

1. Title:

How does Focus on Form Instruction and Performance test develop communicative competence and motivation to learn English for JHS students?

2. Teaching context:

Level: Third year of JHS.

Class size: 30 ×4 classes

Time: 50min. ×4 times per week

Text: Total English 3

3. Problems:

3.1. Student's environment

a) Even in this highly computerized society, only 10% students had some experience to use English outside the class. They cannot receive enough communicative input and output to acquire or motivation to learn foreign language from their daily lives.

b) My students do not have needs for communicative functions in English, rather the goal to learn English for most of them is to prepare for entrance exams and proficiency tests such as Eiken. They used to learn English in traditional pedagogical context and to learn English as a communication tool is new to them.

c) Our school is a public JHS and any children who live in that area can go into the school. The characteristics of individuals such as motivation, proficiency, behavior varies.

3.2. Classroom environment.

a) Our textbook is structure based and we have to give exams based on the textbook several times in a year. The emphasis on those tests is whether they have knowledge of forms, lexical items and so on. Traditionally, the test results are used to measure the achievement of overall studies in our educational context, it is impossible to change the style. Moreover, under the structure based textbook, to employ communicative activities is something extra for teachers because we have to prepare extensive activities or materials. That ends up making our classes still teacher centered and traditional teaching.

3.3 Teacher.

a) There is nobody who employs new teaching method in my working place. It is very hard to predict and how students will develop their competency in communicative context since I employ focus on form for the first time. It makes extremely difficult to choose the materials for the next stage.

4. Goals:

- a) Students develop communicative competence of English.
- b) To make students more interested in English as a communication tool.
- c) To make students more comfortable to have communication in English.

5. What I did.

- a) I gave students ample opportunities of input, meaningful and form focused instruction.
- b) Students get both input and output opportunities.
- c) Students learn and acquire forms and lexical items through tasks.
- d) Students find the meaning of English as a communication tool through performance test and assessment.
- e) Students learned communication strategies and they interact with each other. Teacher gave them corrective feedbacks as well.

5.1 Focus on Form Instruction

a) Processing instruction

I followed structured input guidelines suggested by Lee and Van Patten (2003) and employed the activities in my class. I mixed simplified or classified sentences or pictures to make it understandable for slow learners. I used referential and affective activities separately and in combination.

b) Interactional feedback

To draw learners' attention to forms in communicative context, I employed negotiation of the meaning among student - student conversation and corrective feedback between teacher- student conversations. In student- student conversation, clarification requests, repetition were often seen. And teacher-student conversation, recasts, direct correction were added.

c) Grammar focused task

c.1) Implicit tasks

These implicit tasks are used after students are introduced new forms. They must notice and process the target form as they communicate their meaning. The target form is the key sentence in communication. However there are chances to use other forms in the task.

c.1.1) Pair / group talk

Students make pair and have some information change activities using previously learned forms in their meaning.

c.1.2) Describing pictures

Students of group of four were given 8 to 10 pictures and they were asked to talk about the picture in turns.

Examples of instructions.

Choose one picture and describe the picture with using a particular form.

c.1.3) Asking the way

A student asks the way to go to a particular place. Another student describes how to go to the place.

Examples of forms

Can / could you tell me the way to A? Take the bus No1 at B and take off at C.

c.1.4) Give an opinion

Students of group of four decide a theme that they want to discuss. They describe their opinion in turns.

Examples of forms that students used:

Which do you like pair of glasses or contact lens?

I like glasses because it is not dangerous.

I like contact lens because it is fashionable.

C.2) Explicit Task

C.2.1) Explicit Feedback

Students listen to the explanation of common errors and self correct the mistakes in their own drafts. Errors are underlined by teacher and students analyze the reason of the errors and correct them.

C.2.2) Collaborative output task

C.2.2 Dictogross

The students read through the textbook and they make group of four. They got the series of the picture that shows the story of the contents and some words. Then they reproduce the text. They write down the English that they produced and check the grammar accuracy as much as possible with group members. They got the feedback from teacher.

5.2 Performance test

As I mentioned before, our placement tests do not require the communicative competencies, I developed performance tests. To develop communicative competency, it is necessary to integrate skills in a task.

5.2.1 Process

1. Announcement to students.

Students are announced the kinds of activities and how they'll be assessed beforehand.

2. Preparation for the assessment.

All performance tests are followed by assessments by peers or a teacher and self assessment. Students shared criterion and practiced assessment beforehand. Annalistic evaluation was used in the rubric.

