

Final Report

Name: Sean Reid

1. Title: Creating a Communicative Classroom Environment

2. Context: 1st Grade Elementary School (17boys and 16 girls) 3 classes of 8 students each and a 4th class with 9 students

Subject: EFL (two lessons a week, 45 minutes for each lesson)

Textbook: An in-house textbook create by JIEC entitled Learning Through English 1

Problems: The main problem is difficulty implementing communicative activities and goals due to the low level of the students and having to use a textbook that is not conducive to communicative activities. The textbook often includes vocabulary and topics that are not communicative or interesting for the students.

3.Goal: To foster the students` communicative competence and create an atmosphere where students enjoy interacting with their peers and myself in English.

4.What I did:

1. I began with the approach of teaching the students as much language that I could that would allow them to interact with me in the classroom. I wanted them to see how they could express their views about how things were going to be done and negotiate with me to make decisions. I recorded classes with an audio recorder and made transcripts of the classes. I then classified the students` utterances in our class discussions as either solicited or unsolicited utterances. My goal was to increase the amount of student unsolicited utterances with the idea that this meant that they were increasing their ability to communicate genuine information with me about their thoughts etc.

2. Once the students achieved a certain level of communicative ability, I shifted my focus to increasing the amount of student-student interaction. I began by making a baseline test for the students in September to assess the amount of total English questions that they could ask a partner. I then started to begin each class with a short pair conversation that the students would have about a specific topic. I would then use the remainder of the class to work towards a final communicative activity for each unit that the students would complete. I reported on this final communicative task at the end of each month for my AR report.

3. After taking Yoshi's SLT class and having him visit my classroom however, I realized that it was not enough to simply have a final communicative goal for each unit. Instead, I should end each class with an information exchange task that would allow the students to practice a lesson goal. Each of these lesson goals would then contribute to the students' ability to complete the final unit goal. I also began to use the textbook only as a means of input and made the main focus of each lesson the information exchange activity. I soon found that by implementing this change I was able to drastically increase the level of student engagement in my classes.

4. Additionally, one of my final communicative activities was noted to be quite difficult for the students. After some reflection, I realized that teaching the students a communication strategy would allow them to correct the breakdowns in communication that were occurring. I then had the students complete the same activity a few months later, this time while using the communication strategy. This resulted in a significant increase in the students' ability to complete the task. Moreover, in surveys, the students attested to the fact that they credited the communication strategy with their increased ability to complete the task. By seeing firsthand how communication strategies can benefit students especially of this low level, I began to make a point of integrating communication strategies into my curriculum.

