

Developing would-be teachers' skills to analyze textbooks critically[†]

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Abstract

With a view to exploring ways to develop would-be teachers' skills to analyze teaching materials critically, the author has investigated what effect his lessons on materials analysis had on 17 university students in raising their critical awareness about textbooks. The investigation was conducted on the basis of: (1) a questionnaire asking whether there was a change in their views on textbooks, (2) the comments made by the students in the author's course of English pedagogy where materials analysis was taken up as part of the syllabus, and (3) the comments written in their term papers dealing with the task of analyzing textbooks.

The results of the investigation showed that both the lessons on materials analysis and the term papers were considered effective in raising the students' critical awareness about textbooks, in light of the fact that the students confessed they had not thought much about the contents of textbooks before they took the lessons. In addition, judging from the contents of the students' comments, it may also be said that, though there are individual differences, steps for developing their critical awareness through the lessons and the term papers can be explained on two levels: the level closer to the learner's and the level closer to the teacher's. This categorization may imply the importance of examining issues concerned with textbooks from the learner' as well as the teacher's standpoint in the pre-service training.

Key Words : materials analysis, teacher education, English language

1. Introduction

In recent years, more and more teaching materials have been coming onto the market in the form of "comprehensive packages" (Block, 1991; Richards & Rodgers, 2001), providing teachers

with various teaching aids and detailed instructions about what to do with such materials. Inevitably, such teaching aids and instructions cannot help exerting a tremendous influence, whether good or bad, on the actual practices of teaching and learning languages, given their important role in learning and teaching (McGrath, 2002; Tomlinson, 1998).

This situation is particularly relevant to the teaching context of secondary schools in Japan

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where the School Education Act requires the teachers to use the textbooks authorized by the Ministry of Education. As Imura (2003) states, the teaching materials employed in this context provide teachers with various types of teaching aids. For instance, one of the textbooks widely used in Japanese upper secondary schools, *Crown English Series I* (2002, Sanseido) provides various teaching and learning aids such as cassette tapes, CDs, and student workbooks. The textbook also supplies teachers with detailed teaching plans, including examples of interaction between the teacher and students for each lesson and even sample questions for their mid-term and final examinations. Similar teaching aids and detailed instructions are provided by another major textbook in the context, *Unicorn English Course I* (2002, Bun-eido).

Such packaged materials are utilized by most teachers of English in Japan, who are often pressed by duties other than just teaching and do not have much time to prepare for their classes (Wakabayashi, 1983). This situation causes a problem, since it can deplete teachers' ability to look at and analyze their textbooks critically (Cunningsworth, 1984) – the skill considered essential for effective and efficient teaching.

Under the current circumstances, it may be difficult to expect teachers on the job to develop such skills for critical analysis of textbooks, as their time for studying their textbooks is extremely limited. In order to improve the situation, it may be more realistic to think of developing would-be teachers' skill at the stage of pre-service training (e.g., while studying at university). Thus, this study will explore how to develop would-be teachers' skill to analyze textbooks critically.

2. Literature review

2.1 Definition of "analyzing materials critically"

As the word "critical" has various meanings such as "important," "serious/worrying," "criticizing," and "making judgments" (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (LDOCE), 2003:403), it often

causes misunderstanding among those who hear or see it. In this study, the word is used not to mean "expressing 'disapproval of someone or something' (LDOCE, 2003:404)," but to mean "expressing 'judgments about the good and bad qualities of something' (LDOCE, 2003:404)."

Having clarified the meaning of the word "critical" used in this paper, the author should note that this study assumes that the skill of "analyzing materials critically" is developed out of the skills for critical thinking, which is defined as "a level of reading comprehension or discussion skills when the learner is able to question and evaluate what is read or heard" (*Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*, 2002:135).

2.2 Studies concerned with the critical analysis of materials

While there are a certain number of studies on teacher education in the field of foreign language teaching (e.g., Borg, 2003; Freeman, 2002; Hatta, 2000), those concerned particularly with developing teachers' skills to analyzing materials critically are not found, as far as the author has explored. On the other hand, though not directly concerned with teacher education, there is a study which teaches the skills to analyze texts critically (i.e., Cots, 2006).

