

Annual Action Research Report 2023

Developing Senior High School Students' Accuracy and Fluency through Focus-on-Form Instruction (FFI) and Extensive Reading (ER)

Introduction

Both as a learner and as teacher of English, I have seen some drastic changes in English education in Japan. Traditional English teaching approaches such as GTM and ALM have become out of date and new instructions focusing more on communication and practical use of English are becoming common. In fact, with the new curriculum guidelines, according to MEXT in 2018, there is a greater emphasis on the ability to think and speak independently. The focus is placed on expressing one's own thoughts in English, engaging in communication in English, and learning the importance of using English in everyday life.

Although a lot of effort has been made to improve English education in Japan, some problems still remain to be solved. One of the most urgent issues is that educators still have no idea how to teach English in the way that MEXT requires them to do. I know a lot of Japanese teachers who struggle to introduce communication-based teaching instructions into their classes, end up giving them up and go back to their familiar ones. These educators have had negative influences not only on students' language abilities but also on their perspectives in learning English. Since they have not taught English based on CLT, they are also biased or plagued with some misconceptions about learning English. With these issues in my mind, I will provide English teachers with manageable and effective ways of teaching English, focusing mainly on three fields; grammar instruction based on FFI, communication practice utilizing CSs and reading instructions through ER, so that students can be a good communicator, writer and reader of English in terms of both of fluency and accuracy.

Research issues and research questions

Traditional teaching approaches focusing on accuracy and forms through explicit teacher's explanation and drill-like practice does not lead to learner's acquisition of the L2 in terms both of accuracy and fluency. At the same time, it is true that most teachers

know little about how to implement CLT in practical ways (Sakui, 2004; Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999). Thus, I will be a role model of applying CLT to educational settings with the following three theoretical frameworks in mind: (1) FFI for grammar instruction, (2) CSs for communication activities, and (3) ER for affluent input. Bearing these three theoretical frameworks in mind, my research questions are followed in the next sections.

- (1) How do senior high school students improve their speaking accuracy and fluency through FFI and CSs?
- (2) How do senior high school students improve their writing accuracy and fluency through FFI?
- (3) How do senior high school students improve their reading fluency through ER?

Method

In order to explore the research questions, various types of studies, data collection, and analysis methods were employed. This method section is divided into five subsections: (1) teaching context and participants (2) research design (3) data collection and analysis.

Teaching context and participants. There were 30 second-year senior high school students participating in the research. Students' overall English level was low, with only a few passing EIKEN third-grade. Despite their lack of English proficiency, many students expressed a desire to improve their English skills. In fact, when given the opportunity to speak English in pairs, they energetically engaged in the activity, suggesting the potential for significant progress with careful management and proper instruction. From the 30 students, three students were selected as focus students representing advanced, middle, and beginner level of the group on the following criteria: (1) the scores of the first term test and the first speaking test, both held in June and (2) character and consent, as shown in Table 1. In order to obtain more insightful data, I implemented the interviews to these different levels of students three times after the speaking tests. Moreover, their speaking tests were transcribed and analyzed so that the link between

Data collection and analysis. Each data collection instrument of the research design is described below.

Surveys. Students' surveys were conducted three times in this academic year. They included (1) self-assessment of speaking, writing, listening ability and the use of CSs, (2) perspectives and preference of classroom activities and materials, (3) general opinions on learning English such as how much do you like English, what English abilities do you want to improve the most and do you want to use English in the future, and (4) time spent studying English at home. Open-ended questions asking their development of English abilities and perspectives through the course were added in the second and third questionnaires.

Performance tests. Two types of performance tests were conducted. One was a speaking test. Students had three speaking tests throughout the year. The rubric for a speaking test was given to students at the beginning of each of the units, three or four weeks before the test date and the partners of the test, determined randomly, was announced on the test date. The test was conducted in a different room and the students were required to talk about a given topic for two or three minutes in pairs, which was video-recorded. In preparation for the speaking test, they were engaged in preparatory procedures. For example, in order to make a draft sheet for speaking, they wrote about the target topic gradually by writing the introduction part first, followed by the description in detail as the lesson proceeded. This step-by-step approach helped them to be engaged in writing activities smoothly. In addition, they were presented with the possible topic and rubrics ahead of the day of the test and spent much time in practicing speaking with different partners as small talk activities. The same rubric was used throughout all the speaking tests, and it has the following four criteria: (1) fluency and content for eight points, (2) accuracy in grammar and pronunciation for 3 points, (3) delivery such as volume and eye contact for three points, and (4) the use of CSs including openers, closers, rejoinders, shadowing and follow-up questions, for 6 points, totaling 20 points in maximum. After the speaking tests, the students were given the opportunity to reflect on their performances by evaluating on the criteria in the rubric above by themselves. The other type of performance test was essay writing or fun essay. Since most of the students had difficulty in writing English, writing tests were implemented from the second term, although they engaged in writing activities in the

classroom. They had three writing tests throughout the year; two essay writings in September and October and one fun essay in December. The essay writings were evaluated with the rubric which had the following four criteria: (1) Content, (2) Structure, (3) Vocabulary, and (4) Grammar, with each of the section scored from one to five points, totaling 20 points. The fun essay was assessed based on the rubric whose criteria had (1) design, (2) length, (3) content, and (4) Grammar accuracy. Like the speaking tests, the writing tests followed various preparatory steps, including error-correction of a passage with some target grammatical items in it, reading of a model passage, first writing exercise and peer editing. In the peer editing, they checked other classmate's writings by underlining words, phrases, or sentences and marking "circle", "more", or "?" in them, each of which had some meanings in it; "circle" means the word and sentences they were impressed, "more" they wanted to know more about, and "?" they could not understand. After this peer-check process, they were supposed take a writing test, which was used as a draft for a speaking test.

In addition to these two types of performance tests, in order to assess student's progress of reading fluency through ER, I implemented a reading test once a week from October, using the textbook, titled "READING FOR SPEED AND FLUENCY" (Nation & Malarcher, 2007). This textbook had eight chapters in total and each of them include five passages with multiple-choice questions, and pre-reading activities. The procedure is the following: (1) students read the passage and when they finish reading, they write down the time they take, (2) they answer the five questions with three multiple choices by using Google Form, (3) they check the answer in pairs.

Interviews. To understand students' feelings and thoughts deeper, this research employed semi-structured interviews with selected three students three times a year after each of the speaking tests. Interviews were conducted with every student and they are audio-recorded by the author. Moreover, their speaking tests were transcribed and analyzed so that the link between interview and speaking test would be revealed.

Reflection on ER. I had students reflect on their progress of ER every other month. They evaluated on their two months' reading performance by answering some the following five questions: (1) "How actively were you engaged in silent reading in the class?" (2) "How actively were you engaged in interactive book talk in the class?" (3) "Did you read an English book outside of the class?" (4) "If so, how much did you

read?” and (5) Did you think you improved reading ability through the period?”

Results

Quantitative results. In this part, results of various quantitative data — (1) the overall questionnaire (2) the results of the speaking, writing and reading tests, and (3) the reflection on ER and the speaking tests — are presented.