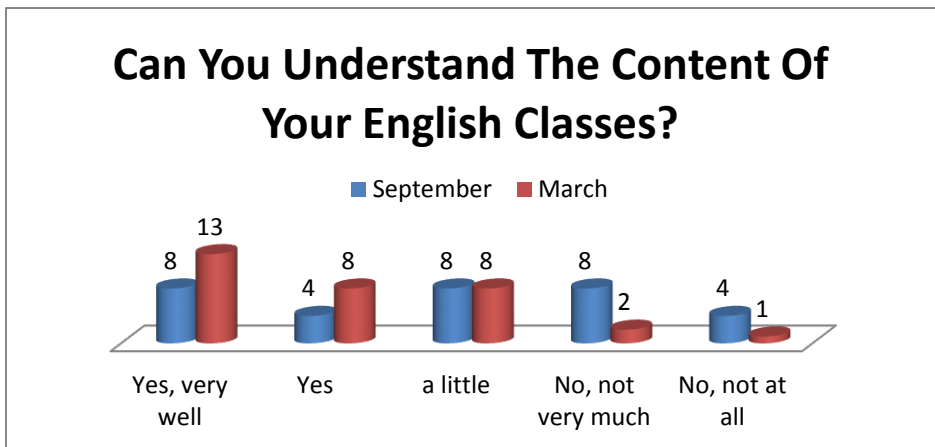
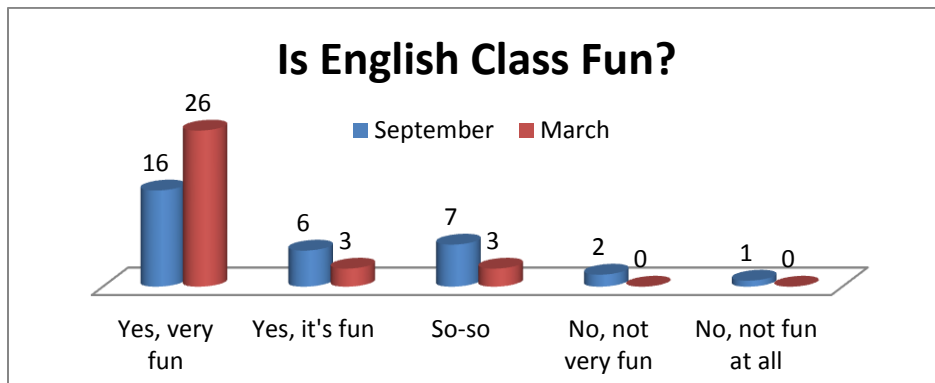
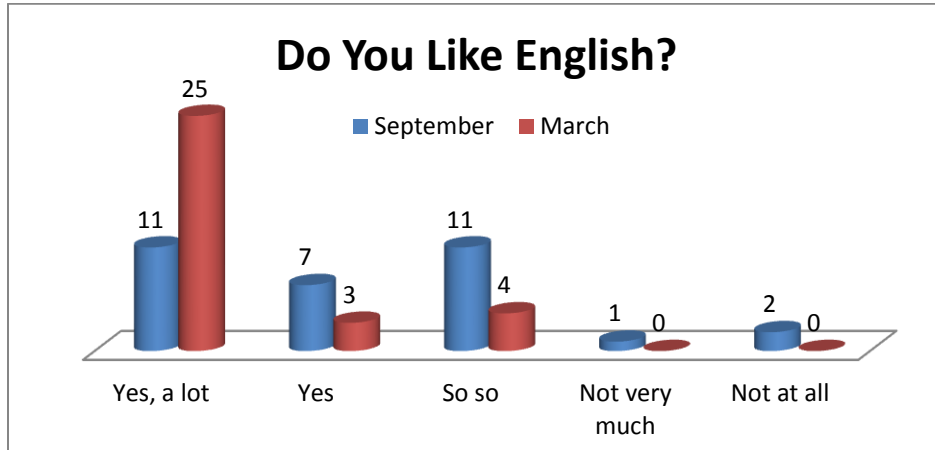
5.Results – What happened?

