

Action Research Final Report

Noriko Ishitobi (Ueda JHS, Nagoya)

March, 2013

1. Title: Creating a Positive Learning Community in the Classrooms

2. Teaching context

- 1) Level: 3rd year of junior high school
- 2) Targeted AR classes: 3-8 (38 students) and 3-6 (38 students)
- 3) Time: 50mins×4/ week
- 4) Textbook: New Horizon English Course 3 (Tokyo Shoseki)
- 5) Problems:

On the surface, my students did not have serious problems concerning attitudes in class. They were relatively polite, very quiet, and enthusiastic toward learning; in other words, they were too shy, did not want to show their feelings. I thought that was problematic when I expected them to express themselves and communicate in class.

On the other hand, they greatly cared about grades. They were strongly conscious of high school entrance exams this year and even slower students were showing willingness to change in their learning attitude in April. Many students went to cram schools and their focus was on reading, writing, and solving problems on their own. As a result, many students showed reluctance about pair work.

I had to encourage the students to practice speaking as well to improve over all English skills while they thought it was important to work on workbooks provided by the cram schools. I also needed to persuade them the necessity of pair work to build communicative ability.

3. Goals:

Students have speaking test. Until speaking test, students engage in timed-conversation in different pairs. Other than that, students work in pairs in all kinds of activities in class.

Through the process, students get to know each other, help each other and learn from each other in class. Their willingness to learn English lead to the successful relationship. Most of all, students improve English proficiency through collaboration in pair work.

4. What I did:

- Timed-conversation
- Speaking test
- Communicative activities
- Songs

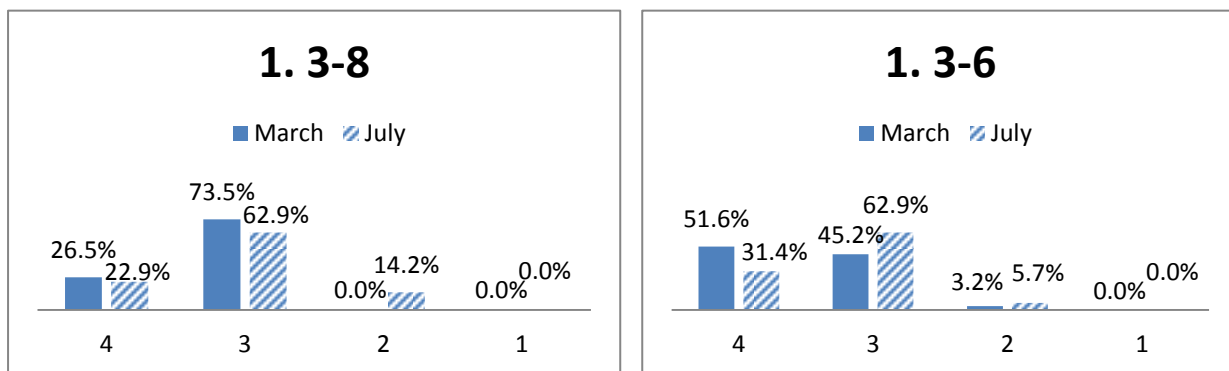
5. Results:

The questionnaires were conducted in July and March. The reason I chose two classes out of four classes was that these two classes had very contrastive atmospheres; 3-6 had rather warm atmosphere and 3-8 had shy atmosphere.

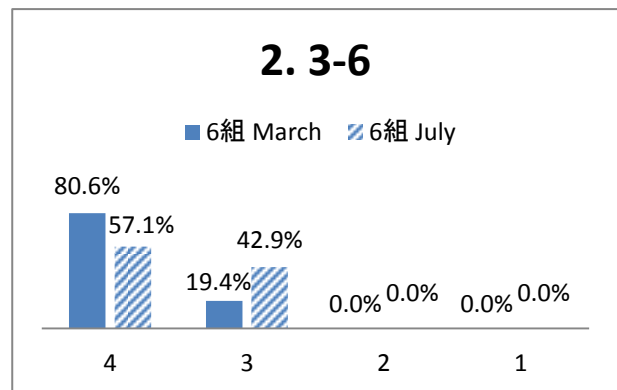
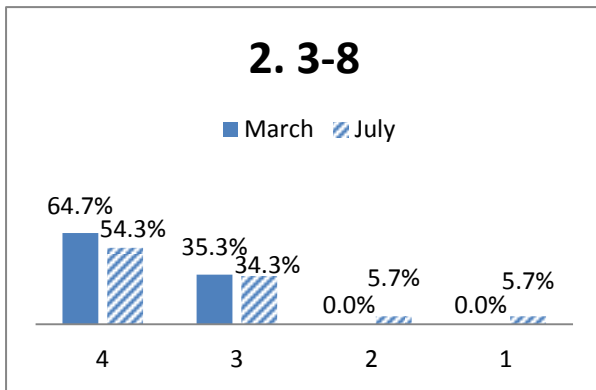
The result of survey showed interesting results. Even though both of the classes increased the number of students who had positive opinion about pair work in March, the two classes still clearly showed each characteristic. 3-6 strongly believed the benefit of pair work and came to loved it. On the other hand, 3-8 also showed more positive feelings in March than in July, however, the number of those students was still smaller than 3-6.

