1. Title: How should we improve Japanese students' communication abilities? 
   — Effective tasks and group activities in order to teach grammar communicatively —

2. Context:
   (1) Level: Junior high school 3rd year students
   (2) Class size: 39 ~ 40 students × 2 classes
   (3) Time: 45~50 minutes × 4 classes (per week)
   (4) Textbook: New Horizon English Book 3 by Tokyo Shoseki
   (5) Issues:
   a. Attitudes
      Ninth graders in Toyohashi had one English class per week for four years when they were in elementary school, consisting mainly of communication games in English. Most students looked used to communicating with the ALT and using simple greetings in English, but some students (about 28.4%) said that they didn't like learning English so much when they entered junior high school. At the end of March in 2013, 23.3% of students said that they didn't like English so much, while 14.4% of students didn't like English so much at the end of March in 2014. The students who don't like English have gradually decreased.

   b. Abilities
      Ninth graders received 90 hours of English learning experience in their elementary school and there seemed to be some differences in their English abilities and motivation when they entered the seventh grade; some students said they liked English and were very eager to communicate in English, but a few students had halfhearted attitudes towards English learning. Students studied grammar communicatively for two years, so their average English abilities show better results, for the last two years (2013 and 2014), in comparison with those of other students in our city.

   c. English teachers
      There are six classes in grade 9 this year. There are two main English teachers (A and B) and one sub-teacher C for grade 9. I am sub-teacher C and teach 6 classes twice a week. Teacher A is good at using the digital textbook made by Tokyo Shoseki and she takes a lot of time to have students recite the textbook. She sometimes tries to use handouts I make, but there is not enough time to make use of communicative activities. Teacher B likes the traditional way of teaching, so he doesn't have enough time to make use of the handouts, either.

3. My goals:
   (1) My first goal is to help my junior high school students acquire communication abilities in English through teaching grammar communicatively.
   (2) My second goal is to work out communication activities which excite and impress students and main teachers.
4. What I did to support Teacher A and B.

(1) To make English classes more understandable

a. Promote reading aloud and writing English sentences which are connected to students' lives
b. Emphasize English word order in all English classes using "eigonou-printo"
c. Integrate new sentences with ones learned before
d. Make use of effective pair work and group work (collaborative learning)

(2) To make English classes more motivating and effective for students' learning

a. Use example sentences connected with students' daily lives
b. Design communicative activities that contain input and output activities
c. Design communicative activities which stimulate students' interest and motivate students to study more
d. Create worksheets that better enable students to acquire English communication abilities
e. Teach students grammar communicatively by using Focus-on-Form and Task-based Instruction.
f. Give students interesting and useful activities based on Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT)
g. Work out effective tasks which cultivate the four fundamental English skills
h. Work out effective pair and group activities which motivate students to study English more
i. Improve teaching methods by giving students opportunities to practice in realistic situations

(3) To take measures to improve curriculum design

a. Teach students grammar communicatively through "Focus-on-Form Instruction (FFI)" and "Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT)".
b. Reorganize and regroup the basic English sentences students have to learn
c. Collaborate on curriculum with other teachers to produce better results for more students
d. Modify the required textbook in order to make handouts based on Focus-on-form
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Class A</th>
<th>Class B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>results of mid-term and final tests</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Class A</th>
<th>Class B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you think you need activities with your friends in English classes?</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>91.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you think English activities with your friends are useful to learn basic sentences in the classes?</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you think English activities with your friends are useful to improve your English abilities (speaking, listening, reading, writing)?</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>83.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you think your speaking abilities improve through communicative activities in the handouts?</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you think your listening abilities improve through communicative activities in the handouts?</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you think your reading abilities improve through communicative activities in the handouts?</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you think your writing abilities improve through communicative activities in the handouts?</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you think communicative activities in the handouts are useful to learn basic sentences?</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>89.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Class A</th>
<th>Class B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. What kinds of English abilities improve the best through learning communicative activities?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>「コミュニケーション」を通じて学ぶ方法で、どんな力が一番伸びると思いますか。また、一番伸びているのはどんな力ですか。 (例：聞き取り、話す力、聞く力、読む力、書く力等)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. What are good and bad points about learning grammar through communicative activities?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>「コミュニケーションを通じて語学を学ぶ方法」の良いところと悪いところについてはどう考えますか。</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. What are good and bad points about learning grammar through traditional methods?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>「発音型・従来の学習方法」の良いところと悪いところについてはどう考えますか。</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Which do you like better, grammar-translation method or CLT? Why?</td>
<td>GTM</td>
<td>CLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>基本文（英文法・英文の文法）の「翻訳」を受けた後、問題文などを使って学習する方法（発音型・従来の学習方法）と、</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>75.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>友達とのペア学習やグループ学習を通じて学ぶ方法（コミュニケーションを通じて英語学を学ぶ方法）を比べると、どちらが</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>56.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>好きですか。また、その理由を聞かせてください。</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>54.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. What have you thought about English learning since this April?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3年生になってからの英語学習について、思ったこと考えたことを教えてください。</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

