

# **Final Curriculum Design Report for March 2016**

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Lesson Plan: **Final Speaking test and comparison**

## Teaching context

- 1. Level: Elementary School, Grade 4;**
- 2. Class size: 7 students (3 girls, 4 boys);**
- 3. Class time: 50 minutes, once a week;**
- 4. Textbook: Let's Go 3 (Oxford University Press);**

**Further teaching context: Nagoya University of Foreign Studies and Kawai Juku**

## **5. a. Goal and Objectives:**

1. Let students have conversations together in English;
2. Gain the confidence and the desire to speak English outside the classroom;
3. Teach and use communication strategies while speaking English
4. Get their opinions on the course as a whole;

## **5. b. Personal goals**

1. Learn how to make lessons more communicative.
2. Find ways to make to make the lessons more interesting.
3. Learn how to make a plan for the entire year.
4. Discover the best teaching methods.
5. Become a better teacher.

## **6. Research Questions:**

1. What communication strategies did the students learn and which strategies did they use?
2. How have the students improved their English ability over the two years of research?

## **More on teaching context and what I did as a teacher**

The research was conducted once a week over 2 years at a kindergarten/elementary school in an after school program. My teaching environment is essentially an English conversation school for elementary school students and the lessons were private. This meant smaller class sizes and there was an emphasis on keeping students and parent happy. While I had the freedom to teach what I wanted the parents were more comfortable with the idea of a textbook as a guide for the course. Without a textbook the parents may have complained. Therefore, it was beneficial to use a textbook; however, the activities used in class were related to what they were learning in the textbook.

The goal of the course overall was for information exchange to occur as much as possible. The difficulty was in the time management because on one side we wanted to cover the material in the textbook and on the other we needed some time for learning communication strategies and conversation practice. The lessons were conducted in English and the students had about 10 min of conversation practice a day.

I did not want to completely discard the textbook because of the sheer number of unique classes that I had to teach each week. One important aspect of this type of teaching situation is to have lessons that are easy to plan. I wanted to be able to apply the same teaching standards in all my lessons without become exhausted.

## **7. Procedure:**

1. Teach from the textbook.  
Use the textbook material and make communicative activities.
2. Teach communication strategies;  
Learn a new strategy every one to two months.
3. Practice the strategies, with teacher and later with classmates;  
Use the last 10 min of class to practice and review the communication strategies.
4. Pair practice;  
Use basic pair practice at the tables with the textbook. Have standing pair practice and switch speaking partners as often as necessary.
5. Test students;  
Have one speaking test per semester and if possible record it and transcribe the recording.
6. Examine progress;  
Track the progress over the research period using the transcriptions and questionnaires.

## **The conversation strategies taught throughout the year.**

1. **Openers:** To start a conversation.  
Ex: "What's up?" "How's it going?" "What's new?"
2. **Continuers:** To make conversations deeper.  
Ex: "What else?" "And you?"
3. **Repair communication breakdown:** For when students encounter difficulties while speaking.  
Ex: "Sorry? Once more please." "I don't understand." "I don't know."
4. **Closers:** To end a conversation.  
Ex: "Nice talking with you." "Talk to you later." "See you." "Bye."

## Conversation results:

Final speaking test on February 25 2015

Legend:      Japanese (L1) in **green**                      Grammar mistake in **red**  
                 Mispronunciation in **blue**                      Pauses in (x)

### Wakana and Ikuto 1:44

1. W: Hello.
2. I: Hello.
3. W: **How** are you?
4. I: I'm fine **and you?**
5. W : I'm fine. Thank you.
6. I: **What** can you do?
7. W: I can jump rope **and you?**
8. I: I can play the piano.
9. W: **What** do you like?
10. I: I like stew. **And you?**
11. W: I like grapes
12. I: **What** do you want?
13. W: I want hot chocolate **and you?**
14. I: I want tea.
15. W: What? (6) **Where** is, where where is the light?
16. I: It's in the living room on the rug. (3) **Where** is the TV?
17. W: It's in the bedroom. It's under the bed. (4)
18. I: Thank you
19. W: Thank you

