

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL ENGLISH LESSONS IN JAPAN IN TERMS OF STUDENTS' ENJOYMENT AND MOTIVATION LEVELS

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Abstract

The study tries to identify any characteristics of English lessons which influence students' high or low enjoyment of English lessons in Japanese primary schools. Four English lessons with students' low enjoyment and five English lessons with their high enjoyment were analyzed in a qualitative matter. The analysis of the former revealed such characteristics as excessive repetition practice, excessive new language teaching, and the anxiety-causing classroom atmosphere. The analysis of the latter, on the other hand, indicated characteristics such as teacher-student interaction, student-student interaction, use of visuals and gesture, and cooperative group activities. The characteristics discerned were discussed in terms of language learning principles proposed in studies on second language teaching and motivation.

1 Introduction

Japan officially started primary school English education for 5th and 6th graders at public primary schools under the name of "Foreign Language Activities" in 2011. Actual development of English proficiency or communicative competence was not deemed the primary goal but a possible by-product (Ministry of Education, 2008). Seven years have passed since then, and Japan is ready to proceed to the next stage: in 2020, 3rd and 4th graders will start learning English once a week, whereas 5th and 6th graders will learn English as an official school subject twice a week rather than once a week.

In Japanese primary schools, English is usually team-taught by homeroom teachers (HRTs) and assistant language teachers (ALTs), who are native or near-native speakers. The main reason for the team-teaching (TT) system is that over 90 percent of Japanese primary school HRTs do not have any English teaching licenses (Mahoney and Inoi, 2014) and they need help from ALTs when teaching English lessons. Some students enjoy such TT English lessons a great deal and show high motivation to learn English, whereas others do not show any favorable attitudes toward such TT lessons as well as English itself. One of the findings in my previous studies indicates that whether a HRT had an English license or not had no impact on student enjoyment of English lessons, nor on student English learning motivation (Inoi, 2018). The author argued that HRTs with English teaching licenses did not always guarantee students' positive affective aspects in TT English lessons and that the issue of HRT English teaching licenses did not seem

to be of great importance in primary school English lessons as long as HRTs team-taught with ALTs.

Students' affective aspects including their English learning motivation may be associated with a number of factors, such as parental attitudes toward English education, teaching materials used in English lessons, peer groups, student personality traits, the classroom atmosphere and teacher personality as well as teaching methods (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011; Lightbown and Spada, 2013). The present study focuses on lesson-internal factors, that is, what actually happens in English lessons in the classroom rather than lesson-external variables such as HRT English teaching licenses. The study aims to discern any characteristics of TT English lessons which may lead to students' high or low levels of enjoyment of English lessons as well as their high or low motivation on learning English, analyzing TT lessons in a qualitative manner. TT lessons are to be analyzed in terms of such lesson-internal factors as teacher-student interaction, student-student interaction, and the nature of teaching methods and language activities involved in lessons.

Students' levels of enjoyment of English lessons were strongly correlated with their English learning motivation levels, as will be shown later in this paper. The more students enjoyed English lessons, the higher their English learning motivation levels tended to be. Of course, the opposite can be true. The less students enjoyed English lessons, the less they were willing to study English. Thus, it is of great significance to find out any characteristics of those English lessons which may influence students' high or low levels of enjoyment of English lessons.

The study first reviews three studies on second (foreign) language teaching and motivation which address certain principles of language lessons, then explains how the data was collected for this study, and finally examines those English lessons toward which Japanese primary school students showed positive attitudes and those lessons toward which they showed negative ones in order to identify any different characteristics of the two types of English lessons.

2 Review of previous studies

The studies reviewed briefly are Ortega (2007), Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), and Nation and Newton (2009). The studies explore the principles in designing and teaching language lessons. The principles, which language teachers should follow, are expected to bring about students' high enjoyment levels of language lessons and in turn motivate them in their language study.