3. Performance.

I picked up four tasks as performance tests this year. I integrated more than one skill in each tasks. I recorded their dialogue in the speaking test. I gave them some comments after their performance.

4 After the performance

Students are asked the feedback to notice the gap between their own language and target language. They are also asked to feedback their attitude and manners. They also are asked to fill out the questionnaire to research the validity of the test each time. In March, they had opportunities to see their recorded conversation. It had very big impact for them and they gave surprisingly strict comment to themselves. I thought they are the best teachers for themselves.

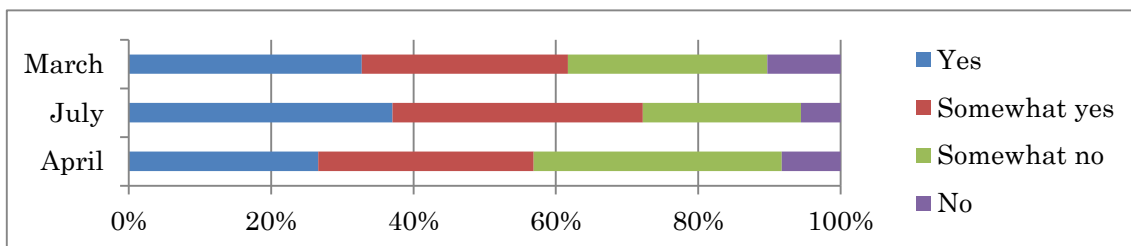
5 Validity

I analyzed students' answers in the questionnaire and some recorded or written learner languages if the task was appropriate for them or not. It was beneficial for me to see their developmental stage and plan for other tasks.

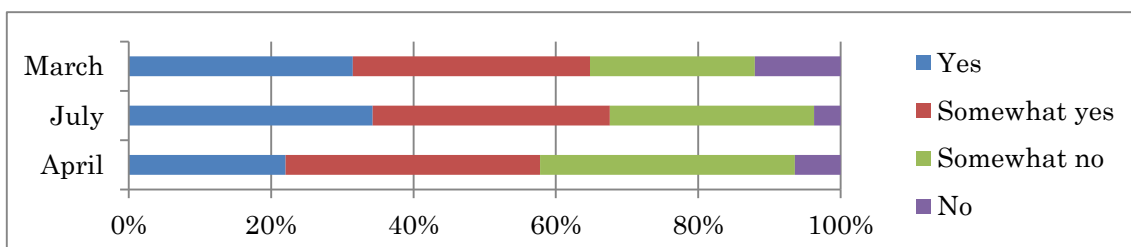
6. What I learned Data analysis

6.1 [Motivation of students]

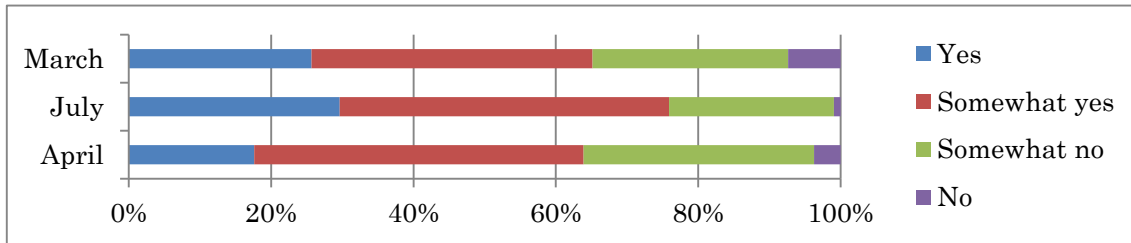
a) Do you like English?



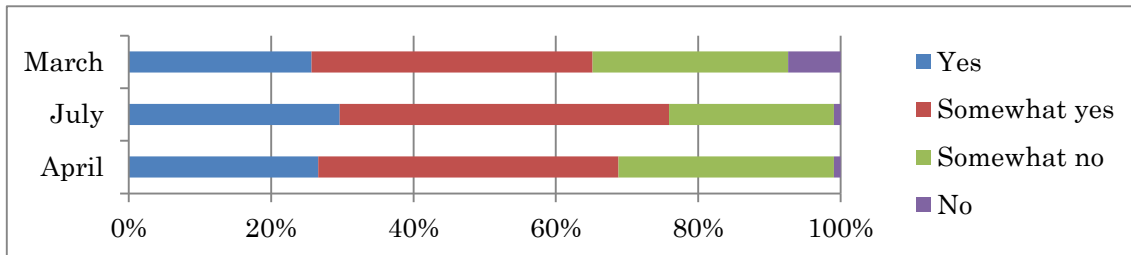
b) Do you like to use your English?