[Table: Survey results excerpt] (3-8:n=34, 3-6:n=31)

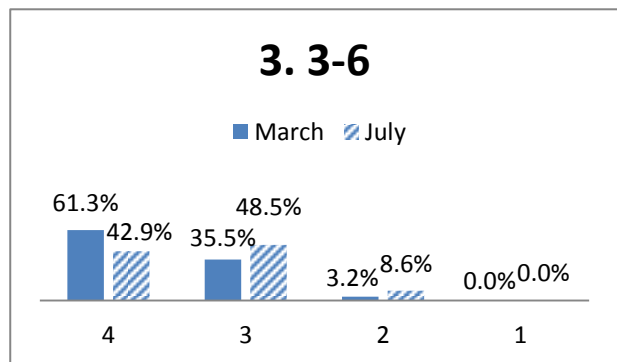
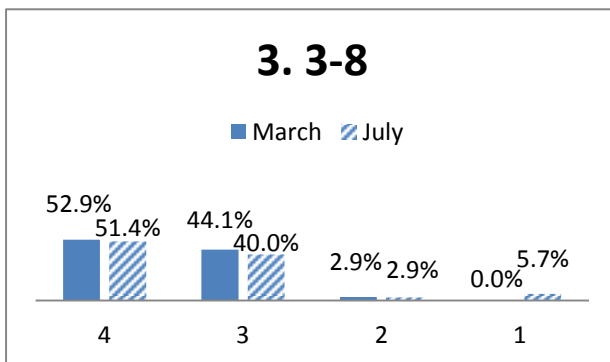
1. I actively participate in pair work when I work on conversation/ communicative activities.



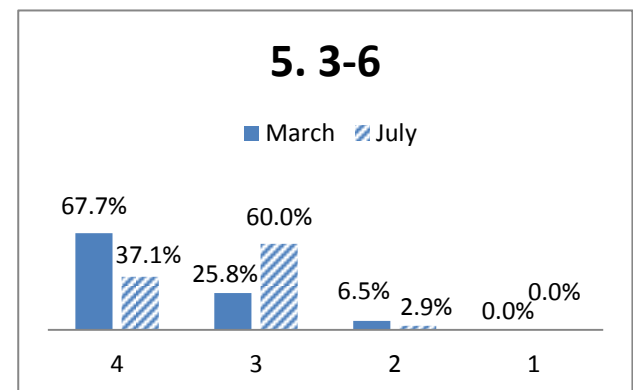
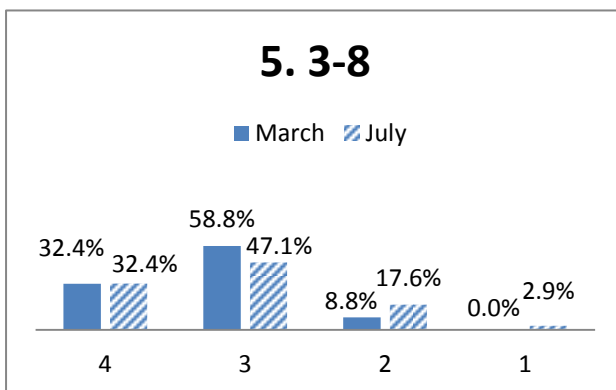
2. Pair work is useful for learning English.