2.1 Ortega (2007)

Ortega (2007) argues for the following three principles for designing meaningful practice in foreign language lessons based on the cognitive-interactionist SLA (Second Language Acquisition) perspective. Principle 1 is "L2 practice should be interactive"; principle 2 is "L2 practice should be meaningful"; principle 3 is "There should be a focus on task-essential forms" (pp. 182-186).

The first principle that Ortega advocates suggests that learner-learner interaction during pair or group work has more benefits than teacher-fronted activities. During such practice learners talk more, negotiate for meaning more often, and are more attentive to peer utterances than teacher-fronted exchanges. She argues for the significant role that interactive practice among peers should play in foreign language lessons. The second principle that she proposes is that L2 practice should be meaningful in two senses. In one sense, practice should focus on both meaning and form. L2 practice should be designed in such a way that form-meaning connections will be salient for the learner. In the second sense, L2 practice should involve learners' cognitive engagement or personal involvement with a task. Ortega, however, adds that it is difficult to operationalize the learner's cognitive involvement with a task empirically. The third principle is that there should be a focus on task-essential forms. EFL classroom tasks should involve the use of some structures and forms that are essential to carry out tasks. For instance, in an English narrative task the use of the definite article "the" and the pronoun "he" or "she" is required for subsequent mentionings after the main characters are introduced.

The present study makes references to Ortega's first two principles (i.e., principle 1 and principle 2 in the second sense) in exploring Japanese primary school English lessons, while the third principle is beyond the scope of the research because the tasks which Japanese primary school students engage in usually involve very simple linguistic forms and there is no need to consider task-essential forms.

2.2 Nation and Newton (2009)

Nation and Newton (2009, pp. 19-22) propose five principles which are particularly relevant to teaching beginning language learners. They are:

- Principle 1: Focus on meaningful and relevant language.
- Principle 2: Maintain interest through a variety of activities.
- Principle 3: Avoid overloading with too much new language.
- Principle 4: Provide plenty of comprehensible input.
- Principle 5: Create a friendly, safe, cooperative classroom environment.

The principles are based on the authors' experiences in teacher training courses. Though Ortega (2007) mentions about language learners in general, Nation and Newton focus on beginning language learners. Nevertheless, a similarity can be found between the two studies. Both the studies emphasize that language learning should be meaningful to learners. However, what Nation and Newton mean by the word "meaningful" in Principle 1 is the usefulness of a word or phrase: learners can use language quickly for their immediate purposes. Thus, English lessons should include those activities that are closely related to learners' daily lives and that will lead to their cognitive or personal involvement. In turn, meaningful activities are expected to bring about learners' positive attitudes toward English lessons.

Principle 2 indicates that language learning activities should be short and varied to maintain learners' interest. Nation and Newton argue that Principle 3 means students should learn a little but use a lot because teachers often make the mistake of introducing too much new language.

Principle 4 states that it is important to ensure that input can be understood with the use of visual aids and contextual support including pictures, gestures, and objects. Principle 5 says that in the early stages of learning a second language, learners need to have low stress learning experiences because anxiety influences learners' willingness to communicate in a second language. All the five principles just briefly described will be mentioned again in the analysis of Japanese primary school English lessons.

2.3 Dörnyei, Z. and Ushioda, E. (2011)

Dörnyei and Ushioda propose a comprehensive model of motivational teaching practice in the L2 classroom. The model has four motivational components, one of which is "Creating the basic motivational conditions" (pp.107-113). The basic conditions are 1) appropriate teacher behaviors and a good relationship with the students, 2) a pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom and 3) a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms. Dörnyei and Ushioda argue that these conditions must be met before any attempt to generate motivation can be effective. The second condition exactly corresponds with Principle 5 of Nation and Newton (2009). Dörnyei and Ushioda remark that student anxiety created by a tense classroom atmosphere undermines learning effectiveness and L2 motivation, and that a safe, supportive classroom environment is necessary for students' high language learning motivation as well as their enjoyment of language lessons. The third condition is concerned with group cooperation and group cohesiveness. Factors that promote group cohesiveness include cooperation towards common goals, intergroup competition, and the rewarding nature of group activities. Dörnyei and Ushioda's second and third conditions will be referred later.