— 39 —
1. Do you think you need activities with your friends in English classes?

(J) It's meaningless for us to have no opportunities to use English we studied even if we can understand what we studied.
(J) We cannot use key sentences we studied if we don't put it into practice.
(J) We can study English enjoying talking with friends.
(F) We can improve each other and become interested in studying English through activities.
(F) We can make good friends through activities.
▼(J) I don't like to study through communicative activities. It's not effective for me to study unwillingly.
▼(F) Some friends loaf on the activities or some others speak in Japanese.

2. Do you think English activities with your friends are useful to learn basic sentences in the classes?

(J) We can use basic sentences and try activities changing usage and contents.
(J) We can study basic sentences and games not listening to explanation but using our body.
(J) I can be much impressed with the sentences used in the activities.
(F) We can better understand substituting what we want to say for basic sentences.
(F) I can better remember basic sentences as I hear what my friends said.
(F) I use key sentences with my friends so many times that I can make use of them.
▼(J) Teacher's minute explanation and writing are more useful for me than talking with friends.
▼(F) Trying workbooks improves our English abilities.

3. Do you think English activities with your friends are useful to improve your English abilities (speaking, listening, reading, writing)?

(J) I'm not sure of using basic sentences as the need arises if I don't use them in English classes.
(J) I can practice English with my friends without feeling ashamed.
(J) It is impressive and clear for us to make sentences by ourselves and write friends' answer.
(F) Activities with my friends improve my motivation for English learning.
(F) We can improve speaking and listening abilities through communication.
▼(J) The effect depends on the ability of the pair.
▼(F) Some friends are not eager to try activities.

4. Do you think your **speaking abilities** improve through communicative activities in the handouts?

(J) I can talk with my friends putting something about myself into basic sentences.
(J) I can remember the basic sentences through talking with my friends many times.
(J) Talking with my friends happily makes me better understand basic sentences.
(F) Substituting what I want to say for basic sentences improves my speaking abilities.
(F) I can make use of sentences and notes I cannot see in the textbook.
▼(J) We only use the similar sentences based on the same pattern.
▼(F) Some friends only read the sentences in the handouts.

5. Do you think your **listening abilities** improve through communicative activities in the handouts?

(J) I can listen to English words which are not familiar to me, and my friends correct my pronunciation.
(J) If I don't listen to friends carefully, I cannot talk with them. So I try to listen to them harder.
(J) I can listen to friends if I join the activities seriously.
(F) I can imitate my friend's voice listening to their good pronunciation.
(F) We have a lot of chances to hear what Teacher and friends say.
▼(J) Practicing with CDs enables us to improve our listening abilities.
▼(F) Some friends speak in **katakana** English, so it's useless.
6. Do you think your reading abilities improve through communicative activities in the handouts?

7. Do you think your writing abilities improve through communicative activities in the handouts?

8. Do you think communicative activities in the handbooks are useful to learn basic sentences?

9. What kinds of English abilities don't improve if worst comes to worst through learning communicative activities?

10. What are some good and bad points about learning grammars through communicative activities?
11. What are good and bad points about learning grammar through traditional methods?

**good points**: (J) We can easily understand grammar because Teacher explains about grammar in detail.
(J) We can get good scores on the tests.
(J) We can understand basic sentence structures well.
(F) It is the best way to write sentences and remember them.
(F) Understanding English logically is easy for smart students to remember.
(F) Writing sentences written on the blackboard improves our writing abilities.
(F) We can understand sentence structures and meaning of words.