With the aim of demonstrating how Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) can be implemented in foreign language teaching, Cots (2006) presents a teaching activity which examines a text on an unusual community, with a non-critical view. He then explains the difference between a critical view and a non-critical view and shows how the activity can be conducted with a critical view, which is suggested not as an alternative to the activity originally intended by the authors, but as one complementing it. This complementing activity takes the form of asking learners some questions based on the text, such as "Are the Amish typical American people? Why?" (p.340) and "In your opinion, who wrote the text? An Amish or a non-Amish person? Try to justify your answer." (p.340)

Following this illustration, he shows how the activity using CDA can be implemented in the framework proposed by Willis (1996), which has three stages: namely, pre-task, task cycle, and language focus. In conclusion, he states that the suggested activities will help develop "learners' capacity to interpret a text within a specific communicative, social, and ideological context and react to it taking into account their personal experience and values." (p.344)

Now, Cots (2006) can be positively evaluated in that he has shown how to teach students the skill to analyze materials critically with some concrete examples, which is useful for the author of this study to develop teaching plans for equipping would-be teachers with such skills. On the other hand, his suggestions have not been tested in the actual classroom, which indicates a need for further research on the issue.

3. Research design

3.1 Research questions

With the abovementioned issues taken into account, this study aims to investigate what effect the teaching of materials analysis has on university students (i.e., would-be teachers) in raising their critical awareness of textbooks in general, on the basis of which the two research questions are formed.

- (1) To what extent have the lessons on materials analysis changed the students' views on textbooks?
- (2) How did their views change both after attending each lesson on materials analysis and after writing their term papers on materials analysis?

3.2 Participants

The participants in this research are 17 students at Akita University, who intend to take the teacher's license in Foreign Languages (English) and are in the author's course "Seminar in English language teaching." Of these, one is a graduate student in the Graduate School of Education,

while the other 16 are undergraduate students belonging to the Faculty of Education and Human Studies. All the undergraduate students are in their third or fourth year at the university and the majority have experienced teaching practice in the elementary or lower secondary schools attached to the university. Most of them are majoring in English language teaching or linguistics, while a few are majors in other subjects such as physical education, special school education and human development.

3.3 Course description

The course "Seminar in English language teaching" was taught by the author with aims to help students to (1) acquire the practical skills for analyzing materials, (2) acquire the practical skills for developing materials, (3) acquire the practical skills for designing tests and evaluating students, (4) understand the realities in public lower secondary schools, and (5) make appropriate teaching plans with learning contexts taken into account. The course consists of 15 lessons, which were held in the first semester from April until July, 2008. As shown in Table 1, the teaching on textbook analysis was conducted in the fourth to sixth lessons.

At the end of the course, a term paper was assigned to the students, in which they analyzed a certain unit from the textbook they had used or they are going to use in their teaching practice. The format of the paper was instructed as follows: (1) Description of analytical criteria (i.e., what students have focused on in their analysis); (2) Presentation of the results of the analysis; (3) Summary with reference to the problems of the text and suggestions for improvement; and (4) Comments after reflecting on the analysis.

3.4 Data collection

In order to answer the first research question set in this study, the author had a questionnaire filled out by the participants at the end of the course (i.e., on July 24 to be exact). One of the

Table 1 Outline of the course "Seminar in English language teaching"