February 25 2015	Ikuto	Wakana
# of words	41	48
# of errors	0	0
Error as %	0%	0%
# of turns	9	10
Pauses (time)	3	10
Strategies		
Openers	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Questions	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
And you?	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
Closer	½	½
Total time of conversation (net)	1:44 (1:11)	1:44 (1:11)

## Yuto and Shoi 2:50

1. Y: hello
2. S: hello
3. Y: **How** are you?
4. S: I'm fine. **And you?**
5. Y: I'm happy.
6. S: I, **What** can **you** do?
7. Y: I can (2) jump rope. **And you?**
8. S: I can do a **sammyso**
9. Y: **What** do you like?
10. S: I'm (**like**) steak. **And you?**
11. Y: I like steak. (12)
12. S: I, (**what do you**) **what** want? (6)
13. Y: I want grape. **And you?**
14. S: I want, I want, I want game. (12)
15. Y: **Where** is (3) where is pasta
16. S: It's living room on the sofa. (14) Living room on the sofa. (8) what telephone? **Where** is **the** telephone?
17. Y: It's living room on the sofa.
18. S: Thank you.

February 25 2015	<b>Yuto</b>	<b>Shoi</b>
<b># of words</b>	38	51
<b># of errors</b>	0	4
<b>Error as %</b>	0%	7.8%
<b># of turns</b>	9	9
<b>Pauses (time)</b>	17	40
<b>Strategies</b>		
<b>Openers</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Questions</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>And you?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Closer</b>	<b>0</b>	½
<b>Total time of conversation (net)</b>	2:50 (1:53)	2:50 (1:53)

Second recording July 1 2015

Legend: Japanese (L1) in green Grammar mistake in red  
Mispronunciation in blue Pauses in (x)

**Tomoki and Yuto (2:21)**

1. T: Hello Yuto
2. Y: Hello Tomoki
3. T: What's up?
4. Y: Not **matching** (much). (3) How are you?
5. T: I'm ... terrible. (24) What's what's what's lunchroom, **Where** is the lunch room?
6. Y: It's next to the office. (4) **What's** (where's) the (4) classroom? (3)
7. T: **Kore?** **It's chair.** (10) **What's** (where's) **teeel**, music room?
8. Y: **It's a chair**
9. T: **etto** I to, I, I, **fhest** to go. (13)
10. Y: Thank you. (11) Nice to meet you.
11. T: **Tank** you.
12. Y: Thank you.
13. T: oh, Thank you.

July 1 2015	Tomoki	Yuto
# of words	40	33
# of errors	1	1
Error as %	2.5%	3%
# of turns	7	6
Pauses (time)	3 (47)	5 (25)
Strategies		
Openers	1	1
Questions	2	2
And you? / I don't know	0	0
Closer	1/2	1
Total time of conversation (net)	2:21 (1:09)	2:21 (1:09)

Note: This conversation had a few pauses, about half the conversation was filled with pauses. They asked a couple questions but did not use the strategy for that week, which was I don't know.

## Shoi and Ikuto (4:30)

1. I: Hello Shoi
2. S: Hello You (6)
3. I: How are you?
4. S: I'm fine, ah, fine. (10) Hello You... (5) How are you?
5. I: I'm fine. (9) when, **What** the music room?
6. S: It's ... (4) next to the ... (4) classroom,
7. I: **etto** (13) What, what the? (23) Kore kore kore, nani the music room,
8. S: I don't know (35) I don't know. (7) What's this?
9. I: I don't know. (4) I have to **goat**
10. S: **Nanndake?** Nice ... (37) **toki?** Nice talking with (18) Thank you
11. I: Thank you

July 1 2015	Ikuto	Shoi
# of words	36	42
# of errors	0	1
Error as %	0%	2.3%
# of turns	6	5
Pauses (time)	5 (55)	8 (120)
Strategies		
Openers	1	1
Questions	2	2
And you? / I don't know	1	1
Closer	1/2	1
Total time of conversation (net)	4:30 (1:35)	2:21 (1:35)

Note: This conversation had many pauses, as a matter of fact, it was mostly pauses (roughly 2/3 was silence). They used the strategy for when they are not how to answer "I don't know" once each. This conversation lacked fluency and accuracy as well, although the pronunciations were generally good.