3 Method

3.1 Data collection procedure

The author visited a total of 35 classes in the 5th and 6th grades in 10 public primary schools in Japan, from November 2013 to February 2018, to observe English lessons and conduct questionnaire surveys. Each class, which lasted 45 minutes, was visited only once and video-recorded for later analysis. All the English lessons except one class were conducted through team-teaching, with ALTs teaching as the main teachers in most of the TT lessons. HRTs, on the other hand, were usually present in the classrooms; many of them stood at the side or in the back of the classroom as supporting teachers. For the last 5 minutes of each lesson, students were asked to respond to a questionnaire about their attitudes toward school English lessons.

3.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire had five items about students' attitudes toward English learning. Four of them (Q1 to Q4) were multiple choices and the last item (Q5) was an open-ended one. Q1 asked students whether they enjoyed regular school English lessons or not. Q2 asked whether students usually took active participation in English lessons. Q3 addressed student English learning motivation, asking whether they would like to study English more. On each of these items, students were asked to respond on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 4) "Yes, very much" to

1) “Not at all.” Q 4 queried the extent to which students enjoyed eight popular types of English activities: a) singing songs in English, b) playing games, c) practicing English pronunciation, d) doing conversation with friends in English, e) talking with the ALT, f) learning about foreign countries, g) learning about differences between L1 (Japanese) and English, and h) reading English letters and words. Q5, an open-ended item, asked students to write about what activity/activities they enjoyed and did not enjoy during the English lesson concerned as well as the reasons (see Appendix). Q 1, Q 3, and Q5 are particularly relevant to the present study: Q1 and Q3 asked about students’ enjoyment of and motivation toward English learning, respectively; Q 5 inquired students of specific language learning activities in the English lessons observed.

3.3 Analysis

The present study aims to discern any characteristics of TT English lessons which may lead to students’ enjoyment of English lessons as well as their high or low motivation on learning English. Class average scores were used for ranking students’ levels of enjoyment of English lessons and those of English learning motivation. First, the class means of student response scores on the two items (Q1 and Q3) were calculated to measure the rates of students’ enjoyment of English lessons and their English learning motivation levels. Then, the top five classes and the bottom four classes in terms of the lesson enjoyment rates were chosen for qualitative analysis. The following table shows the average enjoyment rate of English lessons,

Table 1. Enjoyment Ranking of the Nine Classes

Ranking	School Grade-class	Enjoyment rate	Motivation level	N	T1	Year
1	B5-1	3.74	3.63	19	ALT	2017
2	E6-1	3.64	3.50	28	ALT	2014
3	B5-1	3.59	3.52	32	HRT	2013
4	B5-2	3.52	3.57	21	ALT	2017
5	J5-1	3.37	3.61	39	HRT	2018
6	A6-2	2.94	2.94	32	ALT	2013
6	C6-4	2.94	2.97	33	ALT	2013
8	C5-2	2.90	2.77	39	ALT	2013
9	H6-2	2.50	2.80	30	ALT	2015

Note: The first-ranking class is “B5-1” (i.e., school B, grade 5, class 1), and so is the third-ranking class. However, the two classes are different because they were visited in the different years, 2017 and 2013.

the average motivational level of learning English, the number of students, and who the main teacher was, of each of the nine classes chosen as well as the year when the author visited each class.

A class average enjoyment score of 3 or more indicates that many students in the class showed positive attitudes toward English lessons, while a class average score of less than 3 shows that many students in the class show negative attitudes. As shown in the table, the first-ranking

class (B5-1) had an average enjoyment score of 3.74, which shows that most of the students in the class enjoyed English lessons very much, while the average score of 2.5 of the lowest-ranking class (H6-2) indicates that many students in the class did not like English lessons so much.

As shown in the table, the enjoyment rates of the classes ranked first to 5th are well over an average of 3. It would be quite reasonable to say that students in those classes were more likely to enjoy English lessons than those students in the bottom four classes ranked 6th to 9th.

The significance of investigating students' lesson enjoyment is that the enjoyment rates were significantly correlated with English learning motivation levels, $r_{sp} = .86$, $p < .01$, two-tailed. The correlational analysis of the small number of classes (nine classes) even generated the significantly high correlation coefficient. The higher students' lesson enjoyment rates were, the higher their English learning motivation levels tended to be. Thus, it is worthwhile investigating the characteristics of English lessons which students enjoyed greatly and those of English lessons which they did not enjoy so much.

4 Results and discussion

The nine TT English lessons videotaped were analyzed to identify any characteristics which led to students' high or low enjoyment levels of English lessons. First, salient characteristics observed in the low-ranking classes are described, followed by those in the high-ranking classes. The characteristics are discussed in terms of the principles and the basic conditions in second language teaching and motivation addressed above.

4.1 Characteristics observed in the English lessons of low-ranking classes

4.1.1 Excessive repetition practice

Many language teachers believe that repetition practice is necessary for language learning and teaching so that students can use words and phrases fluently in communicative settings. However, excessive repetition practice seems to deprive students of English learning enjoyment, as will be shown in the description of the English lesson of the lowest-ranking class (H6-2) in Table 1.

The English lesson of H6-2 was led by an ALT, with a JTE (Japanese teacher of English) (a JTE usually has an English teaching license), assisting the ALT as a supporting teacher. The HRT was not present in the classroom. The lesson began with greeting, followed by practicing an English nursery rhyme. The main teaching method used for the rhyme was repetition: the ALT asked students to repeat after her. For instance, the ALT first said "Little Jack Horner" once, which students simply repeated. Then she repeated the same phrase again and so did the students. After that, she segmented the phrase into three words and had students repeat each of them: they repeated "little," "Jack", and "Horner" after the ALT twice. Then the lesson proceeded to the next activity, practice of the target dialogue "Where do you want to go? I want to go to~." The ALT used exactly the same practice method, repetition. When practicing the first part of the dialogue, that is, the question, she started off with the word "where." She had

the students repeat the word after her twice. Then she went on to the next word “do” and the students also repeated it after her twice. Next, she put “where” and “do” together as in “where do” and had the whole class repeat after her twice. After that, she had the students repeat the word “you” after her twice before she proceeded to the phrase “where do you,” which the students also repeated. In this way the ALT was building the whole question from its beginning simply by having the students repeat each individual word after her. The same teaching method was exactly observed in practicing the response sentence “I want to go to~.”

After the dialogue practice, the lesson moved on to the practice of country names and place names. The ALT also used the same teaching method. Six picture cards of national flags had been already put on the blackboard. Pointing at one of the picture cards, the ALT said “Repeat after me. France,” and had the students repeat the word after her three times. Then she checked its meaning by saying “France in Japanese?” Some student responded in Japanese. Then she continued to have the students repeat after her in practicing the names for the rest of the national flags. Then she went on to practicing eight place names such as “swimming pool,” “beach,” and “amusement park.” However, the ALT did not vary at all the way the students practiced the words for the place names. In total, she spent about 20 minutes practicing the nursery rhyme, the dialogue, and the country and place names through repetition. The students all looked bored by the end of the repetition practice.

The repetition drill just described violates Nation and Newton’s second principle: “Maintain interest through a variety of activities.” The ALT used the same teaching method (i.e., repetition) repeatedly for as long as 20 minutes without varying it at all. It is not surprising at all that all the students really looked bored by the end of the drill. Probably the practice reduced students’ enjoyment level of this English lesson as well as their motivation on English learning

In addition, the excessive repetition practice clearly violates Ortega’s second principle and Nation and Newton’s first principle: L2 practice should be meaningful. The practice was not meaningful, because it did not involve students’ cognitive involvement at all. They were simply told to repeat after the ALT and just followed her instruction. They had no opportunity to voluntarily express themselves. Besides, the nursery rhyme and the country and place names may not have been relevant to students’ daily lives. The names for places in the students’ school neighborhood might have been more appropriate.

In fact, repetition drill is a significant part of the audio-lingual approach to second language teaching that is based on the behaviorist theory of language learning (Lightbown and Spada, 2013). However, this approach has been disfavored since it often fails to involve students’ meaningful interaction or their cognitive involvement. Thus, too much repetition should be avoided in language lessons.

4.1.2 Teaching excessive new language

The characteristic of teaching too much new language was observed in the lessons of C6-4 and A6-2, both the 6th-ranking classes (see Table 1). The lesson of C6-4 was also led by an ALT. The ALT introduced a variety of jobs in the sentence structure “I want to be ~,” using picture

cards. The students repeated the names for a total of 32 jobs in the sentence structure after him. The job names included such words and phrases as “firefighter,” “soccer player,” and “taxi driver.” The ALT spent about 6 minutes on this practice. It was too much work for the beginning students to practice as many as 32 job names in English at one time.

A similar practice was also observed in the lesson of A6-2. An ALT introduced 16 names for countries (e. g., Germany, Singapore, Thailand) and eight names for World Heritages (e. g., the Statue of Liberty, the Great Wall, Mont-Saint Michel). The names for World Heritages, in particular, were all new to most of the students: they were not meaningful or relevant to students. The students simply repeated those country and place names after the ALT. Then, they practiced the question “Where do you want to go?” by repeating it after the ALT five times. Then, they were told to use such sentence structures as “I want to go to~,” “I want to see~,” “I want to eat~,” and “I want to buy ~” in their responses. These response sentences included three more new verbs (i.e., see, eat, buy), which were totally new to the students. The practice was overloaded with too many new words and sentence structures for the beginning students, who had only one English lesson a week. The characteristic just mentioned clearly violates Nation and Newton’s third principle “Avoid overloading with too much new language.” The ALT could have chosen a small number of country and place names and sentence structures to teach.

4.1.3 The anxiety-causing classroom atmosphere

The classroom atmosphere of C6-4, one of the 6th-ranking classes, was not really relaxing for some students, because the way in which the ALT asked students to respond to his questions made them very nervous. For instance, when the ALT wanted individual students to respond to the question “What do you want to be?” he chose by lot who was going to answer the question. Some students were quite worried that the ALT might call their names the next time. A couple of students, in fact, wrote as follows in their questionnaire responses: “I do not like the ALT’s drawing lots. The lot may have fallen on me. I didn’t enjoy speaking up”; “The ALT forced us to speak.” Probably they needed a safe classroom atmosphere where they did not have to feel nervous when responding to the ALT’s questions. The ALT’s way of choosing students to respond to his questions caused a great deal of anxiety among some students. It clearly violates the principle of a safe, supportive classroom environment proposed by Nation and Newton (2009) and Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011).

4.2 Characteristics observed in the English lessons of high-ranking classes

4.2.1 Teacher-student interaction

In foreign language learning, it is true that students need a certain amount of repetition in learning new words and phrases. Unlike the excessive amount of repetition mentioned above, the repetition practice observed in the second-ranking class, E6-1, was very short and followed by teacher-student interaction. The main teacher was an ALT. He had the students repeat job names after him while holding picture cards in front of him. The names included such words and phrases as “singer,” “firefighter,” “flight attendant.” But the number of job names was only 14. The ALT used about only 40 seconds for repeating the job names. Then he went on to pattern drill, using the sentence structure “I want to be a ~.” He used about one minute to have the

students repeat the sentences after him. Only less than two minutes was used for the repetition practice. Then, the following interaction took place between the ALT and individual students. He approached one student, with a picture card of a singer in front of him, saying “My singer friend, what do you want to be?” The student responded, “I want to be a singer.” The ALT said with smile, “Oh, my singer friend. Nice.,” while the classmates applauded him. The student looked really happy. The ALT continued to interact with five more students individually, while the whole class listened to each interaction carefully and applauded. The students who interacted with the ALT probably had a sense of achievement because they succeeded in responding to the ALT’s question in English.