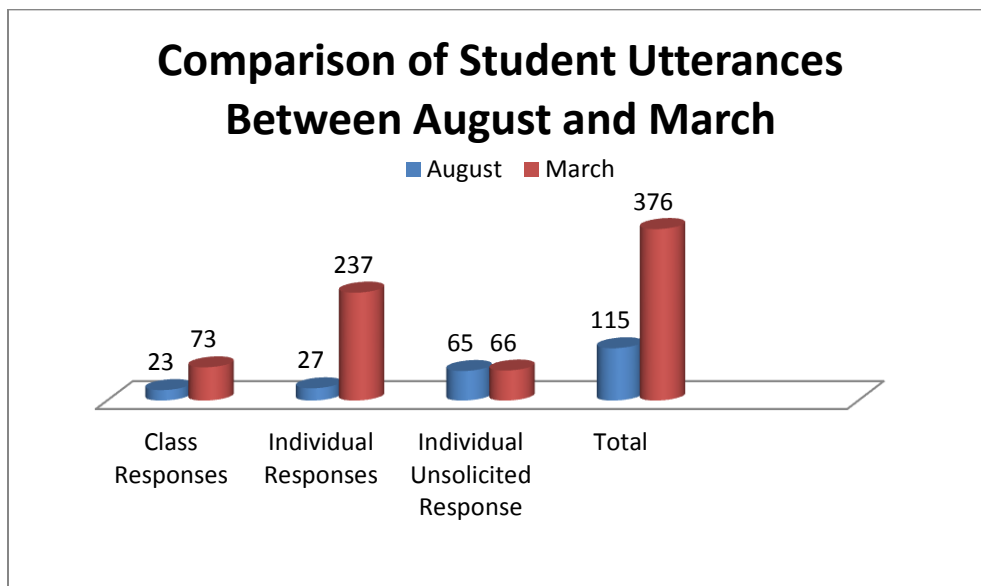
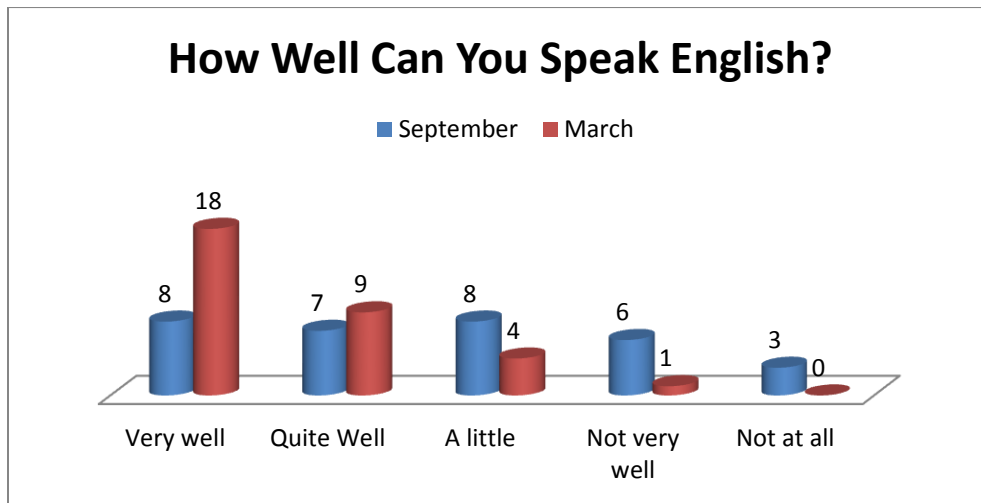
1. Students responded extremely well to the shifting the focus of each lesson from the textbook to an information exchange activity. By having these information exchange tasks that worked towards a communicative goal rather than a grammar-based goal, I was able to allow the students an opportunity to practice speaking in a communicative exercise much more frequently than I would have otherwise. There was a noticeable increase in both student engagement and the students' output almost immediately after changing the way that I structured my lessons. This was further attested to by the students' end of year surveys in which they expressed a significant increase in how much they liked English, how fun they found the classes to be and how well they believed that they could speak English, when asked to compare their feelings at the end of the year with how they felt in September. The introduction of pair conversations and information exchange activities in each class also resulted in a significant increase in student output. When contrasted with data taken from a class before this change, the total amount of student utterances increased by more than 300% and individual student responses increased from 27 in August to 237 in March. This was largely due to the fact that students were now speaking with their partners much more, as opposed to mainly speaking with me as they did in August.

2. Students also responded extremely well to the introduction of communication strategies. In one particular survey, the students identified the introduction of "checking questions" as the reason for their increased ability to complete the information exchange task. Students were also quick to catch on to the "me too" and "me

neither” phrases that I introduced, often spontaneously expressing agreement with statements that myself or other students made in class discussions.

Survey and Tally Data:





6. What I learned:

1. My thinking regarding the best way to structure curriculum for this age level has undergone an immense amount of change over the course of the year. While I previously believed that having a final communicative information exchange task at the end of every unit was sufficient, I have now realized that an effective way to work towards that task is to break the required steps into class hour goals that the students can practice in an information exchange task at the end of each class. This has made a tremendous impact on my classes and has increased the level of student engagement.

2. I have also learned how implementing communication strategies can improve the students' ability to overcome communication breakdowns and provide them with confidence. It can also lead to their increased ability to provide output in our class discussion as a few simple set phrases such as, "me too" can allow them to communicate their feelings easily.

3. Finally, I have learned that although students at this age have a low level of English, they are not at all shy or reserved about making an effort to speak in English. As a result, I will attempt to implement pair conversation and other information-exchange earlier next year than I did this year.