## Tomoki and Shoi 1:11

1. T: Hi Shoi.
2. Y: Hi Tomoki. What's up?
3. T: Not much. How are you?
4. Y: I'm happy.
5. T: How do you **go** to school?
6. Y: I go on foot. **And you?**
7. T: I go on foot.
8. Y: What do you **like**?
9. T: I like sushi.
10. Y: What **else**?
11. T: I like soccer. **And you?**
12. Y: I like sushi.
13. T: What **else**?
14. Y: I like pizza.
15. T: What **can** you do?
16. Y: I can play soccer.
17. T: What **else**?
18. Y: I can swim. **And you?**
19. T: I can play soccer.
20. Y: What **else**?
21. T: I can play basketball.
22. Y: What do you **want**?
23. T: I want money.
24. Y: What **else**?
25. T: I want games. **And you?**
26. Y: I want money.
27. T: What **else**?
28. Y: I want game.
29. T: Nice talking with you.
30. Y: Nice talking with you. Bye.
31. T: See you.

December 16 2015	<b>Tomoki</b>	<b>Shoi</b>
<b># of words</b>	57	52
<b># of errors</b>	0	0
<b>Error as %</b>	0%	0%
<b># of turns</b>	16	15
<b>Pauses (time)</b>	0	0
<b>Strategies</b>		
<b>Openers</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Questions (5W 1H else?)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>And you?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Closer</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total time of conversation</b>	1:11	1:11

### Maika and Ikuto 1:27

1. T: Hello Maika.
2. M: Hello Ikuto. What's up?
3. T: Not much. How are you?
4. M: I'm tired. How do you **go** to school?
5. T: I go **to** on foot. **And you?**
6. M: I go by car.
7. T: What do you **like**?
8. M: I like sushi.
9. T: What **else**?
10. M: I like Kendo. **And you?**
11. T: I like electone.
12. M: What **else**?
13. T: I like English.
14. M: What **can** you do?
15. T: I can **play** swim.
16. M: What **else**?
17. T: I can play electone. **And you?**
18. M: I can play the piano.
19. T: What **else**?
20. M: I can swim.



21. T: What do you **want**?
22. M: I want money. (laugh)
23. T: What **else**?
24. M: I want game. **And you**?
25. T: I want money.
26. M: What **else**?
27. T: I want game. Nice talking **rev** you.
28. M: Nice talking with you too.
29. T: See you.
30. M: Bye.

December 16 2015	<b>Maika</b>	<b>Ikuto</b>
<b># of words</b>	57	56
<b># of errors</b>	0	2
<b>Error as %</b>	0%	3.5%
<b># of turns</b>	15	15
<b>Pauses (time)</b>	0	0
<b>Strategies</b>		
<b>Openers</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Questions (5W 1H else?)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>And you?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Closer</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total time of conversation</b>	1:27	1:27