No.	Date	Contents of the course
1	Apr.10	1. Course orientation 2. Questionnaire for needs analysis of the students 3. Negotiations on the contents of the course
2	Apr.17	Review of the <i>Course of Study for Foreign Languages</i> (2008a)
3	Apr.24	Review of the past English language teaching (ELT) policies
4	May 1	Analysis of textbooks (1): Examining the contents of textbooks
5	May 8	Analysis of textbooks (2): What does it mean to understand the contents of textbooks?
6	May 15	Textbook analysis (3): What does the writer think about the issue? / What type of questions/tasks help students to think about the contents?
7	May 22	Teaching grammar (1): What problem do the five sentence patterns have?
8	May 29	Teaching grammar (2): Why do learners make mistakes on the passive voice?
9	Jun. 5	Teaching grammar (3): What activities can we use to introduce the passive voice with communication in mind?
10	Jun.12	Review of the lesson on teaching paragraph writing to lower secondary school students
11	Jun.19	Teaching grammar (4): What functions do the articles have in communication?
12	Jun.26	Trial teaching by students on the articles
13	Jul.10	Analysis of the question items adopted in term exams
14	Jul.18	Lecture by a guest teacher on ELT in a municipal lower secondary school
15	Jul.24	1. Questionnaire for evaluating the course 2. Questionnaire on the views of textbooks 3. Questions and answers on the term papers

questions was concerned with the extent to which the students had changed their views on textbooks after the lessons on materials analysis, the results of which were calibrated on the five-point Likert scale.

In addition to the questionnaire, the author collected the comments the participants gave on the lessons which were concerned with the analysis of textbooks so as to gain a deeper insight into what they thought about each lesson. The comments were written in five to ten minutes on the comment sheets provided at the end of each lesson. Furthermore, the author examined the comments given by the students in their term papers in which they were asked to conduct a task of analyzing textbooks on their own. These comments served to answer the second research question.

3.5 Data analysis

The questionnaire was analyzed quantitatively, by counting the number of answers and calculating the percentage for each choice made by the students. As for the comments written by the

participants after the lessons, they were analyzed qualitatively: the comments were classified into some manageable units or groups according to their contents. Of these groups of data, a certain number of thematic categories eventually emerged from a repeated processing of comparison and contrast among them. This recombining and synthesizing process was continued until a thematic categorization was complete, which was essential for interpreting the collected data (Brown, 2001). The same process of analysis was applied to the students' comments in their term papers.

Furthermore, to gain a deeper insight into how students' views changed, all the comments made by two of the students, who attended all the three lessons on materials analysis, were examined in detail.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Results of the analysis of the questionnaire

Table 2 shows to what extent students' views on textbooks have changed after taking the lessons

on materials analysis. According to the table, of the 16 students who answered the questionnaire, 14 answered that their views have changed or rather changed after taking the lessons, while there are only two who chose to answer that their views neither changed nor unchanged. Though this research targeted a small number of students, this result appears to show that the lessons in analyzing materials have had a certain effect on students' views on textbooks.

These positive results are supported separately by the results of another questionnaire (Nakamura, 2009), which was more formally conducted campus-wide on the last day of each course (i.e., July 24 in the author's course) by the Committee for Faculty Development at Akita University for the purpose of providing the teachers with an opportunity to get to know their students' evaluation of their courses. According to the results of the campus-wide questionnaire represented by the five-point Likert scale (i.e., from 1 to 5), in which 14 out of the 17 students answered, all the students chose either "Totally agree" or "Agree" to the following three questions: "Were the contents of the course interesting?", "Did you acquire new knowledge/skills/thinking through the course?", and "Do you think that, in general, the course was meaningful for you?"

Table 2 Changes in the students' views on textbooks after the course (N=16)

Students' views on textbooks at the end of the course	N	%
Changed	9	56.3
Rather changed	5	31.3
Neither changed nor unchanged	2	12.5
Rather unchanged	0	0.0
Not changed	0	0.0

4.2 Results of the analysis of the students' comments

4.2.1 How the students' views changed: Some commonalities

The outline of the lessons on materials analysis, which were held on May 1, 8, and 15 in 2008, is shown in Appendices 1, 2, and 3. At the end of

each lesson, the students were asked to write their comments on it, an example of which is shown below.

"I used to think that textbooks always teach us the right things. But through this lesson I was made to be aware that there are things in textbooks which are questionable. I realize that there are a lot more to it than I had thought and so I enjoyed the lesson...As for the door, I think that one of the reasons why Japanese doors open outward may be that Japan has a lot of earthquakes and we need to push open the door to evacuate as quickly as possible."