**bad points**: (J) We only take notes and it's boring.
(J) We cannot get speaking abilities.
(J) Teacher steps ahead even if there are some slower students.
(F) We cannot speak English with only knowledge about English.
(F) We have to study without speaking and cannot put what we studied into practice.
(F) We cannot get speaking or listening abilities.

12. Which do you like better, A (grammar-translation method) or B (CLT)? Why?

(J) I like A because I can remember key sentences firmly and it seems to be efficient.
(J) I like A because I can get used to solving English written tests and become good at English grammar.
(J) I like A because I like to understand using my brain.
(F) I like A because I can get more time to try test questions.
(F) I like A because I can study English sentence structures well.
(F) I like A because I can get a lot of knowledge and information from Teacher.

(J) I like B because I think studying English is not “a study while sitting” but “a study with human relationship.”
(J) I like B because I can understand key sentences while talking with my friends.
(J) I like B because I can talk with many friends and enjoy talking with them.
(F) I like B because it’s important for us to speak English practically through activities.
(F) I like B because I can study English enjoying activities with my friends.
(F) I like B because I can find out my mistakes while trying activities.

13. What have you thought about English learning since this April?

(J) I am studying English through grammar-translation method this year. I like this method, but we always have the same learning pattern. I want to talk about my life with my friends, using English and exchanging views.
(J) When I listen to Teacher’s explanation, I am sometimes sleepy during classes. But I can really understand sentence structures.
(F) Considering about learning basic sentences, we should have more time to read our textbook.
(F) We should study English using both merits of GTM and CLT.
(F) I actually felt the importance of speaking and listening abilities when I went abroad.

6. What I learned:

1) Many students like to study using communicative activities and they know well how effective it is for them to study through communicative activities. They think they can improve their attitudes for English learning through communication with their friends. They also think that they need communicative activities to get speaking abilities and confidence to use basic
sentences in order to express themselves.

(2) Ninth graders are worried about the entrance examination for SHS. They want to get good scores on the written tests. The entrance examinations now in use need listening, reading, and written abilities. They look for effective ways to get high scores on the tests. They also need to get more time to understand basic sentences through minute explanation.

(3) High level students of ninth graders show a tendency to like grammar translation method. They think that they need time to think over grammar logically. They also think that solving problems or answering questions with their workbooks is effective to improve their English reading and writing abilities. Entrance examination system will never change soon. In the four English classes a week, Teachers have to take measures to deal with the students who feel some unease about the tests.

(4) Teachers should think about what teaching methods should use for each grader and create English classes which have both merits of grammar-translation method and CLT.

7. Further issues:

(1) Some ninth graders want to use workbooks to understand grammar more than trying activities. High level students don't like to study with lower students. They think that they need to talk with the same level students or higher ones to improve their abilities. Teachers should work out more effective group activities which satisfy such students.

(2) Even higher level students who study English through grammar-translation method sometimes fall asleep during classes, but they insist on liking this way of learning. They believe that they can get good scores through this way of learning. It's important for instructors to think about the teaching procedure based on the balance of activities and explanation in order to get such students to consent.

(3) Ninth graders have to read a lot of long sentences to answer the entrance examinations. Many students are not sure of comprehension tests using a passage of substantial length. Written examinations consist of long sentences with complicated sentence structures. Ninth graders need to practice how to read complicated sentences. A student said, "We have to more study ‘Five Sentence Structure’ in order to more understand English." Some students and teachers think that they cannot get reading and writing abilities through communicative activities, so they don't want to use a lot of time to do communicative activities.

