

1. Title: Improving students' communicative skills and motivation

2. Context

(1) Level: 2nd year students of junior high school

(2) Class size: 37 students

(3) Time: 45 or 50 minutes, 4 classes a week

(4) Textbook: New Horizon English Course 2

(5) Problems:

Students were taught through grammar-translation method last year and had few opportunities to use English in class. The levels of students are various.

3. Goals:

(1) To give students many opportunities to use English in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

(2) To improve students' communicative skills.

(3) To improve students' motivation to learn English for communication.

4. What I did

(1) Communicative activities to learn grammar

I gave activities to teach each target grammar in the textbook. Students talked in pair and wrote sentences including the grammar. They also used some conversation strategies in the dialogs.

(2) Timed conversation (in December and February)

See the attached lesson plan and handouts.

(3) Poster Session

Students wrote a speech and made a poster about their favorite things. Their writings were evaluated with the rubric. They made a speech in groups of four. After the speech the speaker was asked some questions by the other three members, and then they had to continue talking about the topic for a while.

(4) Extensive reading

I had five ER classes each in the second and third terms (so 13 ER classes in total this year). In the second term, I started to have ER lessons in the computer room. Students listened to stories of books on the computer.

The books which students read are Building Blocks Library (Level 0–4), Story Street (Step 1–3), High-Frequency Readers, Springboard Connect (Level 1-7) and Oxford Reading Tree (Step 1-4). I got students to check the books they read on the booklist.

5. Results

I conducted student surveys in April, July, December and March. I asked about students' comprehension (see Graph 1 & 2). In March more students understand better. Graph 3 shows how students understand and use target sentences in the textbook. More students can write target sentences in March than in April. Graph 4 shows the improvement of their attitude in speaking activities. They gradually got more active through the year, although less students answered that they could speak actively without using Japanese. They had a poster session in March. It seemed difficult for them to continue conversation about their speech after the three questions given by me. I think that it make them hesitate to choose the first option. I guess that their experience in the poster session also influenced the result of the fifth question (see Graph 5). In writing I got the best results (see Graph

6). 75% of students achieved the goal to write 60 words or more. The rubrics encouraged students to write more. I asked them if they liked reading picture books in December and March (see Graph 7). About 70% of them liked it, while only 3% did not like it. Finally I asked if they liked English. In December and March I got good results. More and more students liked English and 75% of them liked English at the end of the year.

6. What I learned

I am glad that I could see students' improvement of their English skills and positive attitude toward English learning. After the midterm report I was advised to improve my survey. Therefore, I changed some survey questions in December and March. I think it gave me good survey results. I worked on three-year Master's project some years ago. In the three years, I did not have opportunity to teach the second-year students. This year I made focus on form activities for the second-year students. I could feel that focus-on-form activities were effective. Besides, I worked on extensive reading and listening. In the first term reading picture books was new to students, so it interested many students. At the beginning of the second term, I started extensive listening. Having English classes in the computer room was new to students and the sounds of the stories attracted them. I felt that some students were losing the feelings gradually. Therefore, I gave some small activities to students, such as reading books aloud for another students and taking notes of vocabulary and expressions. I think that I need to give some other activities to enhance students' motivation for extensive reading and listening.

7. Future issues

I will teach the third-year students next year. I taught about half of

them this year, but all the second-year students this year experienced two poster sessions and three speaking tests. I am going to continue focus-on-form instruction and improve students' English skills and motivation.

My extensive reading and listening is not really extensive, because students read and listen to picture books only in classes and don't do that outside classes. However, the number of books in my school is limited and it is difficult to lend books to students so that they can read at home. I would like to explore the best way to continue extensive reading and listening lessons.

Lesson Plan: Unit 6

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1. Level: 2nd year students of junior high school
2. Class size: 37 students
3. Textbook: New Horizon (Tokyo Shoseki)
4. Goal: Students can talk for one minute and 45 seconds in pairs about their ideal rooms.
5. Objectives:
 - (1) Students can understand *rakugo* in English.
 - (2) Students can understand the structure “there is ...” and gerund.
6. Procedure
 - Day one: Starting Out (1)
 - (1) Communicative activity
 - (2) Explicit explanation of the target sentence
 - Day two: Starting Out (2)
 - (3) Oral introduction
 - (4) New words & phrases
 - (5) Listening to the text and answering questions
 - (6) Reading the text and checking points
 - (7) Practice reading the text aloud
 - Day three: Dialog
 - (1) Communicative activity
 - (2) Explicit explanation of the target sentence
 - (3) Oral introduction
 - (4) New words & phrases
 - (5) Listening to the text and answering questions
 - (6) Reading the text and checking points
 - (7) Practice reading the text aloud
 - Day four: Read and Think 1 (1)
 - (1) Communicative activity
 - (2) Explicit explanation of the target sentence