(Extracted from the comment by a student on the fourth lesson)

In addition, in order to examine how the task of materials analysis assigned for their term papers had affected the students' views on textbooks, the author analyzed their comments regarding the task. An example of the comments the students made is shown below.

"My investigation was useful in deepening my understanding of Rachel Carson. At the same time, it made me think about the meaning of using a textbook in the first place. I have come to realize that the topics, which I used to regard only as a tool for teaching grammar or words/expressions, are important also from the point of view of their contents. Unit 6, which I took up in this assignment, can be a cue not only for deepening students' understanding of great people but also for thinking about how threatening environmental pollution is. I felt anew that teachers need to be always equipped with the background knowledge about their teaching materials."

(Extracted from a student's comment written in her term paper)

Of the comments, the author examined the parts which have relevance to textbooks, classified them into groups, and found the following seven themes: (1) Problems in texts used in textbooks and changes in the students' views on them;

Table 3 Themes appeared in the students' comments on the lessons and in the term paper

Themes in the comments	Lesson/Term paper	4 th lesson (N=14)	5 th lesson (N=17)	6 th lesson (N=13)	Term paper (N=17)
(1) Problems in texts and changes in their views on textbooks		7	12	2	12
(2) Suggestions for solving the problems in the textbooks		0	0	0	9
(3) Problems in and/or behind materials development		2	3	0	0
(4) Teaching students to read materials critically		2	0	0	0
(5) The importance of examining materials for teaching		9	10	6	8
(6) Problems in teaching the findings of studying materials		1	1	0	3
(7) The negative influence from certain questions/tasks in reading materials		0	0	9	0

Note. The number of answers exceeds that of the students, as some students' comments contain more than one themes.

(2) Suggestions for solving the problems in the textbooks; (3) Problems in and/or behind materials development; (4) Teaching students to read materials critically; (5) The importance of examining materials for teaching; (6) Problems in teaching the findings from examining materials; (7) The negative influence of certain questions/tasks in reading materials on the students' deeper understanding of contents (see Table 3). Of these themes, (1) and (5) appeared most frequently (i.e., 33 appearances each) and consistently, which may suggest that these themes were what the students felt most strongly while taking the lessons and writing their term papers. This is followed by (2) and (7) (i.e., 9 appearances each), yet these themes appeared only in the particular lesson or task. The remaining three themes appeared much less frequently than the other four themes mentioned above.

From the analysis of the students' comments on the fourth lesson, it has been found that most students who attended the lesson seemed to have realized the importance of critically examining materials for teaching, as seen in such comments as "I realized that preparing for class means not only to think about how to teach new words and grammar effectively, but also to examine the contents of textbooks critically." Also, half of the students referred to some problems found in texts used in the textbooks and/or to some changes in their views on textbooks (e.g., "I used to think that textbooks are always right, but through this lesson

I learned that they are not always right"). This suggests that, through activities in the lessons, they have developed their critical awareness of textbooks.

In addition, though few in number, there were comments concerned with teaching students to read materials critically (e.g., "if teachers teach students properly, then I think students can develop the skill to examine things critically") and with problems in developing materials (e.g., "I thought textbooks for any subject have some errors or a bit clumsy expressions"). One student even expressed concerns about the negative effects on students' learning if what was found as a result of textbook analysis was brought directly into class (i.e., "I wonder how students will react if they are taught that textbooks are questionable"). These comments show that the students have come to think seriously of these issues in teaching with textbooks, implying that they had not been concerned much about the contents of textbooks before the lessons were given.

Similarly, from the analysis of their comments on the fifth lesson, the author finds that most of the students referred to problems in texts used in the textbooks or to the changes in their views on textbooks (e.g., "I thought that the text on Mother Teresa was valid at first, but as we discussed it in class, I noticed that there were a number of points which needed to be examined more closely. I was shocked to know that"). As mentioned earlier, this suggests that the activities helped them develop

their critical awareness of texts. Many students also referred to the importance of examining materials for teaching (e.g., "the textbook does not give us detailed information about Mother Teresa and thus we need to do some more investigation on her"). In addition, though few in number, there was a concern about the problems in and/or behind materials development, judging from their reference to the vocabulary control by the government. There was also a concern expressed about teaching to students all the findings found about textbooks (e.g., "if we spend so much time in teaching our findings, won't the students get bored?"). All these comments indicate that the students view these issues from the point of view of the teacher, as well as from the viewpoint close to the learner.

