activities

- Writing: 49%
- Oral presentations: 24%
- Interactive Speaking: 7%
- Reading Skill: 19%
- Vocabulary Development: 1%

Writing
Oral presentations
Interactive Speaking
Reading Skill
Vocabulary Development
Regarding their self-described learning gains, 109 students (81%) felt there was some or substantial improvement in their writing ability, indicating it as the area of the most improvement. Eighty eight students (67%) and 76 students (56%) showed improvement in their oral presentation and interactive speaking abilities, respectively. Reading skills and vocabulary were an important component of the AE curriculum: 85 students (63%) and 81 students (60%) indicated both improvement and significant improvement in this category. The participants felt that there was the least improvement in listening comprehension and grammar among all the skill areas. Eighty three students (62%) noticed substantial improvement in listening, while only 62 students (46%) noticed substantial improvement in their grammar ability.

Item 13 dealt with the participants’ impressions of the different content areas introduced in each AE unit. As mentioned earlier, these areas consisted of three literature reading passages: “Charles”, “The Bracelet” and “Eleven”, and two applied linguistics topics: regional dialects and social dialects. The top two content areas were regional dialects, and the short story, “Charles” with 62 and 52 students, respectively favorably evaluating these areas.

8 Conclusions and pedagogical implications

In spite of their limited experience with a CLIL-oriented curriculum, the participants in this study enjoyed their experience, were satisfied with the teaching, manifested a high level of satisfaction with the content of the course, and perceived an overall improvement in their English proficiency. They also considered, to a large extent, that they improved their receptive and productive skills in English. Lastly, final marks in the written and oral assessments indicate that almost all the students managed to successfully learn the curricular content of the subject matter.

Based on the experience of the first year of the project, the study has underscored some key factors in the successful implementation of the CLIL-oriented curriculum. First of all, CLIL programs need to be fostered by the whole department or school, and not by individual teachers. The AE course at the Department of English Language and Literature coordinates 6 teachers among all first-year English majors, since, as mentioned in section 1, the initial stages of any CLIL program require if not whole-school level decisions, then at least intra-department coordination of student profiles that will participate in the program, the teachers involved, and the subject content to be taught.

Second, CLIL programs need to be supported by appropriate didactic materials that adhere to the needs of the students involved (Fernandez and Halbach, 2011). Finally, in relation to the learning benefits of CLIL, as Barredo (2011) points out:
Towards a CLIL Syllabus in Japanese Universities

[…] such a program needs to be evaluated in order to measure whether both the linguistic and subject objectives are being met, and to evaluate whether the learning benefits gained by the program merit the invested energy and resources (p. 310).

Results from the evaluation carried out by the program administrators for AE at Nihon University’s Department of English Language and Literature show that CLIL not only has improved students’ communicative competence in English, but also their overall competence in reading literature and applied linguistics. Similar conclusions can be seen in studies across Europe, which also incorporate CLIL programs (Beatens Beadmore, 2008; Lagazabaster and Zarobe, 2010).

However, although it must be noted that due to CEFR, many European countries have embraced CLIL as a curricular/pedagogic route to multilingualism, cognitive growth and intercultural advancement, Japan due to its historic influences, cultural and geographic isolation and linguistic markedness, has thus far resisted efforts to follow. It is currently difficult for Nihon University Department of English Language and Literature to adopt a department-wide CLIL framework, let alone one that expands to other departments of the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences. If Japan is to truly become a member of the modern day global society, where communicative resources, and personal mobility and international relations are on the increase, it must find a way to incorporate what Kumaravadivelu describes as post-method pedagogies which are

[…] more sensitive to the local exigencies, awakened to the opportunity afforded by post-method pedagogies to help practicing teachers develop their own theory of practice, awakened to the multiplicity of learner identities, awakened to the complexity of teacher beliefs and awakened to the vitality of macrostructures – social, cultural, political, and historical – that shape the reshape the microstructures of our pedagogic enterprise (Kumaravadivelu, 2006: 75).

What Kumaravadivelu terms as local exigencies can, for the purposes of this paper, refer to the disconnect between the MEXT policy guidelines for English education and the classroom realities throughout Japan, and specifically at Nihon University. In order to continue to expand CLIL in Japanese universities, further programs similar to the one at Nihon University need to be enacted and scrutinized to see if their implementation can adhere to Japan’s local pedagogic ecology.
Works Cited


### Appendix 1 Questionnaire

1. **How satisfied are you with the Academic English class?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all satisfied</th>
<th>A little dissatisfied</th>
<th>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. **What do you think of the materials?**

   a. **Too easy**
   | A little easy | Neither easy nor difficult | Difficult | Too difficult |
   b. **Not at all satisfied**
   | A little dissatisfied | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | Satisfied | Very satisfied |

3. **How satisfied are you with the Academic English teachers?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all satisfied</th>
<th>A little dissatisfied</th>
<th>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4. **What is good about the class?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content of the textbooks</th>
<th>Pair and group work activities</th>
<th>Oral Presentations</th>
<th>Pace</th>
<th>The writing assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. **What improvement can be made?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change the contents of the textbooks</th>
<th>Slow the pace of the class</th>
<th>Longer reading passages</th>
<th>More writing assignments</th>
<th>More explicit grammar instruction</th>
<th>More pair and group work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6. **One objective of this course is to improve my speaking skill. I feel that I improved this skill as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No improvement</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Some improvement</th>
<th>A large improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

7. **One objective of this course is to improve my listening skill. I feel that I improved this skill as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No improvement</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Some improvement</th>
<th>A large improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

8. **One objective of this course is to build vocabulary. I feel that I improved this skill as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No improvement</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Some improvement</th>
<th>A large improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

9. **One objective of this course is to improve my grammatical knowledge. I feel that I improved this knowledge as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No improvement</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Some improvement</th>
<th>A large improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10. **One objective of this course is to improve my reading skill. I feel that I improved this skill as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No improvement</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Some improvement</th>
<th>A large improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. **One objective of this course is to improve my oral presentation skill. I feel that I improved this skill as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No improvement</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Some improvement</th>
<th>A large improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12. **One objective of this course is to improve my writing skill. I feel that I improved this skill as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No improvement</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Some improvement</th>
<th>A large improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

13. **Which unit in AE did you find the most valuable?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paragraph</th>
<th>Charles</th>
<th>Dialects</th>
<th>Gender and Language</th>
<th>The Bracelet</th>
<th>Eleven</th>
<th>Essay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>