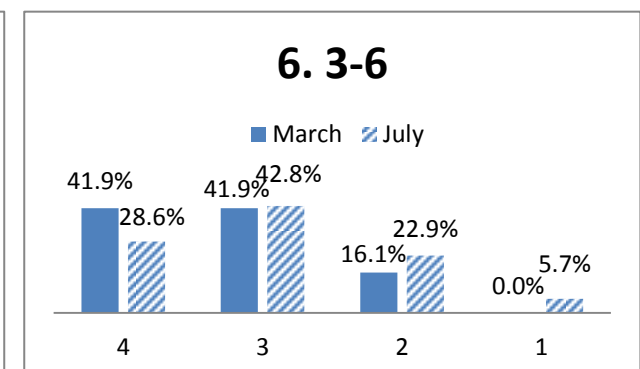
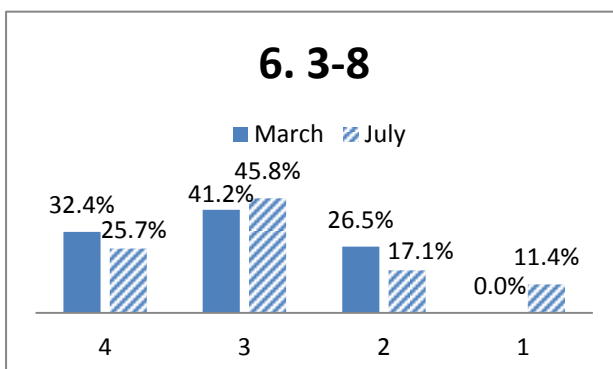
3. We learn about each other though pair work.



5. We learn English from each other through pair work.



6. Pair work motivates me toward learning.



Comments on Q2: Pair work is useful for learning English.

(The numbers in parentheses show the actual number of students out of 65)

- I could build communicative ability. (20)
- I asked my partners when I did not understand something. (14)
- I was motivated toward learning because pair work was fun. (5)
- I checked my understanding by teaching each other. (4)

Comments on Q3: We learn about each other through pair work.

- I learned new things about classmates. (26)
- I got chances to talk to unfamiliar students. (14)
- I changed the image about some classmates. (2)

Comments on Q6: Pair work motivates me toward learning.

- I did not want to be a trouble for my partners. (6)
- Because pair work was fun. (11)
- It really depends on partners. (3)
- I am not good at pair work. (2)
- I was tired of it. (1)

6. What I learned:

I put emphasis on pair work this school year, and less focus on public speaking and individual presentations. I think that students need more confidence about expressing themselves and communicating in English to be able to be active in class.

Since my students were extremely shy and quiet, I had been hesitating to let them make presentations in front of class and tried to reduce their learning stress. As a result, they never got used to speak up in front of others. However, as long as expressing themselves is one of the elements of communicative ability, I should have given them more occasions of public speaking and evaluated them. I should not forget that what students learn often depends on the evaluation.

7. Future Issues:

- I would like to develop a curriculum including evaluations.
- I would like to hold speaking tests at least once a term.
- I also would like to do other kind of performance tests such as speech, skit, and presentation.

Lesson Plan (from Monthly Report of January)

Theme of this year's AR: Creating a Positive Learning Community in the Classroom

1. Level: 3rd year of junior high school

2. Class size: 38×4classes

3. Time: 50mins×4/week

4. Text book: New Horizon English Course 3 (Tokyo Shoseki)

5. Objectives

- To engage in speaking test

Ss talk about their experiences using "Have you ever ~?" for 90 seconds.

- To write an essay "The person I admire"

Ss write about a person they admire with more than eight sentences and a picture.

6. Procedure of writing an essay

Step 1 Ss answer the three questions.

- ① Who do you admire?
- ② What did [do] the person do?
- ③ Why do you admire him/her?

Step 2 Talk in pairs about the three questions. Do it three-four times.

Step 3 Write a first draft. Ss are encouraged to help each other in pairs to finish writing.

Step 4 Write a second draft according to the teacher's comments.

Step 5 Make a poster using the draft and drawing (a picture). [Homework assignment]

Step 6 Read other Ss' posters put on the wall of the corridor.

7. Procedure of speaking test

Step 1 Draw a chopstick with a number to decide a partner.

Step 2 Draw one card out of five to decide a topic to talk about. The topics are

- ①Skiing
- ②Concerts
- ③Swimming in the sea
- ④Roller coasters
- ⑤Meeting celebrities

Step 3 Go out of the classroom and have a talk in front of a video camera in the hall.

Step 4 Come back to the classroom.

Show the drawing to the group and make a presentation about it.

While waiting in the classroom, Ss write the second draft of the essay.

YUI ☆

The person that I admire is Yui. When she was seventeen years old, she became a professional singer. I admire her because she sings very well and makes all her songs by herself. I think she is wonderful.

My favorite song of hers is "Fell my soul". The song is a ballad. And it is her debut song.

I often want to listen to the song.

2-8



Akashiya アカシヤ
Sanma



The person I admire is Akashiya Sanma. He is a multitalented entertainer who is an actor and host of TV shows. I have loved him since I watched the TV show "Odoru sanma goten." He is a very funny.

He is also a host of the very famous TV shows "Odoru sanma goten" and "Sanma no Karakuri TV," and "Honmadekka TV." He has been the host of the program for 39 years. He is a very good speaker in the program.