### **Analysis of Conversations**

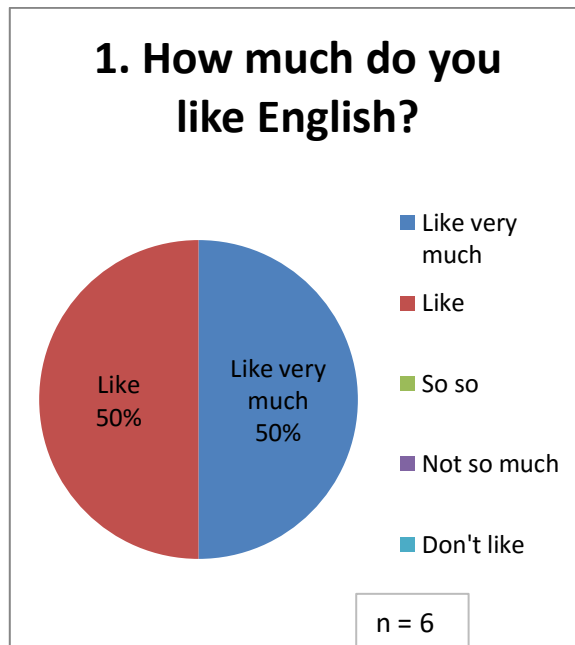
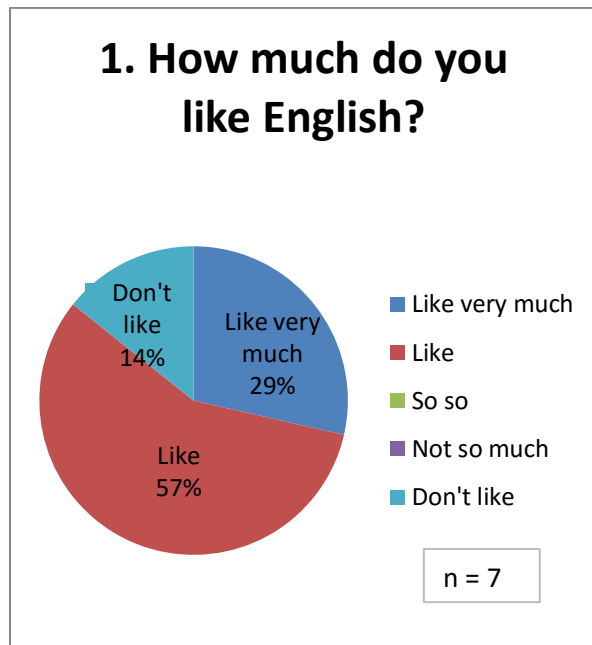
1. Student fluency and accuracy increased.
2. They used more strategies.
3. They spoke with more confidence.
4. They had more turns speaking and asked more questions in a shorter amount of time.

**Questionnaire results:**

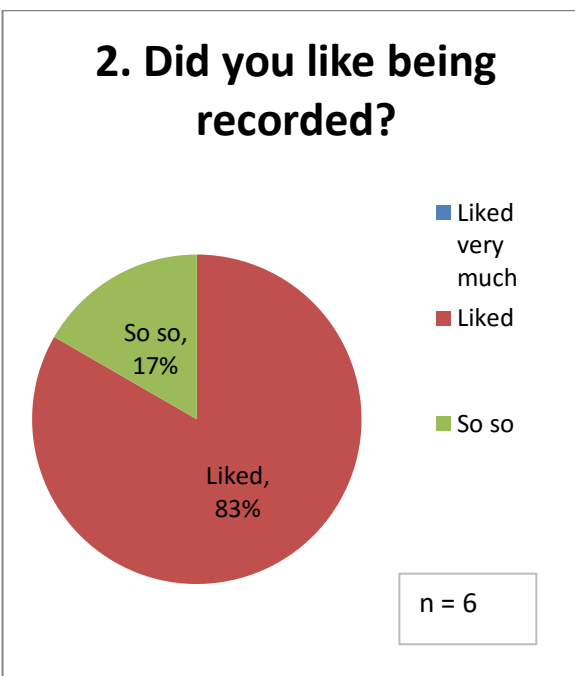
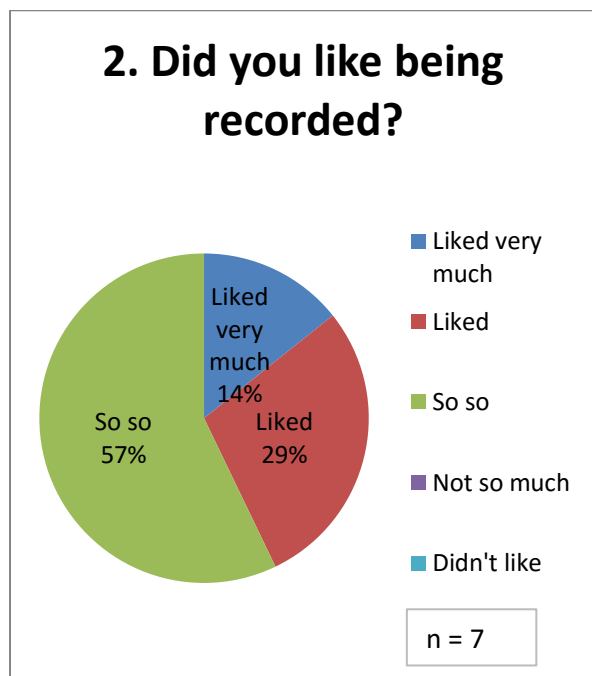
Jan 2015