The analysis of the students' comments on the sixth lesson shows that most of the students referred to the negative influence of certain questions/tasks in reading materials on their understanding of the contents—questions/tasks which merely ask them to extract answers from a given text (e.g., "when taking a test, I find myself immediately becoming a well-trained machine looking for the right answers. Today I was made to realize how scary this behavior is"). Several students' comments were also concerned with studying materials in depth, such as "I usually have no time to care about the contents when answering questions, but I am determined to keep this in mind when reading newspapers and so on." In addition, though few in number, some students referred to problems in texts used in the textbooks (e.g., "I felt that I could not understand the contents clearly when I read a text containing such vague expressions as 'many' and 'some'"). These comments show that the students are beginning to develop a critical awareness on various issues related to teaching and learning—not only on textbooks but also on other teaching materials, as well as on certain tasks for reading.

The analysis of the students' comments expressed in their term papers showed that most

of the students considered as problems some parts in the textbooks they analyzed (e.g., "I felt that it would be difficult to teach with the textbook, as the story was rather abstract and there were some parts of which the context is not natural"). Also, as found in the comments about the past lessons on textbook analysis, more than half of the students pointed out the importance of critically examining materials for teaching (e.g., "I felt anew that teachers need to be always equipped with background knowledge of their teaching materials").

One notable difference from the past three lessons on textbook analysis was that, through the task of analyzing textbooks for their term papers, most students made some kind of suggestions for what they considered as problems (e.g., "I think that textbooks need to include more concrete examples"). This suggests that they are in the stage of exploring ways to improve or supplement their target textbooks, and thus have considerably developed their skills to analyze textbooks critically. Also, though few in number, some students pointed out that, if the explanation by the teacher is in such a detailed manner as the author did to them in the class, then some students may be confused. This indicates that they were aware of the differences in the contexts between universities and secondary schools.

4.2.2 How the students' views changed: A case study

In order to gain a deeper insight into how students' views had changed after the three lessons on materials analysis, the author examined more in depth all the comments made by two of the students (i.e., a male student and a female student) who attended all of the lessons. (The comments made by two students are shown in Appendix 4).

Table 4 shows the results of the analysis of the comments given by both the male and female students. According to the table, both the male and female students referred to more than one points on the lessons and in their term papers. Judging from the average number of points the participants

Table 4 Themes of the two students' comments on the lessons and in the term paper

Lesson/Term paper	4 th lesson	5 th lesson	6 th lesson	Term paper
(1) Problems in texts and changes in their views on textbooks	F1	M2/F1	M1/F1	M1/F1
(2) Suggestions for solving the problems in the textbooks				F2
(3) Problems in and/or behind materials development		M1/F2		
(4) Teaching students to read materials critically	M2/F2			
(5) The importance of examining materials for teaching	M1	F3	M2	M2
(6) Problems in teaching the findings of studying materials				
(7) The negative influence from certain questions/tasks in reading materials			F2	

Note 1. "M" means the point was made by the male student, while "F" means it was noted by the female student.

Note 2. The number after "M" or "F" shows the order of the points made by the students.

referred to (i.e., 1.57), it can be said that, compared to other students, these two students were more aware of various issues in teaching with textbooks, and/or were more eager to put what they had noted into words.

The two students were also similar in that they consistently referred to problems in texts used in the textbooks or to the changes in their views on them. Moreover, they both remarked about the importance of teaching students to read materials critically in their comments on the fourth lesson and about some problems in and/or behind materials development on the fifth lesson.