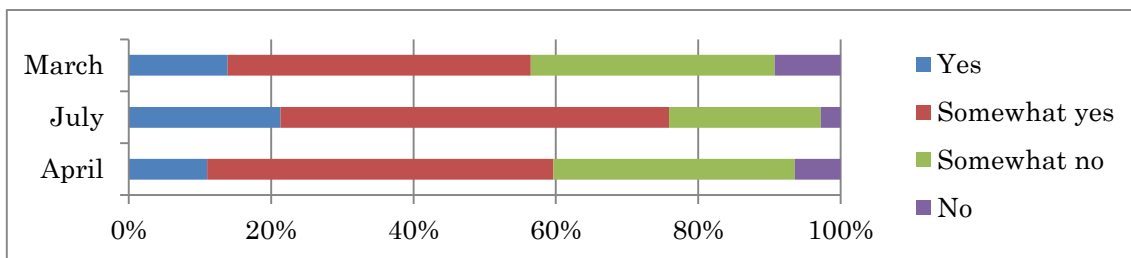
c) Do you use your English in a positive manner in English class?



d) Do you understand English class well?



e) Do you reflect on your understandings of English class?



f) Examples of comments from students

[Positive]

- I became good at English and I like it now. I enjoyed English classes.
- I tried very hard because it was fun to learn.
- I haven't changed a lot but English class was fun.
- I became to use more time on studying English.
- English linguistic examples that teacher showed us helped my studying.
- Because we had a lot of conversation practices, I remembered many expressions.
- I was not good at English but I learned a lot. I liked chants.

[Negative]

- I don't understand English.
- English class was hard to understand.

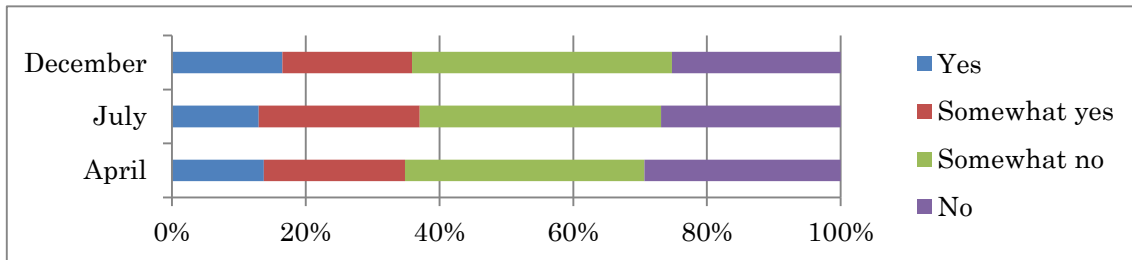
6.1. Analysis

Question from 1 to 5 and comments from students are about motivation. Students are overall positive to English class. But there are some points that I have to look at. To compare the result of the questionnaire in April to the one in March, all data show that they come somewhat better and it was overall acceptable for students. However we can see that data goes up in July but it gets worse in March.

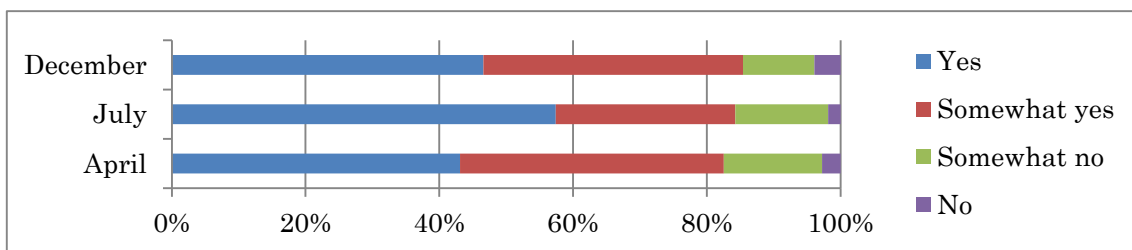
Possible reasons I can think of is that I employed integrated tasks in class and not only linguistic forms but also skills are more integrated and complicated after September. The increased number of 'No' in March is noticeable. They are so called slow learners. When the tasks are integrated, some special support is needed for some students. It is future issue for me.

6.2) [Efficacy of English]

a) Do you want to go abroad to study or to work in your future?



b) Do you think what you learned in English class will be useful in your future?



c) Examples of students' comments.

What I learned will be useful in my future.

I learned not only textbook but also practical English.