Jan 2016

To measure student interest in English

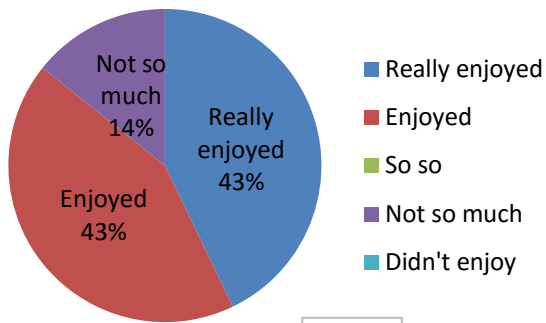


To see if the recording were beneficial according to the students



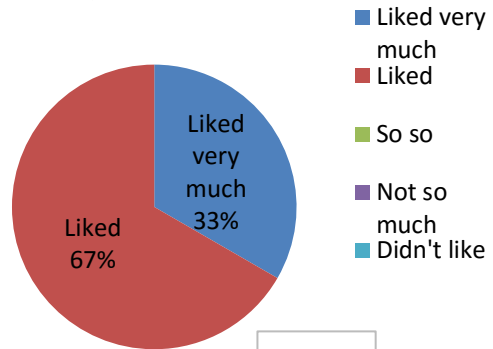
For sociocultural theory

**3. Did you enjoy having a conversation with your classmates?**



n = 7

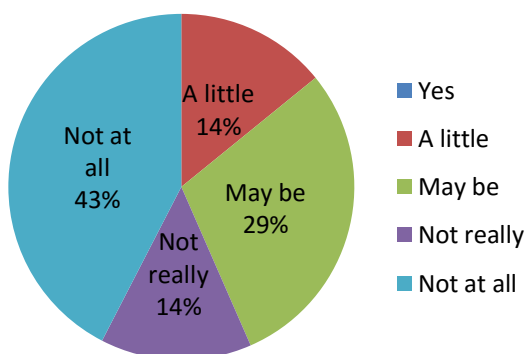
**3. Did you enjoy having a conversation with your classmates?**



n = 6

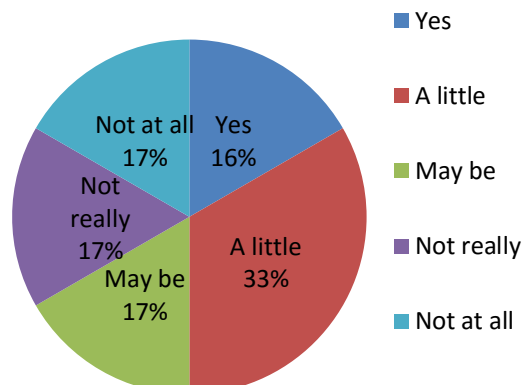
To measure student confidence and self efficacy

**4. Do you think you could talk with a foreigner now?**



n = 7

**4. Do you think you can talk with a foreigner now?**



n = 6

## **Analysis of Questionnaire**

Q1. Students liked English slightly more at the end of the second year.

Q2. They enjoyed being recorded more at the end of the second year.

Q3. They enjoyed speaking with their classmates more in the first year.

Q4. They felt like they had more confidence to speak to a native English speaker at the end of the second year.

## **Some student comments**

1. English is my favorite subject because of you.
2. My mom makes me go to English class.
3. You taught me how to read, write and speak in English. Thank you.
4. I want to visit Canada someday.
5. Thank you for being our teacher, I tried my best.
6. English is hard for me but I like it.
7. I want to improve my pronunciation.

## **8. What happened:**

Over the two years of doing action research I have tried to reduce my dependency on the textbook. It was hard at first and I have still not completely gotten rid of it yet.

Using the recorders put the conversational power in the hands of the students. They enjoyed playing with buttons and listening to themselves after the performance ended.

## **9. What I learned, what I might do differently next time:**

Practice is very important for the students.

Learner/ student- centered activities are the best for increasing student speaking competence.

Communication strategies give necessary tools to students in any language.

Speaking tests give student a target to aim for, so they should be a part of all English courses.

CLT is good for young learners.

Communication strategies are essential tools that students should learn, particularly when they are beginners.

Recording is a lot of work but can be beneficial for all learners especially beginners.