A Pilot Study on Elementary School Foreign Language Activities Which Promote Flow

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1. Introduction: Enhancing Communication in Foreign Language Activities

The authors have written this paper for practitioners of foreign language activities (hereafter, FLA) in elementary school, particularly those educators interested in doing action research. We have three objectives, one, is to introduce a challenging learning activity which was planned collaboratively between the Iwate University Faculty of Education Affiliated Elementary School (hereafter, Fuzoku ES) and the English Department at the Faculty of Education. The second is to show a way for investigating "flow" or how psychologically involved learners are in a task. The last objective is to show ways of investigating the nature of elementary school learner interaction in the L2. We hope that through this, we can help readers better understand what kind of L2 communication is reasonable to expect from elementary school children and give ideas about how to plan, carry out, and evaluate foreign language activities for elementary school children.

In this section, we will discuss the goals behind FLAs in elementary school as well as common problems with their enactment. Next, we will discuss the features of activities that can encourage "flow" or a psychological state in children that keeps them absorbed in a task. We believe that the concept of "flow" can inform teachers about how to plan engaging activities for elementary school students. Lastly, we will introduce a lesson plan designed to address the issues of conducting FLAs while also attempting to promote flow.

1.1 Issues With Foreign Language Activities

Since 2010, in Morioka, Iwate, fifth and sixth grade children have experienced English weekly by participating in foreign language activities. The purpose of FLAs is to form a communicative foundation (*sochi*) to support junior and senior high school foreign language education (Kan, 2008). In FLAs,

children do not learn English as a skill but rather develop an interest in and a positive attitude towards communicating in a foreign language. This foundation is created through realizing the following goals (MEXT, 2014):

- To deepen the understanding of languages and cultures through the experience of foreign language learning.
- To encourage efforts towards communication.
- To familiarize children with foreign language sounds and fundamental expressions.

Kan (2008) argues that FLAs should be "interesting" not "fun." However, he admits that often FLAs become games which children enjoy rather than an activity that provides any kind of intellectual stimulation or cognitive challenge. Among the critics, Yamada, Otsu, and Saito (2009) argue that FLAs teach children the superficial use of formulaic phrases but do not teach them how to use language creatively. Otsu (2009) writes that it is impossible to communicate in an L2 without any knowledge of it. For example, imagine being asked to listen and communicate in Chinese without any knowledge of it. Most people in this situation would likely feel anxiety and be very limited in what they could communicate or understand.

Although there are valid criticisms against FLAs, its broad goals arguably give schools the flexibility to develop their own unique FLA programs. For example, over the past few years, the English Department together with Fuzoku ES, have developed various activities to meet the purpose of foreign language activities using picture books (Hall, 2008; Hall & Yamazaki, 2011). Furthermore, FLAs are on a course of expansion.

In 2013, it was recommended by MEXT to make English a subject which would meet three times a week for fifth and sixth grade elementary school children and conduct the current foreign language activities for third and fourth graders (Oka, 2013). In an editorial for the *Iwate Nippou* newspaper, Yamazaki (2013) makes the point that even if English is made a subject in elementary school, teachers and parents need to have realistic expectations. For example, according to the Foreign Service Institute of the US Department of State (Effective Language Learning, 2014), it will take a native English speaker approximately 2200 hours of class time to develop "general

professional speaking proficiency" (for a description of the scales, see Interagency Language Roundtable, 2014). Given that it would likely take a Japanese language learner a comparable amount of time to develop such a proficiency in English, elementary school English education will not instantly produce fluent English speakers.

In summary, although there seems to be support for English education in elementary school, it is important to have realistic expectations about what can be accomplished. In the current FLAs, children are expected to experience communicating in an L2 with little knowledge of the L2. Critics have questioned the logic of this and even proponents of FLAs note that sometimes the activities tend to be games rather than encounters with the target language. This leads to the questions what kinds of communicative activities are appropriate for young learners in an experiential English learning program and what kind of communication can we expect these young learners to do?

1.2 The Concept of Flow

Flow was a concept coined by Csikszentmihalyi (1994, 2008) and is used to describe the mental state of being so absorbed in a task "that nothing seems to matter; the experiences itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it" (2008, p.4). It is important to note that Csikszentmihalyi does not use flow to describe the absorption one might feel when watching TV or playing a video game. Rather, flow is used to described being absorbed in an activity that leads to self-improvement and growth. Such activities can include making music, rock climbing, dancing, sailing, farming, practicing medicine, etc. Flow is characterized by intense concentration which leads to improved performance on a task.

Van Lier (1996) introduced flow as a potential criterion for planning foreign language learning activities. According to van Lier (p.106), activities that promote flow do the following:

Clarity: They have concrete goals and manageable rules.
Flexibility: They can be adjusted to meet a person's capacities.

Feedback: They continuously provide feedback on performance. People know how well they are doing.

Focus: They screen out distractions and make concentration possible.

Egbert (2003) investigated flow experiences in a secondary school Spanish language classroom over a semester. Her objectives for the study were to determine whether flow can occur in the foreign language class and the type of tasks which encourage flow. To do this, she has the students participate in seven language learning tasks and compared their perceptions of each task by a flow questionnaire she designed, observations, and interviews. To design the questionnaire, Egbert defined the following criteria for flow related to language learning:

Challenge and Skills: The balance between the challenge of the task and an individual's skills. The task should not cause the learners anxiety by being so difficult as to overwhelm them nor so easy that the learners are bored in the class.

Attention: Learners' attention is concentrated on completing the task.

Interest: The task is deemed as important, useful, intrinsically interesting and/or relevant to the learners.

Control: There are concrete goals and manageable rules which help guide learners but they also have the autonomy to make their own decisions about how to carry out a task.
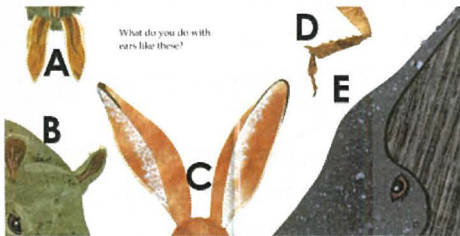
In her study, she found that flow did occur among the participants but only two of 13 participants had flow experiences in all 7 tasks. The task in which the most participants experienced flow was where the participants interviewed native Spanish speakers in Spanish over the computer. Egbert surmises the reason why was the participants had the autonomy to make their own questions and thus had "control" over the task. Interestingly, not as many learners experienced flow in a similar task where the interview questions were determined by the teacher beforehand.

The researchers decided to investigate whether an FLA could be designed

and carried out in such a way that would meet the criteria established by Egbert.

1.3 Designing a Lesson to Promote Flow

Together with two teachers at Fuzoku ES and a visiting teacher at Iwate University, the researchers designed a mini-project to take place during FLA time. This activity was based on a picture book "*What do you do with a tail like that?*" by Steve Jenkin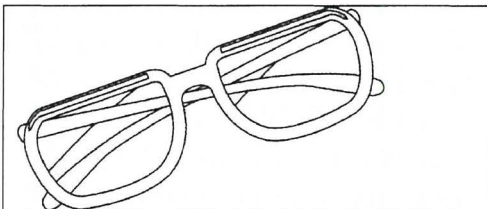s and Robin Page. The book presents animal noses, ears, tails, and mouths and the reader must guess the function that the body part performs and the animal to which it belongs (see Picture 1). The goal of this lesson was for students to work in a group and design a quiz for another group based on a page from this book.

Picture 1. What do you do with ears like these? (Jenkins & Page, 2003, pp. 7-8)

1.3.1 Step 1: Model Demonstration of the Animal Quiz

In the first part of the first lesson, teachers made a demonstration with the body part "ear". There were four steps in this demonstration. In the first step, the teachers used balls (basketball, soccer ball etc.) to demonstrate, using the phrase "What do you do with a ball like this?" while acting out how to use the ball. The goal was to clarify the meaning of the key phrase "What do you do with (body part) like these?".

In the second step, they asked the key phrase "What do you do with ears like these?" while showing Picture 1, then they presented each function for the ears using a

Picture 2. Card used for the ear function "to see"

picture card to represent it. For example, Picture 2 shows the function "to see".

They acted out each picture card to help the students understand its meaning. The cards were not presented in a specific order.

In the third step, once all the functions were presented, students had to guess which function was associated with each pair of ears. The teachers used the key phrase "Which one is (function)?", while doing gestures to help the students understand the meaning of the question, and what was expected as an answer. To add clarity in this step, each pair of ears was tagged with a letter and students had to answer by this letter.

After the students had identified the functions of the ears, the teachers asked the students to identify the animal to which the ears belonged by using the key phrase "Which animal is (function)?" The teachers had the children repeat the names of the animals (see Picture 1).

In the last step, the teachers had the students practice by asking them questions regarding each animal or function. For example "Which one is 'see'?". Overall, the three key phrases in this activity were:

- What do you do with a (body part) like this?
- Which one is (function)?
- Which animal is (function)?

This first stage was teacher-centered and English phrases were simplified in order to reduce sentence-length and lower the difficulty of the task. The aim of the demonstration was to give the students an overall view of the activity and what kind of presentation was expected from them.

1.3.2 Step 2: Practicing for the Animal Quiz in Groups

In the second part of the first lesson, students practiced in small groups, under the guidance of a teacher. The aim was to 1) teach the students the vocabulary and phrases they would have to use during the quiz; 2) teach them how to give the quiz to another group; and 3) teach them how to listen to the other group's quiz. There were four teachers and each teacher had their own way of teaching their group. The teachers gave a sheet to the students (see Picture 3), where the necessary key phrases and vocabulary to conduct the activity were written.