The overall questionnaire (multiple-types of questions). The questionnaire was administered three times during this academic year—in May, July, and December. It comprised three sections: (1) perspectives on English or English learning, (2) perspectives on the English class at school, and (3) self-evaluation of English ability. Each question in the survey presented four or five response options. Additionally, open-ended questions were included in the second and third questionnaires to gather insights on participants' development of English abilities and perspectives throughout the course.

About English or English learning. Figure 1 illustrates students' attitudes toward English, revealing that a majority held positive or neutral feelings, with a minority expressing dislike. Figure 2 provides insights into the English abilities students most desired to improve. Interestingly, the number of students interested in tests decreased, as depicted in the figure.

Figure 1

Students' perception of how much they like English

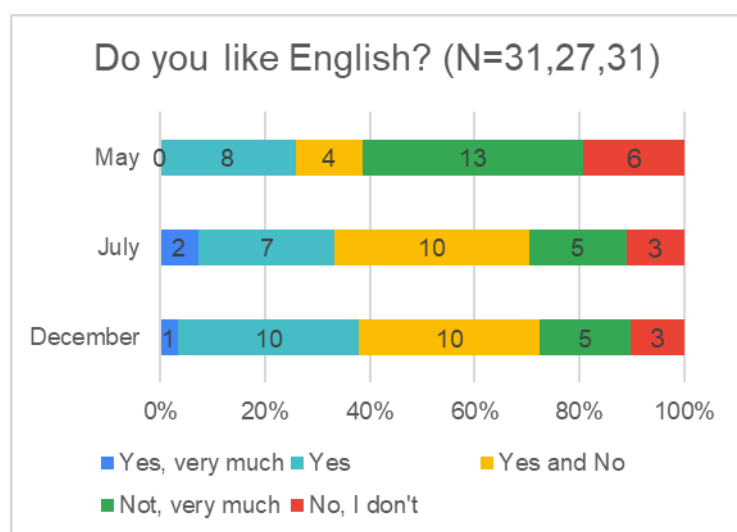
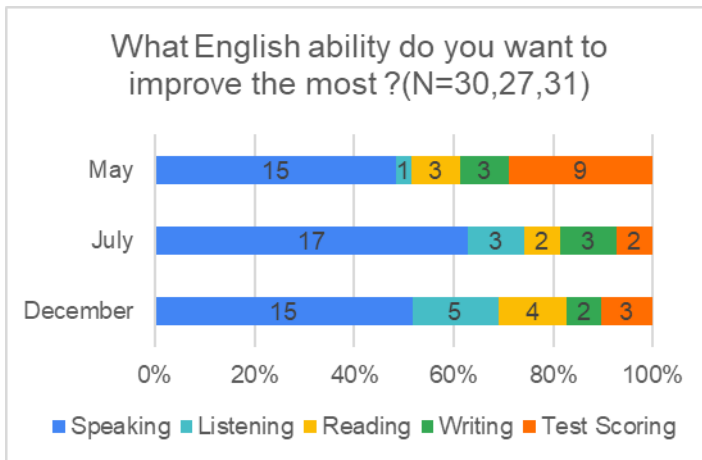


Figure 2

Students' perception of what English abilities they want to improve the most



About the English class at school. The handouts in the classroom are created within CLT framework, which means the materials have a lot of communication activities including speaking and writing. Figures 3, 4, and 5 provide insights into students' perceptions of the usefulness of classroom materials and speaking or writing activities. Notably, a positive shift is observed, particularly in Figure 4, where the number of students finding speaking activities very useful increased from nine in July to twenty-one in December, constituting more than two-thirds of all students.

Figure 3

Students' perception of how useful the handouts in the class are

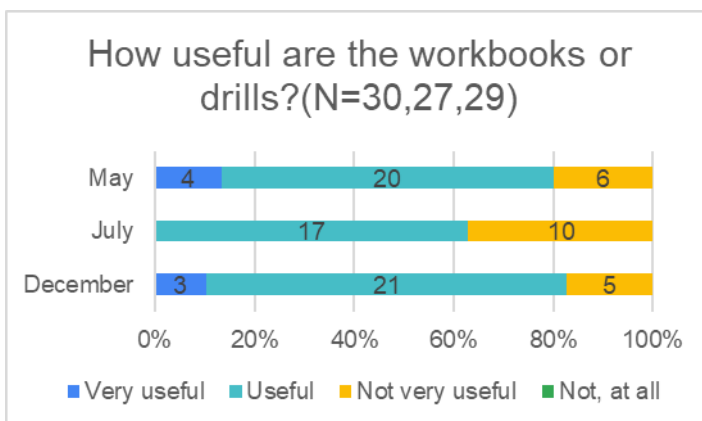


Figure 4

Students' perception of how useful speaking activities in the class are

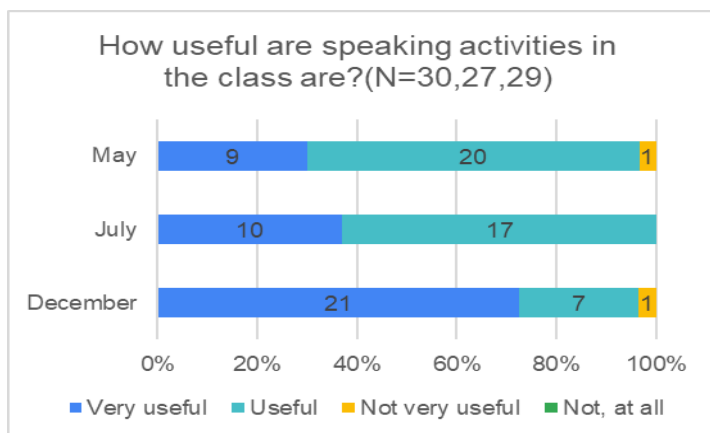
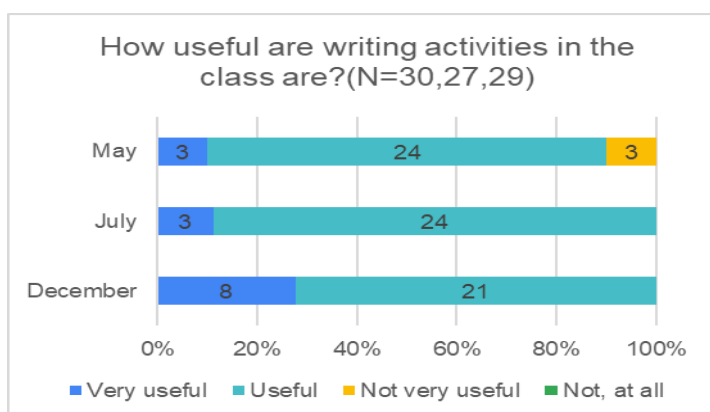


Figure 5

Students' perception of how useful writing activities in the class are



About self-evaluation of English ability (CSs). Students were introduced to co CSs progressively, covering openers and closers in April and May, rejoinders in June and July, and shadowing and follow-up questions in the second term. Each CSs was explicitly taught firstly, using handouts with communicative drills. Subsequently, students were encouraged to apply these strategies in small talk activities during every lesson, with the understanding that their usage would be evaluated in upcoming speaking tests. Additionally, special training sessions on follow-up questions, such as five-finger exercises and quick follow-up question exercise, were conducted in November and December. Figures 6, 7, 8, and 9 illustrate students' self-evaluation of each CSs — openers/closers, rejoinders, shadowing, and follow-up questions. Significant improvement is evident across all CSs, with the most notable progress

observed in the use of follow-up questions. In May, only three students reported using two kinds of follow-up questions, while in December, all students indicated proficiency in using two or more types, with four students noting proficiency in more than three kinds.