On the other hand, there are some differences between the two students in terms of the contents of their comments. While the male student consistently referred to the importance of critically examining materials, the female student referred to a broader variety of points, such as the negative influence which certain questions/tasks in reading materials might give on their full understanding of the contents as well as their suggestions for solving the problems in the textbooks. Given that the points she made in her comments were also pointed out by many other students (see Table 3), her views may represent, more than the male student, what the majority thought on the lessons and on the term papers. In other words, the male student paid more attention to finding problems in the textbook by examining materials in depth during the lessons and when writing his term

paper.

Despite some differences in the contents of their comments, an analysis regarding the order of points expressed in their comments revealed that, in general, their comments started out with their reference to problems in texts used in the textbooks or the changes made in their views on them, followed by other themes. Pending further research, this order in their listing of themes may suggest that the task of finding problems in textbooks forms the basis for the development of their thinking about issues in teaching with textbooks.

4.2.3 Steps for developing their critical awareness

Based on the analysis of the comments conducted in 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, it may be said that, though there are individual differences, steps for developing the students' critical awareness about textbooks can be explained on two levels:

1. The level closer to the learner's
 - Developing critical awareness about texts used in textbooks (Changes in their views on textbooks)
 - Developing critical thinking about the questions/tasks contained in textbooks
2. The level closer to the teacher's
 - Recognizing the problems in and/or behind materials development
 - Recognizing the importance of examining materials for teaching
 - Recognizing the way in which students can

be taught to read materials critically

-Thinking of possible suggestions to improve identified problems in teaching

-Making judgments on how to make the findings from text analysis reflected in teaching

This categorization suggests that in teacher education—in this case, developing would-be teachers' skills to analyze materials critically—it is important to provide would-be teachers with an opportunity to examine issues from the standpoint close to the learner's as well as to the teacher's, as indicated by authors such as Little (1995, 2000) and Smith (2003). This experience of learning and teaching given in two parcels will, in turn, form a basis for their judgment on what they need to do in actual teaching. However, this author's approach to developing students' skills for analyzing textbooks is still at the level of a hypothesis and needs further research to consolidate it.

5. Conclusion

From the results of the study, it can be said that both the lessons and the term papers were effective in raising their critical awareness of textbooks, in light of the fact that the students had not been concerned about the contents of textbooks before the lessons were conducted. In addition, judging from their comments, it can also be said that, though there are individual differences, steps for developing their critical awareness through the lessons and the term papers can be explained on two levels: the level closer to the learner's and the level closer to the teacher's. Nevertheless, further study is needed on the teaching concerned with developing would-be teachers' skill to analyze textbooks critically, because the study is one on such a small scale, and the analysis is conducted only on the basis of their comments and the questionnaire returned from them. To gain more insight into this issue, observations of the classes concerned, as well as interviews with the students, will be necessary.

In spite of the limitations, this study will contribute to understanding what could be done to raise would-be teachers' critical awareness on textbooks. Furthermore, this approach to textbooks can be applied to improving secondary school students' skills to read materials in depth, the importance of which was emphasized in the *Manual of the Course of Study for Lower Secondary Schools: Foreign Languages* (2008b, MEXT), as well as by many authors in fields other than ELT (e.g., Arimoto, 2010; Shibata, 2006), particularly after Japanese students' PISA test results were announced in 2004 (MEXT, 2006).

Since this type of study on teaching materials has scarcely been conducted in Japan, it is hoped that it will generate further interest in the use, evaluation, and development of teaching materials in the ELT of Japan.

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Appendix 1 Procedures for the fourth lesson

Time	Procedures
0 (min.)	-Explain the outline of the lesson
1	-Provide students with Text 1 (i.e., "Ohayo") and ask them to read it silently
4	-Ask students to form groups and discuss the contents in groups
9	-Ask each group to report their findings to the whole class
16	-Discuss the following points with the whole class (1) "They speak different languages, but they mean the same thing." – Do you agree with this? (2) What does "Ohayo" mean and what does "Good morning" mean? (3) What do other greetings (e.g., "Bon jour" and "Buenos dias") mean? (4) What context is there behind the expressions?