- Day five: Read and Think 1 (2)
- (1) Oral introduction
 - (2) New words & phrases
 - (3) Listening to the text and answering questions
 - (4) Reading the text
 - (5) Q & A (pair work)
 - (6) Checking points
 - (7) Practice reading the text aloud
- Day six: Read and Think 2 (1)
- (2) Communicative activity
 - (3) Explicit explanation of the target sentence
- Day seven: Read and Think 2 (2)
- (1) Oral introduction
 - (2) New words & phrases
 - (3) Listening to the text and answering questions
 - (4) Reading the text
 - (5) Q & A (pair work)
 - (6) Checking points
 - (7) Practice reading the text aloud
 - (8) Announcement of the speaking test
- Day eight: Preparation for the speaking test
- (1) Answering three questions
 - (2) Practice in pairs
- Day nine: Preparation for the speaking test
- (1) Practice in pairs
 - (2) Activity (Listening)
- Day ten: Preparation for the speaking test
- (1) Practice in pairs
- Day eleven & twelve: Speaking Test (Assessment)

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

2年2学期スピーキングテスト My ideal room (わたしの理想の部屋)

Step 1 Prepare to talk with your classmates.

1. What is (there) in your ideal room?

2. Why do you want () in your room? (どうして部屋に〜がほしいのですか?)

3. Is/Are there () in the room? (その部屋には〜はありますか?)

Plus 1 Question ※Is there ...? / Are there ... ? 以外の質問をすること。

Step 2 Talk with your classmates.

A: Hi. How are you doing?

B: Fine, thanks. And you?

A: Great.

So, what is (there) in your ideal room?

} 会話を始める時のあいさつ

B: There is/are in my ideal room.

A: There is/are in your ideal room.

That's nice. / Wonderful. / Sounds great.

Why do you want ... in your room?

B: Because

A: I see. / That's nice. / Really?

Is [Are] there?

B: Yes, there is [are]. / No, there isn't [aren't].

A: I see. / That's nice. / Really?

Plus 1 Question

B:

A: I see.

B: How about you? What is (there) in your ideal room?

A: There is/are in my ideal room.

B: That's nice. / Wonderful. / Sounds great.

There is/are in your ideal room. Why do you want ... in your room?

A: Because

B: I see. / That's nice. / Really?

Is [Are] there?

A: Yes, there is [are]. / No, there isn't [aren't].

B: I see. / That's nice. / Really?

Plus 1 Question

A:

B: I see.

..... (タイマーが鳴るまで会話を続ける)

Well, nice talking with you.

A: You, too.

} 会話を終わる時の

あいさつ

相手の言ったことを確認
する

言葉が出てこない時は・・・
Well, ... / Uh...
Let's see. / Let me see.

相手の言う英語がわから
ない時は・・・
What does "... " mean?
— It means

What's ... in Japanese?
— It's

聞き取れない時は・・・
Pardon? / Excuse me? /
Sorry? / Once more, please.
Could you say that again?
Could you speak more slowly?

Speaking Test 'My Ideal Room'

Date: From Dec 5 to 15

Two students play janken and the winner starts the conversation.

Each pair has to keep talking in English for 1 minute 45 seconds.

You evaluate each student according to the rubric below.

If one student doesn't speak at all and you can't evaluate the other student, you can join the conversation, or talk to him/her after the 105 seconds.

Rubric for Speaking Test (2nd Term, 2nd year students)

(1) Fluency

Ability to express	7 points	The student could keep talking in English smoothly for 1minute 45 seconds. He/She could use the starter and the closer. He/She could use rejoinders several times naturally.
	5 points	The student sometimes made pauses, but could keep talking in English for 1minute 45 seconds. He/She could use the starter and the closer. He/She could use rejoinders once or twice.
	3 points	The student couldn't keep talking for 1minute 45 seconds. He/She could use the starter and the closer. He/She could use few rejoinders.
	1 point	The student made a long pause or frequent pauses, or sometimes spoke in Japanese. He/She couldn't use rejoinders.

(2) Accuracy

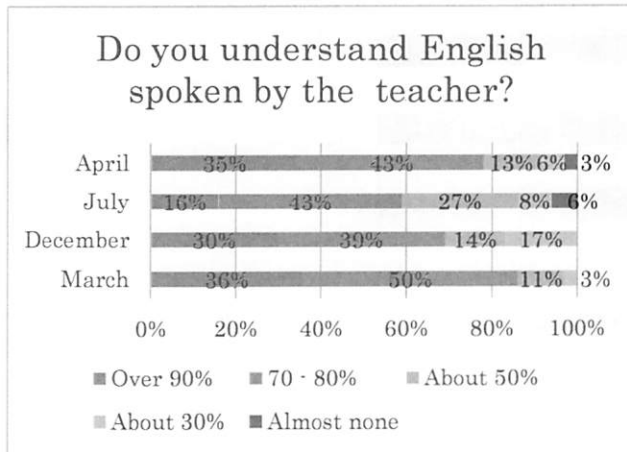
Ability to express	10 points	The student could say the first three questions, Plus 1 Question and the answers correctly with little restating.
	8 points	The student could say the first three questions, Plus 1 Question and the answers almost correctly, though he/she sometimes restated.
	6 points	The student said the first three questions, Plus 1 Question and the answers, though he/she sometimes restated. There were some errors.
	4 points	The student could say half of the first three questions, Plus 1 Question and the answers correctly.
	2 points	The student made many errors, but he/she managed to make him/herself understood.
	1 point	The student could use little grammar correctly and only responded to the partner.

(3) Loudness and eye contact

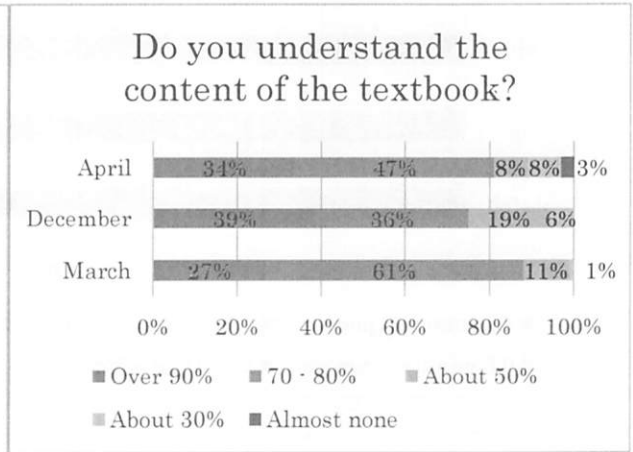
Attitude	5 points	The student could speak clearly and in so loud a voice as his/her partner and the examiner could hear easily. He/She tried to confirm the partner's understanding by keeping eye contact.
	3 points	Either loudness or eye contact was good, but the other wasn't enough.
	1 point	Both loudness and eye contact weren't enough.

Appendix

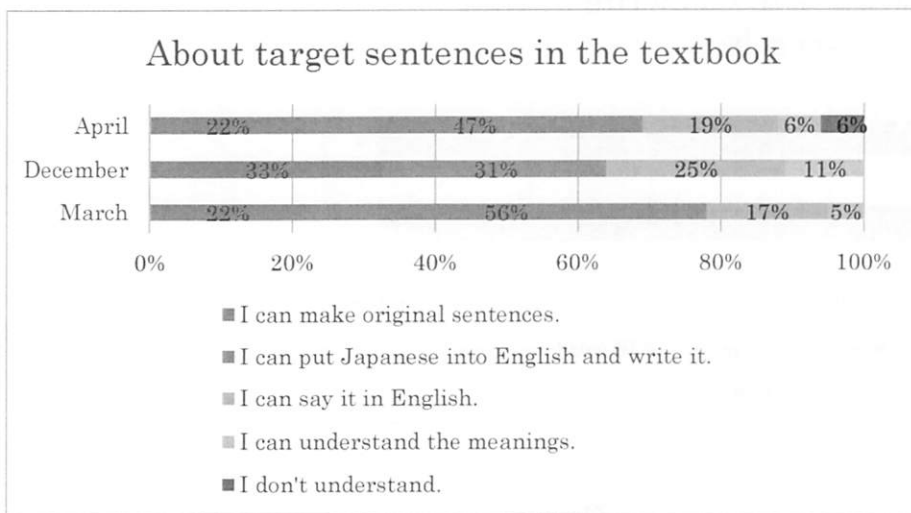
Graph 1



Graph 2



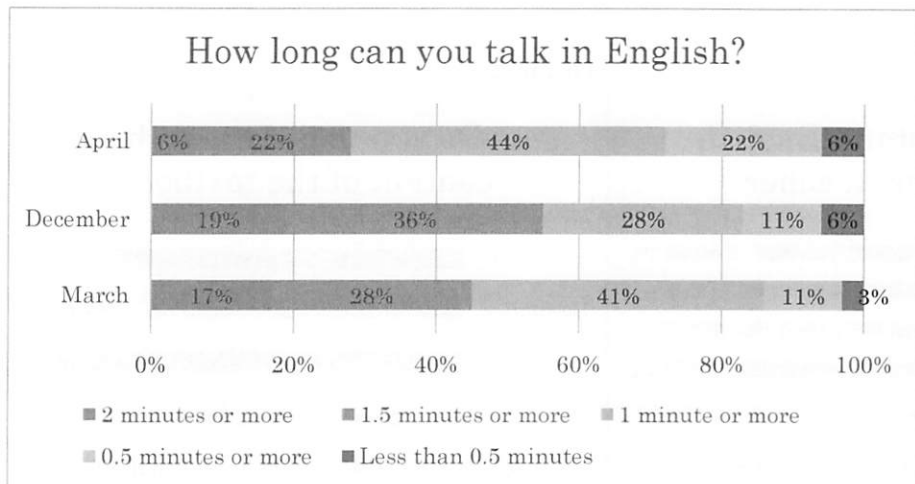
Graph 3



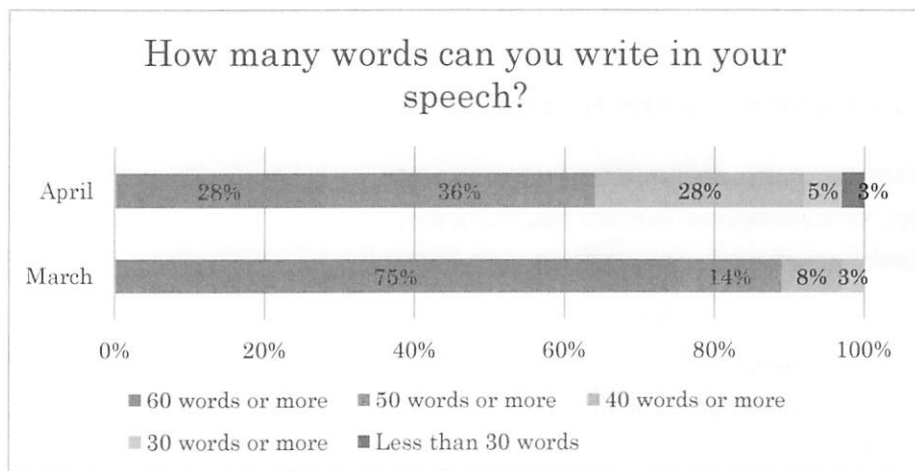
Graph 4



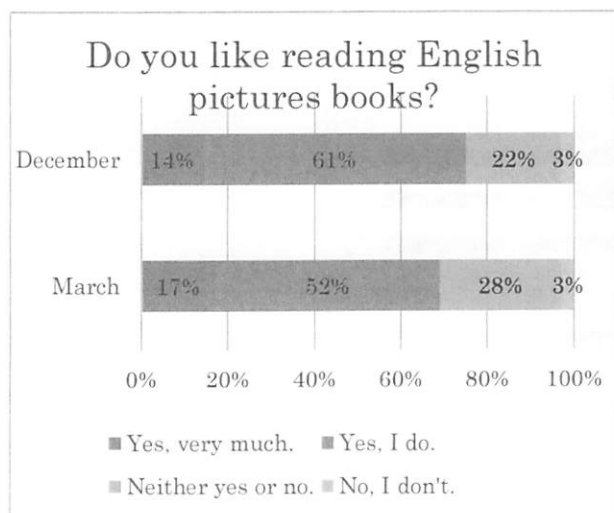
Graph 5



Graph 6



Graph 7



Graph 8