(4) Some students are not good at communicating with other students and they don't like studying English through communicative activities. Teachers should plan classes which enable such students to enjoy the activities and learn how to communicate each other through English classes.
A Lesson Plan (March, 2015)

Name( Hiromi Osuka )

1. Level: Junior High School third year students
2. Class size: 2 classes with 39 ~ 40 students
3. Textbook: New Horizon English Course Book 3 (Tokyo Shoseki)
   Let’s Read 3 “An Artist in the Arctic”

4. Goals:
   • Students can understand the writer’s intention
   • Have students think about the life of an artist

5. Objectives
   • Language Function: To read and understand a long story
   • Communicative Function: To give thoughts on the life of an artist

6. Procedure

(1) Day one: Pre-reading activity
   ① Pre-reading Activity
      • Students look at three pictures and read the title
      • Students answer the 12 questions and imagine the story (Step 1)
   ② Pronunciation practice of new words (p.84~p. 89)
   ③ Students look at the 10 pictures, read the sentences about them, and write the
      point of each photograph in Japanese (Step 2)
   ④ Listen to the story (p. 84~p. 89) looking at the textbook

(2) Day two: While-reading activity
   ① Review pronunciation practice of new words (p.84~p. 89)
   ② Listen to the story (p. 84~p. 89)
   ③ Read the story silently and answer the 18 questions (Step 3)
   ④ Make groups of three or four and check the answers
   ⑤ Comprehension Check (p. 84~p. 86) (Step 4(1))
      • Try eigonou printsu.
      • Put the sentences on the eigonou printsu into Japanese by oneself.
      • Listen to Japanese sentences.
   ⑥ Reading aloud (p. 84~p. 86)

(3) Day three: While-reading activity
   ① Review pronunciation practice of new words (p.84~p. 89)
   ② Listen to the story (p. 84~p. 89)
   ③ Review reading aloud (p. 84~p. 86)
   ④ Comprehension Check (p. 87~p. 89) (Step 4(2))
      • Try eigonou printsu.
      • Put the sentences on the eigonou printsu into Japanese by oneself.
      • Listen to Japanese sentences.
5. Reading aloud (p. 87~p. 89)
6. Choose and write the best title for each page (Step 5)

(3) Day four: Pre-reading activity

1. Review pronunciation practice of new words (p.84~p. 89)
2. Review of reading
   One minute reading for each page (p.84~p.89)
4. Try “Review” in the textbook (p. 90)
5. Try to retell the story using 10 picture cards. (Step 6)
6. Self-evaluation
7. Language focus activity: identifying key words and phrases(p. 84~p.89)

(4) Day five: Post-reading activity

1. Review pronunciation practice of new words (p.84~p. 89)
2. Review of reading
   One minute reading for each page (p.84~p.89)
3. Review of retelling the story
4. Understanding the writer’s intention (Step 7)
   • the most impressive photograph for students
   • the most impressive sentence for students
   • critical thinking for Michio’s life
   • things noticed by the story

7. Today's Lesson

(1) Pre-reading Activity
   • Students look at three pictures and read the title
   • Students answer the 12 questions and imagine the story (Step 1)
(2) Pronunciation practice of new words (p.84~p. 89)
   • Students pronounce new words according to the phonetic symbols
(3) Students see the 10 pictures, read the sentences about them, and write the point of each photograph in Japanese (Step 2)
   • Try by oneself
   • Make groups of three or four and check answers in groups
   • Check answers in class
(3) Listen to the story (p. 84~p. 89) looking at the textbook

8. Assessment

(1) Worksheet: How eagerly students write the key sentences. (10 minutes)
(2) Pair activity: How eagerly students try to re-tell the story to the partner. (15 minutes)
Look at the title and the three pictures. Answer the following questions.

1. Read the title and put it into Japanese.
2. Do you know who this man is? ( ), ( ), ( ).
3. If you answer "Yes.", write his name. ( )
4. Can we talk with him? ( ), ( ), ( ).
5. Do you know where he died? ( ), ( ), ( ).

Do you know where this picture was taken? It was taken ( ).

What can you see in this picture? I can see ( ).

Do you want to go to this place? ( ), ( ), ( ).

What is happening in this picture? The ( ), ( ).

Do you know where this is happening? ( ), ( ), ( ).

Do you know where Alaska is? ( ), ( ), ( ).

Can you guess the story through the title and three pictures?

Look at the 10 pictures and read the sentences about them.

Write the point of each photograph in Japanese.

Can you guess the story through 10 photographs?

* Please look at the other handout.

Please read the story and answer the 18 questions.