7. Future issues:

In future classes, I would like to continue to introduce communication strategies and other structures that I believe the students can use to express themselves in a variety of situations. By monitoring which ones the students use most often, perhaps I can see a pattern that will help me to understand how students want to express themselves. I would like to maintain communicative goals rather than grammar based goals that I can use to create interesting communicative activities that will engage the students and develop their communicative competence, despite the challenges that I will meet regarding next year's theme and textbook content. I will continue to gauge the effectiveness of these activities by distributing student surveys and ensuring that the students are able to complete their final unit goals.

Lesson Plan:

Sean Reid

1. **Level:** Elementary School Grade 1
2. **Class size:** 8-9 students per class
3. **Textbook:** An in-house activity book created by JIEC
4. **Goal:** The goal of this activity is to provide the students with the tools necessary to talk naturally about their daily routines and make comparisons between their routines and those of other students.

Objectives:

- 1.) Students will become familiar with expressions related to time. They will be able to ask for and provide information about what time it is.
- 2.) Students will be able to communicate information about when they usually do their daily routine activities and also solicit this information from their peers.
- 3.) Students will evaluate information they have solicited from others and compare it with their own routines to make comparisons. After processing the information, they will be able to show interest and make an appropriate summarizing comment.
- 4.) Students will be able to discuss how their free time activities relate to those of their peers.

5.) Procedure:

Day One: What's The Time? Subgoal: Students are able to use and understand specific time expressions to communicate and request the current time.

1. The time structures are introduced to the students with structured input.
2. Students then listen to time expressions and attempt to set the correct time on their clocks in order to familiarize themselves with the vocabulary.
3. Students then play, "What Time is it Mr. Wolf?" with each student getting a turn as the wolf.
4. Students then work in pairs to complete the blanks in **worksheet 1**, by asking "Number one, what time is it?"

Day Two: When Do You...? Subgoal: Students are able to use daily routine vocabulary and structures to talk about when they do things.

1. Students are introduced to the routine vocabulary with flash cards.
2. They practice the vocab by singing the, “This is the Way We” song.
3. They then put the flashcards in order as pairs and then together with the rest of the class, using the structures “_____ is number 1.”
4. Once they are familiar with this vocabulary, they are introduced to the structure “When do you? And I _____ at _____” via structured input.
5. Students use **Worksheet 2** to fill in the answers to their own schedule, while listening to the questions that come in random order (to ensure they are attending to meaning). They then put the activities in the correct order and compare the answers with their partners.
6. Students practice the structure by each asking the teacher a question about his schedule, and recording the information on the board.

Day Three: Wow That’s Early! Subgoal: Students ask someone else questions about his/her daily routine and comment on it in relation to their schedule.

Introduce, “Wow! That’s early/late” via structured input dialogue.

1. Students then complete **worksheet 3**.
3. The class ends in a communicative task where students ask each other about their schedules do a comprehension check and record their partner’s information using **worksheet 4**. They then consider their partners information relative to their own schedule and comment as to whether their partner is early or late using a showing interest comment and a summarizing comment. If the time is the same for both students, they will say, “Me too.” and circle both. They fill out their partner’s daily routine information and then bring it to the teacher to check with their partner’s sheet to confirm that the activity was successful and that they are using the appropriate, “that’s early/late” structure.

Day Four: Do you...? Subgoal: students learn about free time activities and how to ask if other people do them.

1. Go over the activities vocabulary with flash cards. They should be quite familiar with these structures although a few students may not know one or two of the structures.

2. Play charades with one student miming the activity while the other students guess what it is. Mix in some of the previous daily routine vocabulary as well.
3. Introduce, the “Do you...?” structure via structured input in a dialogue with another teacher. Confirm that the students understand the structure. Have students complete **worksheet 5** by filling in information about their Sunday schedules. They will use this information to guide their answers for the next class’s information exchange activity. Remind students of how to use the “What else...?” structure before the activity by demonstrating how to use it in this context with the other teacher. For this activity, ensure students attend to meaning by asking the questions in random order and have them write their answers in a different color pencil. For example, “Next question, blue pencils please. Do you play outside?”

Have them practice using it with their partners in an activity where they have flash cards with the various activities and they try to guess which cards their partner has by asking, “Do you...? If they guess correctly, they can take their partner’s card. The student with the most cards at the end wins.

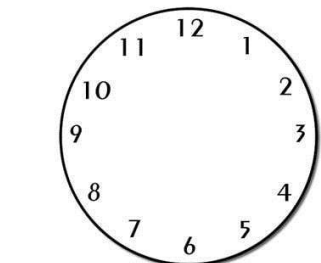
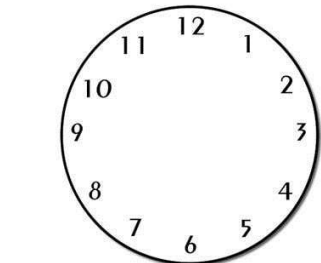
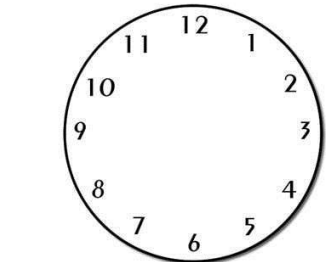
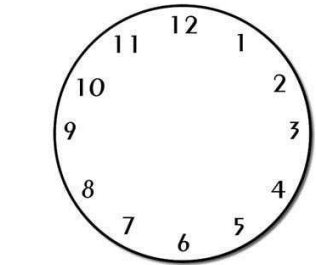
Day Five: Wow, You Do That? *Subgoal: students put their communicative abilities to use in order to find out what their classmates do on Sundays. They then consider whether or not they do this activity and if so how their timing compares with that of their partner.*

1. Students use the same paper they filled out before with their personal information as a reference, to make sure their answer is consistent. This time they will work with a partner and ask about what they do on Sunday. If they do the same activity, they will consider their partner’s time in relation to theirs and comment, “that’s early/late”. If they don’t do the activity they can say, “that’s great!” or another showing interest comment. They will use **worksheet 6** to record the information that they gather from their partner. Their recorded information will then be checked against the other students’ papers for evaluation.
2. Once the students’ conversations with their partners are complete we will talk about the results as a class and draw a chart on the board that displays the information the students provide. This chart will demonstrate which activities are the most popular among the students and what time of day they like to do them. As students provide their partners information, we will comment on it as a class in attempt to start further conversations, for example, “ You like to do that? That’s great. Why? Why do you do it so late? etc.

Day Six: My Special Day Subgoal: Students make a poster that outlines their ideal Sunday. They present it to the class using the target expressions and answer any questions the other students might have.

The students are each given poster paper with six clock cut outs. Students follow the teacher's instructions and example page (**worksheet 7**) in order to fold the paper correctly and paste the clock dial on the appropriate place. Students then draw in the activities that they want to include for their ideal Sunday. They then draw the hands on the clocks to indicate the time that they would do each activity. Finally, they present their posters to the class, using the target structures to explain what they would do on their ideal Sunday.

What/time/is/it? Worksheet 1



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My Schedule (Worksheet 2)

When?

Order



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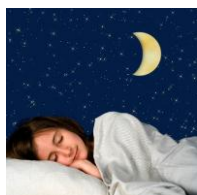
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////////`s//Schedule worksheet 4

me partner



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worksheet 5

Do/You?

When?

1.



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2.



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3.



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4.



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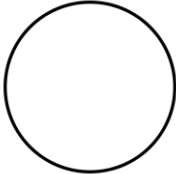


5. What/else/do/you/do?




Sunday Activity

Do You? O/X

When?

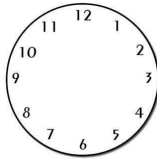


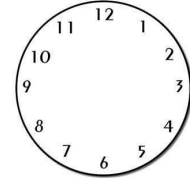
					
					
					

My Special Day

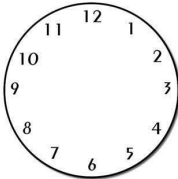
I wake up at...



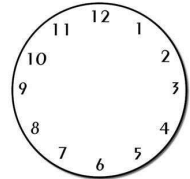
Then I



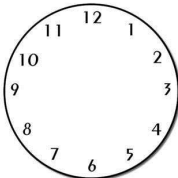
Next I



Then I



Next I



Finally, I go to sleep at...