Teacher-student interaction was also observed in the lesson of the first-ranking class, B5-1. The students practiced writing the alphabet letters “X” and “W” by tracing them several times on their worksheets. The ALT said to the whole class, “What color did you use?” Several students voluntarily raised their hands. One student chosen by the ALT answered, “Red, blue, orange, yellow, green.” Then the ALT said, “Wow, so many colors.” The ALT interacted with two more students, asking them on the colors they used for tracing the letters. Such ALT-student interaction probably gave individual students a sense of achievement that they were able to respond the ALT’s question in English.

The teacher-student interaction observed in the two lessons is not the same as the learner-learner interaction of Ortega’s (2007) first principle. However, it is effective to give students successful experiences in using English

4.2.2 Student–student interaction

Student-student interaction was observed in the lessons of the second-ranking class (E6-1) and the third-ranking class (B5-1). In the lesson of the former, students prepared speeches about their dreams about future jobs and told each other about them. Some students reported in their questionnaire responses that the speech activity was great fun because they were able to understand what classmates wanted to be in the future. In the lesson of the latter, students interviewed each other about what they wanted as Christmas presents. One student wrote as her response to the questionnaire that she enjoyed the interview activity in English greatly because she was able to talk with some classmates she did not know well, adding that she would not ask her classmates in Japanese (her mother tongue) about what they wanted as Christmas presents. The student-student interactions observed in the two lessons gave students opportunities to communicate with each other in English and enabled them to get to know better about their classmates. The interactions correspond exactly with Ortega’s first principle: L2 practice should be interactive. In addition, they accord with Ortega’s second principle and Nation and Newton’s first principle: L2 practice should be meaningful, because students talked about the topics they were interested in, that is, their dreams about future jobs and Christmas presents they wanted. These topics probably made it possible for students to get involved with the activities personally through the student-student interaction.

4.2.2 Use of visuals and gestures

Another feature seen in the lesson of one of the high-ranking classes was an ALT's use of visuals to make spoken input comprehensible for students. Such an example was observed in the lesson of the second-ranking class, E6-1. When the ALT read aloud the sentence "I want to help the earth," he seemed to think that the word "earth" was too difficult for students to understand. So he drew a picture of the earth on the blackboard. Then some students responded by saying "I see." He could have asked the Japanese HRT to translate the word into Japanese. Instead, he drew a picture of the earth. Visuals such as pictures facilitate students' understanding of spoken input.

Another strategy that the same ALT employed to facilitate students' understanding was his frequent use of gestures. For instance, when he said "I study Japanese," he pointed at himself, putting stress on the word "I." The ALT's use of gestures probably made the input comprehensible enough for students. It is closely related to Nation and Newton's principle 4: "Provide plenty of comprehensible input." The use of visuals and gestures may be preferable to that of students' first language since the former facilitates students' cognitive involvement with input.

4.2.3 Cooperative group activities

Cooperative group activities seem to enhance students' enjoyment of English lessons. Group activities were found in four lessons of the five high-ranking classes, whereas they were not found in any lessons of the four low-ranking classes. In the lesson of the top-ranking class, B5-1, for instance, groups of three or four students worked together to write English words which the ALT pronounced. When the responses were correct, the groups earned points. Students in groups cooperated with other group members in order to compete with the other groups in earning points.

Another cooperative group activity was observed in the lesson of the 5th-ranking class, J5-1. In the lesson, groups of five students made "Guess who?" quizzes based on their interviews with their classmates in the previous lesson: they had asked their classmates about their favorite colors, fruit, animals, school subjects, and sports. Each group decided on one of the classmates, made five questions on him or her based on the interview results, and asked the whole class who he or she was. In this activity, the students worked together to make questions about the classmate they chose and to answer the questions that other groups asked. Many students, in fact, wrote in their questionnaire that they had great fun working together with group members. The activity of making and asking questions about classmates not only involved students' cooperation but was very meaningful because students talked about their own classmates, not someone else in their textbooks.

Both the group activities above involved group members' cooperation toward common goals, intergroup competition, and the rewarding nature of getting points, as suggested in Dörnyei and Ushioda's third condition. Students' enjoyment of group activities, however, may be closely connected to Japanese culture. As there are a lot of group activities in students' daily lives at school, such as school lunch and classroom cleaning, group cooperation or group cohesiveness is highly valued in schools in Japan. As a result, Japanese students, in particular, were most

likely to show positive attitudes toward group activities. A further research is needed on this point.

5 Conclusion

The study attempted to discern any characteristics of TT English lessons that influenced Japanese primary school students' high or low enjoyment of English lessons. The qualitative analysis of the four lessons with low enjoyment revealed such characteristics as the excessive repetition practice, the excessive new language teaching, and the anxiety-causing classroom atmosphere. The excessive repetition practice observed was not meaningful at all in that students' cognitive engagement with the practice was hardly involved. Probably it also reduced students' enjoyment of English lessons as well as their English learning motivation. The teaching of too many expressions was beyond students' understanding since they had only one English lesson a week. The tense classroom environment was not appropriate for students, particularly beginning language learners. It was not beneficial to students' enjoyments of lessons as well as their English learning motivation. Each of the three characteristics identified, which violates the principles of second language teaching, led to students' low enjoyment of their lessons.

The analysis of the five lessons with high enjoyment showed characteristics such as the teacher-student interaction, the student-student interaction, the use of visuals and gestures, and cooperative group activities. It was argued that the teacher-student interactions observed provided students a sense of achievement, which was likely to not only lead to students' positive attitudes toward English lessons but also enhance their English learning motivation. The student-student interactions were most likely to give students opportunities to get to know their classmates better and discover new things about each other. Teachers' use of visuals and gestures helped students' comprehension of input. The cooperative group activities also contributed to students' enjoyment of English lessons. The cooperation among group members toward common goals promoted a sense of group cohesiveness, leading to students' enjoyment of English lessons.

The present study analyzed only nine lessons (five lessons with student high enjoyment and four lessons with student low enjoyment). Analysis of more number of lessons may produce characteristics different from those identified in the study.

Acknowledgements

This research was supported in part by a 2016-2018 Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (C) (No. 16K04659), administered by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). The author wishes to extend my sincere gratitude to all the teachers and students involved in this research.

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Appendix

(The following is a translation of the Japanese questionnaire for primary school students.)

- Q1. Do you enjoy English lessons at school?
4) Yes, very much 3) Yes 2) Not really 1) Not at all
- Q2. Do you usually take active participation in English lessons?
4) Yes, very much 3) Yes 2) Not really 1) Not at all
- Q3. Would you like to study English more?
4) Yes, very much 3) Yes 2) Not really 1) Not at all
- Q4. How much do you like each of the following activities?
4) Yes, very much 3) Yes 2) Not really 1) Not at all
- a) Singing songs in English
 - b) Playing games
 - c) Practicing English pronunciation,
 - d) Doing conversation with friends in English,
 - e) Talking with the ALT
 - f) Learning about foreign countries
 - g) Learning about differences between L1 (Japanese) and English
 - h) reading English letters and words.
- Q5. Please write about what activity/activities you enjoyed and did not enjoy in today's English lesson as well as the reasons.