

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FINAL REPORT

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**Title:** Cooperative Learning in the EFL Classroom

**Teaching Context:**

Level: 6th Grade Elementary School (6-2)

Class size: 37 students

Time: 45 minutes once a week

Textbook: Hi, friends! 2 (Tokyo Shoseki)

**Goals:**

- ① To develop the students English competencies through Cooperative Learning structures.
- ② To introduce and provide opportunities to use Conversational Strategies.
- ③ To boost students' intrinsic motivation to learn the English language through group activities.

**Issues:**

- ① Schedule
  - Schedule changes happen very often which may lead to classes getting cancelled.
  - The interval between lessons are irregular.
  - Beginning and ending time of classes are inconsistent
- ② Data gathering
  - Majority of the students can't read and write in English.
  - Company policy pertaining to privacy doesn't allow the use of any audio and video recording during the lesson.
- ③ Cooperative Learning
  - Individual learning styles.
  - Preparation in and outside of the class was very time consuming.

**What I did:**

- ① I developed fun and engaging Cooperative Learning structures and modified textbook suggested activities to facilitate a communicative language approach.
- ② I designed original worksheets to guide the students during information exchange activities.
- ③ I introduced useful conversational strategies such as openers, closers, rejoinders and asking for clarification/translation techniques to further enhance the students' communication skills to prevent the use of L1 during conversations.
- ④ I used a variety of materials such as flashcards, songs and storyboards to introduce and practice vocabularies and target sentences to raise the students interest.
- ⑤ I developed Keynote presentations and supplementary materials to capture the students attention and keep them focused on the lesson.
- ⑥ I conducted student self-evaluation surveys, a speaking test and a final listening test.

- ⑦ I strived to establish a positive learning environment where students are intrinsically motivated and encouraged students to try and make mistakes.

**Methodology:**

The study is a Mixed Method Research on Cooperative Learning approach and its influence on the English as a Foreign Language class experience. As a subgoal, the research aims to look at the social and motivational benefits of CoLe.

A student self evaluation survey was administered at the end of each unit. The questionnaire has a concurrent embedded structure designed for gathering quantitative data using closed questions with some open questions to solicit qualitative information. The participants were asked multiple choice questions with a four-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree"; students who are undecided were given the "I don't know" answer-choice option.

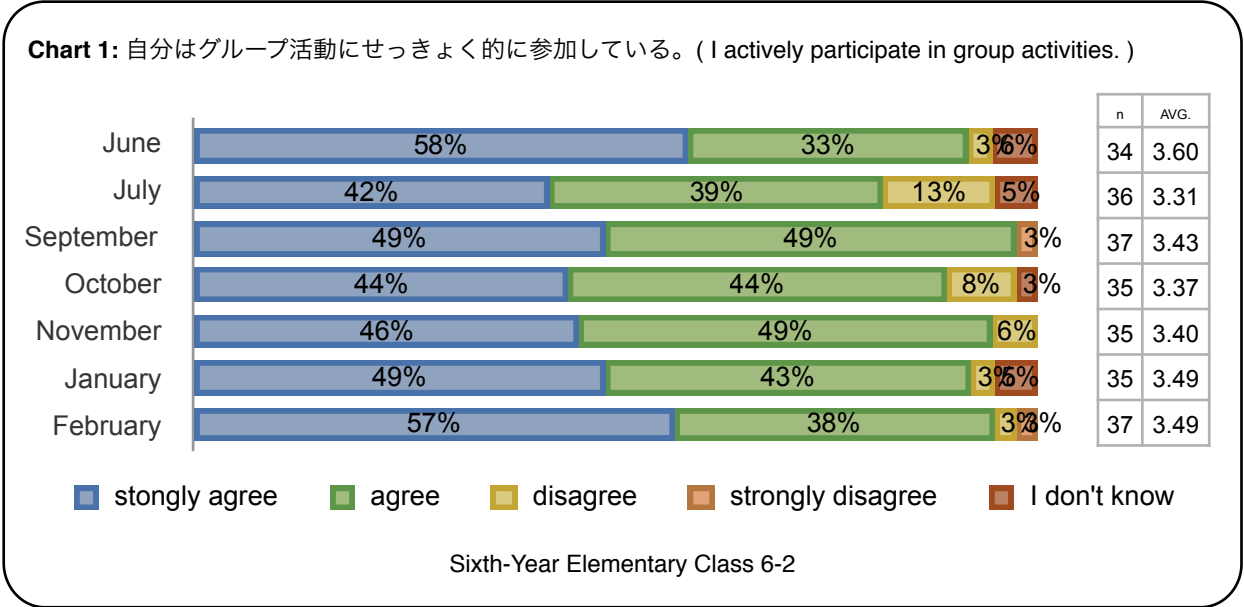
A speaking test was administered to assess the students' fluency, accuracy and attitude where the students were assessed using a three-point scale. The test also measured the use of conversational strategies. The students were asked to volunteer and paired in random before the actual speaking test. A rubric was designed to facilitate the assessment process.