1. Why did Michio write a letter to the mayor of the village?
   He ( ), ( ).
2. Did Michio hear from the mayor? ( ), ( ), ( ).
3. What did the mayor do? He ( ), ( ), ( ).
4. What kind of skills did Michio learn from the Inuit?
   He ( ), ( ) for ( ), ( ), ( ).
5. Do the Inuit need to understand nature? ( ), ( ), ( ).
6. What do the Inuit have to do to get meat?
   ( ), ( ), ( ).
7. When did Michio return to Alaska?
   He ( ), ( ) he ( ) university in ( ).
8. What kind of skills were useful to Michio?
   The ( ), ( ) the ( ), ( ) him ( ).
9. Did Michio feel free in the vast wilderness? ( ), ( ), ( ).
10. What did Michio try to show in his photographs?
    He ( ), ( ) the feeling of ( ) and ( ).
11. When was Michio killed by a bear?
    He ( ), ( ), ( ).
12. Did Michio love his work?
    ( ), ( ), ( ).
13. Is the Alaskan wilderness changing? ( ), ( ), ( ).
14. What's happening to the Arctic glaciers? ( ), ( ).
15. What are the Inuit people losing?
    ( ), ( ), ( ) their ( ), ( ) of life.
16. What was special to Michio?
    The ( ), ( ).
17. Did Michio use his photographs to show us the importance of life?
    ( ), ( ), ( ).
18. What will encourage us to think about the beautiful Earth?
    ( ), ( ), ( ).
Look at the 10 pictures and read the sentences about them.

1. This photograph taken in Alaska caught Michio's attention and changed his life. You can see a small village surrounded by wilderness.

2. This is a picture taken in Alaska. For one summer, Michio lived among the Inuit people in that Alaskan village. He learned about Inuit food, family life, culture, and skills for living without city conveniences.

3. Michio stayed in the tundra of the Arctic alone to photograph caribou for one month. He felt lonely and incredibly free in the vast wilderness.

4. This is a photograph of caribou Michio wanted to photograph. You can see a lot of caribou in the Alaskan Arctic.

5. This is a photograph of caribou crossing the river in Alaska.

6. Michio took playful photographs of polar bears and majestic photographs of Arctic mountains. He wanted to show his feeling of freedom and wonder in his photographs.

7. The Alaskan wilderness is changing because of global warming. The polar bears and seals photographed by Michio cannot hunt and catch food now.

8. Because of global warming, the Harvard Glacier in the Arctic is melting now. The habitat of the caribou is growing smaller.

9. Because of global warming, the Columbia Glacier in Canadian Rockies is also melting. Michio's photographs show us the importance of life on Earth.

10. This is a photograph of auroras seen above the Alaska mountains. His photographs will also change someone's life. They will encourage us to think about the beautiful Earth we share.
4. Please read the story again and try **eignour purinto**.

5. Choose and write the best title for each page from the following box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>A Photograph That Changed Michio's Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>B Global Warming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>C Photographs Can Change the World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>D Michio and the Inuit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>E Only One Life to Live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>F Traveling around Alaska</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Retell the story with your partner without looking at the text. Use 10 pictures and take turns for each picture.

7. Let's talk about the following four things with your friends. Make a group of three or four. Write your answer and share it with your friends.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>評価項目</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 アイコンタクト</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 障聴人の生活</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 取り組みの態度</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 労働の理解</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 発表の内容</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) What is the most impressive photograph for you? Why is the photograph the most impressive for you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photograph</th>
<th>イメージ</th>
<th>Why the photograph is the most impressive for you</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mountains are very beautiful. I wonder how he took this photograph. Maybe he took it from a plane. I want to see such great mountains someday too.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) What is the most impressive sentence for you? Why is the sentence the most impressive?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Impressive because</th>
<th>Why it is impressive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We only have one life to live.</td>
<td>Because this sentence made me excited and told me how I should live my life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) Do you want to live a life like Michio even though your life is cut short?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I think so.</td>
<td>I agree with Michio's way of life because he loved his work and his photographs will encourage a lot of people to think about the importance of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I don't think so.</td>
<td>I don't want to live a life like Michio because he kept taking photographs in the wilderness though he knew how dangerous his work was.</td>
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(4) What did you learn from this story?

I learned from this story that it's necessary for us to think about the importance of life on Earth. We have to think about the beautiful Earth we share.

自己評価

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*even though: たとえ〜でも*