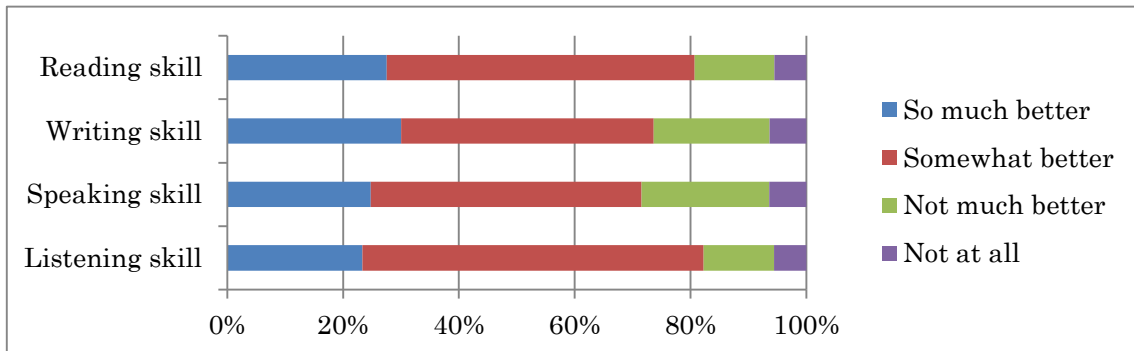
6.2) Analysis

As table 6) shows, over 60% students want to stay in Japan even in future. The data means that they have less motivation or needs to learn a foreign language and is not an easy situation to teach a language in a classroom environment. I think that to show some clear goals are options to solve this problem. In our EFL situation, not only the pedagogical context, but also to show efficacy of English in our daily lives is another key to success.

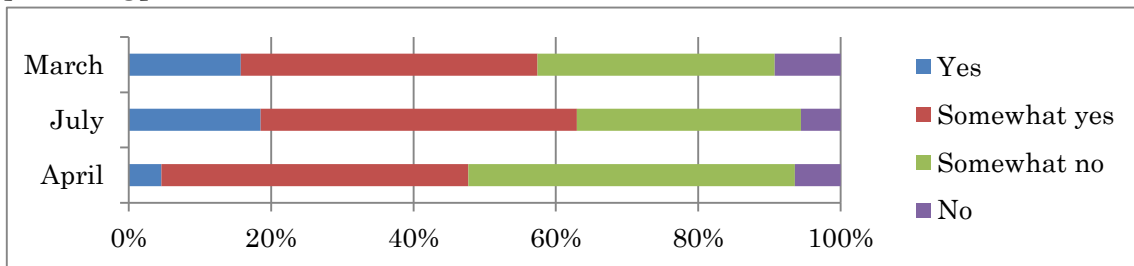
As table 7) shows, students felt some efficacy of English as a communication tool. I think this is great because to show them more than one clear goal is a key to success for an English class.

6.3) [Skills]

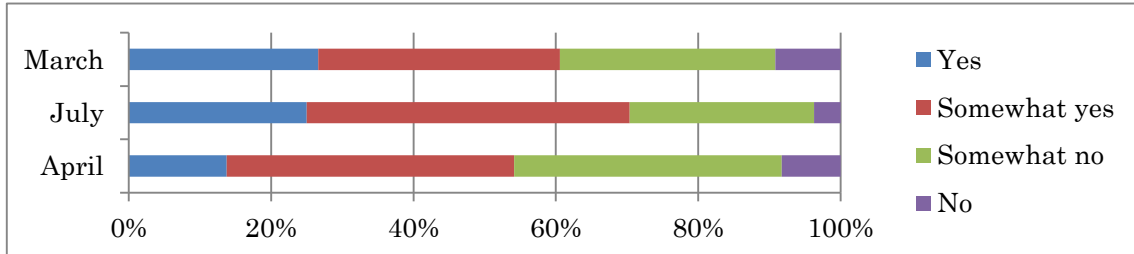
6.3.a) How did you develop your English skills this year?