40	-Provide students with the rewritten version of Text 1 (i.e., Text 1a) -Ask students to fill in the blanks and complete the passage -Check the answers with the whole class
45	-Tell students about the teacher's experience with regard to the influence that textbooks had on his learners when teaching at an upper secondary school
48	-Provide students with Text 2 (i.e., "Front Doors") and ask them to read it silently
51	-Ask students to form groups and discuss the contents in groups
56	-Ask each group to report their findings to the whole class
63	-Discuss the following points with the whole class (1) Why are doors put at the entrance in the first place? (2) Do the doors used in Japan open outward from the beginning? (3) Why does the textbook's description miss these points?
78	-Tell students about the importance of materials analysis in teaching
80	-Tell students about the homework (Rewriting Text 2 based on the discussions)
83	-Ask students to give a comment on today's lesson

Appendix 2 Procedures for the fifth lesson

Time	Procedures
0 (min.)	-Explain the outline of the lesson
1	-Ask students to form groups and read aloud their homework (rewritten version of Text 2) to one another within each group
6	-Ask each group to choose their best work and polish it
21	-Ask each group to read aloud their work to the whole class
26	-The teacher reads aloud his rewritten work -Provides students with the teacher's work with several blanks in it (Text 2a) and ask them to fill in the blanks and complete the passage -Check the answers with the whole class
33	-Tell the students about how the author has elaborated on Text 2a
36	-Provide students with Text 3 (i.e., "With Love and with Joy") and ask them to read it silently
39	-Ask students to form groups and discuss the contents in groups
44	-Ask each group to report their findings to the whole class
51	-Ask students the following questions and discuss them (1) Is Mother her first name? What is her real name? (2) "Mother Teresa began her work..." – What kind of work did she do? (3) What happened to Kolkata in 1948? What was it like in the 1940s? (4) "In some parts of the city..." – What does "some parts" refer to? (5) "the people were very poor..." – How poor were they and why? (6) "Mother Teresa gathered together some children and taught the alphabet to them." – How many was "some"? How did she gather children? How did she communicate with them? Why did she teach the alphabet? What else did she teach? (7) Does thinking about these questions help you understand her more? (8) Can you feel how great she was by just reading the text?
81	-Tell the students about the homework (Studying the next part of Text 3)
83	-Ask the students to give a comment on today's lesson

Appendix 3 Procedures for the sixth lesson

Time	Procedures
0 (min.)	-Explain the outline of the lesson
1	-Ask students to form groups and present what they have studied about the next part -Ask them to complement their presentation by using Japanese
11	-Ask students the following questions and discuss them (1) "Over the next few years" – From when and until when does this refer to? (2) "some Sisters joined..." – How many sisters does the word "some" imply? (3) "Mother Teresa and these Sisters worked very hard." – How long did they work? (4) "They saved the lives of many homeless children." – How many lives did they save? (5) "They cared for sick people and old people too." – What did they do to care for them? (6) Why does the text use words such as "some" and "many"? (7) Can you imagine how many when you hear these words?
31	-Ask the students to answer reading comprehension questions in the text
36	-Provide students with Text 4 (i.e., "English Around the World") -Ask them to read the text and answer reading comprehension questions
55	-Ask students to form groups and compare the questions in Text 3 and Text 4
60	-Ask each group to report their findings to the whole class
67	-Ask students to discuss among themselves in each group whether the writer is for or against the prevalence of English in the world and explain why they think so
75	-The teacher provides them with his view and discusses it with the whole class -Ask students to reflect on what they did when answering questions. Were they able to think about the writer's (hidden) opinion when answering them?
81	-Tell students about the homework (Read other texts and guess the writer's opinion on the issue)
83	-Ask the students to give a comment on today's lesson

Appendix 4 Comments made by a male student and a female student

"I realized that we could miss the first step to our understanding of other cultures if we just accepted what is written in textbooks without questioning it. In other words, I think students' critical thinking skills can be developed if teachers instruct them properly, as we have learned in class today."