Figure 6

Students' self-evaluation on how much they can use opener/closer

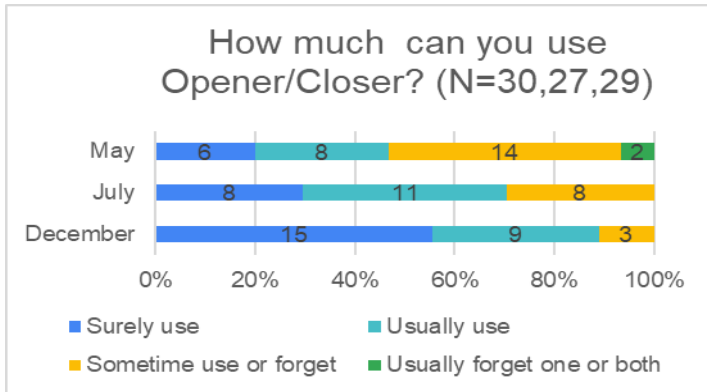


Figure 7

Students' self-evaluation on how many kinds of rejoinders they can use

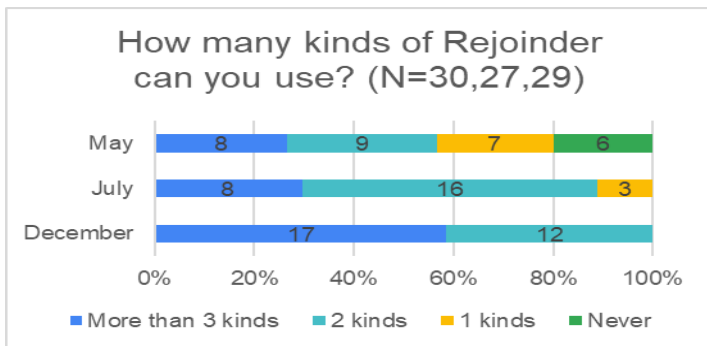


Figure 8

Students' self-evaluation on how much they can use shadowing

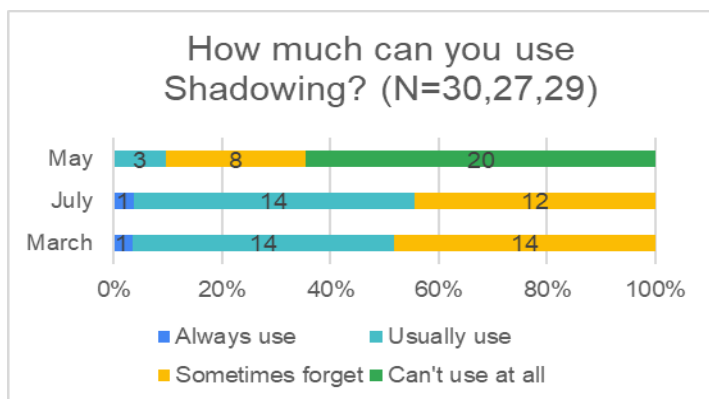
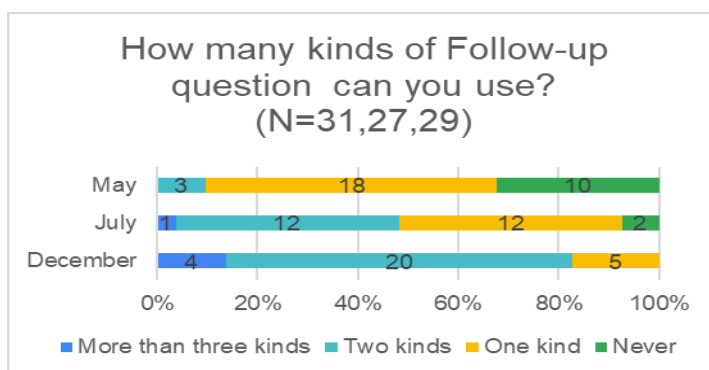


Figure 9

Students' self-evaluation on how many kinds of follow-up questions they can use



About self-evaluation of English ability (speaking, writing, and reading). Figures 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 depict students' self-evaluation of their English speaking, writing, and reading abilities. The figures reveal that the majority of students perceived improvement in these three skills over the course of the year. Regarding the duration of speaking time illustrated in Figure 14, no students reported being able to speak fluently for more than one minute in May. However, by December, fourteen students indicated the ability to do so, with two of them extending their fluency to more than two minutes. Figure 13 suggests a notable enhancement in writing fluency, as only one student could write approximately 80 words in May, whereas by December, 20 students achieved this level, and four of them claimed to write more than 100 words.

Figure 10

Students' self-evaluation on how well they can speak English

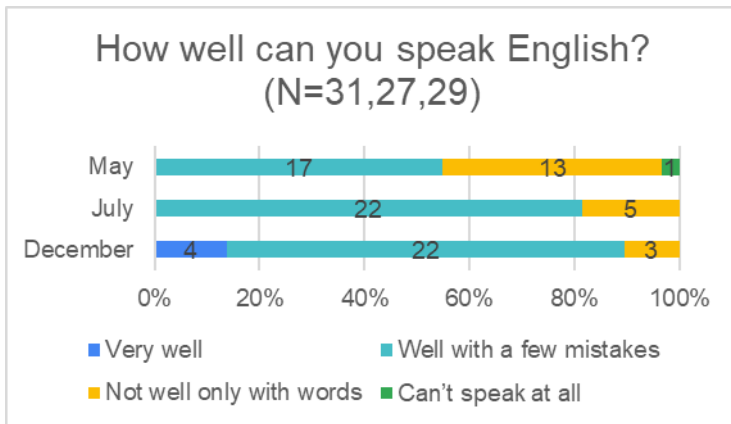


Figure 11

Students' self-evaluation on how long they can speak English

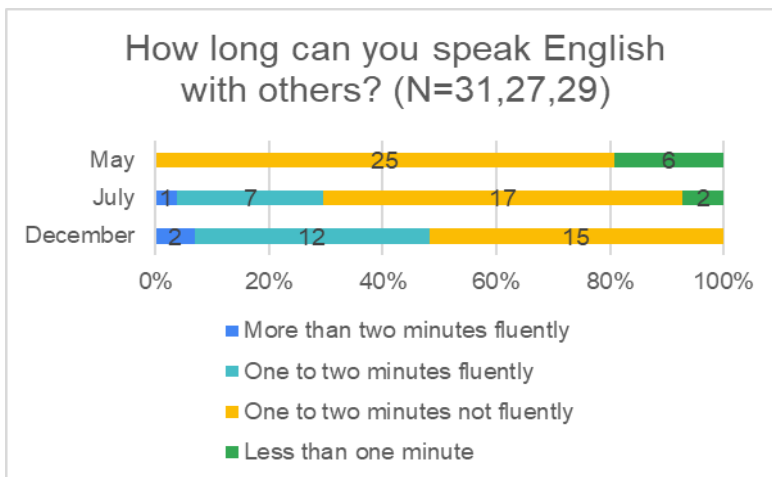


Figure 12

Students' self-evaluation on how many words they can write in English

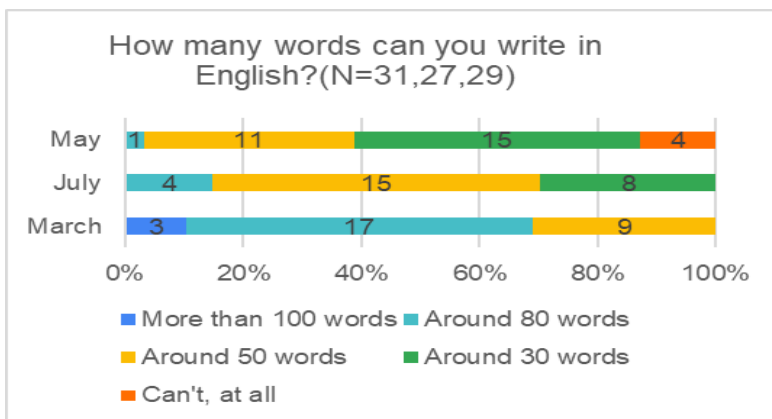


Figure 13

Students' self-evaluation on how well they can read and understand English

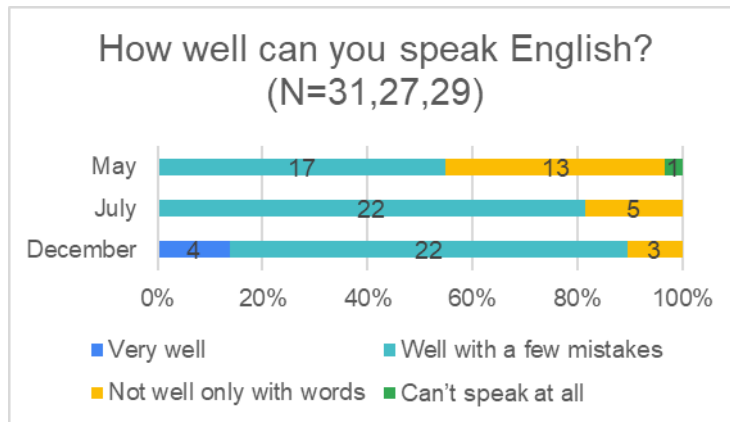
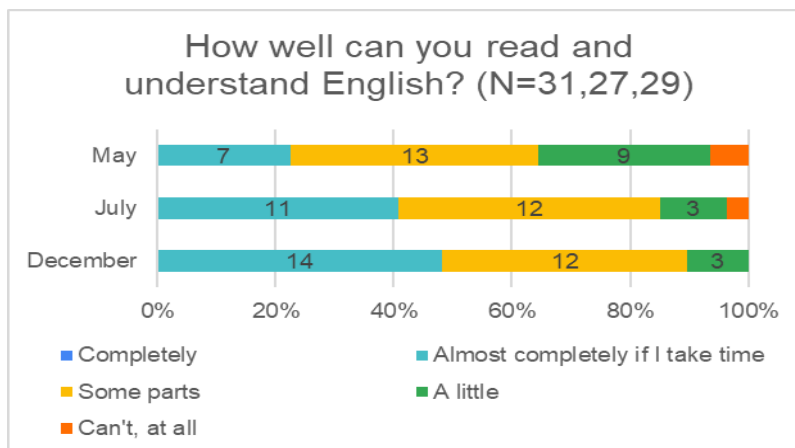


Figure 14

Students' self-evaluation on how well you can read and understand English



Content analysis of the overall questionnaire (open-ended questions). In addition to answering multiple-types of questions, students were encouraged to voluntarily write their comments on their change in their self-evaluation of English abilities and their perception of the English class at school in the second and third questionnaires. Each comment was categorized depending on different English skills, although some students' comments may encompass multiple skills.

Table 2

Content Analysis of self-evaluation on English abilities in July. Note. Write free about the change or development you feel you made over the first term.

Students' comments	Number	Categories
I can react smoothly to partner's English	2	<i>Improvement in</i>
I can use CSs more smoothly	2	<i>using CSs</i>
I can use more types of Cs.	3	
I can talk with partners in English more fluently	4	<i>Improvement in</i>
I can say what I want	1	<i>speaking English</i>
I can read English books more easily	2	<i>Improvement in</i>
		<i>reading English</i>
I can read English books more easily	2	<i>Improvement in</i>
		<i>reading English</i>
I can understand what a partner says in English	2	<i>Improvement in</i>
		<i>listening English</i>
I can understand what a partner says in English	2	<i>Improvement in</i>
		<i>listening English</i>

Table 3

Content Analysis of students' perception of the English class at school. Note.

Write free about the change or development you feel you made over the first term.

Students' comments	Number	Categories
I can enjoy talking in English with a partner	3	<i>Speaking activities</i>
I can talk smoothly by using CSs	2	
I can understand grammar more by using it in speaking	1	

I can enjoy reading English books	4	<i>Extensive reading activities</i>
I can read English fast	1	
I can learn about vocabulary by reading	1	

Table 4

Content Analysis of self-evaluation on English abilities in December. Note. Write free about the change or development you feel you made over the second term.

Students' comments	Number	Categories
I become able to use conversation strategies more often.	4	<i>Improvement in using CSs</i>
I don't pause in the conversation thanks to CSs	1	
My questioning and response to the other person's opinion has improved	2	
I have not care so much about grammatical mistakes when asking a question.	1	
I used to speak by myself, but now, I was able to construct sentences and respond with the other person in mind.	1	<i>Improvement in speaking English</i>
I am able to speak English more fluently now.		
I am now able to try to speak and communicate without worrying about grammar.	3	
I am happy to be able to understand what the other person is saying.	2	<i>Improvement in listening to English</i>
I started listening more to the other person in order to hear their questions.	1	
I know more words now.	1	<i>Improvement in grammar and vocabulary</i>
I can think of English sentences better than before.	1	
I know how to use English grammar in detail.	1	

My test scores have improved and I feel less stressed about studying English than before. This has allowed me to spend more time studying for English tests on my own.	1	<i>Improvement in motivation</i>
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As shown in Table 2 and 4 above, students found that they made some progress in various English skills, with notable improvements in the use of CSs and speaking abilities. Moreover, one student commented “I started listening more to the other person in order to hear their questions”, which implies that the use of follow-up question raised the awareness of listening to his partner’s English. On the other hand, few students reported perceived improvement in grammatical knowledge, although one student wrote that “I know how to use English grammar in detail”. The same trend can also be seen in Table 3. Many students started to have a positive opinion to speaking English. The data on ER will be explored later in another section.

The results of speaking tests. Table 5, 6, and 7 shows the number of the CSs used during the speaking test in June, October, and December. As for openers and closers, all students successfully used them in every test, although some of them failed to use closers because they did not finish their conversation within the set time. As shown in table 5, students used rejoinders the most in the first test, although they used more kinds of rejoinders in the second test. Table 6 indicates that students developed the ability to use questioning strategy over the year; very few students could ask only what question in the first test, while all of them could use follow-up questions by using various types of expressions. Drastic development could not be seen in the use of shadowing in Table 7. Table 8 shows the mean scores of the speaking tests, which were evaluated based on rubric with the following four criteria: (1) fluency and content for eight points, (2) accuracy in grammar and pronunciation for 3 points, (3) delivery such as volume and eye contact for three points, and (4) the use of CSs including openers, closers, rejoinders, shadowing and follow-up questions, for 6 points, totaling 20 points in maximum. In the first and second tests, they talked for two minutes, while in the third test, they were required to talk for three minutes. Although some students had trouble to keep talking for this extended time, they performed well.

Table 5*The number of rejoinders used in the speaking tests*

Use of rejoinders		1st (June)	2nd (Oct.)	3rd (Dec.)
Emotion	Expression	Number	Number	Number
Happy	That's great	14	9	4
	Terrific			
	Wonderful	3		2
Sad	That's too bad	8	3	2
	I'm sorry to hear that			
	Oh, no!	11	0	
Interested	I see	17	6	4
	That's nice	7	5	17
	Oh, yeah?	1	5	2
Surprised	You're kidding!	1	0	1
	I can't believe it		9	
	Oh, really	5	4	3
Total		67	41	35

Table 6*The number of follow-up questions used in the speaking tests*

Use of follow-up questions	1st (June)	2nd (Oct.)	3rd (Dec.)
	Number	Number	Number
What	5	13	35
How		4	11
Who			1
Where		2	5
When			
Why		4	5
Other questions		2	3
Total	5	25	60

Table 7*The number of shadowing used in the speaking tests*

Use of shadowing	1st (June)	2nd (Oct.)	3rd (Dec.)
	Number	Number	Number
	1	3	4

Table 8*Mean scores of each of the criteria in the speaking tests*

	10	3	3	4	20
5年2組	Fluency and Content	Accuracy	Delivery	Cs	Total
June	5.7	2.3	2.5	2.1	12.7
October	7.3	2.3	2.9	2.1	14.6
December	7.2	2.2	2.7	2.3	14.1

The results of writing tests. Table 8 presents the mean scores derived from the writing tests conducted in September, October, and December. The first two tests involved timed essays, with students writing about a given topic within 15 minutes. Evaluation was carried out using a rubric featuring four sections: (1) Content, (2) Structure, (3) Vocabulary, and (4) Grammar, each scored from one to five points, amounting to a total of 20 points. The third test assessed a fun essay assigned as homework, employing a rubric with criteria such as design, length, content, and grammar accuracy. Table 8 suggests a notable improvement in students' writing abilities throughout the year, reflecting advancements in both fluency and accuracy

Table 9*Mean scores of each of the criteria and the numbers of words in the writing tests*

5年2組	Content	Structure	Vocabulary	Grammar	Total	Word Number
Sep.	4.1	3.3	3.1	2.9	13.2	94
Oct.	4.4	3.6	3.6	3.6	15.2	112
Dec.						124

The results of reading test. Table 10 shows the mean scores and time of the reading test in October, November, and December. No progress could be seen in students' improvement of reading fluency and accuracy.

Table 10

Mean scores and time of the reading tests

	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh
Score	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.6	4.1	3.5	3.4
Time (second)	180	174	187	200	160	170	165

Reflection of ER. Figure 15 and 16 show student's perception of the ER activities, consisting of (1) silent reading for ten to fifteen minutes, (2) interactive book talk for five minutes, and (3) writing a read log for five minutes. As suggested in these two figures, most students are motivated to be engage in these activities. Moreover, Figure 17 suggests that they improved reading their reading abilities through ER. Some of them said that they became able to read and English faster than before thanks to ER. At the same time, however, Table 11 underscores that some students encountered difficulties in reading English books, particularly as the vocabulary level increased.

Figure 15

Students' perception of how motivated they are in silent reading

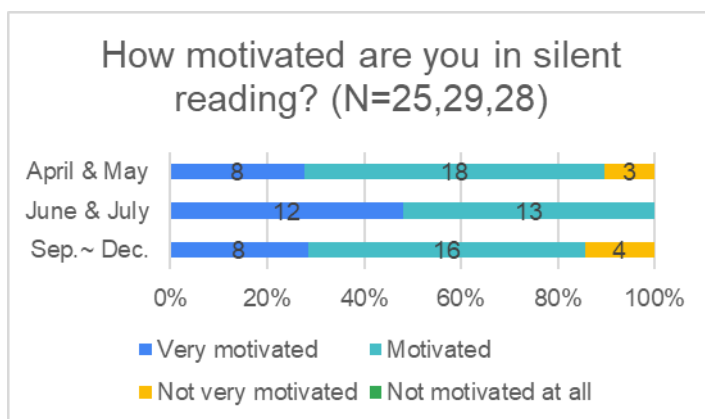


Figure 16

Students' perception of how motivated they are in book talk

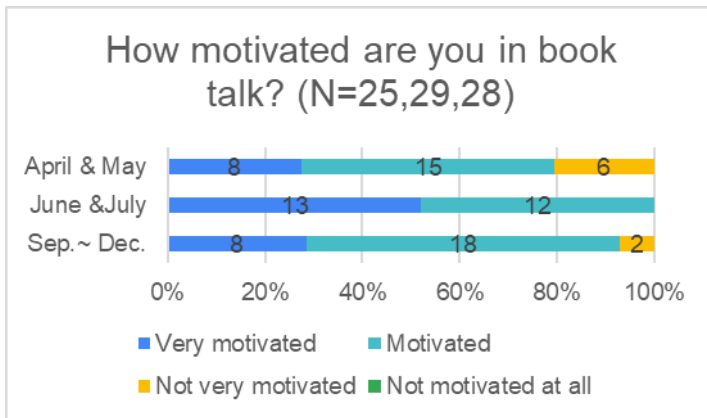


Figure 17

Students' perception of how much progress they make in reading ability through ER

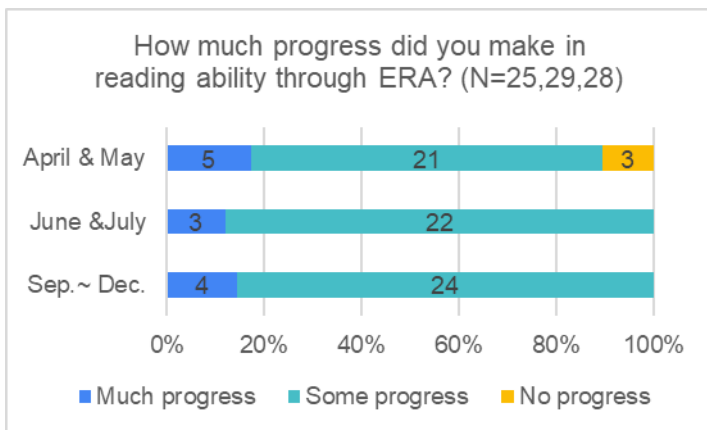


Figure 18

The number of the completed books

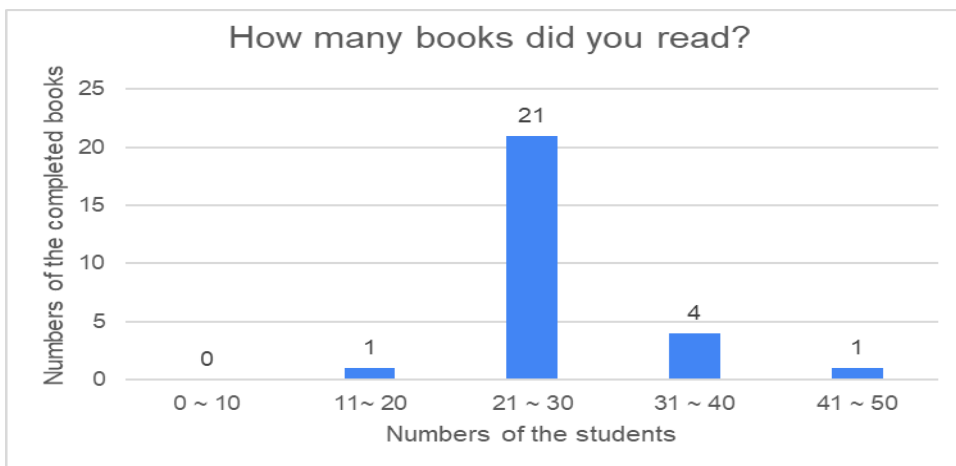


Table 11*Content Analysis of students' perception of ER: Write free about ER*

Students' comments	Number	Categories
I became able to read and understand English fast	7	Improvement in reading ability
I became able to skim the content	2	
I improved speaking ability through book talk	1	
I learned about many words by reading	1	
I came to like English books	3	Pleasure of reading English books
I want to know more words to read English books	2	
The words became more difficult, which stopped me from reading more	5	Difficulty in reading English books
As the level of the book went up, I found it difficult to read it	2	

Qualitative results. This section shows the results of data collected from interviews with the selected students and conversation analysis of the three speaking tests

Interviews with the three students, Kei (high-level), Ryodai (middle-level), and Minori (low-level). The interviews were conducted in July, October, and December, after each of the speaking tests and the data were analyzed according to the following two topics: (1) reflection on the English class until then and (2) the speaking tests.

Reflection on the English class. Regarding the reflection on the English class, three of them seemed to have positive opinions on communication-based English lessons. In fact, all of them showed strong preference to speaking English with other classmates.

- I want more time to speak. Two minutes are not enough for small talk. Also, I want you to tell another teacher to give us more time to talk, not for him to give a boring lecture. (Ryodai, in October)

- In a small talk activity, I feel I has become able to speak a little. Since I was in junior high school, I hated English, but now I realize I can speak, so I do not like English now. (Minori, in October)

- I enjoy taking your English lesson, because I had a lot of chances to talk in English. I want you to keep your style as it is. (Kei, in July)

Ryodai found the different teaching approaches between the class I conducted based on CLT and that another teacher taught based on GTM and ALM, and he commented that mine was more effective and enjoyable.

- In another teacher's class, I was not allowed to talk. I just wrote whatever the teacher wrote on the whiteboard. I don't use my brain, and it was boring, but in your class, we are busy with speaking, writing, and reading English. It was a little bit tough, but I feel I use my brain. (Ryodai, in July)

In July, Minori expressed concern about the term exams since she thought what she learned from my classes was not applicable to the paper tests. However, as time went by, she started to take more interest in speaking English than obtaining good scores in the tests, as she felt progressed in her speaking abilities.

- The class was OK, since the grammar items in the class was not so difficult, and you give us a lot of chances to use it in speaking and writing. However, I am worried about the term test, since it is made by another teacher, who always asks difficult grammar questions. (Minori, in July)

- I want more time of small talk; I feel I has become able to speak more. (Minori, in December)

As they became accustomed to speaking English through the classroom activities, they started to show intention to engaging in more advanced speaking

exercises by talking for a longer time or by using more difficult grammar items. For example, Ryodai exhibited the ambition to use grammar in the conversation so that he could speak more deeply with others. On the other hand, Kei, with comparatively high level of speaking ability, expressed anger toward his speaking partner for his inability to speak English.

- I want to use more grammar in speaking, nowadays, I am little bored to talk with easy English, and I try to use the grammar I learned in the class in small talk, but it is difficult. (Ryodai, in December)

- I sometime feel irritated to talk with someone who cannot understand my English or someone who cannot speak at all, so I want you to change the partner I talk to in every class! (Kei, in December)

Reflection on the speaking tests. The reflection on the first speaking test displayed mix reactions among the three students. In the July's interview, just after the first speaking test, Kei and Ryodai mentioned some mistakes he made during the test, while Minori expressed her performance positively. She also commented on the positive impact that CSs had on her speaking fluency.

- I forgot what I intended to say. I would like to fix it. (Kei, in July)

- I should have spoken English more fluently and loudly with confidence. (Ryodai, in July)

- Before the test, I was very nervous, but when the test started, I could use CSs, which relieved me and I could speak more than I had expected. (Minori, in July)

In July's interview, all of the students attributed their improved performances to the use of CSs.

- I was able to use follow-up questions more than before, which was good. I finished a little earlier than the time limit, so I would like to deepen the content more. (Kei, in October)

- Compared to last time, I think I have eliminated the robot-like way of speaking. Next time, I would like to be able to understand and respond to what is being said so that I can give more accurate rejoinders. (Ryodai, in October)

- I could not speak well in the speaking test this time because I was in more of a hurry than last time and I forgot what I had to say, but I was able to use follow-up questions more than last time. (Minori, in October)

Reflection on the speaking tests. In December's interview, Ryodai and Minori expressed their improvement in speaking fluency. In addition, Ryodai mentioned the importance of interactive nature of conversation. On the other hand, Kei commented that the longer speaking time hindered his smooth conversation.

-I finished speaking in two minutes, so I had no idea what to say for another one minute. I was totally regretful about the test. (Kei, in December)

-I was able to express what I wanted to say, but the partner's reaction was very weak so I don't think we performed well. (Ryodai, in December)

-I couldn't use more rejoinders than in the last speaking test, but I was able to say what I wanted to say better than before. (Minori, in December)

Summary. Minori, Ryodai and Kei s explained their perspectives of the English classes based on CLT. Their comments demonstrated positive impacts of the communication-based instructions on their perspective of learning English. In addition, they explained their perceived performances of the speaking tests. All of them commented they benefited from the use of CSs, which contributed their enhancement of speaking accuracy. These quantitative data suggested the usefulness of CLT and CSs for language learners in terms of speaking fluency and perspectives of learning English.

Conversation analysis. To accurately assess students' performance in speaking tests, I transcribed the speaking tests of the three selected students in June, October, and December (see p. 127 for Table 1): Specifically, Excerpt 1, 2, 3 for Minori (low level), 4, 5, 6 for Ryodai (middle level), and 7, 8, 9 for Kei (high level). The transcribed data are subjected to analysis, focusing on improvements in speaking fluency and accuracy, as well as the development of strategic skills through the use of CSs.

Excerpt 1 Speaking test: Minori (target student) and Yuko in July

- 09 Minori That's great thank you for your good () (.) good
10 advice °it will be helpful° (.) tell me your problem
11 Yuko (.) I often (.)my neck were hurt
12 **Minori oh: no: <you should (.) you should ()> stretch**
13 Yuko oh: that's great え〜と{e::to,let me see} I: いや
14 {iya::,no} <another problem is I have get early>
15 **Minori oh:no (.) <you should go to bed early>**
16 Yuko () last problem is え〜と{e::to,let me see} I want
17 to many money but I can't as much
18 **Minori oh:no <you should home (.) home pet home>**
19 Yuko ok nice talking with you

Excerpt 2 Speaking test: Ryodai (target student) and Ryo in July

- 03 Ryodai oh (.) that (..) that's bad you should (.) you
should
04 train your back>
05 Ryo oh: that is nice advice (.) another problem is え〜と
06 {e::to,let me see} <I'm not having study sleepy>
07 Ryodai you should え〜と{e::to,let me see} you should ()
08 smartphones

09 Ryo oh: last last problem is I have (.) <I am
10 sleeping>late at night

11 Ryodai oh: that's too difficult (..)you should え〜と
12 {e::to,let me see} (.) you should ()
smartphone

13 Ryo that's nice (.) thank you for the good advice it will
14 be helpful

15 Ryodai my problem is え〜と {e::to,let me see} I have (.) I
16 have (.) I have some these days

17 Ryo that's bad (.) what are they?

18 Ryodai I feel え〜と {e::to,let me see} I feel ()
sleep at
19 ()

20 Ryo that's too bad え〜と {e::to,let me see} (.) you should
21 you should () at home

22 Ryodai え〜と {e::to,let me see} another problem is (.) I
can't
23 eat many food

Excerpt 1 and 2 were taken from Minori and Ryodai's first speaking test in July. These two data indicated that both of them experienced challenges, marked by pauses (Excerpt 1, Line 09, Excerpt 2, Line 03 and 12) and the frequent use of fillers (Excerpt 2, Line 07, 11, 15, 18, 21) such as 'let me see' in Japanese, which prevented them to do smooth communication.

Excerpt 3 Speaking test: Minori (target student) and Takeru in December

01 Minori <I went shopping (.) with university students
02 Takeru oh: what did you (.) BUY
03 Minori I (.) <I bought T-short and food>?

04 Takeru that's nice

05 Minori I (.) <when you go shopping in Vietnam, (..) you (.)

06 you had you had () and ask for price reduction >

07 Takeru oh: did you asked [1.16.00]

08 Minori yes, I did (.) we took a (..) we took a ()

09 bay it was very beautiful

Excerpt 4 Speaking test: Ryodai (target student) and Rio in December

[0.10.00]

11 Ryodai on the school trip I went to Vietnam

12 Ryo oh what did you do?

13 Ryodai first day I went to Ho Chi Minh it's very big え~と

14 {e::to,let me see} and I excited at many bike because

15 Vietnam is most () motorcycles (.) <and>
second day I

16 went to え~と {e::to,let me see} Fifteen School a:h I

17 made Origami I TEACHED ORIGAMI

18 Ryo What did you make

19 Ryodai I made TSURSU next day we played soccer match but we

20 lost the soccer match last day I went to (.)
Chan

21 Rio How was it?

22 Ryodai Chan is very beautiful and have many people and え~と

23 {e::to,let me see} (..) mountains (..) <I buy I
bought

24 (...) coffee and dry mango and bought to my family
and

25 my family is excited>

Improvement in speaking fluency. The assessment of speaking fluency progress involves measuring the length of silent time and the frequency of repetition. Excerpt 3 and 4 showed improvement of speaking fluency of Minori and Ryodai. For example, Excerpt 3, Line 05 and 08 suggested that Minori spoke in more than 10 words with few pauses and use of filters in Japanese, which were obvious in the previous speaking test, according to Excerpt 1. The same was true to Ryodai, who successfully address the issues of frequent use of filters seen in Excerpt 2. He became able to speak for longer time (Excerpt 4, Line 14,19, 22) ,while reducing the number of use of filters drastically.

Excerpt 5 Speaking test: Kei (target student) and Gaidai in July

01 Rio I have some problems these days?
02 Kei o:h that's too bad what are they
03 Rio え〜と{e::to,let me see} first problem is that (.) I'm
04 very sleepy
05 Kei o:h you had better (.) go to bed early
06 Rio OK another problem is that math is difficult
07 Kei え〜と{e::to,let me see} you should え〜と{e::to,let me
08 see} you should understand (.) () class
09 Rio That's nice last problem is that I am very tired for
10 weeks
11 Kei o:h, no: you (.) you had better take a rest

Excerpt 6 Speaking test: Minori (target student) and Yuko in July

09 Minori That's great thank you for your good () (.) good
10 advice °it will be helpful° (.) tell me your problem
11 Yuko (.) I often (.)my neck were hurt
12 **Minori oh: no: <you should (.) you should ()> stretch**
13 Yuko oh: that's great え〜と{e::to,let me see} I: いや
14 {iya::,no} <another problem is I have get early>

15 Minori oh:no (.) <you should go to bed early>

16 Yuko () last problem is え〜と{e::to,let me see} I want

17 to many money but I can't as much

18 Minori oh:no <you should home (.) home pet home>

19 Yuko ok nice talking with you

Excerpt 5 and 6 were taken from Minori and Ryodai's first speaking test in July. The target grammar item in this test was auxiliary verbs such as "should," "ought to" and "had better". Excerpt 5, Line 02,05,07, and 11 indicated that Kei, with comparatively high English proficiency, successfully employed these items. This suggested that he became able to use them only though the classroom communication-based activities based on FFI. On the other hand, Excerpt 6, Line 12,15, and 18 demonstrated Minori's difficulty in applying the grammar items into communication; in Line 12 and 15, she repeated the grammar with smaller voices and in 18, he made a basic grammar mistake in putting home after "should", although auxiliary verb should always be followed by a verb stem.

Excerpt 7 Speaking test: Kei (target student) and Rio in December

01 Kei I want to be a carpenter in the future?

02 Hayato o:h what is the meaning of carpenter?

03 Kei o:h it means Daiku in Japanese

04 Hayato o:h I see

05 Kei (.) the first reason is that I like to watch TV shows about building houses

06 Hayato え〜と{e::to,let me see} what TV do you like?

07 Kei o:h wonderful (.) I like too

08 Hayato <it makes me excited so I watch (.) it every week>

09 Kei the second reason is that I enjoy building various

10 things?

11 Hayato え〜と {e::to, let me see} what do you enjoy
building?

12 Kei I I enjoy (.) building Lego blocks [1.00.00]

Excerpt 8 Speaking test: Minori (target student) and Yuko in October

01 Minori I'm going to talk about my mother she is あ {a, oh}

02 she is strict <she does watch you-tube for a long

03 time>

04 Sae oh: that's too bad (.) how long watch you-tube?

05 Minori <I watch> (..) two hours she (.) she makes (.) she

06 makes me study every day

07 Sae oh: that's great (.) how long study?

08 Minori <I study> (.) thirty minutes <she ()n't she doesn't

09 let me come home late at night> she makes me come
home

10 (.) before 8 o'clock

Improvement in speaking accuracy. Students were required to use the target grammar items in each of the speaking tests: auxiliary verbs such as “should,” “ought to” and “had better” in June, the causative verbs such as “make”, “have”, and “let” in October, and gerund and all learned grammar items throughout the year in December. Kei adeptly utilized gerund according to Excerpt 7, L12. In fact, he successfully used the target grammar items in all speaking tests throughout the year. In addition, Excerpt 8 showed her effort to use the target grammar item in communication. In Line 02, she wanted to say “she does not let me watch you-tube for a long time instead of “she does watch you-tube for along. In Line 05 and 06, she managed to utilize a causative verb, “make”, with a repetition. Finally, in Line 09, she succeeded in using a causative verb, “let” properly and smoothly.

Excerpt 9 Speaking test: Minori (target student) and Yuko in July

01 Minori my problem is that math is difficult
02 Yuko oh (.) oh no I いや {iya::,no} you should (.) math
very
03 hard week
04 Minori (.) that's great another problem is that >I very
05 sleepy<
06 Yuko oh I see え〜と {e::to,let me see} you should go to bed
07 early at night
08 Minori I see (.) last problem is that I am hungry
09 Yuko oh: (.) oh no ha ha you should eat (.) more food
10 Minori That's great thank you for your good () (.) good
11 advice °it will be helpful° (.) tell me your problem
12 Yuko (.) I often (.)my neck were hurt [0.56.00]
13 Minori oh: no: <you should (.) you should ()> stretch
14 Yuko oh: that's great え〜と {e::to,let me see} I: いや
15 {iya::,no} <another problem is I have get early>
16 Minori oh:no (.) <you should go to bed early>
17 Yuko () last problem is え〜と {e::to,let me see}
18 I want to many money but I can't as much
19 Minori oh:no <you should home (.) home pet home>

Excerpt 10 Speaking test: Minori (target student) and Yuko in October

[0.16.00]

01 Sae I'm going to talk about my mother she is strict she
02 makes me study hard
03 Minori oh really? how about (..) how long study?
04 Sae I study an hour
05 Minori oh really?
06 Sae yes (.) she makes あ {a,oh}she doesn't let me watch TV

07 for a long time
08 Minori oh really (.)I (.) you (.) what kind of (.) watch TV?
09 Sae I watch (.) I watch TV (.) drama
10 Minori oh: me too ha ha [0.50.00]
11 Sae I'm finished how about you?

Development of strategic skills using CSs. During the first test, the students successfully employed a limited range of CSs, using openers, closers, and few kinds of rejoinders. For example, Excerpt 9 demonstrated what kinds of rejoinders Minori, low-level English learner, could employ in the conversation: “oh, no” in Line 2, 9, 13, and 16, and “I see” in Line 08 and “that great” in Line 10. This means that CSs can be learned regardless of user’s English proficiency. There was a notable increase in the incorporation of follow-up questions during the second and third test, which contributed to a more interactive and engaging conversation. For instance, Excerpt 10, Line 03 and 08 demonstrated Minori’s use of question strategy, although the sentences were not grammatically correct. At the same time, Excerpt 10 also indicated that Minori did not use as many types of rejoinders as they used to do in Excerpt 9. This suggested the important nature of CSs: the process of learning CSs is not linear but gradual ((Sato, 2005; Wood, 2010).

Summary. The Transcribed data with CA indicated that all of the three students improved speaking fluency and accuracy. In addition, it was revealed that CSs was learnable regardless user’s English proficiency, but the process of learning a wide range of CSs required time and effort; when a new strategy was employed, an old one was less used or never used.

Discussion

This section will explain and examine what has been found so far and what should be explored further in the future in order to answer the research questions.

How do senior high school students improve their speaking accuracy and fluency through FFI and CSs? Students' survey on their self-evaluation of English abilities shows their perceived improvement of speaking ability over the year. In fact, some students answered that speaking activities in a classroom helped them to use English smoothly. Moreover, the transcribed data of the selected students indicated that they developed both of speaking accuracy and of fluency. The students received various kinds of input and output-based instruction (i.e., FFI). They were also engaged in communication with others in English by using the sequenced CSs within CLT approaches. Thus, the adaptation of FFI and CSs helped them to improve their speaking accuracy and fluency.

How do senior high school students improve their writing accuracy and fluency through FFI? According to student's survey on their self-evaluation of English abilities, students believed that they could write more words than before. The same improvement was also observed in the results of their writing tests; more and more became able to write essays with 100 words, which means that they improved their writing fluency. They worked on various types of writing tasks, including error-correction of model passage, peer-editing, common error exercises, all of which helped them to develop their writing skills. On the other hand, regarding writing fluency, which can be measured by the correct use of grammar and expression, noticeable changes were not seen based on the scores of the rubric used throughout the year for writing tests.

How do senior high school students improve their reading fluency through ER? The survey demonstrates students' perceived improvement of reading ability. They believed that they became able to read and understand English. In addition, the data from the reflection of ER show that by reading many English books, they thought they became able to read fast. Students were engaged in ER activities compassing silent reading, interactive book talk, and recording a reading log in the classroom. Some students worked outside of the classroom, which was evident in their reading logs. Through these various kinds of ER activities, students could increase large amount of comprehensive input with

content-based high-qualitative materials, which facilitate their perceived enhancement of reading fluency.

Conclusion

Significant breakthroughs were achieved from AR 1 and AR 2 to AR 3, marking a progressive refinement in teaching and data collection methods over the course of three years. Through trial and error across the successive three-year AR projects, successful implementation of teaching and data collection was achieved. In grammar teaching, both planned and incidental FFI through input and output-based instruction, were successfully carried out. Regarding the introduction of strategic skills, the sequenced CSs, were progressively taught, allowing students to gradually acquire and apply them to their conversational exercises. Specific CSs were treated with special care by receiving explicit and repetitive teaching through drill-like exercises. Concerning Extensive Reading, students actively participated in a series of ER activities periodically. Their performances were systematically assessed through tests and reflections, which maintained their motivation to read. Additionally, data collection based on a triangulated, explanatory, sequential mixed method design led to more accurate and reliable information available, which was analyzed with sophisticated.