Action Research Year-End Final Revised Report in 2024-2025

Shima Masuda

1. Title

To raise children who are willing to use English to communicate through Communicative Language Teaching

2. Context

Level: junior high school (third year)

Class size: 40 students (22 male, 18 female)

Textbook: New Horizon 3

Problems:

According to the questionnaire that I took this April, over 20% of students like English, 51.4% students somewhat like English. As for the skills, I asked the question, "What skill would you like to improve?" More than 40% of students want to improve their speaking skill, and writing skill comes second. On the other hand, they think speaking is the most difficult skill, and writing is the second most difficult. They want to improve these skills, but they feel significant difficulties. Even though they understand grammar well and get good marks on their tests, when they try to talk with peers in English, they don't know what to say or how to form sentences. When they want to speak in English, the words and sentences they want to use don't come to mind. I have also been using many kinds of activities that force them to use English in given situations. But they don't feel like they can speak English yet. They aren't satisfied with their skills. Therefore, I am going to conduct my lessons using Focus on Form Instruction (FFI). I would like to create a class that consists of many CLT tasks, so students can learn communicatively, use common phrases, and get used to using English both speaking and writing in their own words.

3. AR goals and objectives

(1) AR goal

My goal is to develop students' communicative speaking competence and writing competence.

(2) Objectives

① By March, 80% of students can continue a conversation in English for two minutes using Communicative Strategies without pauses less than three seconds.

② By March, more than two thirds of students can write in English more than 100 words.

③ In the final survey, more than 50% students will answer "I like English."

4. Literature review

In April 2020, new curriculum guidelines started in elementary schools. In April 2021, they began in junior high schools. It was the first update in a long time, about 10 years. In the new curriculum, foreign language activities were added for 3rd and 4th graders, and English became a formal subject for 5th and 6th graders, with lessons using textbooks. According to the curriculum guidelines of foreign languages,

To develop students' competencies that form the communication such as understanding, expressing and communicating simple information and thoughts etc. as outlined below through language activities of listening, reading, speaking and writing in a foreign language

while activating the Approaches in communication in foreign languages. (p.1, Junior high school curriculum guidelines chapter 2 section 9 foreign language, 2017)

As mentioned above, what is necessary for foreign language education is to develop students' communicative competence through language activities.

(1) Communicative competence

Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence as having four components: (1) grammatical competence, (2) sociolinguistic competence, (3) discourse competence, and (4) strategic competence. According to Savignon (1997), these skills are not separate but are integrated and influence each other as a whole ability.

Why is it important to improve learners' communicative competence? Savignon (1997) stated that "Communication is the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning." Communicative competence depends on the situation and requires the combined use of grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence (p. 225). Later, Savignon (2002) explained that the main idea of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is to engage learners in communication so they can develop their communicative competence.

(2) Communication language teaching (CLT)

Until the late 1960s, language teaching mainly focused on grammar. Teachers used methods such as memorization, question-and-answer practice, and substitution drills. The audio-lingual method (ALM) was a well-known example of this approach. In ALM, teachers led drills, and students repeated dialogues to develop good language habits (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p. 13). The method emphasized repetition, imitation, and reinforcement, while mistakes were strongly avoided. However, ALM did not usually give students chances to use the language in real communication (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, pp. 9-10).

A second language teaching approach that has attracted attention in recent years is communicative language teaching (CLT), which was created in the 1980s. CLT aims at developing learners' communicative competence through communication (Savignon, 2002). Brown (2007) described CLT as "Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes."

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.
(3) Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques.
(4) In the communicative classroom, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts. (p. 241)

Lee & VanPatten (2003) explained CLT that "It is language teaching that has communication as its goal" and "Communicative language teaching …cannot be equated with first learning some vocabulary, then learning some grammar, and then finding something to talk about to use the grammar and vocabulary." They also claim that teaching communicatively requires answering 3 fundamental questions.

1. "What is communication? What is a good working definition for language teaching purposes?"
2. "What do we want to communicate about and how do we want to do it?"
3. "What of listening, reading, and writing as communicative acts?"

These questions help teachers design activities that focus on real communication rather than just memorizing vocabulary and grammar. In CLT, students learn language by using it in meaningful interactions, making communication the central goal of language learning.

(3) Communication Strategies

Communication strategies are concrete tactics for strategic competence. Savignon (1997) shows the diagram a possible relationship between grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence as overall communicative competence increases.

Figure 1 Image of communicative competence (Savignon, 1997)

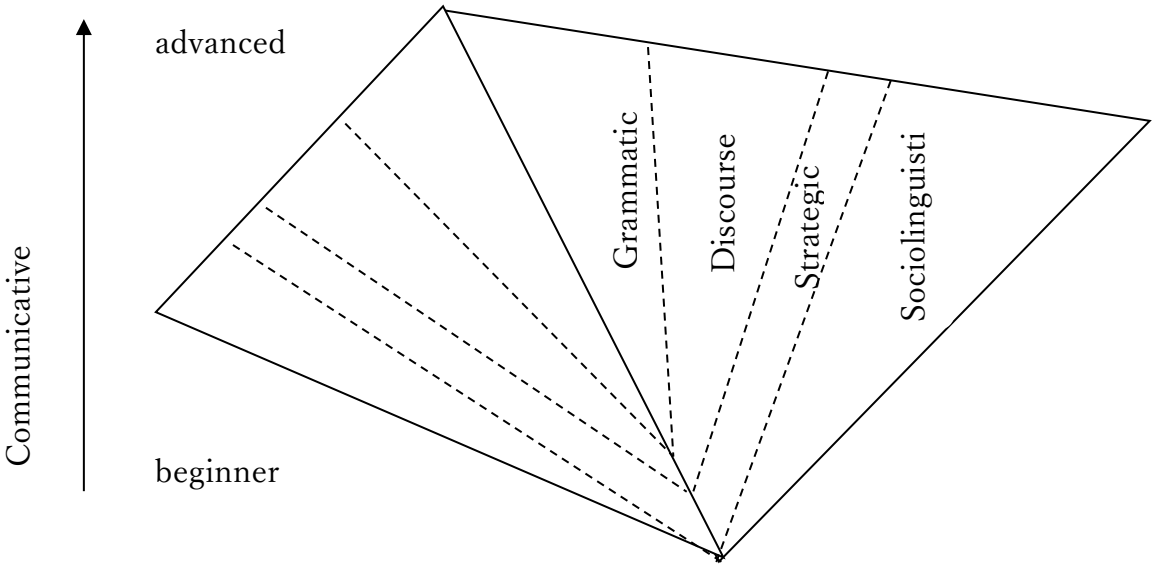


Figure 1 shows that strategic competence is present at all levels of proficiency. Strategic competence is the most important for beginners. In order to facilitate communication, it is necessary to solve problems when there are communication problems. What is essential to achieve smooth communication is communication strategies (CSs), which are included in strategic competence. Therefore, it is quite important to incorporate CSs into classes. Communication strategies are so beneficial that even lower level students can use them as tools to start, continue, and close a conversation appropriately. Here are some typical communication strategies. - Opener: to begin a conversation. (Hi. / How are you? / How are you doing? etc.) - Rejoinders: to show your interest in a conversation. (I see. / Sounds good., etc.) - Shadowing: to confirm what a partner says. - Fillers: to avoid silence during conversations and to consider what to say. (Well. / Let me see., etc.) - Follow-up questions: to elicit extra information related to the topic they are talking about, or expand a conversation. (What else? / When? etc.) - Closer: to close a conversation. (Nice talking with you. – You too.) These simple phrases are helpful for learners to continue talking in English in a meaningful information exchange.

(4) Focus on Form Instruction (FFI)

Lee & VanPatten (2003) state that learners who engage in meaningful or meaning-based approaches to grammar (called focus on form) perform as well as or better than those who engage in activities that are non-meaningful or not part of a communicative intent.

Ellis (2006) mentions that "Focus on forms" refers to instruction involving a structure-of-the-day approach, where students primarily focus on form (i.e., accuracy) and engage in activities directed intensively at a single grammatical structure. Focus on form, on the other hand, entails a focus on meaning, with attention to form arising from communicative activity. He also states that this focus can be **planned**, where a focused task is designed to elicit occasions for using a predetermined grammatical structure, or **incidental**, where attention to form in the context of a communicative activity is not predetermined but rather occurs according to the participants' linguistic needs as the activity proceeds.

Planned FFI "requires a focused task and intensive, while incidental FFI "is typically extensive (i.3., addresses a wide range of linguistic features)" (Ellis, 2008, p. 827).

Planned focus on form focuses on a specific grammar rule. Incidental focus on form does not focus on a specific rule. Instead, students review what they have learned by expressing their ideas on a topic. This helps students reuse grammar in their own expressions and improves their language learning.

a. Planned focus on form

Planned focus on form focuses on the target grammar and is organized by three components: (1) input (2) noticing (3) output. The first part of a planned FFI is input. There are two important characteristics of good input: (1) comprehensible (2) meaning bearing (Lee, J. F. & VanPatten, B, (2003).1997, pp. 26-27). The first input activity helps learners notice the target grammar instead of explicit explanation. Regarding grammar points, no research shows explicit explanation and information is necessary for acquisition. Also, noticing is the effective way for learners to learn language grammar. (Lee, J. F. & VanPatten, B, (2003).1997, p.125). Then learners start a structured output activity since output is necessary to develop the ability to use language in a communicative context. Moreover, research since the late 1980 resulted that "…learners who are engaged in meaningful or meaning-based approaches to grammar (called focus on form) do as well as or better than those who are engaged in activities that are nonmeaningful or not part of some communicative intent" (Lee, J. F. & VanPatten, B, (2003).1997, p. 123).

b. Incidental focus on form

After a unit is finished, students can review what they learned by incidental focus on form which focuses on a topic. As Lee and Van Patten (2003) claims that learners need opportunities to build a developing system to improve fluency and accuracy in second language (p. 181). Also, the task of incidental FFI is suggested to be used as a speaking test. "If there is to be an oral test with content related to classroom activities, learners will have additional motivation not only to participate in the class but to strive to improve their communicative Language ability" (Lee, J. F. & VanPatten, B, (2003).1997, p.114). Also, two important parts of communication are the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning. Especially, negotiation of meaning within a particular context is the extremely important aspect to acquire a second language. The task of incidental FFI helps learners become more task-oriented since asking each other involves sharing information and the negotiation meaning. Then learners get an opportunity to develop communication skills. Also, compared with a planned FFI, there is more communicative drill practice; thus, learners can express their voice (Lee, J. F. & VanPatten, B, (2003).1997, p. 72).

(5) Three-part framework reading

Brown (2007) proposed a three-part framework to implement skills integration: (1) pre-reading (2) while-reading (3) post-reading. Predicting the story, scanning some key

words, and discussion of the topic to activate schemata are the parts of pre-reading. (Sato & Hirano, 2014). In addition, understanding the gist by first silent reading, introducing vocabulary, answering comprehension questions by second silent reading, and practicing reading are the parts of while-reading. To complete tasks while reading, readers read and read the text. Through readers' exploration, they get to understand the content deeply. Moreover, choral reading is introduced after a while reading. Finally, retelling the story, writing and discussion are parts of post-reading. It is important to include at least one part of them to help students understand the article deeply (Sato & Hirano, 2014). Through a post-reading activity, learners get opportunity to interact with the content of the text many times, and it makes them comprehensive better. (Lee, J. F. & VanPatten, B, (2003).1997, p.114).

5. Research Questions

(1) How does focus-on-form instruction change students' attitude toward learning English?
(2) How do communication strategies improve students' speaking ability?
(3) How does focus-on-form instruction together with performance tests improve students' communicative competence?

6. What I did

(1) Communication Strategies

I previously created a worksheet for communication strategies and used it for 1-minute chatting activities and the communicative activities of focus on form instruction. We focused on various communication strategies such as openers and closers, rejoinders, fillers, and partial shadowing.

At first, students managed to use openers and closers by referring to the worksheet, and they tried using simple rejoinders like "Really?", "Great!", and "Wow!". Over time, they became comfortable using these strategies without looking at the worksheet. Then, I introduced partial shadowing. At first, students practiced by simply repeating their partner's words. For example, if one student said, "I ate curry and rice," the other would respond with, "Oh, curry and rice." They were able to handle this skill well.

I also introduced another approach to partial shadowing. For instance, if one student said, "I went to the park," the other could either repeat it or say, "Oh, you went to the park?" to keep the conversation going. At first, students struggled to use this strategy, but they gradually became more comfortable with it.

(2) Focus on Form Instruction (FFI)

The textbook for third graders, NEW HORIZON, contains 6 units for teaching grammar. I started to teach grammar points using a focus on form instruction last May. Each unit in the textbook has 3 or 4 new grammar points. I created the handouts seeing the book edited by Professor Sato. And I modified the handouts suited to the textbook.

The first step involves understanding the content by listening to the teacher's talk or conversations. Students focus on the content and take notes in Japanese.

The second step of input focuses on the language forms used in the first step. Students listen carefully and pick out the words they can catch. This helps them notice new language forms they are about to learn.

The next step is a summary of the grammar point. Students identify the target grammar by filling in the blanks. They engage in thinking about the form and meaning of the target

grammar. I designed this step using sentences from the input activities, which makes it easier for students to notice the grammar points.

Next, depending on the grammar point, students take notes about themselves and write in English using the target grammar. Then, they use that information to pair up and do a communication activity, interacting with at least three different peers.

(3) Speaking test (information-exchange task)

The speaking tests were conducted twice between students. For the first speaking test in July, my students talked in pairs about their history, like what they like and what they have been doing. I was nervous about giving this speaking test because it was my first time doing it between students, rather than between a student and an AET. The students also faced another challenge: they didn't know who their partner would be until the day of the test.

For the second speaking test in December, they randomly chose one of two topics, "my habits" or "a person I respect," and had a conversation.

Most students were able to keep the conversation going using communication strategies. They asked and answered questions, reacted to each other, and even enjoyed the conversation. I found that they used partial shadowing effectively and practiced reading many times to remember the content.

I advised them not to memorize everything and encouraged them to use their own words as much as possible. However, some students tried to memorize their sentences because they wanted to speak perfectly and avoid making mistakes. As a result, they couldn’t say anything once the conversation started, as they forgot everything.

Despite this, most students were able to manage the conversation and successfully interact with their peers.

(4) Fun essay

After the speaking test, I had the students write a fun essay on the same topic. I showed them a model essay, and the students wrote their own. Since they had already talked about the topic, they could imagine what to write. I provided them with writing criteria so they would know what was expected of them.

(5) Three-part flamework

I taught the reading section of the textbook using a three-part framework: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. This method helped integrate different skills as part of task-based learning.

First, as a pre-reading activity, I designed three steps to help students grasp the gist. Students looked at a picture on the TV and a worksheet. They asked each other some questions. Then, they looked at the title and some pictures that showed the whole story. I had them guess the story for each picture using both Japanese and English. They tried to imagine the story by looking at the pictures. Since I allowed them to use Japanese, I noticed their willingness to guess the content, and they seemed to have fun.

After that, they moved on to the next step, which was the question part. As the pre-reading, they asked each other questions and guessed the answers.

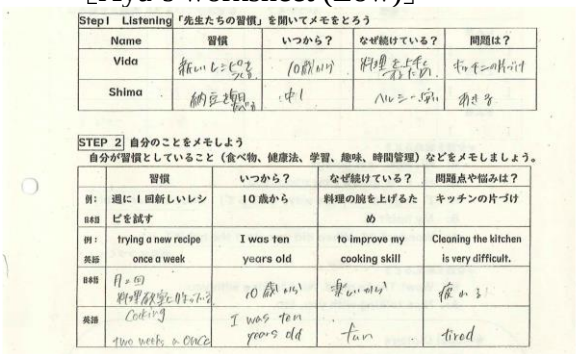
In the while-reading section, students checked vocabulary step by step. Then, they read the text silently and answered true or false questions and other comprehension questions. I

had students talk with their peers by sharing answers and answering questions. They could use English in all steps.

Students tried hard to read and answer each step by themselves. By including vocabulary checks, they could confirm the meanings, which helped them understand the story.

As a post-reading activity, I used retelling and timed conversation. For retelling, I added keywords to each picture to support the students. For timed conversation, I included different questions on each worksheet and designed it so that, in the end, it led to an information-exchange task.

［Aya's worksheet (Low)］



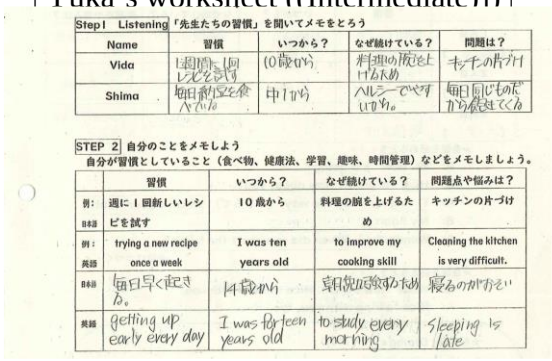
Step1 Listening「先生たちの習慣」を聞いてメモをとろう

Name	習慣	いつから？	なぜ続けている？	問題は？
Vida	新しいレシピを作る	10歳から	料理の腕を上げるため	キッチンの片づけ
Shima	納豆を朝食べる	中1	ヘルシーだから	忙しさ

STEP 2 自分のことをメモしよう
自分が習慣としていること（食べ物、健康法、学習、趣味、時間管理）などをメモしましょう。

	習慣	いつから？	なぜ続けている？	問題点や悩みは？
例：日本語	週に1回新しいレシピを試す	10歳から	料理の腕を上げるため	キッチンの片づけ
例：英語	trying a new recipe once a week	I was ten years old	to improve my cooking skill	Cleaning the kitchen is very difficult.
日本語	月に6回料理教室に習いに行く	10歳から	楽しいから	疲れる
英語	Cooking two weeks a once	I was ten years old	fun	tired

［Yuka's worksheet ((Intermediate))］



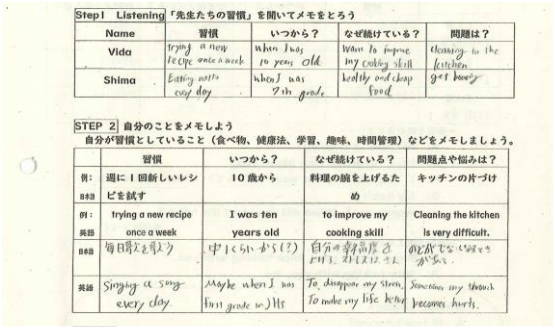
Step1 Listening「先生たちの習慣」を聞いてメモをとろう

Name	習慣	いつから？	なぜ続けている？	問題は？
Vida	1週間に1回新しいレシピを試す	(10歳から)	料理の腕を上げるため	キッチンの片づけ
Shima	毎日納豆を食べる	中1から	ヘルシーでやすいから。	毎日同じものだから飽きてくる

STEP 2 自分のことをメモしよう
自分が習慣としていること（食べ物、健康法、学習、趣味、時間管理）などをメモしましょう。

	習慣	いつから？	なぜ続けている？	問題点や悩みは？
例：日本語	週に1回新しいレシピを試す	10歳から	料理の腕を上げるため	キッチンの片づけ
例：英語	trying a new recipe once a week	I was ten years old	to improve my cooking skill	Cleaning the kitchen is very difficult.
日本語	毎日早く起きる。	14歳から	朝勉強するため	寝るのがおそい
英語	getting up early every day	I was fourteen years old	to study every morning	Sleeping is late

［Kei's worksheet (High)］



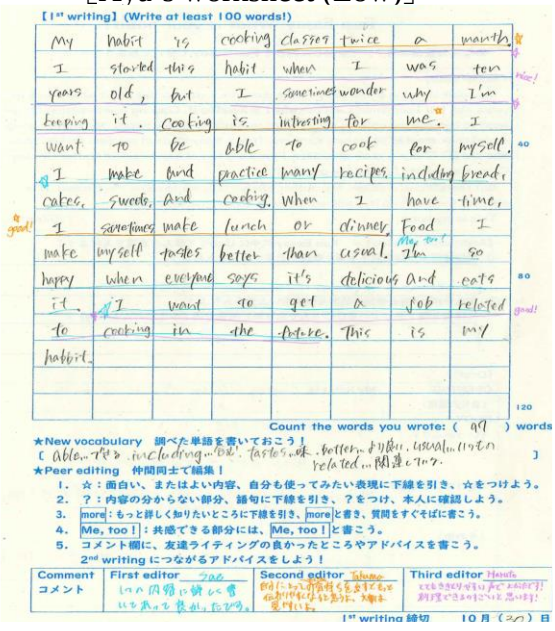
Step1 Listening「先生たちの習慣」を聞いてメモをとろう

Name	習慣	いつから？	なぜ続けている？	問題は？
Vida	trying a new recipe once a week	When I was 10 years old	Want to improve my cooking skill	Cleaning in the kitchen
Shima	Eating natto every day	When I was 7 in grade	Healthy and cheap food	get busy

STEP 2 自分のことをメモしよう
自分が習慣としていること（食べ物、健康法、学習、趣味、時間管理）などをメモしましょう。

	習慣	いつから？	なぜ続けている？	問題点や悩みは？
例：日本語	週に1回新しいレシピを試す	10歳から	料理の腕を上げるため	キッチンの片づけ
例：英語	trying a new recipe once a week	I was ten years old	to improve my cooking skill	Cleaning the kitchen is very difficult.
日本語	毎日歌を歌う	中1くらいから(?)	自分の歌声を聞いて、おくりたいから	歌がうまくいかない
英語	Singing a song every day	Maybe when I was first grade with	To disappear my stress To make my life long	Sometimes my throat becomes hurts.

［Aya's worksheet (Low)］



【1st writing】(Write at least 100 words!)

My	habit	is	cooking	classes	twice	a	month.
I	started	this	habit	when	I	was	ten
years	old,	but	I	sometimes	wonder	why	I'm
keeping	it.	Cooking	is	intresting	for	me.	I
want	to	be	able	to	cook	for	myself.
I	make	and	practice	many	recipes	including	breads
cakes,	sweets,	and	cooking.	When	I	have	time,
I	sometimes	make	lunch	or	dinner.	Food	I
make	myself	tastes	better	than	usual.	I'm	so
happy	when	everyone	says	it's	delicious and	eats	
it.	I	want	to	get	a	job	related
to	cooking	in	the	future.	This	is	my
habbit.							

Count the words you wrote: (97) words

★New vocabulary 調べた単語を書いておこう！
(Able…できる including…含む tastes…味 better…より良い usual…いつもの related…関連している)

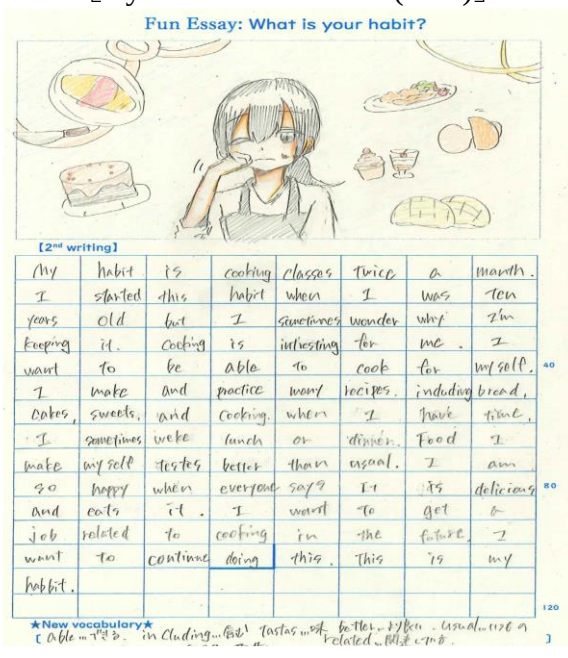
★Peer editing 仲間同士で編集！
1. ☆：面白い、またはよい内容、自分も使ってみたい表現に下線を引き、☆をつけよう。
2. ？：内容の分からない部分、語句に下線を引き、？をつけ、本人に確認しよう。
3. more：もっと詳しく知りたいところに下線を引き、moreと書き、質問をすぐそばに書こう。
4. Me, too！：共感できる部分には、Me, too！と書こう。
5. コメント欄に、友達へライティングの良かったところやアドバイスを書こう。

2nd writing につながるアドバイスをしよう！

Comment コメント	First editor	Second editor	Third editor
	1つの内容に絞って書いたほうが良い作品になると思う。	自分にもっと自信を持ってもいいと思うよ。文章は完璧。	とてもきれいな英文で読みやすい！料理できるのもすごい！

1st writing 締切 10月（ ）日

［Aya's final worksheet (Low)］



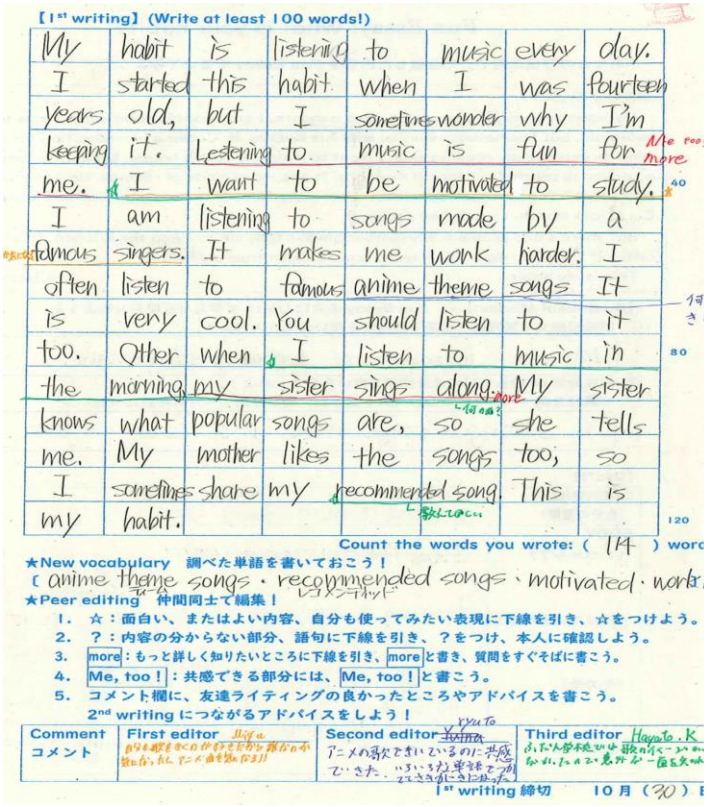
Fun Essay: What is your habit?

【2nd writing】

My	habit	is	cooking	classes	twice	a	month.
I	started	this	habit	when	I	was	ten
years	old	but	I	sometimes	wonder	why	I'm
keeping	it.	Cooking	is	intresting	for	me.	I
want	to	be	able	to	cook	for	myself.
I	make	and	practice	many	recipes,	including	bread,
cakes,	sweets,	and	cooking.	when	I	have	time,
I	sometimes	make	lunch	or	dinner.	Food	I
make	myself	tastes	better	than	usual.	I	am
so	happy	when	everyone	says	I	it's	delicious
and	eats	it.	I	want	to	get	a
job	related	to	cooking	in	the	future.	I
want	to	continue	doing	this.	This	is	my
hobbit.							

★New vocabulary★
(Able…できる。 including…含む tastes…味 better…より良い usual…いつもの related…関連している)

［Yuka’s worksheet ((Intermediate))］



【1st writing】(Write at least 100 words!)

My	habit	is	listening	to	music	every	day.
I	started	this	habit	when	I	was	fourteen
years	old,	but	I	sometimes	wonder	why	I'm
keeping	it.	Lestening	to	music	is	fun	for
me.	I	want	to	be	motivated	to	study.
I	am	listening	to	songs	made	by	a
famous	singers.	It	makes	me	work	harder.	I
often	listen	to	famous	anime	theme	songs	It
is	very	cool.	You	should	listen	to	it
too.	Other	when	I	listen	to	music	in
the	morning	my	sister	sings	along.	My	sister
knows	what	popular	songs	are,	so	she	tells
me.	My	mother	likes	the	songs	too,	so
I	sometimes	share	my	recommended	song.	This	is
my	habit.						

Count the words you wrote: (114) words

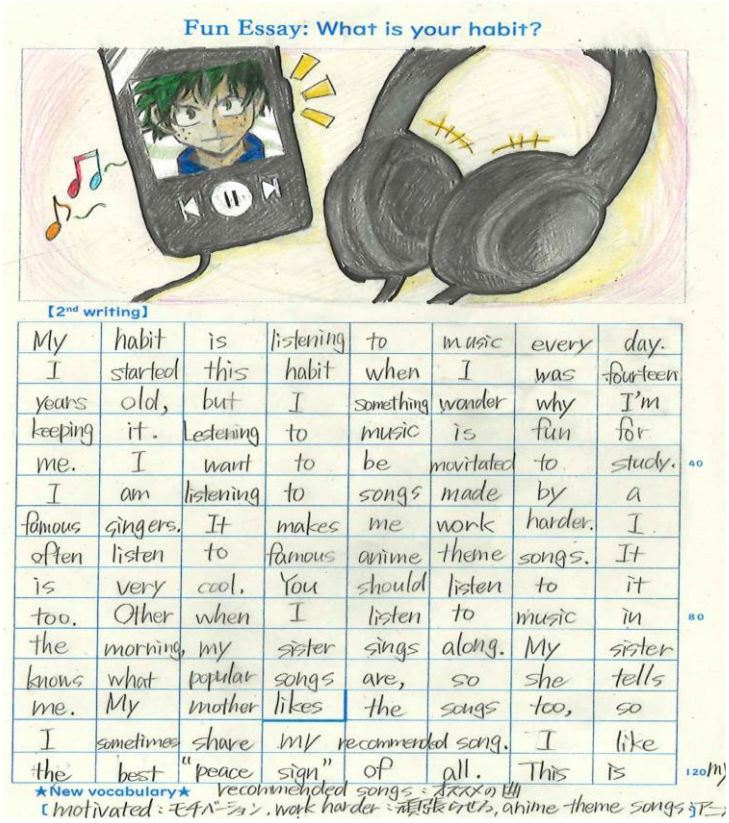
★New vocabulary 調べた単語を書いておこう！
〔anime theme songs・recommended songs・motivated・work

★Peer editing 仲間同士で編集！
1. ☆：面白い、またはよい内容、自分も使ってみたい表現に下線を引き、☆をつけよう。
2. ？：内容の分からない部分、語句に下線を引き、？をつけ、本人に確認しよう。
3. more：もっと詳しく知りたいところに下線を引き、moreと書き、質問をすぐそばに書こう。
4. Me, too！：共感できる部分には、Me, too！と書こう。
5. コメント欄に、友達ライティングの良かったところやアドバイスを書こう。
2nd writing につながるアドバイスをしよう！

Comment コメント	First editor	Second editor	Third editor

1st writing 締切 10月（30）日

［Yuka’s final worksheet ((Intermediate))］



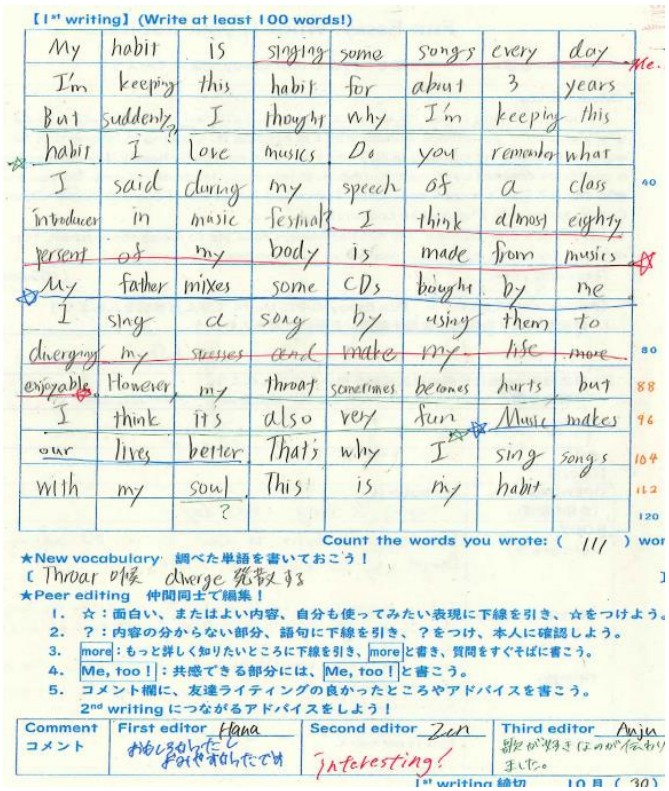
Fun Essay: What is your habit?

【2nd writing】

My	habit	is	listening	to	music	every	day.
I	started	this	habit	when	I	was	fourteen
years	old,	but	I	something	wonder	why	I'm
keeping	it.	Lestening	to	music	is	fun	for
me.	I	want	to	be	motivated	to	study.
I	am	listening	to	songs	made	by	a
famous	singers.	It	makes	me	work	harder.	I
often	listen	to	famous	anime	theme	songs.	It
is	very	cool.	You	should	listen	to	it
too.	Other	when	I	listen	to	music	in
the	morning,	my	sister	sings	along.	My	sister
knows	what	popular	songs	are,	so	she	tells
me.	My	mother	likes	the	songs	too,	so
I	sometimes	share	my	recommended song.		I	like
the	best	"peace	sign"	of	all.	This	is

★New vocabulary★ recommended songs：おすすめの曲
〔motivated：モチベーション，work harder：頑張る，anime theme songs：アニ

［Kei’s worksheet (High)］



【1st writing】(Write at least 100 words!)

My	habit	is	singing	some	songs	every	day
I'm	keeping	this	habit	for	about	3	years
But	suddenly	I	thought	why	I'm	keeping	this
habit	I	love	musics	Do	you	remember	what
I	said	during	my	speech	of	a	class
introducer	in	music	festival?	I	think	almost	eighty
persent	of	my	body	is	made	from	musics
My	father	mixes	some	CDs	bought	by	me
I	sing	a	song	by	using	them	to
diverging	my	stresses	and	make	my	life	more
enjoyable	However,	my	throat	sometimes	becomes	hurts	but
I	think	it's	also	very	fun	Music	makes
our	lives	better	That's	why	I	sing	songs
with	my	soul	This	is	my	habit	
		?					

Count the words you wrote: (111) words

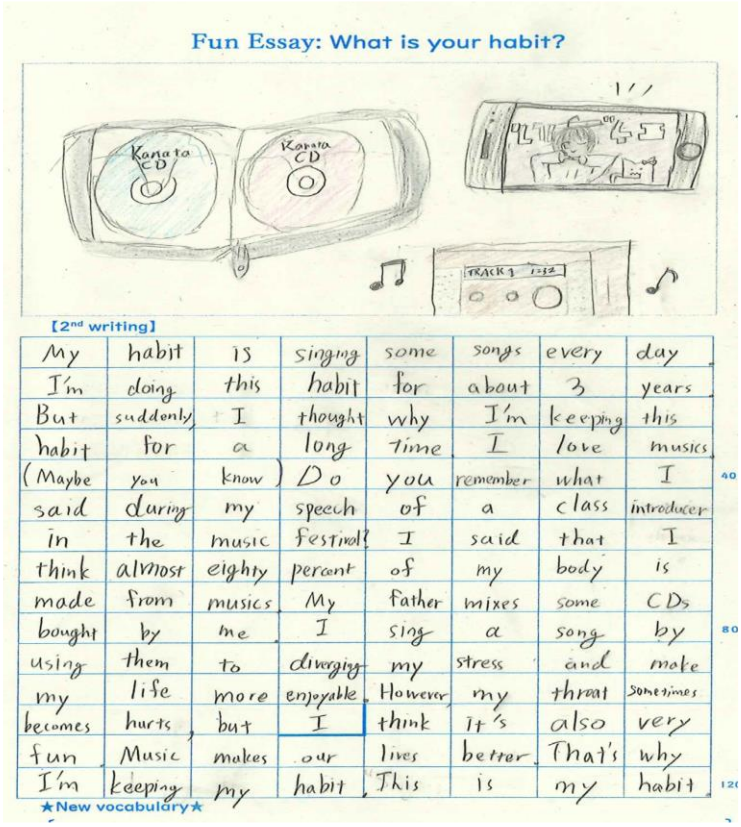
★New vocabulary 調べた単語を書いておこう！
〔Throat 喉 diverge 発散する

★Peer editing 仲間同士で編集！
1. ☆：面白い、またはよい内容、自分も使ってみたい表現に下線を引き、☆をつけよう。
2. ？：内容の分からない部分、語句に下線を引き、？をつけ、本人に確認しよう。
3. more：もっと詳しく知りたいところに下線を引き、moreと書き、質問をすぐそばに書こう。
4. Me, too！：共感できる部分には、Me, too！と書こう。
5. コメント欄に、友達ライティングの良かったところやアドバイスを書こう。
2nd writing につながるアドバイスをしよう！

Comment コメント	First editor	Second editor	Third editor
		Interesting!	

1st writing 締切 10月（30）日

［Kei’s final worksheet (High)］



Fun Essay: What is your habit?

【2nd writing】

My	habit	is	singing	some	songs	every	day
I'm	doing	this	habit	for	about	3	years
But	suddenly	I	thought	why	I'm	keeping	this
habit	for	a	long	time	I	love	musics
(Maybe	you	know)	Do	you	remember	what	I
said	during	my	speech	of	a	class	introducer
in	the	music	festival?	I	said	that	I
think	almost	eighty	percent	of	my	body	is
made	from	musics	My	father	mixes	some	CDs
bought	by	me	I	sing	a	song	by
using	them	to	diverging	my	stress	and	make
my	life	more	enjoyable	However	my	throat	Sometimes
becomes	hurts	but	I	think	It's	also	very
fun	Music	makes	our	lives	better	That's	why
I'm	keeping	my	habit	This	is	my	habit

★New vocabulary★

7. Result

I demonstrate how students have changed or have not changed since April using the result of the surveys conducted in April, July, and January. In the questionnaires, the results are shown from top to bottom in the order of April, July, and January.

The results of the survey in Figure 2 show changes in students' attitudes toward English classes over time. In April, over 20% of students reported that they liked English, while 51% somewhat liked it. By July, the percentage of students who liked English had increased to over 35%, with 51% still somewhat liking it. In January, this positive trend continued, with 42% of students expressing that they liked English and 50% somewhat liking it. These results indicate that the number of students who like English has steadily increased throughout the year.

Figure 2

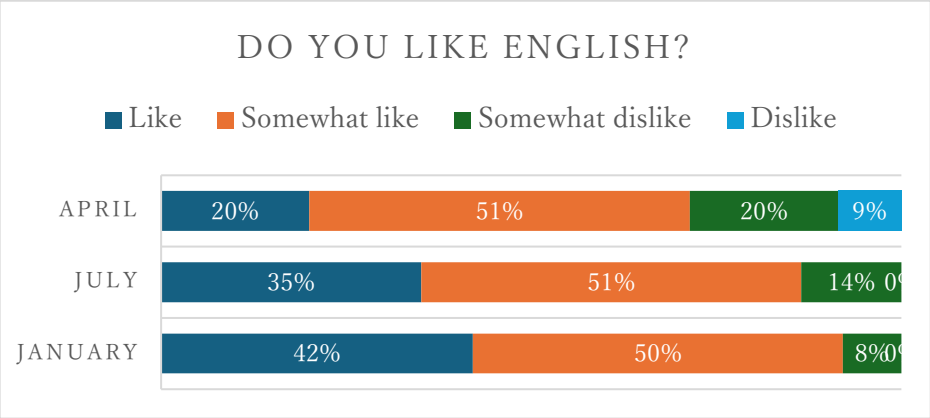


Figure 3

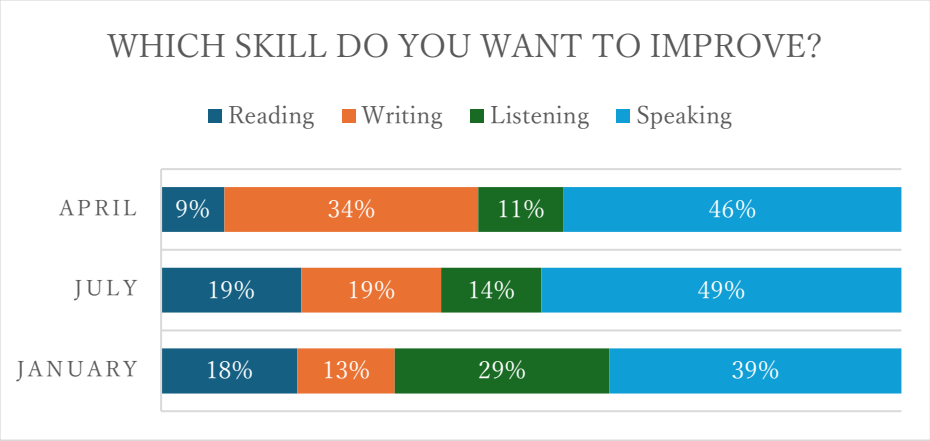


Figure 4

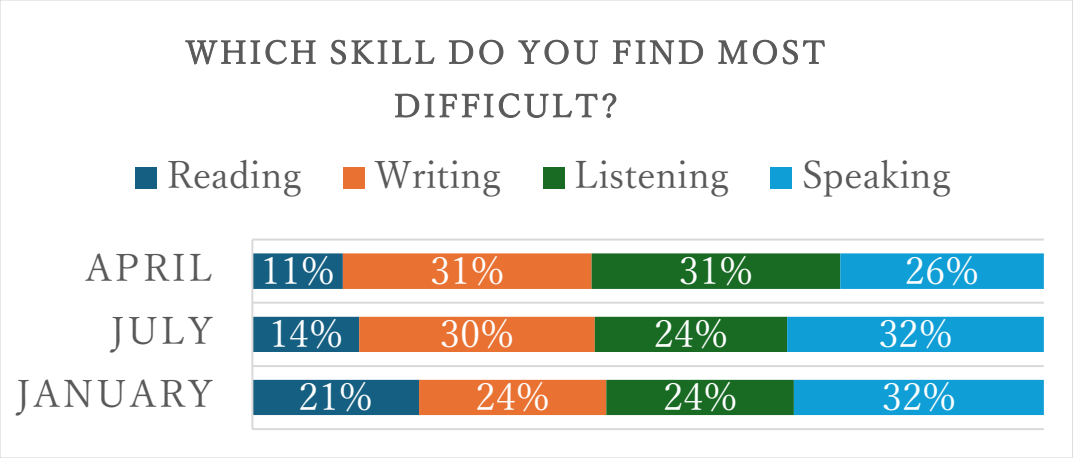


Figure 3 shows which skills students want to improve. In April and July, many students wanted to improve their speaking skills. In July, 49% of students said they wanted to improve speaking. In January, the number of students who wanted to improve speaking decreased to 39%, but it was still the most selected skill. The number of students who wanted to improve listening skills increased to 29%. Looking at the comments about speaking in Table 1, many students said things like, " I felt happy because I have grown compared to my past self," and " The skill I learned is speaking English without fear of making mistakes." This suggests that many students felt their speaking skills had improved and might have been motivated to enhance their other skills as well.

Figure 4 shows which skill students feel is the most difficult. In all months, students felt that speaking was the most challenging skill, indicating that it remains the most difficult for them.

In January, the percentage of students who felt writing was difficult decreased to 24%. Some students commented negatively about writing in Table 2, saying things like, " It's hard because I need to learn words to write sentences," and "I'm afraid of making spelling mistakes."

However, after doing the Fun Essay twice, some students began to feel that writing was less difficult.

There were also positive comments, such as, " I have started to enjoy writing in English.," and "I found tips for using new expressions in writing." This suggests that some students started to enjoy writing more and gained confidence in using new expressions.

Table 1 *Students' comments about speaking in January*

Category	Comments
Fun (3)	I found speaking to be fun.
	It is good because I can make friends with people from other countries when I speak English.
Growth (21)	When I couldn't understand my partner, I learned to ask again in English or repeat what they said.
	Even if I didn't understand the grammar, I kept speaking and writing, and I gradually understood more.
	Speaking English was difficult, but I felt happy because I have grown compared to my past self.
	I thought my English might be wrong, but I learned to keep the conversation going and improved my listening skills.
	The skill I learned is speaking English without fear of making mistakes.
Motivation (10)	I want to speak English better.
	English is the most important skill for my future, so I want to keep working hard.
	Speaking English will be useful in the future, so I want to practice more.
Difficulty (4)	My mind goes blank, and I don't know what to say.
	I think speaking is useful, but it is very difficult.
	I practiced speaking many times, but I feel sad when I can't say what I want.

Table 2 *Students' comments about writing in January*

Category	Comments
Fun (3)	I have started to enjoy writing in English.
	I feel happy when I can write words and sentences that I couldn't write before, smoothly.
Growth (24)	I used to be bad at writing in English, but little by little, my mistakes have been getting fewer.
	Thanks to writing fun essays, I was able to express my feelings and experiences more.
	By using new grammar many times, I learned more ways to express myself and could write more sentences
	I found tips for using new expressions in writing.
Motivation (8)	I want to be able to write more words and sentences.
	I think it's important to learn one word every day.
Difficulty (3)	I'm afraid of making spelling mistakes.
	It's hard because I need to learn words to write sentences.

Table 3

Speaking scores based on rubrics (Dec) by focus group students: Kei, Jin, Outa

Student name level	Kei high	Jin middle	Outa low
1. The use of CSs / time 2mints) (7 points)	7	5	4
2. Accuracy (3 points)	3	2	1
3. Attitude (5 points)	5	5	3
4. Total (15 points)	15	12	8

Table 4

Writing scores based on rubrics (Dec) by focus group students: Kei, Yuka, Aya

Student name level	Kei high	Yuka middle	Aya low
1. Contents (7 points)	7	5	5
2. Accuracy (3 points)	3	2	1
3. Length (3 points)	3	3	2
4. Design (2 points)	2	2	2
4. Total (15 points)	15	12	10

Figure 5

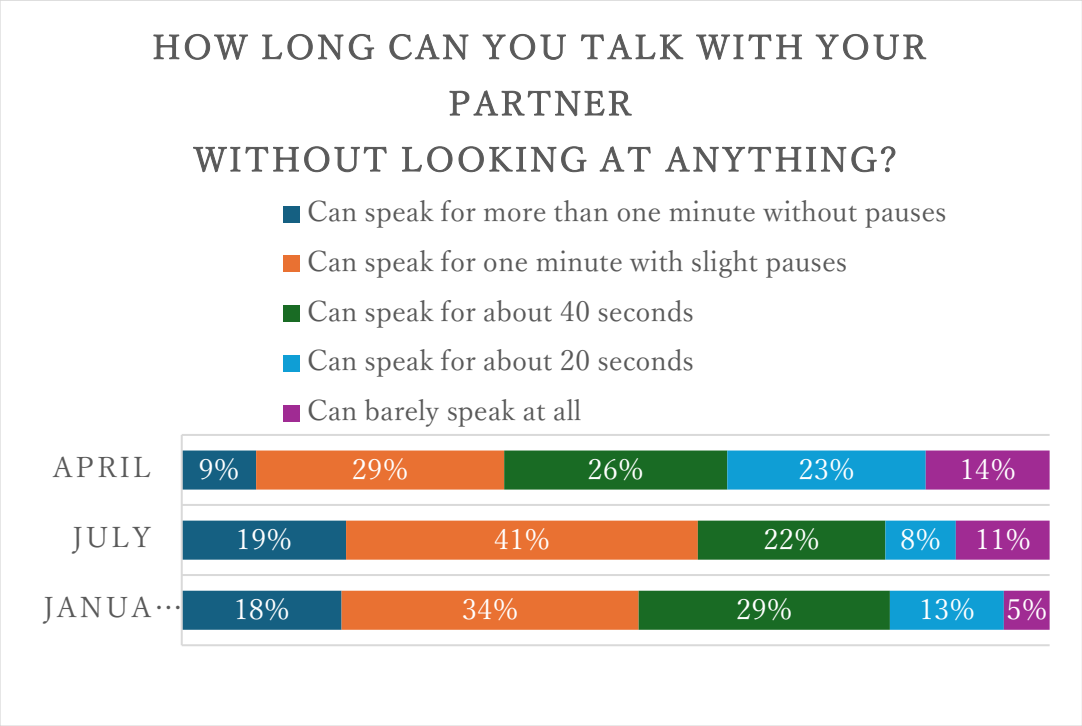
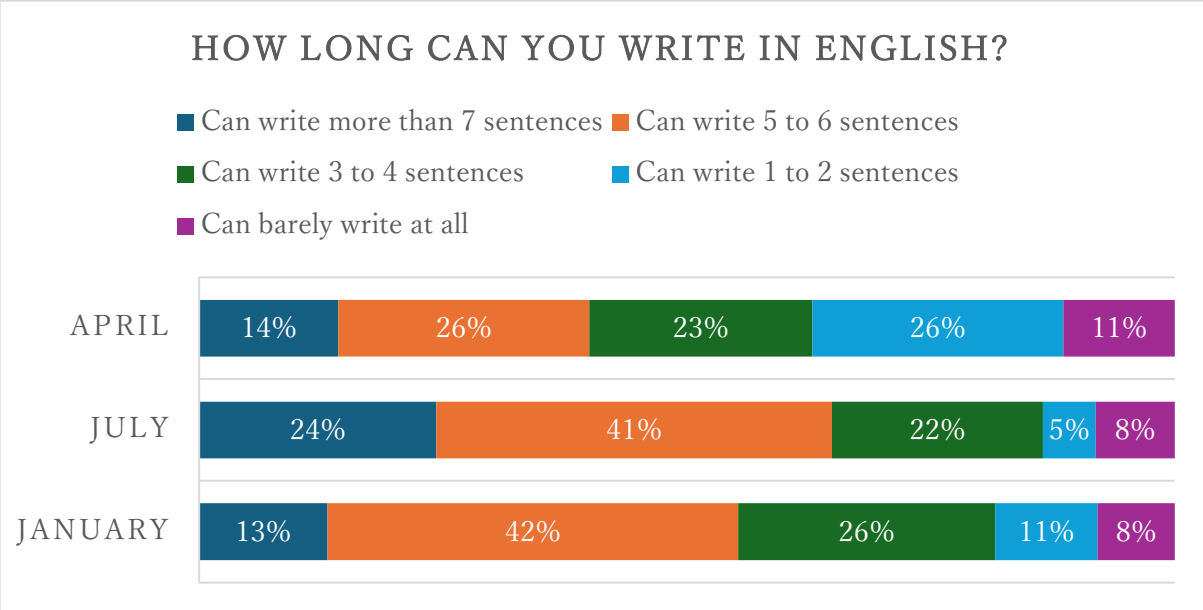


Figure 6



In my AR objective, I set the goal for 80% of students to speak for 2 minutes by March. However, when I wrote this in April, I didn't know what to do and couldn't see the way forward. So, in the survey I gave to students, I made the option "I can speak for more than 1 minute."

According to Figure 5, the percentage of students who said they could speak for 1 minute was 38% in April, 60% in July, and 52% in January.

In the speaking test in July, students talked with each other about one topic. But in December, the speaking test was harder because they were given one random topic from two options. This might be the reason for the lower result.

However, when I watched the video of the December speaking test, I saw that most students were able to talk for about 1.5 to 2 minutes. It seems that students were not carefully checking how long they spoke with a timer.

For writing, I also set the objective, "By March, more than two-thirds of students can write more than 100 words in English." However, for the same reason, I asked in the survey how many sentences they could write.

According to Figure 6, when comparing April and July, the number of students who said they could write 7 or more sentences, and 5 to 6 sentences increased. However, in the January survey, the number of students who said they could write 7 or more sentences decreased to 13%.

One possible reason for this decrease is that the writing topic in December might have been more difficult for students. Another reason could be that students became more aware of the quality of their writing, focusing more on grammar and vocabulary, which made it harder for them to write longer sentences.

Figure 7

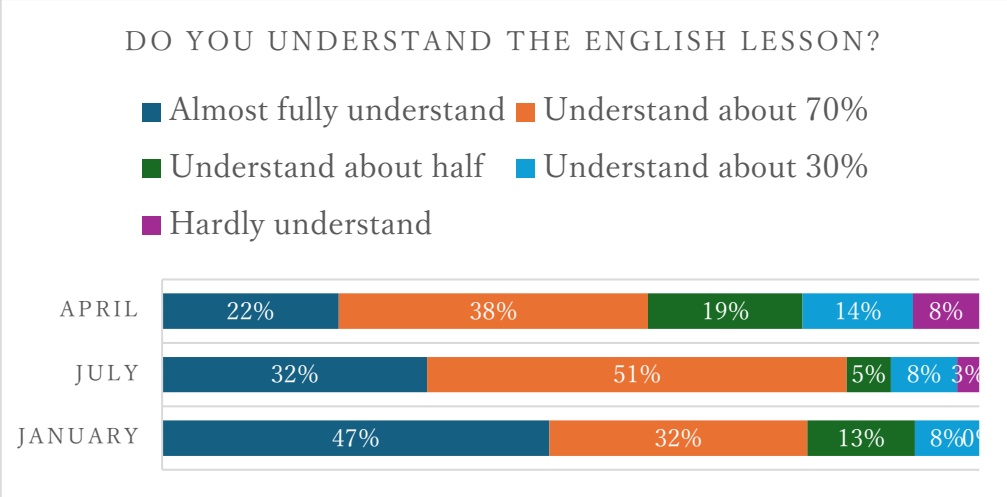


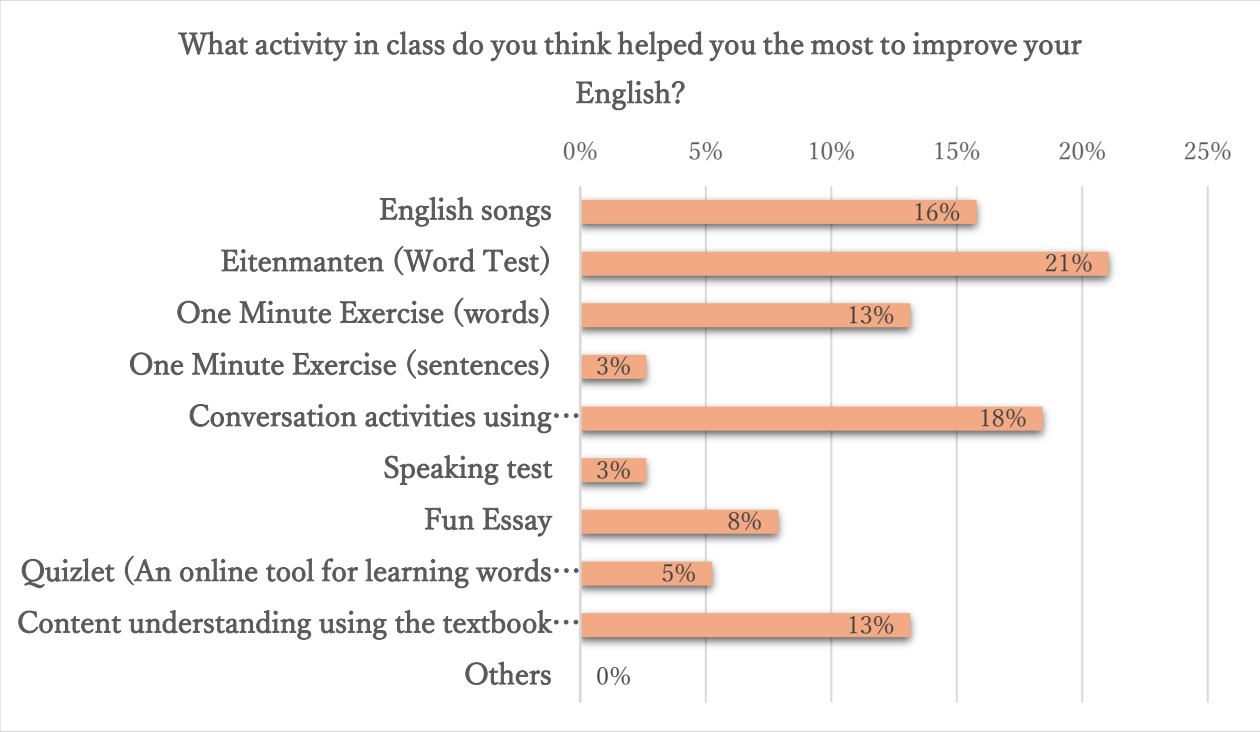
Figure 7 shows how well the students understand the English lesson. In April, 22% of students reported that they almost fully understood the lesson, while 8% said they hardly understood it. By July, the percentage of students who almost fully understood the lesson increased to 32%. Furthermore, in January, this percentage rose to 47%. Additionally, no students reported that they hardly understood the lesson.

This result can be explained by students' comments. From the speaking-related comments, some students said, "Even if I didn't understand the grammar, I kept speaking and writing, and I gradually understood more." (Table 1)

From the writing-related comments, one student said, "By using new grammar many times, I learned more ways to express myself and could write more sentences." Another student mentioned, "By writing repeatedly, I learned grammar naturally." (Table 2)

These comments suggest that continuous practice helped students improve their understanding, leading to these results.

Figure 8



In the survey in January, I asked the students which activity in class they thought helped them the most to improve their English. According to Figure 8, "Eitenmanten" (the word test I named) came in first place, and conversation activities using communication strategies came in second place.

In the January survey, I also asked the students some questions about communication strategies. Figure 9 shows the students' responses to whether they think they have become better at using communication strategies compared to April. 39% of students answered, "strongly agree," and 50% answered "agree," so almost 90% of the students said they can use communication strategies.

Furthermore, I asked the students how much they have improved in using each communication strategy, including openers and closers, rejoinders, and shadowing. (Figure 10) What the results show is that openers and closers are the communication strategies that students feel they have become the best at using. However, the table also shows that most students feel they have improved in using rejoinders and shadowing as well. Also, there was no student who answered "strongly disagree" with any of the communication strategies.

Figure 11 shows whether students think communication strategies are helpful for having conversations. 66% of students strongly agree that communication strategies are helpful for conversations, and an additional 31% mildly agree. This suggests that the majority of students recognize the value of communication strategies in conversations, which may lead to more confident and effective conversations.

Figure 9

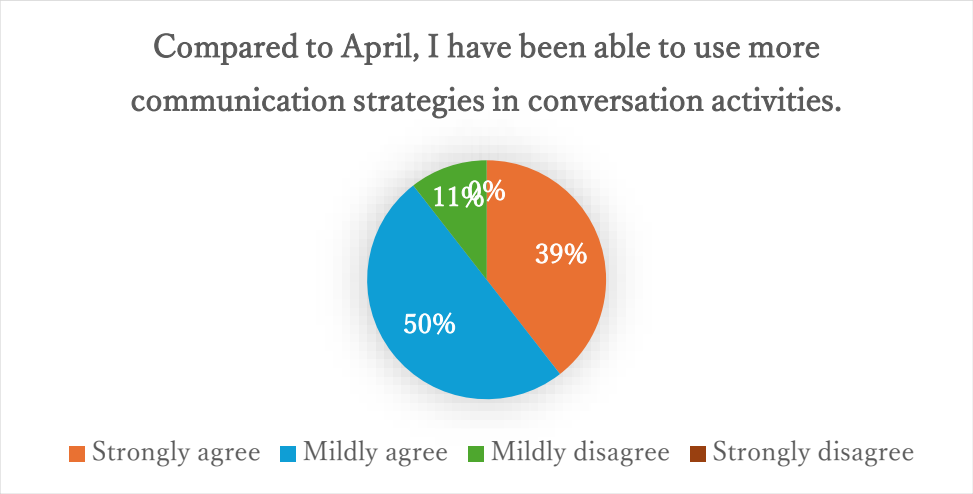


Figure 10

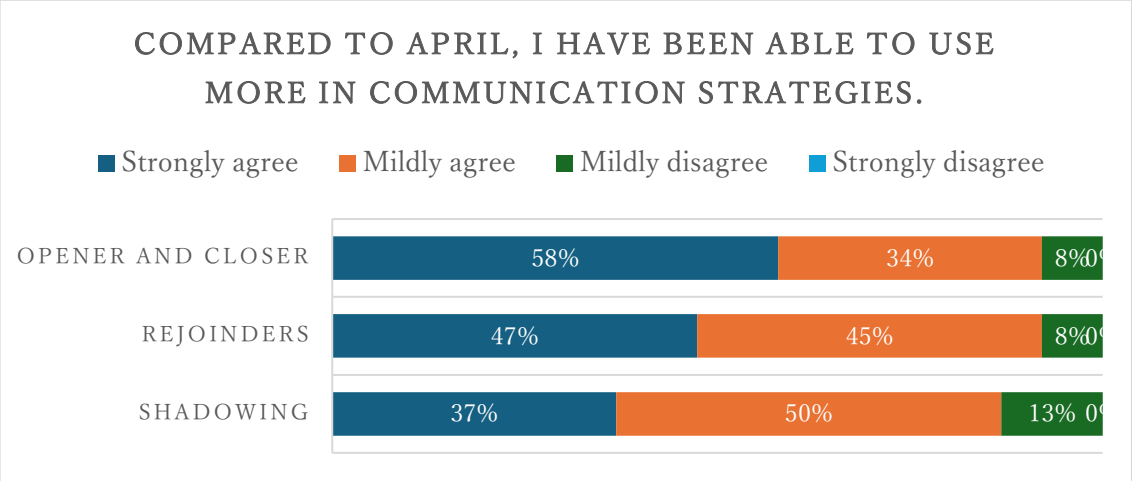
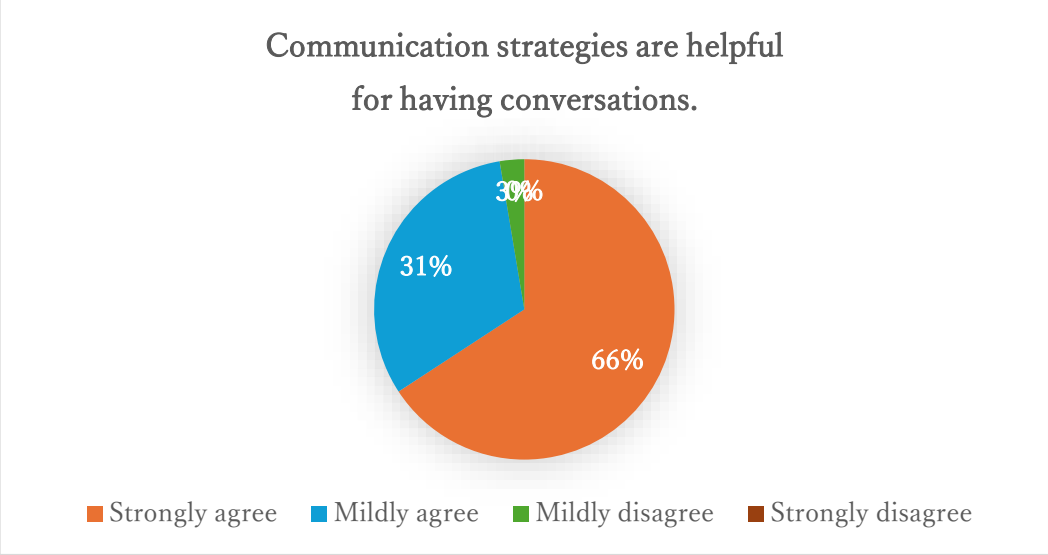


Figure 11



8. What I learned

My lessons have completely changed over the past year. I taught grammar using worksheets I created based on FFI. I learned how to teach by observing my senior teachers and gradually

improved my teaching style. FFI lessons helped the students listen to English multiple times and notice the target grammar on their own. They engaged in speaking English using the target grammar with peers and applied communication strategies. At first, they couldn't use these strategies naturally, but they became more comfortable and started using them smoothly. They also practiced partial shadowing, changing the subject as they went. Using these strategies made the conversations longer. These experiences helped the students gain confidence in speaking English.

I conducted the speaking test and fun essay using the same topic. It was a very special test for both me and the students because it was done between students, not between a student and an AET. They had conversations with their peers for one and a half minutes and didn't know who their partners would be until the day of the test. This was also their first challenge. They seemed nervous beforehand, but most of them were able to talk with their peers for more than a minute.

I believe that conversation activities in class should connect to the speaking test and fun essays. It is very important to inform students in advance that the speaking test will focus on continuing the conversation, not just accuracy.

I also tried to teach reading sessions in the textbook using a three-part framework: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. This method helped integrate different skills as part of task-based learning. I designed a speaking test, and a fun essay based on the final goal of this reading session, which is using the information-exchange task. Based on this, I created timed conversations for each part and completed the worksheet. I learned how important it is to set a clear goal for the students from the beginning.

Pre-reading activities made students guess the story and made them eager to learn more.

In while-reading activities, students read the story many times, but each time with a purpose. I could see their engagement in reading.

The biggest thing I noticed was that all these activities became communicative. In the end, the reading session turned into a communicative lesson.

Designing worksheets based on theory is very important because it makes the lesson more student-centered and improves their communication skills. I've realized that when students are actively engaged in talking, it enhances their ability to express themselves and interact. I want to keep improving my lessons by focusing on student-centered activities and creating more opportunities for communication. This will help my students develop stronger communicative competence.

9. Future issues

I started learning theory-based methods of teaching English last spring, and while taking an action research course, I could change my English lessons. Despite having over 20 years of experience as a teacher, what I learned this year dramatically changed my teaching style. I have been using FFI in my classes since May, and even though it has been less than a year, my students have shown remarkable improvement. Most importantly, they participate in English classes much more positively compared to last year. Seeing my students change made me want to keep learning as a teacher and improve my teaching skills. Next year, I want to learn even more and make my lessons even better.

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Appendix 1-A

My lesson Plan

Objectives: (1) Students will be able to think and talk about the person who they respect
(2) Students will be able to talk with their peers and interact with each other using conversation strategies.

Time	Interaction	Activity and Procedure
0.5	T-Ss	(1) Greeting and attendance
0.5	S-S	● Greeting between Ss.
2	T-Ss	(2) Sing an English song
4	S-S	(3) Warm up chatting ● Ss use the grammar they learned in the last class ● Ss use communication strategies with their partner.
3	T-S	(4) Input: ● Ss listen to the teachers and catch the content.(Step1)
8	S	(5) Task1: ● Ss write notes about their habit.(Step2) ● Ss think about how to say them in English.
5	S	(6) Task2: ● Ss answer some questions about their habit in English and write them. (Step3) (7) Task3:
1	T-Ss	● Ss practice the model dialog.(Step4)
12	S-S	● Ss work on the communicative activity (timed conversation). ● Ss summarize the task outcome
8	S	(8) Fun Essay: ● Ss start writing a Fun Essay about 'What is your habit?'"
0.5	T-Ss	(9) Ss listen to the teacher talk about upcoming plans, like the Fun Essay submission and the speaking test.
0.5	T-Ss	(10) Greeting

Total Time: 45 minutes
S-S: 16.5 minutes
S: 21 minutes
T-Ss: 7.5 minutes

Appendix 1-B

Performance Mission Unit4

Class___No.____Name_____

What is your habit? あなたの習慣は何？

Step1　Listening「先生たちの習慣」を聞いてメモをとろう

Name	習慣	いつから？	なぜ続けている？	問題は？
Vida				
Shima				

STEP 2 自分のことをメモしよう

自分が習慣としていること（食べ物、健康法、学習、趣味、時間管理）などをメモしましょう。

	習慣	いつから？	なぜ続けている？	問題点や悩みは？
例：日本語	週に１回新しいレシピを試す	10歳から	料理の腕を上げるため	キッチンの片づけ
例：英語	trying a new recipe once a week	I was ten years old	to improve my cooking skill	Cleaning the kitchen is very difficult.
日本語				
英語				

STEP 3 質問に答えよう。

上の「自分のことメモ」を見て、以下の質問に例を参考にして答えよう。

1. What is your habit? （例:My habit is trying a new recipe once a week.）

2. When did you start the habit?（例: I started this habit when I was ten years old.）

3. Are there any reasons why you keep the habit?（例: Yes, there is. I want to improve my cooking skill.）

4. What is one challenge about this habit?（例: Cleaning the kitchen is very difficult.）

STEP 4　お互いの習慣をたずね合おう

ペアになり、お互いの習慣をたずね合いましょう。重要な情報はメモしましょう。３人目は Model Dialog を見ないで会話をしよう。

	習慣	いつから？	なぜ続けている？	問題点や悩みは？
１人目【　　】				
２人目【　　】				
３人目【　　】				

★Model Dialog★

A: Hi. How's it going?
B: Hi, I'm hungry. How about you?
A: I'm tired. By the way, what is your habit?
B: My habit is trying a new recipe once a week.
A: Wonderful! When did you start the habit?
B: Well…. I started this habit when I was ten years old.
A: Really? Wow! Are there any reasons why you keep this habit?
B: Yes, there is. I want to improve my cooking skill.
A: So nice! Are there any challenges about this habit?
B: Let me see. Yes, there is. Cleaning the kitchen is very difficult.
A: I know. It's hard! You have a nice habit!
B: Thank you! How about you? What is your habit?
A: (change roles)My habit is ・・・

B: Wow! You have a nice habit! Nice talking with you.
A: Nice talking with you, too.

★ ミュニケーションストラテジーを使って会話を続けよう。

Performance Mission Unit4

Class___ No.____ Name_____

Fun Essay: What is your habit?

「あなたの習慣は何？」で会話した内容を Fun Essay で書いてみよう

<Model essay>

My habit is trying a new recipe once a month. I started this habit when I was ten years old, but I sometimes wonder ***why I'm keeping it***. Cooking is interesting for me. I want to improve my cooking skill. I want to make my family happy. My mother bought a cookbook ***created*** by Harumi Kurihara. It has many kinds of recipes. Do you know ***who she is***? She is a cook specialist. I am a big fan of her. I cooked Butter Chicken Curry last month. I really like cooking!

But there's one problem. My mother always tells me to clean the kitchen. It is difficult for me to do it. I will learn how to clean from my mother.

This is my habit. (102words)

【Additional Mission】☛ Fun Essay の中に Unit4 で学んだ表現を入れよう！

① 間接疑問文≪疑問詞＋主語＋動詞≫を用いた文を入れよう。

② 現在分詞 or 過去分詞の後置修飾を用いた文を入れよう。

≪現在分詞：～している〇〇（人や生き物）過去分詞：～された△△（物）≫

【Draft】

OPENING **（自分の習慣）**	**My habit is**
BODY **（いつから？）** **（続けている理由）** **（その他）**	
CLOSING	**This is my habit.**

Fun Essay: What is your habit?

【1st writing】(Write at least 100 words!)

							40
							80
							120

Count the words you wrote: (　　) words

★New vocabulary　調べた単語を書いておこう！

〔　　〕

★Peer editing　仲間同士で編集！

1. ☆：面白い、またはよい内容、自分も使ってみたい表現に下線を引き、☆をつけよう。
2. ？：内容の分からない部分、語句に下線を引き、？をつけ、本人に確認しよう。
3. more：もっと詳しく知りたいところに下線を引き、more と書き、質問をすぐそばに書こう。
4. Me, too！：共感できる部分には、Me, too！と書こう。
5. コメント欄に、友達ライティングの良かったところやアドバイスを書こう。
   2nd writing につながるアドバイスをしよう！

Comment コメント	First editor＿＿＿＿	Second editor＿＿＿＿	Third editor＿＿＿＿

Class___ No.____ Name_____

Fun Essay: What is your habit?

【2nd writing】

40

80

120

★New vocabulary　調べた単語を書いておこう！

〔　　〕

【評価表：Speaking Test】

Categories(項目)	Criteria(評価基準)	Points
1．表現の能力 Fluency 流暢さ 7点	・2分間、スムーズに英語で会話を続けることができた。 ・Communication Strategies（特にパーシャルシャドーイング）をたくさん使えた。	7
	・途切れながらも、2分間えいごで会話を続けられた。 ・Communication Strategies（特にパーシャルシャドーイング）を使えた。	5
	・途切れながらも、2分間えいごで会話を続けられた。 ・Communication Strategies（特にパーシャルシャドーイング）を使えなかった。	4
	・会話が 2 分間もたなかった。 ・Communication Strategies（特にパーシャルシャドーイング）を使えた。	3
	・会話が 2 分間もたなかった。 ・Communication Strategies（特にパーシャルシャドーイング）を使えなかった。	1
2．表現の能力 Accuracy 正確さ 3 点	文法項目を正しく使えた。	3
	誤りがあったが、内容を理解することができた。	2
	ほとんど正しく使えていなかった。	1
3．態度 Loudness 声の大きさ Eye-contact アイコンタクト 5点	・相手に十分聞こえる大きな声ではっきりと話すことができた。 ・アイコンタクトをして相手が理解しているかどうか確認しようとしていた。	5
	・声の大きさかアイコンタクトのどちらかはよかったが、もう一つが不十分だった。	3
	・声の大きさ、アイコンタクトどちらも不十分だった。	1

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【評価表：Fun Essay】

Categories(項目)	Criteria(評価基準)	Points
1．Contents 内容 7点	間接疑問文と現在分詞（過去分詞）の後置修飾を用いた文の両方がある。 さまざまな習った表現を用いてオリジナルの文があり、内容が充実している。	7
	間接疑問文と現在分詞（過去分詞）の後置修飾を用いた文の両方がある。 Model essayを習って、ある程度文章がまとまっている。	5
	間接疑問文と現在分詞（過去分詞）の後置修飾を用いた文のどちらかがある。 オリジナルの文があり、Essayがまとまっている。	4
	間接疑問文と現在分詞（過去分詞）の後置修飾を用いた文のどちらかがある。 Model essayを習って書いている。	3
	間接疑問文と現在分詞（過去分詞）の後置修飾を用いた文のどちらもない。 オリジナルの文があり、Essayがまとまっている。	2
	Model essay をそのまま写している、または、Model essay を活用しているが、間違いがあったり、意味の理解が難しい部分があったりする。	1
2．Accuracy 正確さ 3 点	文法が正しく使用されており、スペルミスもない。	3
	文法の誤り、スペルミスが合計で 3 つ以内である。	2
	文法の誤り、スペルミスが4つ～6つである。	1
	文法の誤り、スペルミスが7つ以上である。	0
3．Length 語数 3点	120語以上書いている。	3
	100語以上文書いている。	2
	80 語以上書いている。	1
4．Design デザイン 2点	色の工夫があり、丁寧に描かれてあり、内容がとてもよく伝わる作品である。	2
	色はついているが、丁寧ではない、又は白黒であり、工夫が見られない作品である。	1
	絵を書いていない。	0

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