A listening test covering all the target sentences contained in the textbook was administered to measure the students learning. The test is consisted of fifteen items with three answer choices each. The listening test also served as a final review activity.

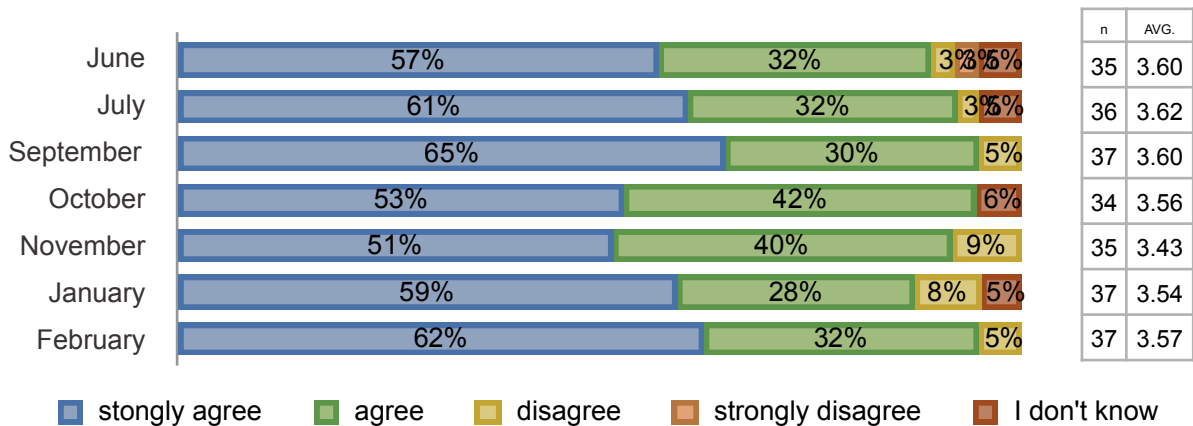
**Results:**

The quantitative data gathered from the survey were tabulated and averaged using a varying n value caused by discounting the number of "I don't know" responses. The qualitative data were quantified and categorized based on frequently appearing opinions or patterns of thought. The results of the speaking test were tabulated and averaged. The results of the listening test were tabulated. A short discussion of the results and they're significance to the study will follow the presentation of data.