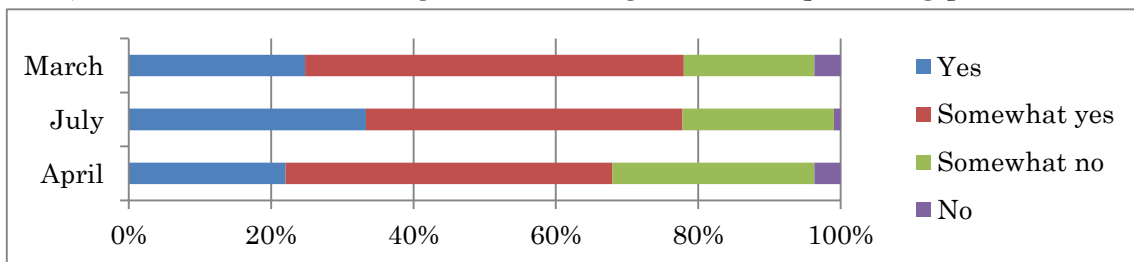
6.3.b) Can you add comments and follow-up questions when you talk to friends? [Speaking]



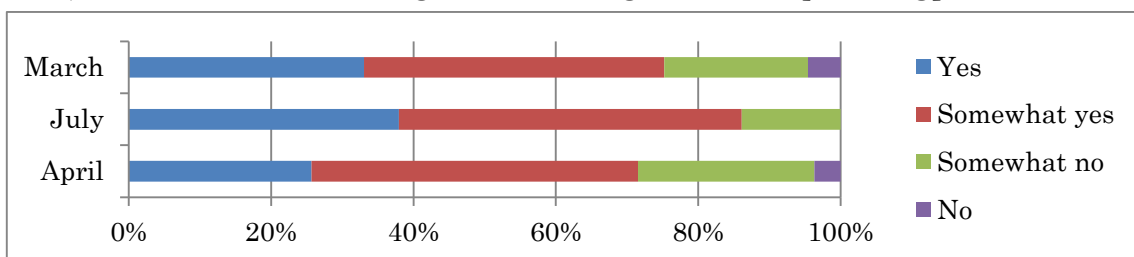
6.3.c) Can you write an essay? [Writing]



6.3.d) Do you understand English used in English class? [Listening.]



6.3.e) Do you understand English used in English class? [Reading]



6.3.f) Examples of students' comments

f.1) Vocabulary

I learned / remembered a lot of vocabulary.

I used a lot of vocabulary in my conversation.

Thanks to increasing of my vocabulary that I can use in communication, I can tell more about myself now.

f2) Grammar

I remembered a lot of grammars.

f3) Writing

I can write what I want to express in English.

My writing proficiency gets better.

I can talk only a little but my writing proficiency gets a lot better.

f4) Speaking

I learned positive manner of conversation.

I learned what is important in conversation.

I can speak without preparation now.

My competency of speaking gets better.

I couldn't speak at all at first, but I gradually became better.

f5) Listening

I understand what my friends are talking about.

I was very poor at listening at first but my listening proficiency gets so much better because I listened to teacher carefully.

f6) More than one skills.

Now I can express myself in English.

My overall proficiency of English got better.

I just used very simple and easy English at first, but I now use more words and phrase when I talk and write.

I was not good at speaking and writing but my proficiency of English gets better.

f7) Others

I often read and write English without translating these days.

I learned English a lot when I understood English.

I need shorter time to understand English.

6.3) Analysis

From the research table 8), students who said Yes or Somewhat yes are from 70 to 80 percent. We can see that students feel development of all 4 skill competencies. From table 9) to 12), it is striking that students who are confident with English developed speaking and writing skills more and students who are not confident with English developed listening and reading skills more. As one of the students says in f7), 'I learned English a lot when I understood English.' it is

important to introduce the understandable input and interactive output together. It also shows that students learn vocabulary and forms while they are using in communication.

6.4) [Learner language]

6.4.1) No1 [Average and low]

S1: Hello?

S2: Hello?

S1: How are you?

S2: I'm fine.

S1: By the way, can you tell me about your happiest memory?

S2: My happiest memory was club activity.

S1: Club activity? [Confirmation checks]

S2: Yes,

S1: What are you in? Club.

S2: Oh.. Etto.. Tennis club.

S1: Oh. I was in school band. Tell me about it more.

S2: We... We... We... *nandakke?*

S1: You.... you... Tennis... ? Tennis... club? [Confirmation checks]

S2: Yes.

S1: Tennis club was very hard.

S2: Un... Yes. We tried hard... hard...

S1: Hard? So, your practice was hard. My happiest memory was daily life.

[Confirmation checks]

S2: Oh.

S1: Because I learned a lot of things from it.

S2: Oh.

S1: For example, chorus contest and sports day. I can find good point of my friends.
How about you?

S2: Etto....

S1: Can you find your club activities friend good points? Yes? No?

S2: Yes.

S1: Yes. OK. Good. Thank you for talking.

S2: Thank you.