(Extracted from the comment by the male student on the fourth lesson)

"I think it's a pity that there is a limit on the number of words to be used in textbooks. Certainly there would be no problems if they can get the gist of stories which are written in easy-to-understand language. But if students have to read a text with little background information, as in the text on Mother Teresa, then the limitation on words should be a little more relaxed."

(Extracted from the comment by the male student on the fifth lesson)

"As I feel every time, I really felt this time in particular that the amount of information contained in textbooks is too limited. As for today's topic in the lecture, for example, we were able to understand what "They worked "very hard"." meant by being given by the teacher detailed information about how Mother Teresa and her co-workers lived their lives. I now think we, as teachers, need to gather necessary background information beforehand for topics which are concerned with other countries, especially when different religions are involved."

(Extracted from the comment by the male student on the sixth lesson)

Given only the text message adopted in the textbook, I cannot fully understand their actions: What did they strive for, in what situations, and with what beliefs? They all survived difficult situations with a spirit of "never-give-up." However, unless we can feel how much pain and difficulty they actually experienced, we will not be able to understand what is meant by the phrase "They gave dream and hope to people all over the world", which is repeatedly used in the text.

It's a pity that I could not get sufficient information about these four people. There are many points in the text for which I am not sure whether I could provide students with convincing explanations which allow them to imagine the situation vividly. Particularly, when we take up in a foreign language class such people as Helen Keller, who eventually acquired many languages despite her disabilities, the class has to be one which will stimulate students in the way in which they can reflect on their language learning. This will not be achieved without sufficient study of teaching materials beforehand, without which we may end up in a mere translation of the text. I felt we need to equip ourselves with a skill for good planning and a skill for examining the materials with a focus on the actual situations in the classroom.

(Extracted from the male student's comment written in his term paper)

"I used to feel that 'Ohayo' in Japanese and 'Good morning' in English were somewhat different, but I had never thought of their etymology. And so, after I learned their etymology in class, I have come to realize that I had never questioned what I was taught in class and what was written in textbooks. Now that we are going into practice teaching sooner or later, I think we should be careful to pay more attention when we have a chance to tackle our teaching materials."

(Extracted from the comment by the female student on the fourth lesson)

"I was surprised (to see) that there were so many issues found in just one unit of the textbook. I think the textbook itself contains problems arising from the limit imposed on the number of words to be used. On the other hand, however, I have come to realize that it may be difficult to make students understand the meaning (of why a certain topic is included in the textbook) unless teachers try hard enough to teach them by acquiring beforehand sufficient knowledge on the topic. Indeed, I now know that we need to study the text well before teaching, and, as it is often said, we need to have ten times as much knowledge as we actually need to teach."

(Extracted from the comment by the female student on the fifth lesson)

"I also feel that we cannot really understand exactly how many the text means when it uses such vague expressions as 'many people/things' and 'some people/things', though behind this may lie issues (such that different books tell different stories about Mother Teresa). Also, I now realize that we did not have a chance to examine in detail what was actually written in the text, because, in our regular exams at school, many reading-related tests used the materials in the textbook we had read in our reading classes and the questions in those tests only required us to extract certain specific information from the texts. I think we should pay more attention to such issues and it makes me wonder whether our own teachers were aware of those issues."

(Extracted from the comment by the female student on the sixth lesson)

Since the amount of the text I analyzed was very limited, there were not many points in it which I felt the need to explain more clearly, unlike the time when we analyzed textbooks together in our course. Yet I noticed with a little uneasiness that some situations set in the textbook were not made clear enough and some passages had an unnatural flow of communication. Given that most of the students who use these textbooks have just started learning English in their lower secondary school, we need to set the situations clearer and create situations in which students can understand the content without difficulty.

Also, I felt the conversations in the textbook should be made more natural, if the purpose is not just to acquire language forms but to equip students with practical communication skills. For example, take the case of the interaction on p. 47; I think we could communicate better if we change the conversation into something closer to real life such as: "Oh, no! My cola! Emi, do you have any tissues?" "No. Well, use this handkerchief."

(Extracted from the female student's comment written in her term paper)