One of the goals Global Kosen Project (グローバル高専事業), is to teach some engineering courses in English. A fundamental problem that will be encountered is the typically lower English proficiency levels of NIT students. This means that the students will have difficulty understanding, even if the professor has good English proficiency.

Here are 3 possible scenarios for Engineering courses in English at NIT schools:

1. Engineering Course with English
   - AMOUNT OF ENGLISH \(\rightarrow\) <5%
   - AT TSUYAMA COLLEGE? \(\rightarrow\) Yes

2. Engineering Course in English
   - AMOUNT OF ENGLISH \(\rightarrow\) 100%
   - AT TSUYAMA COLLEGE? \(\rightarrow\) No

3. Engineering Course mainly in English
   - AMOUNT OF ENGLISH \(\rightarrow\) >90%
   - AT TSUYAMA COLLEGE? \(\rightarrow\) No

In the first scenario, the engineering course is taught entirely in Japanese, but uses some materials in English, such as diagrams, problem sets, or textbooks. This is a valuable way to introduce English into the curriculum, but it is not a course in English. In the second scenario, a course in English with the same content as the equivalent course in Japanese is put into the curriculum. This would be impossible at NIT schools, unless the course were limited to students with TOEIC scores above, say, 500.

The third scenario offers a way to introduce an engineering course into the current NIT curriculums. The pace of the course would have to be slower, and the content reduced. This would require two fundamental features: 1) the amount of content would have to be reduced and the amount of credit would have to be determined by the department, and 2) the faculty member in charge would have to be prepared to teach to lower English proficiency level students.

This means, among other things, that the lecture format would have to be supplemented with frequent activities that require students to explain – verbally and in writing – the subject material in English. Additionally the faculty member would need to calibrate his or her own English proficiency with English as International Language (EIL) conference standards. I am currently working with a “Study Group” to facilitate these goals at Tsuyama College.