3-8(7)

【 Students' works "The person I admire" 】



【 Students' works displayed on the wall of the hallway 】

Appendix A Handout for Speaking test

Speaking Test について

ある事柄について、お互いの経験について対話する。Have you ever ~? を使った質問文を使う。Conversation Strategies (教科書の最後のページにあるおしゃべりのコツ)を使って、最低1分間、会話を継続させる。

テーマ	使用する動詞
Skiing	skied
Concerts	been to a concert
Swimming in the sea	swum in the sea
Roller coasters	ridden a roller coaster
Meeting TV stars	met a TV star

ペアの決め方 : くじ
 テーマの決め方 : くじ

対話の例 テーマ : Traveling 使用する動詞 : traveled Kyoto

(例としては、実際のテストのテーマにないものをあえて選びました。)

A: Hi, How'ya doing?

B: Good. How about you, ...?

A: Pretty good.

B: Good.

So, let's talk about traveling. Have you ever traveled Kyoto?

A: Yes. I have traveled Kyoto. I went to Kinkakuji.

B: Kinkakuji? Nice. How did you go there?

A: By shinkansen. I like shinkansen.

B: Oh, I see.

A: How about you? Have you ever traveled Kyoto, ...?

B: Well, no, I haven't.

A: Do you want to go to Kyoto?

B: Yes, yes.

A: Where do you want to go?

B: Kiyomizudera! And Sanju-sangen do.

A: Kiyomizu and Sanju-sangen do, I see. You like temples.

B: Yes, very much. I am interested in temples.

A: Nice talking with you.

B: You, too.

シャドウイング

コメント

follow-up question

たずね返し

follow-up question

follow-up question

シャドウイング

コメント

Speaking Test 評価表

		POINT		
		0	2	4
1	声の大きさ loudness of voice	そばで聞いている先生に声が聞こえない。	声がやや小さく、聞こえにくい。	声をはっきりしていて、よく聞こえる。
2	英語らしい発音 pronunciation	日本語にしか聞こえない。カタカナ英語。「ハブユー エバー～？」のように聞こえる。	英語らしい発音に気をつけているが、まだ練習の余地がある。	英語らしい発音に気をつけて、よく練習してきた様子が表れている。
3	1分間の対話の継続 speaking for one minute	1分間経過のタイマーが鳴るまで対話を続けることができない。不自然な沈黙が数秒にわたって続いた。	1分経過のタイマーが鳴るまで、やや途切れることがあったものの、対話を続けることができた。	1分～1分半、ある程度途切れることなく対話を続けることができた。
4	CSの使用 use of conversation strategies	Conversation strategiesを使うことができなかった。	Conversation strategiesを1, 2回使って、会話を続ける努力をした。	Conversation strategiesを3回以上使って、会話を続けることができた。
5	現在完了の使用 use of present perfect	現在完了を使った質問をたずねることができなかった。	現在完了を使って質問をたずねることができた。	現在完了を正しく使って質問をたずねることができた。
6	態度・印象 attitude/ impression	総合的な対話に対する態度がよくない。	総合的に見て、対話に対する態度が普通。会話を続けようとする努力が見られる。	習った英語をなるべくたくさん使おうとしている。総合的に見て、やる気に満ちていて、円滑に対話を続けようと努力した印象が大きい。
Total		/24		

Speaking Test を終えての感想

Appendix E Transcription of speaking test

1 *The first pair comes and sits.*
2 T: ikuyo: rock paper scissors one two three (.) go. (pi)
3 S1: hi. how are you doing.
4 S2: good. good. how about you.
5 S1: good. so let's talk about ski. have you been ski?
6 S2: (.)yes. I have skiin. I have. how about you. have you
7 ever ski?
8 S1: yes I have. where did you go?
9 S2: o: about about three times. how about you.
10 S1: o: (.) maybe two times.
11 S2: do you like winter?
12 S1: yes. I like winter. but I like cold places.
13 S2: nice. I don't liku (.)winter.
14 S1: oh↑ why.
15 S2: e::very cold.
16 S1: ah cold.
17 S2: I like summer.
18 S1: Oh summer.
19 S2: yeah (2.0) why why do you like sum- ah winter.
20 S1: uh:winter has a: (.)Christmas a: oshogatsu, many
21 interesting things.
22 S2: that's nice. (.) I I like summer because (0.5) nn (0.5)
23 go (0.5) go (0.5)sea.
24 S1: sea. oh sea.
25 S2: and swimming.
26 S1: do you like swim?
27 S2: yes.
28 ((pi pi pi pi))
29 S2: [nice
30 S1: [nice talking with you.
31 S2: you too. ° thank you.°
32 *The second pair comes and sits.*
33 T: rock paper scissors
34 S3: one to three one two three one two three
35 S4: hi, Goto, how ya doing?
36 S3: good. how about you, Takeshi,
37 S4: good. so let's talk about roller coasters. have you ever
38 roller coaster?
39 S3: uh: I haven't. uh but I wanna try. how about you, Takeshi.
40 S4: yes, I have.
41 S3: oh where was it.
42 S4: eh::nagashima spa land.
43 S3: ↑ah I see. that's ↑great uh: etto: (0.3) with who?
44 S4: eh:my friend.
45 S3: I see. e:t e=
46 S4: =Do you want to ridden a roller coaster?
47 S3: a: .hhh yes. I I want nagashima spa land an: nandakke:
48 fu fujikyu?
49 S4: nice.
50 S3: uh how many times?
51 S4: eh three times.
52 S3: ↑oh. a:
53 S4: how about you.
54 S3: uh:nankaikattekoto? u:(.)m::e. (2.0) ja: what sport do
55 you like?
56 ((pi pi pi pi))=