T: OK, Thank you very much. Very good. Very good talking..

OK, first, S2. Can you tell me about S1? OK? What is her good memory of her school life?

S2: Etto... *Nanndakke?*

T: Okay. What is it? (to S1)

S1: Daily life. All school life.

T: Everyday. Do you know why? Do you remember why?
 S2: No.
 T: No? OK. Can you tell her why? (to S1)
 S1: I can find a good point of my friend.
 T: Good point. OK? Right. How about S1? What is S2's good memory, happiest memory?
 S1: She.. she.. Her her...?
 T: Uh-huh. [Correction]
 S1: Her happiest memory was club activity. [Uptake]
 T: Uh.. I see. Why?
 S1: Why? Eeee... because she practiced very hard.
 T.: Humm.. That's right. Is that right? You practice very hard?
 S2: Yes.
 T: OK. I see. OK. Can you tell me more about her?
 S1: Me?
 T: Yeah.. Can you... tell me about her more?
 S1: Yes.
 T: Yes. Ah, Okay.
 S1: She... she was tennis club.
 T: Uh huh. She was in ... [Recast]
 S1: She was in a tennis club. [Uptake]
 She practiced every day, for example, hot day, and very cold day. She... her ...her club activity ... [Self correction]
 Sorry, etto.. very hard practice every day and every year. I think that she.. she was very great. I respect she.. her. [Self correction]
 T: Ah-huh. That's right. I think so, too. Very good. Thank you. 2'20

6.4.1 Analysis

S1 had enough practice to talk about her and is ready to talk with the topic. She tried to interact with S2. When S2 was in trouble with finding words, she tried to guess the words, used shadowing, or asked closed questions to confirm her answer. She has some troubles using personal pronouns but after she up took the right one from the teacher, she knew how to use the personal pronoun and we can hear her self-correction the twice.

S2 doesn't have enough linguistic form to express herself. Even she understood the meanings, she could not find appropriate words.

6.5)

Another thing that I noticed was the average marks on the placement tests were good not only the test that I made but also the test published by outside of the school. I learned that communicative teaching with focus on form instruction help to develop the knowledge of the linguistic forms to prepare for both the test in our pedagogical content and communicative content. And performance test makes them to be active learners.

7. Future issues

a) It is necessary to develop right curriculum and use tasks for classroom management. But the problem that I had this year was that it was hard to preview students' development of competency. Even though I tried to observe my students carefully, I missed students' progress and my curriculum was not always adequate.

b) I wonder how I can collect effective and credible data to my research. I noticed sometimes my data or are subjective.

c) I also wonder how I assess performance test . I'm not sure my criterion is adequate for my students. I'm sure that I need more experience. It is necessary to share the criterion with other teachers in our school.

Lesson plan

1. Level JHS 3rd year
- 2 Topic Memory of JHS life or future dream.
3. Task Timed conversation , Follow-up questions
4. Skill integrated task Writing, speaking, listening.
5. Goal Students can write what they want to be in the future or their memory.
Students can memorize what they wrote to continue speaking.
Students can have a conversation in a good manner.
Students can listen and talk each other more than 2 minutes.
Students can answer some questions after that.
6. Procedure
Day1. Students are announced the kinds of activities and how they'll be assessed.
Day2-3 They have form focused task and prepare the linguistic information.
Day4 They practices talking many times and practice assessment.
Day5 Performance test.
Day6 Feedback to students.

Worksheet

中学校 3 年間の思い出を語ろう！

- 文法
- ① I enjoyed
 - ② I have learned
 - ③ I had a ~ time. Thank you for~.

- 例文
- ① I enjoyed our sports day the most.
 - ② I have learned that practice is important.
 - ③ I had a great time.

1 Choose correct form.

- 1) I (enjoy enjoyed) our school trip to Okinawa.
- 2) I (have learned am learning) that peace is really important.
- 3) I (have had has) a wonderful time.

2 Fill in the blanks.

- 1) We () the ball game tournament. [play]
- 2) I have () the teamwork is important. [learn]
- 3) () () () a great time. [Thank]

3 Practice

例文を参考にして「中学校の思い出」について英文で書こう。



伝えたいこと

部活が楽しかったな。
練習って大切って学んだな。
すばらしい時間を過ごせたな。



- Check! I enjoyed ~ ing.
 I have learned that ~ .
 I had ~ time.



4 How about you? What is your memory?

Q What is the happiest memory of your school life?

A My happiest memory is

Q Why?

A Because

Q Tell me more about it.

A Sure.

HR No NAME

