

Final Action Research Report

Title: Modifying ESL Activities for Beginner Learners of English

Class: First Year and Third Year Students

Class Size: 38 students

Textbook: New Horizon 1 and New Horizon 3

Problems Encountered: The first year students were uncooperative especially in activities that asked them to reveal something about themselves.

Third year students were ready to have communicative activities but my classes with them were very limited.

Goal: To provide modified communicative and meaningful activities based on students' needs and interests

What You Did:

First Year Level

The Japanese Teacher of English (JTE) and I planned various meaningful and communicative activities. These include card games, interviews and surveys that provided opportunities for students to review the English grammar and at the same time practice saying the key sentences.

We lessened group activities at the middle of the year because students were hesitant to work together with the opposite sex. Further, the uninterested students became noisier and had more chances to disturb other classmates. Instead of group activities, the JTE and I walked around and asked each student some English questions while they were

answering their worksheet. However, at the end of the school year we needed to do group activities again because students have to be familiarized with this kind of process in preparation for the next school year.

Third Year Level

The third year students did various communicative and meaningful activities too. These include interviews, surveys and games such as fruit basket, cards, guessing and more. Mostly, the activities were done in groups because they got more productive than doing them individually.

Result:

First Year Level

Those activities that did not need to reveal students' personal information were generally successful. About 80-90% responded positively to these kinds of activities. Since students were shy to express their own opinions, we integrated factual questions.

During the one-on-one interview, students became very focused with the questions. Those who are interested in English liked this activity because they could express their personal ideas. They felt that they were having a real English conversation. Uninterested students were forced to answer back even to just one or two questions. They felt a little bit pressured but with their classmates as their translators, they were able to make it.

In the last two months of the school year, group activities were still not effective. We thought that those who were not participative would be slightly encouraged but it turned out the other way around.

Third Year Level

I asked once the students to evaluate one activity using the attached questionnaire. Below is the summary.

Let's Go Camping

Questions	Yes	No	So-so/A little
Was the activity easy?	14	3	12
Was the activity interesting?	11	0	18
Were you able to speak English?	16	0	13
Were you able to make your own sentence?	21	8	-
Were you able to remember the target sentence	9	8	12

Below are the summary of the students' comments in doing communicative/meaningful activities:

1. I was not able to form sentences but I tried to remember them.
2. Today's activity was very interesting. Thank you for your preparation.
3. I was very interested with the activity and I understood it.
4. I had a very good time.
5. It was fun. I want to do it again.
6. Forming the sentences was hard but I tried my best to cooperate with the group.
7. Memorizing the sentences and competing with other group were hard. I'm pressured to memorize the sentences hurriedly that is why I forget some of the words once I report to Cecil. Next time, I must do it patiently.
8. To remember English sentences is fun.
9. I was very tired with today's activity. Though it was fun.
10. I helped another group. The game was very boring.
11. I did not know what we did but I enjoyed the activity very much.
12. To speak English is very difficult and very hard.

Learning:

Because of this action research, I gained more confidence in my teaching skills. I learned that modifying the activities to suit students' needs and interests is very important. There were times that our activities were perfected at the last class but even if it was already late, the effort was still worth it. What is important was the process we underwent.

Sometimes, we, teachers need to give enough time for students to learn how to communicate with the opposite sex. We need to be patient in waiting for students to be comfortable to share something about themselves to others. It may take a long time for them to overcome these concerns but they will eventually.

Future Issues:

When I asked my students what they want to do in Sogo English Classes aside from the games that we usually do, they suggested the following:

- a. sing English songs in class
- b. watch English movies or TV programs
- c. have theme parties (Halloween, Christmas and more)
- d. read English stories

I think I was so focused in learning grammatical points this year through games. I forgot to give them opportunity to just enjoy English. So next school year, I will discuss their suggestions with my JTEs. These may be the key to increase their interest in English.