**SURVEY RESULTS**

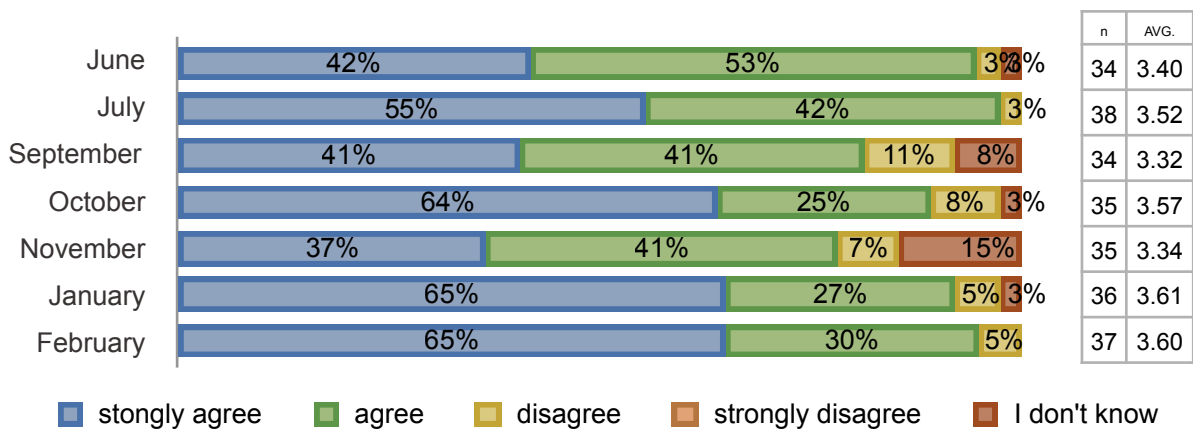


**Chart 2:** グループ活動は英語学習の役に立つ。( Group activities are useful for learning English. )



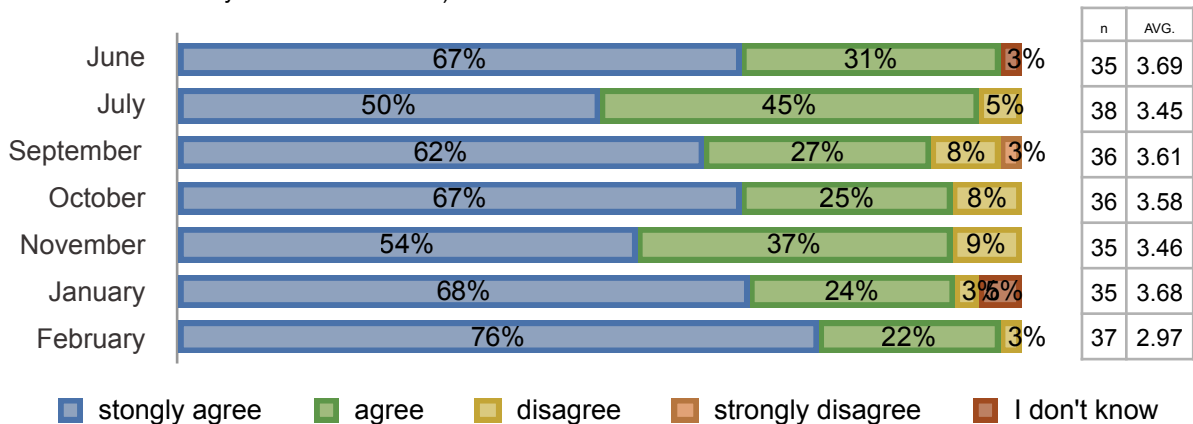
Sixth-Year Elementary Class 6-2

**Chart 3:** グループ活動は、学習に対するやる気を出させる。( Group activities motivates me to learn. )



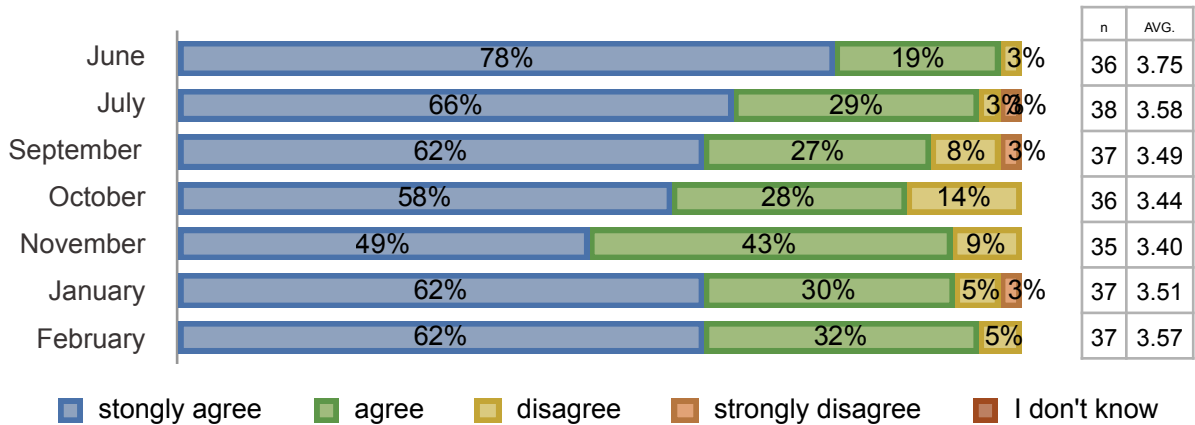
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**Chart 4:** グループ活動を通して、クラスの友達のことをよりよく知ることができる ( Group activities allows me to know my classmates better. )



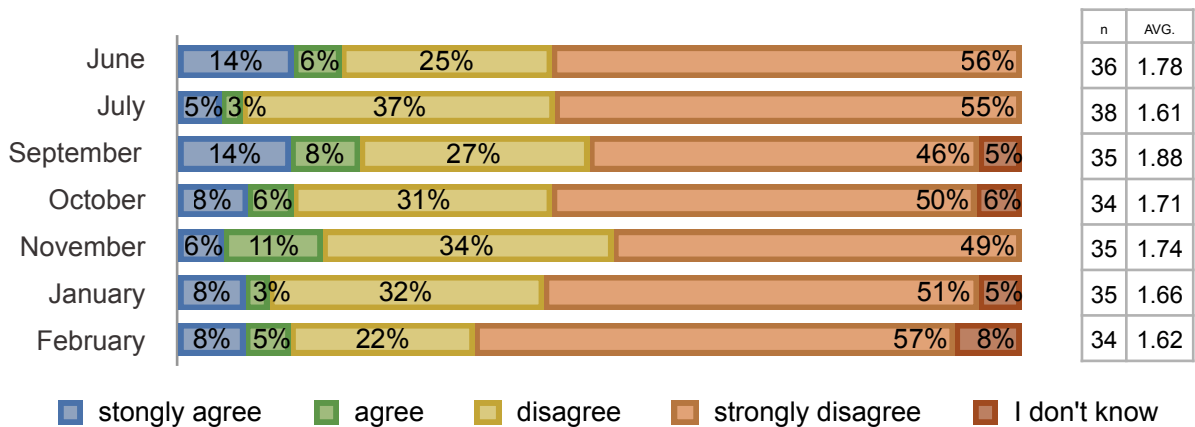
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**Chart 5:** グループ活動は好きである。( I like group activities. )



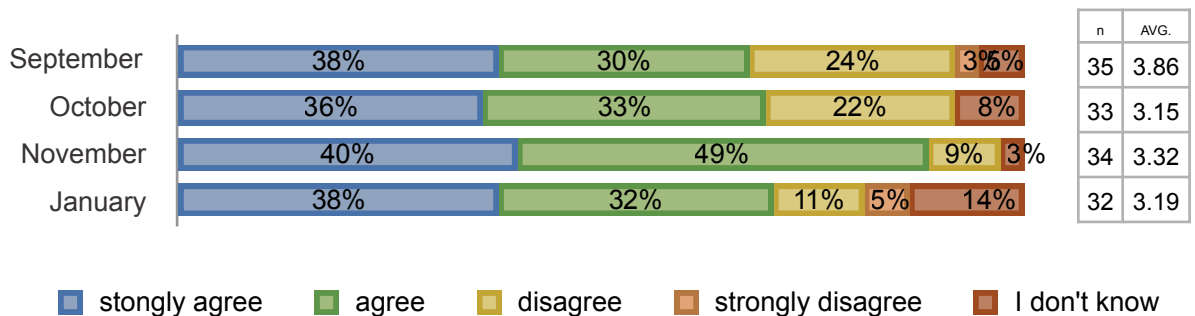
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**Chart 6:** グループより個人で活動したい。( I prefer working individually rather than in groups. )



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**Chart 7:** 責任を果たすことがができました。( I was able to fulfill my responsibilities. )



Sixth-Year Elementary Class 6-2

## OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS RESPONSES

**Table 1.** グループ活動はどのように役に立ちましたか？(How is group activity useful for you?)

Comments		Responses	Total
Positive Comments:			
Cooperation	I can ask my group mates for help	7	16
	we can do group <i>soudan</i> (consultation)	3	
	we can support each other	3	
	it's fun to working with group mates	2	
	I can ask for clarifications immediately	2	
Communication	I can communicate with friends	5	9
	it gives more opportunities to communicate	4	
Relationships	it helps us deepen our friendships	4	6
	I can make friends	2	
Learning	I can learn about my group mates' ideas	4	5
	I can learn easily	1	
Negative Comments:			
No comment			3

**Table 2.** グループ活動でやる気ができるその理由は？(Why do you feel group activities can motivate you?)

Comments		Responses	Total
Positive Comments:			
Cooperation	learning with friends is fun	22	34
	we can support each other	6	
	I can ask my group mates for help	3	
	I need to do my best for the groups' sake	3	
Relationships	it helps us deepen our friendships	1	1
Negative Comments:			
No comment			3

**Table 3.** グループ活動のどこが好きですか？( What do you like about group activities? )

Comments		Responses	Total
Positive Comments:			
Cooperation	studying together with friends is fun	19	21
	I can help group mates who are having difficulties	1	
	my group mates help me a lot	1	
Relationships	I can learn more about my friends	8	8
Communication	I can talk to my friends	3	3
Motivation	I am more motivated	1	2
	I feel that it's OK to make mistakes with friends around	1	
Negative Comments:			
No comment			3

**Table 4.** 責任を果たすことができましたか？( Were you able to fulfill your responsibilities? )

<b>Leaders' Comments:</b>	Responses
I was able to pull my team together. I encouraged my group mates.	4 3
<b>Negative Comments:</b>	
I don't have leadership qualities.	1
No comment	1

<b>Cheer Leaders' Comments:</b>	Responses
I was able to praise my group mates. I gave praise whenever my group mates correctly say the sentences. I was considerate in giving praise.	5 2 1
<b>Negative Comments:</b>	
I wasn't able to do my responsibilities.	1

<b>Materials Monitors' Comments:</b>	Responses
I fetched, distributed and returned the worksheets promptly. I did my best for my group mates.	7 1
<b>Negative Comments:</b>	
I wasn't able to do it.	1

<b>Reporters' Comments:</b>	Responses
I listened to the opinions of others and shared it to the class. I was able to share the opinions of group to the class. It may not be a lot, but I was able to do my job.	4 2 1
<b>Negative Comments:</b>	
I don't remember doing anything.	1
No comment	1

**Discussion:**

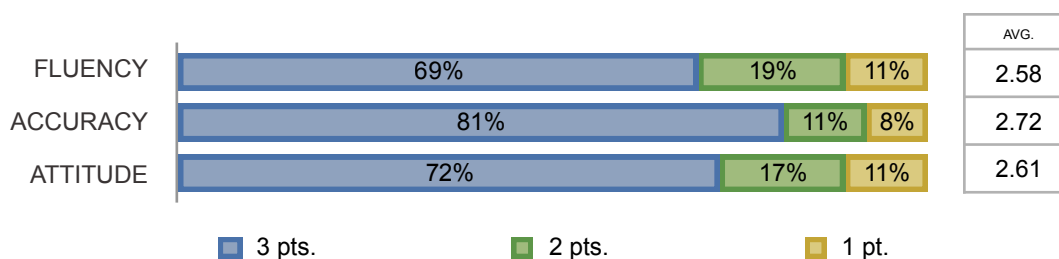
The students reception to cooperative learning structures is very positive. They participated actively during the activities and felt that working as a group is an important factor in their English learning experience.

In Chart 3, the students' motivation has improved from 42 percent to 65 percent saying that they strongly agree that group activities motivated them to learn. However, It is very interesting to point out that overall, students gave the lowest approval ratings in November. I think that the topic, names of places and giving directions, had a major impact on the results. Comparing the topic to the rest such as dream vacations, birthdays, possessions, sports, daily routines and dream jobs, it is the only unit that is not personal in nature. The topic did not require the students to look into themselves and express their genuine thoughts to their group mates. In addition, the topic failed to create an opportunity for students to know more about each other. Overall, the students were not emotionally engaged to the topic.

The results of the open questions show that the students believe that cooperation is very important in learning English. The group activities also helped them improve their relationships with their classmates in general.

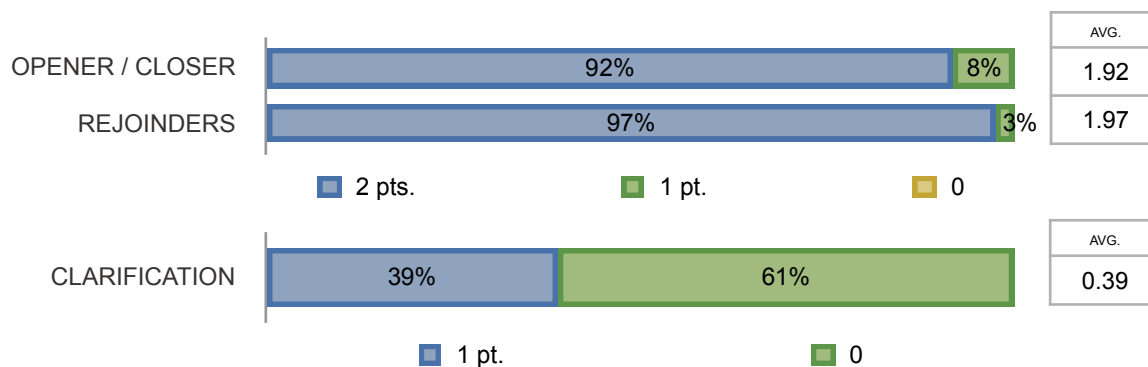
## SPEAKING TEST RESULTS

**Chart 8:** Speaking Test Results [n = 36]



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**Chart 9:** ( Conversational Strategies ) Speaking Test Results [n = 36]



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### **Discussion:**

The results of the speaking test in Chart 8 shows that 69 percent of the participants were able to engage in a communicative activity without difficulty. 81 percent of the students were able to successfully talk about their dreams for the future by asking and providing the correct target sentences. 72 percent of the students were able to speak in a clear voice and used good eye contact during their conversations.

In Chart 9, more than 90 percent of the students were able to use conversational openers and closers as well as rejoinders while a very few number of students made mistakes.

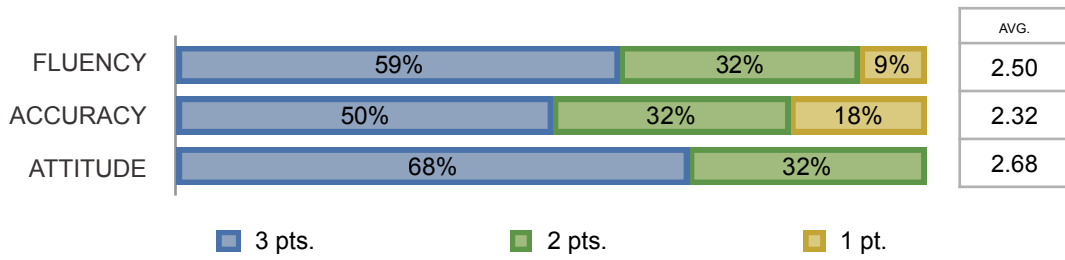
In addition, the strategy for asking for confirmation or translation was used in the speaking test. The results shows that less than 40 percent of the students used the strategy while majority of the students did not see the need to use it.

In comparison to the results of the first speaking test held in July (see Charts 10 and 11), the results of the second speaking test administered in February shows a 10 percent increase in the number of participants who were able to fluently engage in a guided English conversation.

The results for accuracy shows a big increase of 31 percent in students who can ask and respond to questions precisely. The percentage of students who had difficulty during the first speaking test decreased to only 8 percent from 18 percent in July.

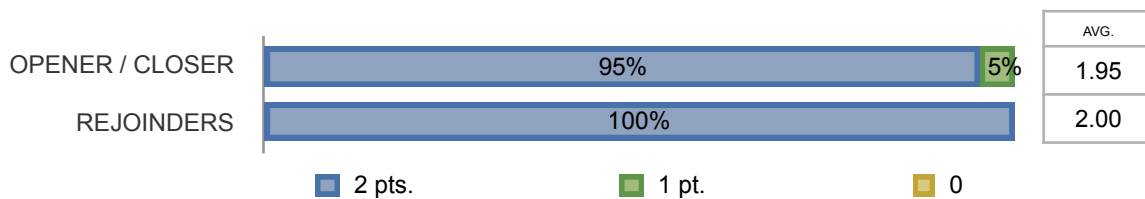
On the other hand, the results for the use of conversational strategies didn't show any significant changes.

**Chart 10: Speaking Test Results [n = 22]**



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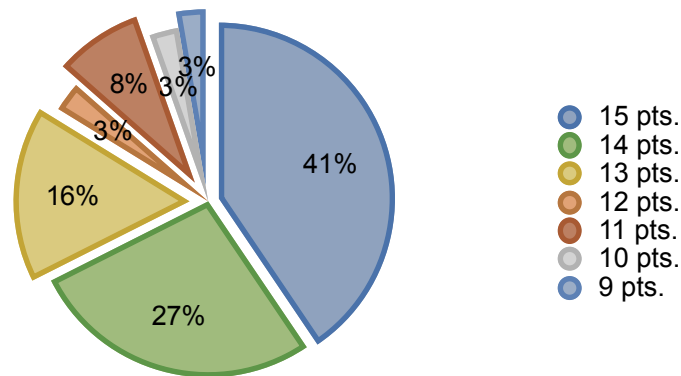
**Chart 11: ( Conversational Strategies ) Speaking Test Results [n = 22]**



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**LISTENING TEST RESULTS**

**Chart 12: Listening Test Results [n = 36]**



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**Discussion:**

I have set the passing score for the final listening test to 11 points. The results of the final listening test shows that 94 percent of the class were able to successfully pass the test. A total of 15 students got a perfect score of 15 points, 10 students with 14 points, 6 students with 13 points, 1 student with 12 points and 3 students with 11 points. On the other hand 2 students had a score lower than 11, 1 student with 10 points and 1 student with 9 points as the the lowest.



### **What I learned.**

- Topic is a very important factor to consider as it can lead to the success or failure of the lesson. However, most topics are flexible and are open to a variety of context. Thinking about names of buildings/places and giving directions, I realized that I failed to make it more interesting or personal.
- Students enjoy working with each other. However, there must be a fine line between just having fun and having fun while learning. It is a fact that when students are put into groups, they will talk to each other, make unnecessary noise and get off track. To avoid this, it is my obligation to capture their attention and never let go of it. It is also imperative that I create activities that will require students to talk more and use their energies to communicate and accomplish tasks through cooperation.
- Students need to learn more communicative strategies. The rubric that I used has a few flaws in it. The lack of an alternative strategy, such a shadowing, for those who need not ask for a translation provided them with no opportunity to earn an extra point. Clearly, I should be aware of all the probabilities and come up with an array of solutions to cover all my bases.
- Demonstrate don't explain. Clear actions definitely speaks louder than unnecessary and often very long explanations. In case of projects involving artistic savvy, I will always set the bar high and set the standards for the students to follow or emulate. Modelling is a powerful tool in teaching students with beginner level English skills.
- Intrinsic motivation is one of the keys. Having students who are highly motivated has been my dream since day one. Through my actions, lesson flow, activities, giving praise and all that's in between, I worked hard to raise the students interest to learn English. I believe that students should do the activities not because it is a requirement but because they want to. It all starts at a point when the students realize that learning something totally new can be fun. I want students to actively participate in class even without material rewards. Learning English and the fun that comes with working with friends during activities means more than stickers and prizes. However, I do not deny the fact that giving material rewards can work to the advantage of the teachers, I do give stickers, it is the when and why we give them that we need to carefully think about.
- Choices. During the speaking test, the students were given an option whether to read and look at the script or not. The first few students who volunteered were the most active and bravest, so they challenged themselves and did not use the script. Most of the other students followed suit, hence the mistakes on accuracy and fluency. A few students used the script which is absolutely fine. Learners of a foreign language need all the help they can get. If students are not confident enough to do away with the script, I will not stop them from using it.

### **Future Issues:**

- ① To adjust cooperative learning structures to very young learners.
- ② To introduce more Conversational Strategies.
- ③ To provide opportunities for communicative activities and exchange of genuine information.
- ④ To improve lesson observation and students assessment processes.
- ⑤ To use more data gathering techniques to be able to accommodate a multifaceted view of student performance and linguistic development.

## LESSON PLAN

### Lesson 8: What do you want to be?

1. **Level:** 6th Grade Elementary School
2. **Class Size:** 37 students
3. **Textbook:** Hi, friends! 2 by Tokyo Shoseki
4. **Class Time:** 45 minutes
5. **Goals & Objectives:**

- ① To develop the students communicative abilities using Cooperative Learning structures.
- ② To learn about occupations and jobs.
- ③ To be able to talk about their dreams for the future.

#### 6. Procedure:

##### Day one:

- ① Greetings
- ② Grouping: Puzzled People
- ③ Skit / Target Sentences
- ④ Activity 1: Top 3 Dream Jobs
- ⑤ Activity 2: Survey Says
- ⑥ Homework Announcement
- ⑦ Reflection
- ⑧ Farewells

##### Day three:

- ① Greetings
- ② Review Vocabulary
- ③ Review Target Sentences
- ④ Let's Chant
- ⑤ Activity: All Write Round Robin
- ⑥ Christmas Janken
- ⑦ Reflection
- ⑧ Farewells

##### Day five:

- ① Greetings
- ② Review Vocabulary/Expressions
- ③ Review Target Sentences
- ④ Activity 1: Dream Card
- ⑤ Activity 2: Speaking Test
- ⑥ Reflection/Evaluation
- ⑦ Farewells

#### 7. Today's Lesson

##### Day five:

##### Step 1: Greetings

The class chants the Alphabet Song. After the chant, the teachers greet the students and asks about the weather, day, and date.

### Step 2: Review Vocabulary

The previously learned vocabulary and expressions will be reviewed.

### Step 3: Review Target Sentences

The print shown below is given to the students to help them review the target sentences and to prepare for the speaking test as well. The SOS signifies stress points where the use of asking for clarification or translation may be needed.

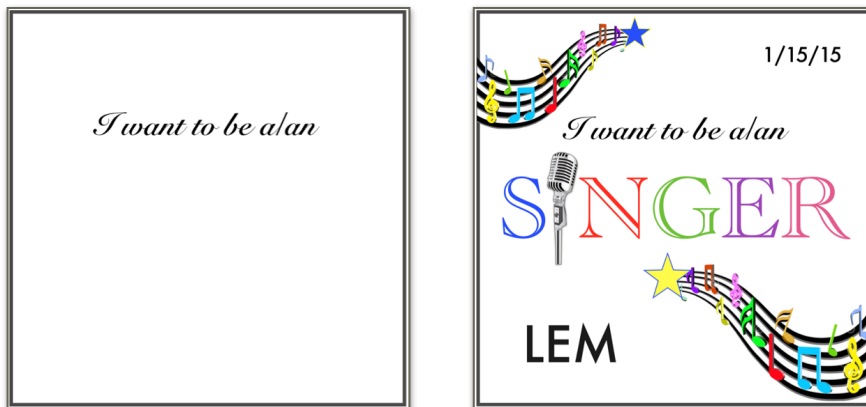
<b>LET'S TALK!</b>	
1 A: Hello.	B: Hello.
2 A: Let's talk. 話をしましょう。	B: Sure. いいよ。
3 A: What do you want to be? あなたは何になりたいですか。	B: I want to be ( a / an ) _____ . 私は OO になりたい。 <span style="color: red; font-weight: bold;">SOS</span>
4 A: Why? なぜ。	B: Because I _____ . なぜなら ( その理由 )
5 A: _____ . ( ほめて )	B: How about you? あなたはどうですか。
6 A: I want to be ( a / an ) _____ . 私は OO になりたい。 <span style="color: red; font-weight: bold;">SOS</span>	B: Why? なぜ。
7 A: Because I _____ . なぜなら ( その理由 )	B: _____ . ( ほめて )
8 A: Thank you.	B: See you.

将来の夢がわからない場合、これできくよ！  
What's OO in Japanese?  
日本語でOOは何ですか。

ほめることば  
Good luck! - Excellent! - Wonderful!  
Amazing! - Go for it! - Cool!

### Step 4: Activity 1: Dream Card

To provide students who are waiting for their turn to do the speaking test, they are asked to write a Dream Card as shown below. They are free to draw pictures, use colors and be as creative as they can possibly be. The Dream Card will not only keep the waiting students busy, but it can also serve as a self-reminder of each students' dream. It will serve as an inspiration to strive to be what they want to be or a simple memorabilia of what they once dreamed of becoming.



### Step 5: Activity 2: Speaking Test

The students are encouraged to volunteer for the speaking test. Students do not know who are they going to be paired with as the pairs are chosen in random. The test takers are asked to come to the front and play Rock Scissors Papers to determine the roles, A or B. Following the guide showed in Step 3, the students will exchange information about their dreams and the reasons for their choice.

Although, the use of a video camera and/or recording devices would aid in the assessment process, it is prohibited by the researchers dispatch company.

## Step 6: Reflection / Evaluation

The students are also asked to do a self evaluation and answer some open-ended questions regarding cooperative learning and the speaking test.

## Step 7: Farewells

The ALT says, 'That's all for today.' 'Today's leader.' The leader stands up and lead the class by saying, 'Thank you teachers.'. The teachers say, 'You're welcome. Goodbye. See you. and Have a nice day!'

### SPEAKING TEST RUBRIC

CATEGORY	STUDENT		CRITERIA
	A	B	
FLUENCY ease and speed	1	1	Could talk and respond with difficulty.
	2	2	Could talk and respond with many pauses.
	3	3	Could talk smoothly and respond promptly.
ACCURACY correctness	1	1	Could ask and answer the questions with difficulty.
	2	2	Could ask and answer the questions with mistakes.
	3	3	Could ask and answer the questions correctly.
ATTITUDE Eye-contact / Volume	1	1	No eye-contact / inaudible voice
	2	2	Bad eye-contact / low voice
	3	3	Good eye-contact / loud and clear voice
<b>CONVERSATIONAL STRATEGIES</b>			
OPENER & CLOSER	0	0	Could not use CSs.
	1	1	Could use the CSs with mistakes.
	2	2	Could use the CSs.
REJOINERS Excellent, Amazing Good luck, Wonderful Go for it, Cool	0	0	Could not use CSs.
	1	1	Could use the CSs with mistakes.
	2	2	Could use the CSs.
ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION or TRANSLATION	0	0	Did not use CSs.
	1	1	Used the CSs.

### SELF-EVALUATION SHEET

Group Name (グループ名)	2015 年 月 日			
※あてはまるところに○をつけてください。				
1. 自分はグループ活動にせきよく的に参加している。				
4 非常にそう思う	3 そう思う	2 そう思わない	1 非常にそう思わない	分かりません
2. グループ活動は英語学習の役に立つ。				
4 非常にそう思う	3 そう思う	2 そう思わない	1 非常にそう思わない	分かりません
※グループ活動はどのように役に立ちましたか?				
3. グループ活動は、学習に対するやる気を出させる。グループ活動だと、やる気という気になる。				
4 非常にそう思う	3 そう思う	2 そう思わない	1 非常にそう思わない	分かりません
※グループ活動でやる気が出るその理由は?				
4. グループ活動を通して、クラスの友達のことをよりよく知ることができる。				
4 非常にそう思う	3 そう思う	2 そう思わない	1 非常にそう思わない	分かりません
5. グループ活動は好きである。				
4 非常にそう思う	3 そう思う	2 そう思わない	1 非常にそう思わない	分かりません
※グループ活動のどこが好きですか?				
6. グループより個人で活動したい。				
4 非常にそう思う	3 そう思う	2 そう思わない	1 非常にそう思わない	分かりません
♠ ♥ ♣ ♦ ♠				
7. 責任を果たすことができました。				
4 非常にそう思う	3 そう思う	2 そう思わない	1 非常にそう思わない	分かりません
※その理由は何か?				

### STUDENT'S DREAM CARD SAMPLES