57 S3: =nice talking (.) with you. uuu.
58 S4: you too.
59 *The fourth pair comes and sits.*
60 T: rock paper scissors [one two three
61 S7: [one two three one two three
62 S8: [one two three One two three
63 (pi) (4.0)
64 S7: ° how ya doing°
65 S8: good. how about you?
66 S7: ° pretty good. so let's talk about meeting tv stars. have
67 you ever meet tv stars.°
68 S8: no. I have never been to tv stars.
69 S7: ° oh, eh do you etto like tv stars.°
70 S8: ah:::(.) I liku (.) ↑golden bombers,
71 S7: uh.(giggle)
72 S8: a:nd bump of chicken.
73 S7: ° me too me too. etto.°
74 S8: I liku. I liku bump of chicken n::a: (2.0)I liku: a a
75 chigau. ° aaa ° >maiiya maiiya.< how about a have you.
76 how about you? have you ever meet tv stars.
77 S7: ° ((?)) but I ((?))° seen a tv stars.
78 S8: who.
79 S7: actually I don't know° when (.) I (.) three years old.
80 I think tv star.°
81 (pi pi pi)
82 S7: ° nice talking with you.°
83 S8: you too. yabbe misutta. tondematta. yabbe tochu de
84 tondematta. maaiiya. (1.0) gomen.

85 *The fifth pair comes and sits.*
86 T: rock scissors paper one two three ((pi))
87 S9: hi, how are you doing.
88 S10: ↑good. how about you,
89 S9: good (.) so let's talk about roller coaster.
90 S10: ↑yeah.
91 S9: have you ever (.) ridden a roller coaster?
92 S10: yes, I have. but I don't like jet. o: sorry I but I don't
93 like roller coasters.
94 S9: Oh yes.
95 S10: >oh you too.<
96 S9: good (.) u:
97 (4.0)
98 S10: oh:.how about you? have you ever have you ever ridden
99 roller coasters?
100 S9: yes I have.
101 S10: ↑oh(.) where?
102 S9: (1.0)fujikyu high land.
103 S10: ↑oh I envy you. (2.0) do you like jet roller coasters?=
104 S9: =yes I do. how about you.
105 S10: no I don't. I don't like roller coasters. but my friends
106 says you should r.ride you should ride roller coasters.
107 you must rid roller coasters.
108 S9: oh.
109 (pi pi pi pi)
110 S10: ((sigh))hhh. nice talking with you.
111 S9: you too.

Appendix F Transcription conventions

(Based on Jefferson, 2004, with additional attention to non-verbal details)

- . : falling intonation
- ? : rising intonation
- , : slightly rising intonation
- ↑ : rising pitch in the following segment
- ↓ : falling pitch in the following segment
- ↑↓ : pitch rises and falls within the next word
- : : lengthened speech
- = : latched speech
- : cut off word
- underline : stressed syllable
- CAPITALS : louder volume
- superscript zero o : beginning and end of quieter speech
- (()) : vocal effect accompanying speech or transcriber's notes
- [: beginning of overlap of speech or nonverbal actions
- > < : sped up speech
- < > : slowed down speech
- (number) : duration of silence in seconds
- (.) : a pause of roughly one-tenth of a second
- hhh. : audible out-breath or laughing voice
- .hhh : audible in-breath
- italics : nonverbal actions occurring without speech or at around the same time as the speech in the line immediately above.

Reference

Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G. H. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation analysis: Studies from the first generation* (pp. 13-31). Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins.