Action Research Final Report

Name: Hashiguchi Daisuke

The impact of Task-Based Language Teaching on Japanese junior high school students' communicative competence.

1. Teaching Context

Level: Junior High School in the 2nd grade

Class size: 38-39 students (3 classes)

Time: 45 or 50 minutes, 4/week

Textbook: *New Horizon 2 (Tokyo Shoseki)*

Problems: There were four classes in the first year in 2022. I taught English only two classes out of four classes. I used the theory of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) since they entered junior high school. They had some opportunities to take speaking and essay writing tests. The other teacher who was in charge of other two classes taught in the way of grammar translation method (GTM) because he did not know how to teach communicatively. However, he got interested in communicative approach after a half of the year passed. We gradually started to collaborate to teach in communicative language teaching. Since October in 2022, we used the same worksheets I made in TBLT in class. However, it was difficult for the teacher to give the class in a communicative way. He used Japanese a lot and had students communicate little. Thus, a half of the students had almost no opportunities to speak or write English in their first year. There are three classes in the second grade this year, and I teach all classes.

2. Goals and Objectives

2.1 Overall Teaching Goal

I would like to improve my teaching skills to develop students' communicative competence through Task-Based Language Teaching

2.2 Clear and Measurable Objectives

(1) Students are able to use several kinds of conversations strategies appropriately and effectively in talking (opener, closer, rejoinders, shadowing, follow-up questions) by the end of March, 2024.

(2) Students are able to write what they want to express with more than 100 words by the end of March, 2024.

(3) Students are able to keep talking in pairs for three minutes without pauses less than 3 seconds by the end of March, 2024.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Four Conditions for Language Learning

Willis (1996) asserted that there are three essential conditions: exposure, use of language, and motivation. Additionally, there is one desirable condition: instruction.

Exposure of the target language is essential. All good language learners fully take advantage of exposure in the target language including reading and listening. They learn a lot through rich exposure. For example, they would notice small chunks or phrases frequently used in the target language and discover what they mean. This process occurs consciously or largely subconsciously. Krashen argues that language acquisition occurs when one is exposed to language that is comprehensible and contains i+1. Willis (1996) also asserts that comprehensible input should help acquisition. Lee and VanPatten (2003) summarized that comprehensible and meaning-bearing input is crucial for all domains of language. Exposing comprehensible and meaning-bearing input is essential for language learners to acquire.

Use of language is also an essential condition for language acquisition. Savingnon (1997) found that those who had been given opportunities to use the language for real life communication were able to speak the target language, but those who had not been given opportunities to use the language could not speak it. That is, language learners need output for language acquiring. Moreover, Lee and VanPatten (2003) asserted that learners need not only input but also opportunities of output.

Motivation is also an essential component in language learning. Learners who are motivated to learn a language are likely to receive exposure and use the target language as often as possible in order to benefit from exposure and use. There are several kinds of motivation, such as integrative (the motivation based on a desire to know about the culture and community of the target language group and a desire to be more like members of that group), or instrumental (the motivation that is essentially practical, such as the need to learn the language in order to achieve objectives), or both.

Instruction is not an essential part of the conditions for language learning, but a desirable one. Instruction is very important both to accelerate the rate of language development and to improve the ultimate level of the learner's attainment. Instruction helps learners notice specific features of the target language. Moreover, learners can receive the opportunity to develop their grammatical and lexical patterns, and to formulate hypotheses about their use and meaning. Through instruction, learners gradually restructure the hypotheses to adapt to the new evidence, and process their language development.

3.2 Communicative Language Teaching

Language acquisition has been researched for decades. Behaviourism which is a theory emphasizes that language is acquired through imitation and habit formations was influential in the 1940s and 1950s. One of the methods based on Behaviourism is a grammar translation method (GTM). In GTM, a teacher shows explicit grammar explanation and gives learners translation exercises. Another method based on Behaviourism iBudio-lingual method (ALM). It expects learners to learn language through repetition and habit formation through pattern practice. These methods had limitations to develop learner's communicative competence.

According to Savingnon (2002), communicative language teaching (CLT) iBpproach to develop learner's communicative competence through communication: interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning. Canale and Swain (1980) describes four skills of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence (see also Canale, 1983). Brown (2007) offers four interconnected characteristics of CLT:

(1) Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.

(2) Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.

(3) Fluency and accuracy are seen as complimentary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.

(4) In the communicative classroom, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts.

3.3 Communicative Competence

Savignon (1997) rationalized that CCs consist of four competences: grammatical competence (the ability of the structure and form of language), discourse competence (the ability of the rules of cohesion and coherence across sentences and utterances), sociolinguistic competence (the ability to appropriately understand the social contexts in which the language is used), and strategic competence (the ability to effectively manage communication by employing various strategies). Savingnon (1997) also represents a possible relationship

between four competences when overall competences increase in an inverted pyramid. It shows that sociolinguistic and strategic competence developed before discourse and grammatical competence develops. Beginning with the inverted tip of the pyramid and moving upward, all competences increase along with a corresponding overall increase in CCs. strategic competence is present at all levels of language proficiency although other competence gradually develops.

3.4 Interactional competence

Wong and Waring (2020) define interactional competence as the proficiency of language learners to effectively participate in conversations and interactions in a second language (L2). This competence extends beyond linguistic abilities, encompassing the understanding and application of interactional strategies and cultural norms within the target language community. Key elements of interactional competence include turn-taking skills, repair strategies, adherence to politeness norms, awareness of pragmatic functions, cultural sensitivity, and adaptability in communication. It emphasizes the ability to engage in meaningful and appropriate communication in real-life contexts, requiring learners to develop a deep understanding of social and cultural dimensions of language use.

3.5 Communication Strategies

As Savingnon (2002) shows in an inverted pyramid of the relationship of developing communicative competence, strategic competence is the most significant especially for beginners in developing communicative competence. Communication strategies are recognized as an important factor for language acquiring. Several researchers have suggested that communication strategies might aid acquisition. Corder (1978) asserts that while achievement strategies facilitate acquisition, avoidance strategies do not, which is supported by Farch and Kasper (1980). They suggest that learners might integrate strategic problem-solving approaches into their interlanguage systems. Tarone (1980) argues that all strategies are beneficial as they assist learners negotiate their way to the correct target language structures. Additionally, communication strategies may aid acquisition by sustaining conversations, thus providing more input for learners. Kasper and Kellerman (1997) suggest that communication strategies serve as a crucial means for generating pushed output, which some researchers argue contributes to acquisition.

3.6 Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Ellis (2003) asserted that TBLT is at the very heart of CLT by placing the use of tasks at the core of language teaching. Canale (1983) asserted that tasks can contribute to the development of all four communicative competences.

Ellis (2003) suggested two kinds of tasks: focused task and unfocused ask. Focused task is a task that requires learners to use some particular linguistic feature and promotes learners to use language for communication. Unfocused task is a task that stimulates to use the language for a communicative act but the particular language form is not required to use.He (2003) also suggested the critical features of a task:

(1) A task is a workplan.

A task is essentially a plan for learner activity, whether it's formal teaching materials or ad hoc plans that arise during instruction. While the intended activity may not always match the plan, tasks provide a framework for learner engagement.

(2) A task involves a primary focus on meaning.

Tasks prioritize the use of language for pragmatic communication rather than displaying language. They incorporate gaps that motivate learners to use language to achieve specific outcomes, allowing them to choose linguistic and non-linguistic resources accordingly.

(3) A task involves real-world processes of language use.

Tasks involve language activities that mimic real-world communication processes, such as completing forms or engaging in dialogues. The language use resulting from tasks reflects authentic communication scenarios.

(4) A task can involve any of the four language skills.

Tasks can encompass any of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), either individually or in combination. They may require receptive or productive language use, similar to exercises.

(5) A task engages cognitive processes.

Tasks necessitate the use of cognitive processes such as selecting, classifying, reasoning, and evaluating information to complete the activity. These processes influence language choice but don't dictate it, allowing learners autonomy in selecting linguistic forms.

(6) A task has a clearly defined communicative outcomes.

Tasks have a defined non-linguistic outcome, serving as the goal of the activity for learners. This outcome acts as a measure of task completion, indicating when participants have achieved the task's objectives.

Ellis (2003) suggested two types of listening tasks to have learners notice the target language form. One is listening-to-comprehend task and the other is listening-to-notice task. The first task requires to listen-to-comprehend by making use of their schematic knowledge. The second task uses the same listening texts but is designed to focus learner's attention on a specific grammatical feature. The purpose of these tasks is to promote them notice the specific language feature they are learning.

Willis (2003) proposed six types of tasks for language learning:

(1) Listing Tasks: These tasks involve generating lists of ideas or items, often leading to extensive discussion among learners. Processes include brainstorming and fact-finding, with outcomes such as completed lists or draft mind maps.

(2) Ordering and Sorting Tasks: Learners engage in sequencing, ranking, categorizing, and classifying items according to specified criteria or personal values.

(3) Comparing Tasks: Learners compare information from different sources or versions to identify similarities and differences, employing processes such as matching and finding commonalities.

(4) Problem-Solving Tasks: Tasks challenge learners' intellectual and reasoning abilities, ranging from short puzzles to real-life problems that require hypothesis expression, alternative comparison, and solution evaluation.

(5) Sharing Personal Experiences Tasks: These tasks encourage learners to freely discuss personal experiences, facilitating interaction resembling casual social conversation.

(6) Creative Tasks: Often conducted as projects, these tasks involve collaborative creative work with multiple stages and combinations of task types. They may require out-of-class research and emphasize organizational skills and teamwork.

These tasks aimed at promoting language learning through engaging and authentic activities that prioritize meaningful communication and cognitive engagement. In addition to these types of task, Lee and VanPatten (2003) recommended information-exchange tasks. It works best at giving learners a purpose for using and further both developing language abilities.

3.7 A Three-part Framework

Brown (2007) proposed a three-part framework to implement skills integration: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading as one of the ways of task-based learning.

Pre-reading activity aims at activating learner's schema to prepare for reading or listening. According to schema theory proposed by Rumelhart (1980), all knowledge is packaged into units. Lee and VanPatten (2003) claims that the schemata contribute readers to understand. Moreover, Mohammed and Swales (1984) asserts that a particular level of language proficiency was required in order to understand the technical directions; yet, once that level was attained, background knowledge and appropriate schemata were better predictors of success than was language proficiency.

While-reading activity aims at having learners comprehend the content. Lee and VanPatten (2003) suggested that the combination of two types of tasks: management strategies and comprehension check are to be used in this phase. Management strategies suggest ways to divide a passage into sensible parts. Comprehension checks help learners monitor their comprehension in an ongoing way.

The purpose of post-reading activity is to encourage learners to learn from what they have read (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). They suggested some activities for this phase such as to clarify information as main ideas, supporting information, and detail, to create a poster of the content of the passage, to write a summary, and so on. These activities promote learners to internalize the content they read, thereby ensuring that learners are reading to learn from passages.

3.8 Pair work

Rulon & McCreary (1986) compared small-group activities and teacher-fronted activities. They found that small-group work produced twice the number of content confirmation checks as did the teacher-fronted tasks. There seems to be more communication occurring in paired work than in teacher-fronted activities. Lee (2000) compared two groups: one participated in a teacher-fronted discussion, answering questions and the other performed group work developed from the discussion questions. Only a few students spoke during the question-and-answer discussion, whereas all learners spoke during the group work. Porter (1986) found that learner-to-learner interactions in the classroom resulted in increased opportunities for self-expression for the learner. She also found that uneven proficiency resulted in more interactions. While these are good things, she reported one negative thing: that sociolinguistic competence cannot be developed in the absence of native-speaking interlocutors. In language class, it is essential to put learners into the circumstance to use the target language. Thus, pair work should be used in communicative activities.

3.9 Corrective Feedback on writing

Semke (1982) compared several methods of giving feedback to freshmen of German. The instructors used one of the methods: commenting on the content, correcting errors, commenting on the content and correcting errors, coding errors for learners to then self-correct. As a result, learners who received comments on content only performed the best at the end of the quarter. They wrote more and more correctly than the other groups. Robb, Ross, and Shortreed (1986) found that writing improved more as a result of additional opportunities to write than as a result of feedback on errors. That is, a teacher should not correct learner's writing in terms of language form.

3.10 Assessment

The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) is a face-to-face assessment method designed to elicit a speech sample for evaluation based on the ACTFL Guidelines. It aims to assess learners' performance in their second language (L2) by examining content, function, and accuracy. The OPI consists of four distinct phases: a warm-up phase, a level check phase, a probes phase, and a wind-down phase, typically lasting around thirty minutes, contingent upon the learner's proficiency level and the interviewer's expertise. In contrast, the Israeli National Oral Proficiency Test (INOPT) supplements the OPI by integrating three additional tasks—role play, a reporting task, and group discussion—enhancing its multi-componential nature and thereby its comprehensiveness. Bachman (1990) and Savignon (2003) criticized both tests regarding the reliance on holistic rating systems in both the OPI and INOPT. They argue that such methods lack specific criteria and components for assessment. According to them, oral proficiency evaluation should employ componential scoring criteria, such as separate scales for assessing grammatical, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic competence. By utilizing multiple componential rating scales, a more accurate and detailed evaluation of learners' language proficiency can be achieved, facilitating precise diagnosis and feedback within the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) framework.

4. What I did
4.1 Focused Task

The textbook, *NEW HORIZON*, contains 11 units for teaching grammar. The first phase of input requires students to comprehend the content that includes the target grammar. The second phase of input focuses on the

language form in the content used in the first phase. In the noticing phase, students focused on the meaning and the form of the target in Japanese. They translate into Japanese and find the grammar rules. During tasks, they are required to use communication strategies such as openers, rejoinders, shadowing, follow-up questions, and closer. In the task phase, they work on the task to achieve the outcomes in English. They communicate with their friends in pair. After talking for achieving the task, they write what they have talked in pair in English.

4.2 Unfocused Task

In the end of each unit, they have information-exchange task using what they learn in the unit. The rubric for the task is shown in the beginning of the first class of unfocused task, and they find what they have to achieve. Most information-exchange task is related to the content they learn in the unit to recycle what they learn in terms of the grammatical items and the content. The example of the task is below.

In the initial phase of this information-exchange task, students work on brainstorming to come up with what they talk. They write down as many experiences as possible in terms of when, what, who, and so on which they will use as follow-up questions in conversation. They have ten minutes to brainstorm. In the next phase, students start talking in pairs. They have already practiced rejoinders, shadowing, and follow-up questions, so they are required to use them in timed conversation. After they practice several times with different partners, they move on to the writing phase. In the first draft, students write as many words as possible. They will focus on how much they can write and its content, not on any grammatical forms and spelling. After writing the first draft, they will work on peer editing activity. Students talk in pair, exchange their drafts, underline and mark some signals such as "☆" where they liked or are interested in, "more" where they want more detail, "?" where they did not understand well, and some comments about the content. They do not have focus on forms in the first draft and peer editing activity. then, they write the second draft. when they write the second draft, it is allowed to use the first draft and comments in peer editing. after the second draft, the list of common errors in the second draft is shown and check how to improve them. They will make a fun essay and record they talking as a performance test.

4.3 Introduction of Communication Strategies

Communication strategies such as opener, rejoinders, shadowing, follow-up questions, and closer were introduced little by little. In focused and unfocused tasks, students had practices to use them in conversation.

Firstly, opener and closer were introduced. Secondly, rejoinders were practiced from June. Thirdly, shadowing was practiced from September. Lastly, follow-up questions were introduced from October.

5. Results

5.1 The Survey Result

The survey was conducted in July and March. The survey for April was conducted in July as a post-pre-post survey. Every time, students have their previous response when they take a survey. They compared their growth, and they change their answer if necessary.

There are three focus students, and they are also analyzed later. One is a High-level students. He is good at writing, but he is not good at interacting in English with others. He talks a lot but little reaction to what his friends' saying. Another focus student is a middle-level students. She likes talking but struggles to talk in English. The other focus student is a Low-level student. She is not good at talking or writing in English. She does not like to study any subject very much.

5.1.1 Talking in English

Figure 1 shows the survey results about talking in English. in April, less than 50 percent of the students enjoyed talking in English. As they feel timed conversation is helpful, they were able to enjoy talking in English. the biggest change about talking is the time to talk in English. in April, only 19 percent pf them were able to keep talking in English. In March, 90.8 percent of them answered that they are able to keep talking in English. Also, they are able to talk without pauses less than three seconds.
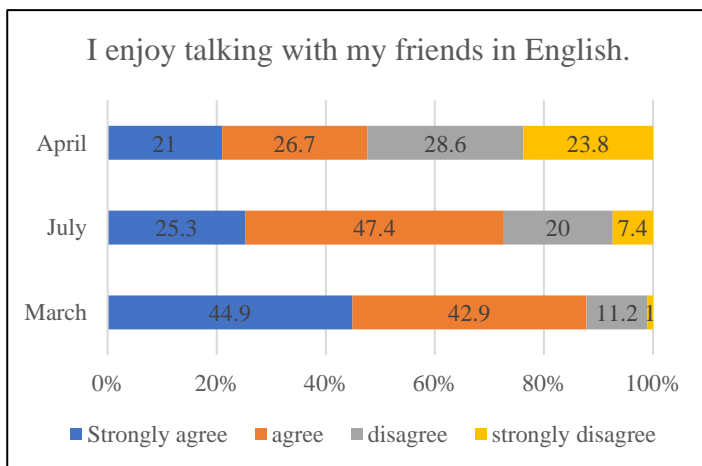

Figure 1. Questionnaire result: I enjoy talking with my friends in English (n=98)
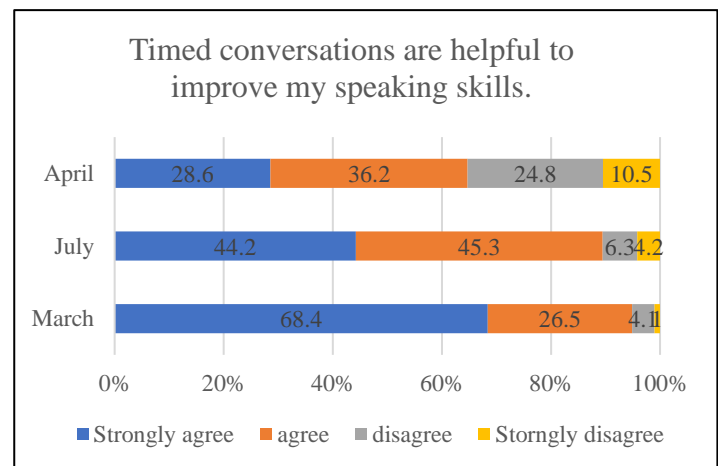
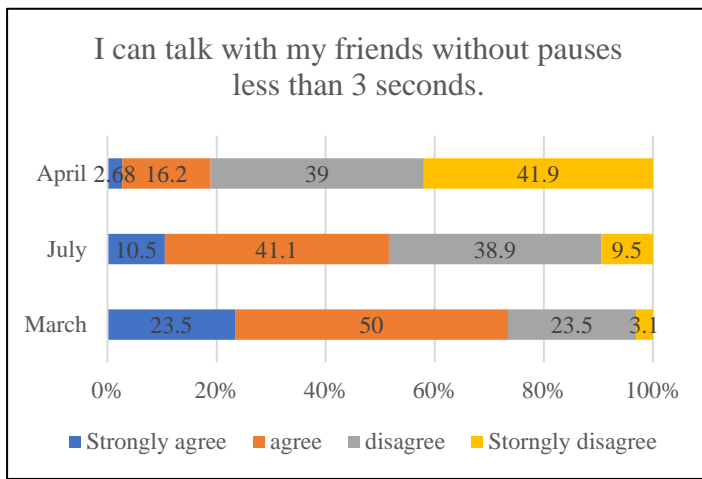Figure 2. Questionnaire result: Timed conversations are helpful to improve my speaking skills. (n=98)

Figure 3. Questionnaire result: I can talk with my friends without pauses less than 3 seconds. (n=98)
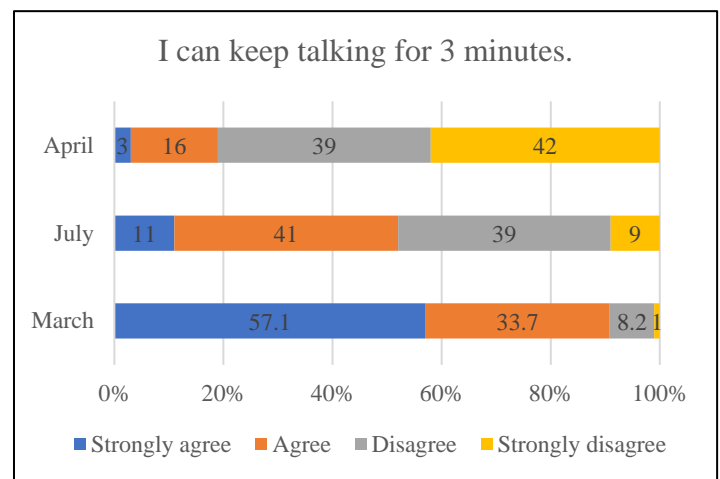

Figure 4. Questionnaire result: I can keep talking for 3 minutes. (n=98)

Figure 5 to 7 show how much students are able to use communication strategies during conversation in pair. As for opener and closer, all students responded, "Strongly agree" or "Agree", which means that they are able to use them in conversation. As for shadowing, less than half of the students in April were able to use, but they are able to make a use of shadowing in March. As of follow-up questions, approximately 80 percent of the students thought that they can ask follow-up questions during conversation. Some of them, however, responded negatively in March. I asked them the reason why they change their response negatively. Then, they answered, "As we practice follow-up questions more, I felt pressure to ask questions. That experience made me think it is difficult." They had to ask questions during conversation, which raised their affective filter.
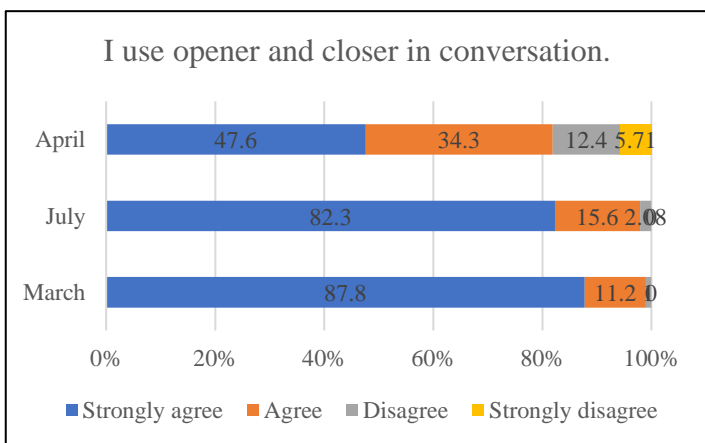

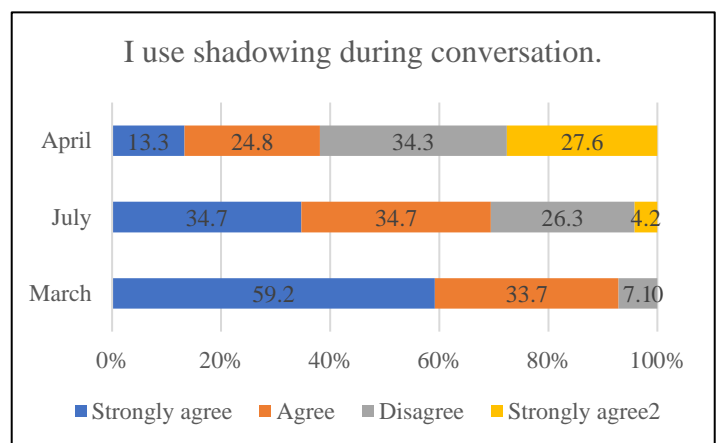Figure 5. Questionnaire result: I use opener and closer in conversation. (n=98)

Figure 6. Questionnaire result: I use shadowing during conversation. (n=98)
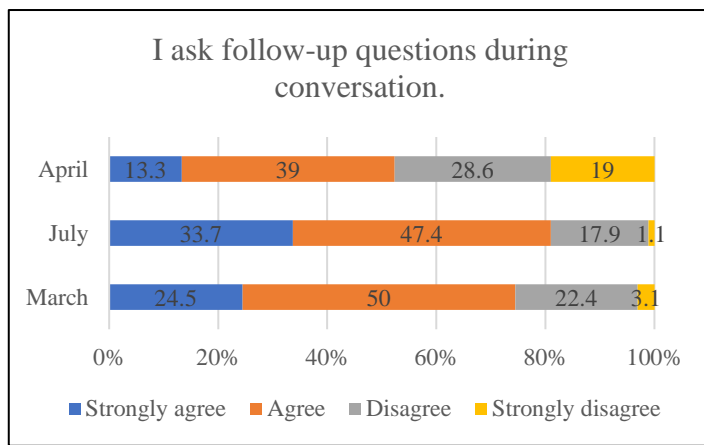
Figure 7. Questionnaire result: I ask follow-up questions during conversation. (n=98)

Open-ended questions about were also asked in the survey. Table 1 shows students' comments on timed conversation. There are positive comments that indicate they have positive attitudes for learning English. Especially, many of them feel their growth of English abilities. Some students directly feel developing strategic competence. Also, timed conversation occurs collaborative learning. They feel relieved in talking. Through practicing communication strategies, they reported that they are able to keep talking with fun and they can overcome communication breakdown coping with communication strategies. It is obvious that communication strategies in timed conversation promotes to develop their communicative competence, especially strategic competence.

Table 1. Students' comments on timed conversation (number of similar comments shown in brackets)

Q. What do you think of timed conversation?

Category	Students' comments
Fun	It was a lot of fun to listen to my friends' various kinds of ideas. (6)
	The content to talk was a lot of fun. (2)
Growth	I had a lot of fun to talk in English. (27)
	I feel developing my listening and speaking skills. (2)
Strategic Competence	I can make a good use of follow-up questions (6)
	I can make a good use of rejoinders (5)
	I can make a good use of shadowing (5)
	I became able to negotiate meaning (2)
Fluency	I can talk more than I expected through continuous practice. (7)
	I can talk more than 3 minutes now. (3)
	I can talk smoothly though a lot of practice. (2)
Motivation	I want to improve my English pronunciation. (3)
	It was fun. I want to learn English more. (4)
Relationship	I could build a good relationship with my classmates who I don't often talk. (3)
Collaborative learning	I enjoyed talking even though I have troubles because my friends taught me what I did not understand. (3)
Learning vocabulary	I enjoyed talking because I can review vocabulary. (4)
	I could use a lot of vocabulary through timed conversation. (3)
Difficulty	I felt difficult to express my idea clearly. (7)
	There are people who are easy to talk to and others who are difficult. (6)
	It was difficult to understand English. (2)
	I felt awkward when there was silence. (2)

5.1.2 Writing in English

Figure 8 and 9 show students' thought of writing in English. As Figure 8 show, 78.6 percent of the students enjoy writing in English in March. In terms of the number of word count, 90.8 percent of them are able to write

more than 100 words in fun essay. These results show that they enjoy writing in English if they are able to write more words in essay.
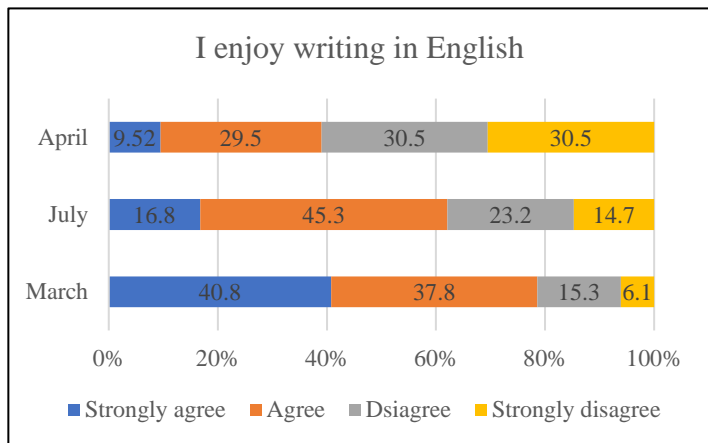

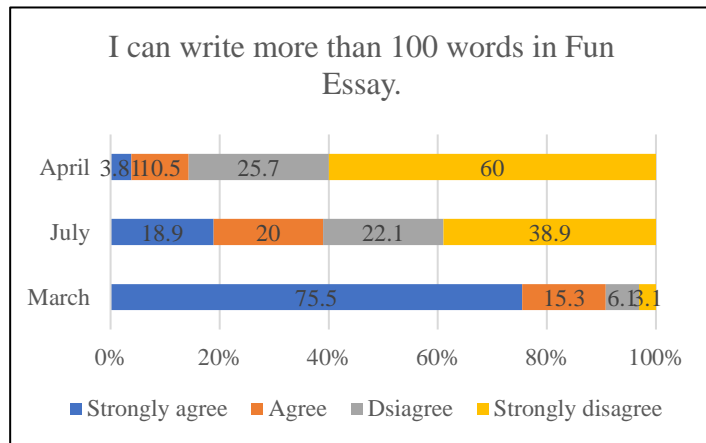Figure 8. Questionnaire result: I enjoy writing in English. (n=98)

Figure 9. Questionnaire result: I can write more than 100 words in Fun Essay. (n=98)

Figure 10 shows the students' thought about peer editing. More than 80 percent of them think peer editing is useful to develop writing skills.
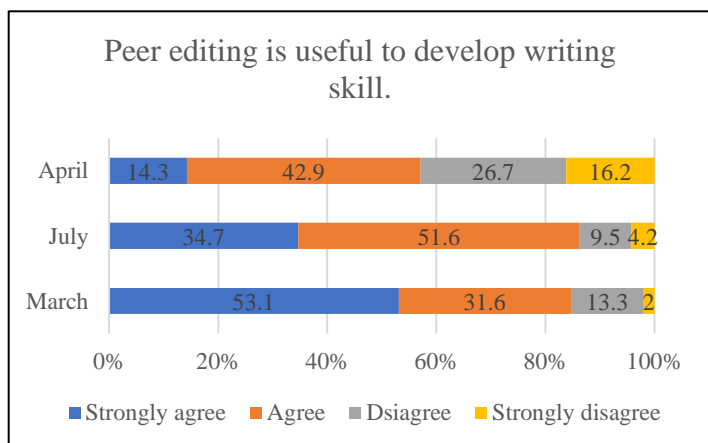

Figure 10. Questionnaire result: Peer editing is useful to develop writing skill. (n=98)
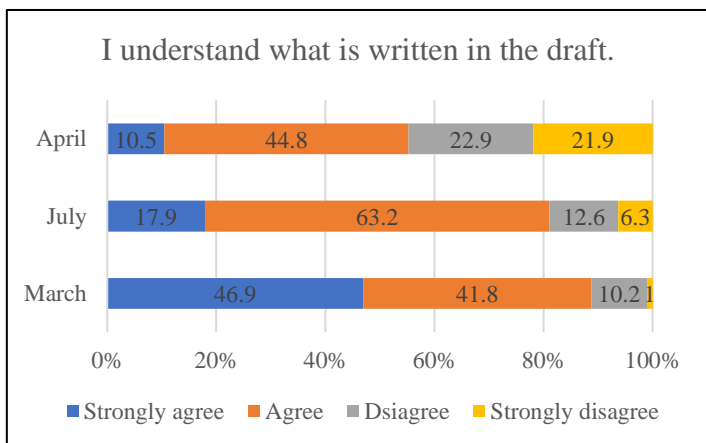

Figure 11. Questionnaire result: I understand what is written in the draft. (n=98)

Table 2 shows students' comments on peer editing. Most importantly, most of them reported that peer editing is useful to learn how to organize the draft and what expressions are effective to express from their friends. Some students notice their errors through reading their friends' drafts. Most students positively responded to peer editing activity. On the other hand, there are some students who feel it difficult. They are students who are not good at studying not only English but also other subjects. This survey revealed that peer editing is helpful for those who have a proficiency to some extent, but for very low-level students, it was difficult to carry on this activity.

Table 2. Students' comments on peer editing (number of similar comments shown in brackets)

Q. What do you think of peer editing?

I can learn how to organize and what to write from my friends' drafts. (70)

I can notice my errors through reading my friends' drafts. (9)

It was fun because I can find different idea. (8)

My friends' comments made me glad. (5)

It was difficult to comment on my friends' drafts. (4)

I couldn't understand what is written. (3)

I feel embarrassed when my draft is read.be read.

I think my English ability is highly improved.

I think this activity is meaningless.

I feel sorry when I wrote different things from what I talked.

5.1.3 TBLT lesson

Figure 12 to 16 show how TBLT lesson have an influence on their attitudes on learning English. In March, approximately 97 percent of them responded that TBLT lesson develop their English abilities. They reported that TBLT lessons promote acquiring vocabulary as well as grammar (see Figure 14 & 15). Besides, they think that they may be able to use English in real world through learning in TBLT. That is, TBLT lessons build learner's confidence to use English.
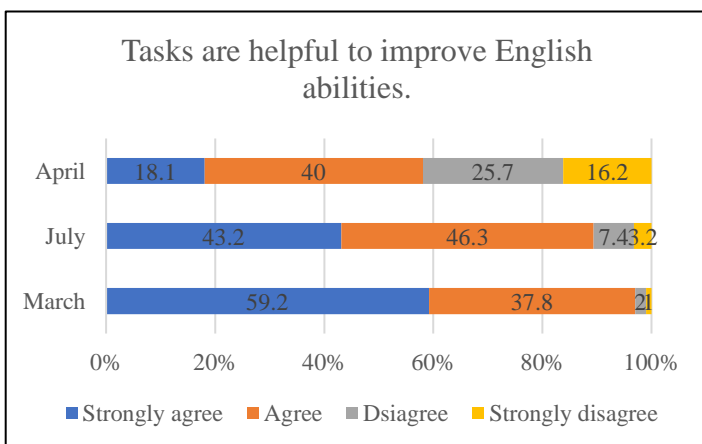

Figure 12. Questionnaire result: Tasks are helpful to improve English abilities. (n=98)
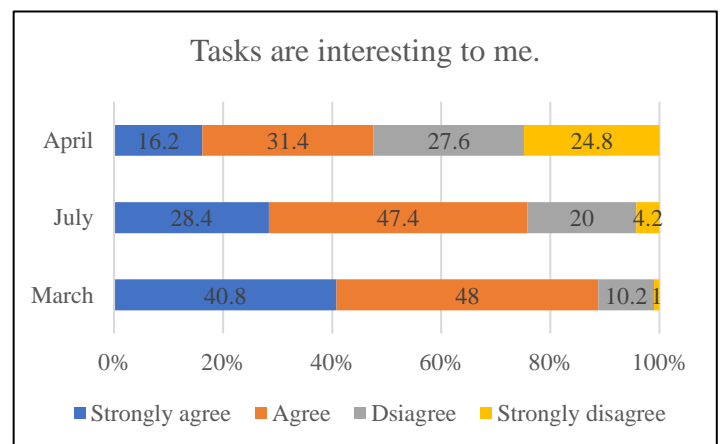

Figure 13. Questionnaire result: Tasks are interesting to me. (n=98)
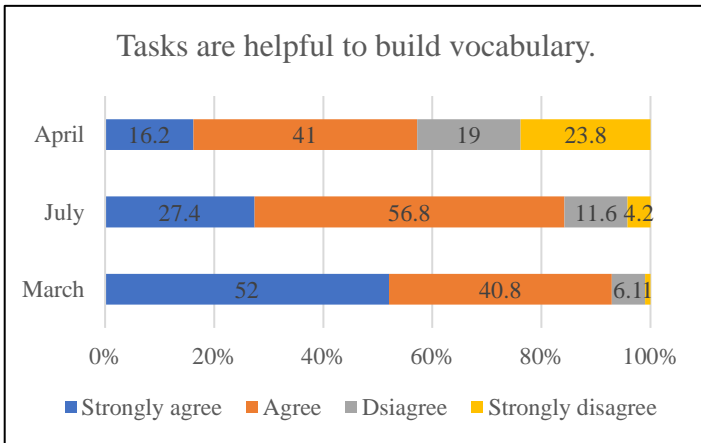
Figure 14. Questionnaire result: Tasks are helpful to build vocabulary. (n=98)
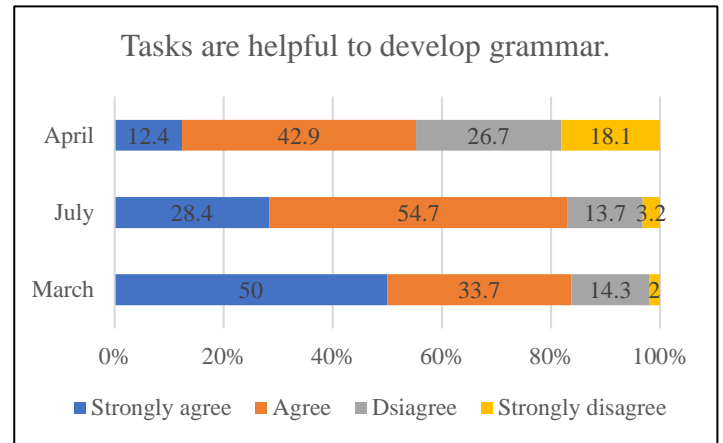
Figure 15. Questionnaire result: Tasks are helpful to develop grammar. (n=98)
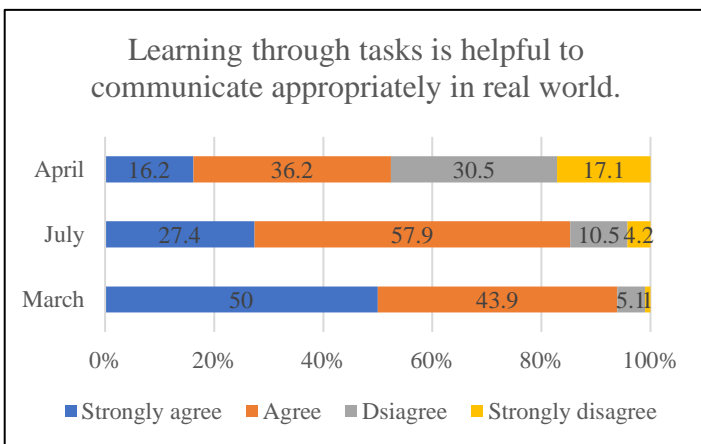
Figure 16. Questionnaire result: Learning through tasks is helpful to communicate appropriately in real world. (n=98)

Table 3 shows the students' comment on TBL learning. Many students feel their English abilities developing. Some of them also reported that tasks promoted to acquire grammar and vocabulary. Some students are willing to talk with others in English. As for motivation, 17 students reported that TBLT motivated to learn because there are clear goals to achieve. They worked hard on achieving the task. These data indicate the merits of implementing TBLT in classroom. On the other hand, there are some students who did not think tasks helped acquire vocabulary or grammar. There may be improvements about lesson planning.

Table 3. Students' comments on TBL learning (number of similar comments shown in brackets)

Q. What do you think about learning English in TBLT style?	
Improving English ability	*My English abilities are highly improved.* (39)
	I think I can use English in my daily life because the tasks were based on real-life situations. (5)
Willingness to communicate	*I enjoyed sharing our different idea.* (3)
	I can express my idea, so I want to talk. (2)
	I want to talk more with a lot of people.
Acquiring grammar and Vocabulary	*It was helpful to understand.* (17)
	Many words and grammars were recycled in different tasks, which helped acquire. (2)
Motivation	*The goals were clear, which motivated me to learn English.* (17)
	I got confident to use English.
Difficulty	*It was a little hard to think of what to talk.* (2)
	I didn't acquire grammar or vocabulary. (2)
	It was difficult to talk depending on the difficulty of tasks.
	It was stressful talk to people who I dislike.
Others	*I want to learn in this style next year.* (4)
	Tasks were much more interesting than NEW HORIZON. (3)
	I enjoyed collaborative learning. (2)

5.2 Focus Students

Table 4 shows how many minutes the focus students kept talking in speaking tests. In April, they the task was to plan for Golden week holidays. In July, they discussed whether junior high school students need smartphone or not. In March, they talked about the world heritage sites they want to visit. They had four minutes max to talk in each speaking test. If time comes, they needed to stop talking. As the table shows, they were able to talk in March more than four minutes. The task in July was difficult to discuss or them. Thus, the time got shorter.

Table 4. The time that focus students talked

The time that focus students talked in speaking tests

	April	July	March
High-level student	3:39	3:10	4:07
Middle-level student	3:31	2:53	4:01
Low-level student	2:06	2:04	4:02

Table 5 to 7 show the number of communication strategies the focus students used during the task. The similar change can be seen in the data. All focus students increased the number of shadowing. As for follow-up questions, the low-level students were not able to use in July and March. As the data from the survey indicates, they may need more practice to use follow-up questions.

Table 5. The number of communication strategies during conversation (High-proficiency student)

The number of communication strategies during conversation

		Opener / Closer	Rejoinders	Shadowing	Follow-up questions
High-level student	April	1	2	0	5
	July	1	5	2	0
	March	1	8	6	5

Table 6. The number of communication strategies during conversation (Middle-level students-proficiency student)

The number of communication strategies during conversation

		Opener / Closer	Rejoinders	Shadowing	Follow-up questions
Middle-level student	April	1	10	1	1
	July	1	8	2	1
	March	1	8	8	4

Table 7. The number of communication strategies during conversation (Low-proficiency student)

The number of communication strategies during conversation

		Opener / Closer	Rejoinders	Shadowing	Follow-up questions
Low-level student	April	1	1	1	2
	July	1	2	1	0
	March	1	8	5	0

Except 1 is the excerpt of transcription recorded in April. A indicates the low-level student and B is her friend. In line 11, the focus students could ask about her friend's plan for golden week holidays. She used follow-up question. In line 13, a longer pause can be seen. Also, she had a shadowing to the friend. In line 15, she had the longest pause in their conversation, and asked a question.

Excerpt 1

```
[0:05]
04 B  do you ha:ve any plans (.) for golden week holidays?
05 A  um (.) golden week (.) is (.) may (.) may fourth is tokyo
06 B  oh
```

```
07 A  Tokyo is u:m (.) aquarium
08 B  oh
09 A  [sunshine aquarium] Um (1.0) penguin is look (3.0) look fine
10 B  look fine (3.0) it's nice
11 A  >and you?<
12 B  (2.0) I'm going to: (2.0) visit (.) ° movie theater °
13 A  oh (2.0) movie theater?
14 B  Yes
15 A  (5.0) movie theater is Colona?
16 B  (3.0) yes there is interesting
17 A  oh (.) interesting
```

Excerpt 2 is a transcription recorded in March. The low-level student is A and C indicates her friend. In line 11, she repeated what her friend said. In line 15, she had a shadowing. In line 17, she commented to her friend. She could use some kinds of rejoinders compared to excerpt 1.

Excerpt 2
```
[0:04]
04 C  What world heritage site do you want to visit↑
05 A  uh:: I want to visit (.) ah:: mt fuji↑
06 C  >mt fuji< Ok.
07 A  ah: (2.0)
08 C  mt fuji? And↑ And?
09 A              [Ah:: the louvre]
10 C  the louvre Oh: >me too< >me too<
11 A  oh me too?
12 C  ha ha
13 A  the louvre (.) a:nd (.) >himeji castle<
14 C  EH::: Me too: All me too:
15 A  ALL me too::?
16 C  ha ha ha ha
17 A  really? (.) (ha ha) really?
```

Table 8 shows the word count in Fun Essay. In April, only High-level students was able to write more than 100 words, but in March all focus students are able to write more than 100 words. Amazingly, High-level students wrote more than 200 words.

Table 8. The word count in Fun Essay

The word count in Fun Essay			
	April	July	March
High-level student	162	154	248
Middle-level student	88	111	178
Low-level student	67	70	160

6. What I learned

TBLT impacts on learner's motivation. Students worked hard on the tasks and developed their English abilities and communicative competence. Also, TBLT develops learner's fluency and accuracy. As they perform better, they got more motivated to learn English. Especially, after writing first and second draft, they talked how many words they wrote each other. Many of the low-proficiency students achieved more than 100 words, they boasted to their friends. I found that TBLT motivates learners to learn.

Peer editing is a key activity to improve learner's writing. They learn many expressions through reading their friends' draft. Besides, student's commenting on each other's drafts encourages to write more. As the survey result shows, many of them enjoyed comments from their friends.

Communication strategies help talk smoothly and overcome communication breakdown. As the result of the low-level focus student shows, acquiring communication strategies makes conversation smooth and enjoyable. Students who struggle with learning English are not good at communicating even in Japanese. Once they practice using communication strategies, they tend to keep talking longer.

The difficulty level of tasks should be suitable for learners. Otherwise, they will be discouraged to learn. there were some tasks whose level was difficult for students. Then, they had a little dissatisfaction because it took longer time or was impossible for them to achieve the task. The task level should be appropriate to students' proficiency.

Students learn English through TBLT lessons though they had almost no homework. I gave only a little homework this year. They studied English at home themselves. Most students do not go to cram school. However, their proficiency greatly improved. It can be said that TBLT lessons are not always necessary to give

homework to students.

7. Future issues

First, although TBLT has a good influence on learners, there are a few students who cannot learn enough because their proficiency is too low to learn what they need to learn. It is necessary to make lesson plan to help those students learn English.

Second, there are students who cannot make a good use of communication strategies during conversation. I have to give them continuous practice of communication strategies.

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Appendix 1-A (Lesson plan)

Target student: Second grade students in junior high school

Target grammar: comparison and superlatives (better, the best)

Aim: To be able to talk about favorite seasons using better and the best

Procedure

Time	Student's activity	Points
10	1. Input (1) Listen to the teacher and take notes of the ranking of the favorite season in Step 1 on the worksheet. (2) Listen to the teacher and choose one they listen to.	○ Before beginning Step 1, have students fold the paper at "Fold here." ○ Use better and the best to explain the ranking of the favorite season. ○ Use gesture to make input comprehensible. ○ Add reasons why the teacher likes the season and what we can do in the season. ○ If necessary, repeat the phrase to have students catch the meaning. ○ Check the ranking in class. ○ Repeat the same phrase in Step 1 to make sure of the language form. ○ Check the answer in class.
7 (17)	2. Noticing Write the meaning and the language form following the worksheet.	○ At first, have students think of the meaning and language form individually. ○ Next, have students think of them in pair or groups. ○ The teacher must not tell the answer. ○ Check the answer in class.
18 (35)	3. Output (1) Practice how to talk in Step 4. (2) Talk about the ranking of favorite season and what they like to do in the season. (3) Write down about the ranking and what they can do.	○ Check the pronunciation. ○ Show a demonstration to talk. ○ Practice how to use communication strategies. ○ Time about one and a half minutes (depending on the students' proficiency). ○ Change partners and practice several times. ○ Make sure that students do not have to care about spelling and grammar. ○ Make sure that they need to use the target grammar. ○ Have them write the word count.

U6-3

Class　　　No.　　　Name (　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　)

Step 1. 話を聞いて、好きな季節ランキングをメモしよう！

The Season Ranking			
spring	summer	fall	winter

-------------------------------------　Fold here.　-------------------------------------

Step 2. 聞こえたものを選ぼう！

I like fall (better than / the best) of all.

I like spring (better than / the best) winter.

I like winter (better than / the best) summer.

Step 3. 今日のポイント！

I like winter better than summer.

意味（私は　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　）

I like fall the best of all.

意味（私は　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　）

better は good や well の（　　　　　）級、the best は good や well の（　　　　　）級

Step 4. 一番好きな季節を話し合おう！

A: What season do you like the best?

B: I like (spring / summer / fall / winter) the best.

A: Shadowing + rejoinder

　　What do you like to do?

B: I like to ~~~~~.

A: Shadowing + rejoinder

Step 5. 好きな季節についてまとめよう！

例　I like fall the best. I have three reasons. First, I like to enjoy camping in fall. It is not so hot, but not so cold. It is the

best season to go camping. Second, ~~~~

(　　　　　words)

Step 6. 振り返り

学んだ文法	できるようになったこと	次の授業に向けて頑張ること

Appendix 1-C (Students survey)

英語学習に関するアンケート

【話すことについて】

1　友達と英語で話すことは楽しい。

　　当てはまる　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

2　Communication Strategies は英語で話すときに役に立っている

　　当てはまる　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

3　英語での会話活動は話す力の向上に役に立っている。

　　当てはまる　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

4　友達が英語で話していることを、たいてい理解することができる。

　　当てはまる　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

5　3秒以内の沈黙で、友達と英会話をすることができる

　　当てはまる　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

6　Communication Strategies の会話を始めるときの表現（例 Hello. How are you?など）を使うことができる。

　　当てはまる　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

7　会話活動で、友達の発言を理解していることを示すために、shadowing をすることができる

　　当てはまる　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

8　会話活動で、友達の発言にコメント（rejoinders）することができる。

　　当てはまる　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

9　会話活動で、友達に質問（follow-up questions）をすることができる。

　　当てはまる　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

１０　会話活動の感想を書いてください。

１１　英語で話すときに、どのような困難を感じますか。（１つ以上書いてください。）

【書くことについて】

１２　英語で文章を書くことは楽しい。

　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

１３　Fun essay では、１００語以上の英語を書くことができる

　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

１４　Fun essay をやってみた感想を書いてください。

　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

１５　draft の分析（peer editing）は英語で書く力の向上に役立っている。

　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

１６　友達の draft を読むこと（peer editing）は、書く力の向上に役立っている。

　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

１７　友達の draft に書いてある内容をほとんど理解することができる。

　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

１８　Peer editing についての感想を書いてください。

１９　英語で draft を書くときに、どのような困難を感じますか。（１つ以上書いてください。）

【授業について】

２０　タスクを通した学習は、英語力の向上に役立っている。

　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

２１　タスクの内容は面白い。

　　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

２２　タスクを通した学習は、語彙力の向上に役立っている。

　　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

２３　タスクを通した学習は、文法理解・定着に役立っている。

　　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

２４　タスクを通した学習は、コミュニケーションの中で、英語を適切に使う力の向上に役立っている。

　　当てはまる　　　　まあまあ当てはまる　　　あまり当てはまらない　　　当てはまらない

２５　タスクを通した学習は、あなたの英語の力にどのような効果がありましたか。（２０字以上で書いてください。）

２６　タスクを通した学習は、あなたの英語の学習態度にどのような効果がありましたか。（２０字以上で書いてください。）

２７　今後、どのような内容について英語で会話したり、意見をまとめたりしたいですか。（２つ以上書いてください。）

２８　１年間、タスクを通して学習をしました。この学習スタイルの感想を書いてください。