What do you do with an ear like this?		Which one is ~ ?	
See		Bat See	
Keep cool.		Rabbit Keep cool.	
Close their ears underwater.		Hippopotamus Close their ears underwater.	
Hear with their knees		Cricket Hear with their knees	
Hear far away sounds.		Whale Hear far away sounds.	

Picture 3. Handouts students used to prepare for the animal quiz.

At the beginning of the second lesson, the students were given additional time to prepare their quiz. They practiced one more time either under the teacher's supervision or independently.

1.3.3 Step 3: Giving and Participating in the Animal Quiz

In the last part of the second lesson, students gave the quiz to their classmates and listened to the quiz made by their classmates. The students were expected to follow the model given by the teachers as well as their plans made in their small groups. The authors wanted to observe and analyze the interactions between the students, how they would teach each other new vocabulary and phrases of the quiz, and how they would react when taught by their classmates.

1.4 Research Questions

After conducting the activity we hoped to answer the following research questions to reveal the nature of FLAs that are conducive to flow as well as the nature of L2 interactions that may or may not promote flow during FLAs.

1. To what extent did the activity we planned promote flow?
2. What were the characteristics of teacher/student interaction in this classroom environment?
3. What were the characteristics of student/student interaction in this classroom environment?

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants and Setting

This research was done at Fuzoku ES for a class of 36 sixth-year students. Some of the students had lived abroad or studied English at cram schools or English conversation schools, but the majority of them had only experienced English in their weekly FLAs.

There were four teachers (the homeroom teacher, the two researchers, and a visiting teacher to the Faculty of Education). Each teacher represented a different country: France, Hungary, Japan, and the USA. They also all had different teaching backgrounds: kindergarten, elementary school, high school and university. All the non-Japanese teachers were proficient in the students' L1. For the analysis of classroom interaction, students belonging to the groups of the authors were chosen. Information about these two groups is below:

Table 1. Information of groups for the interaction analysis		
Group name	Tail Group	Nose Group
Goal	Give quiz on animal tails and functions	Give quiz on animal noses and functions
Teacher	T1: Female from France, elementary school teaching experience in France	T2: Male from the USA, 11 years university English teaching experience in Japan.
Students (No.)	10 students who formed two groups of 5 for the quiz.	9 students who formed two groups of 5 and 4 for the quiz.

The researchers did not give any direction regarding how to conduct group work, so each teacher conducted the group work as they saw appropriate.

Therefore, the strategies used to teach the students and practice the quiz differed among groups. All teachers, however, were in agreement as to how the quiz should be conducted.

2.2 Materials and Methods of Analysis
2.2.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was given after each class to determine the extent to which the children's perceptions of their experience in the class matched the flow criteria. Although Egbert (2003) presents a statistically reliable questionnaire in her paper, the authors realized that many of the items would be too abstract for Fuzoku ES students to answer (One such example is "This task allowed me to control what I was doing."). Furthermore, while Egbert's study asked students about specific tasks, the questionnaire we designed aimed to ask learners about their perceptions of their overall experience.

In total, two questionnaires were created and given after the first and second class. Because each questionnaire asked the students how they perceived the specific content of the class, they both differed from each other. The questionnaires were based on Egbert's four criteria: challenges and skills, attention, interest, and control. The authors attempted to make specific and unambiguous items asking students about their perceptions of the class activities. Translated versions of the questionnaire items are shown in Table 2 with their flow categories shown on the right (Challenges and skills will hereafter be abbreviated to skills.). Students answered each item using a 4 point Likert scale: 1 = Agree; 2 = Somewhat agree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = Strongly disagree.

After the questionnaire was given, the researchers became aware of some issues with the construct validity of the questionnaire. First, there was a lack of items for "interest" that asked students about their perceptions of the usefulness of class activities. Second, there was a lack of items for "challenge and skills" that asked the students the degree to which the task was sufficiently challenging.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for reliability was calculated after giving the questionnaires. The coefficient for the first questionnaire was 0.74 and that of the second was 0.84.For scales of 10 items or more, the reliability

should "approach 0.80" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 207) but a coefficient greater than 0.70 is generally considered within an acceptable range (Tavakol & Dennick, 2001). In conclusion, the reliability scores indicate that students were able to answer the questions consistently, but there are some issues with the construct validity which the researchers will have to rectify in future questionnaires.

In addition to Likert-scale questions about flow, the questionnaire also contained open-response questions to students asking them what new English words they learned as well as the good points of the lesson and the points that should be improved.

Table 2. Flow questionnaire items

Questionnaire 1, Given on 2013/12/11
1. I felt like the class ended fast today. (Attention)*
2. I concentrated on the teachers' "ear quiz" (Attention)
3. Today, I was able to concentrate on preparing for the animal quiz (Attention)
4. My group understood the procedures for conducting the animal quiz (Control)
5. Next time, when I do the animal quiz, I understand exactly what to do. (Control)
6. The ear quiz content was interesting (Interest)
7. Overall, the ear quiz was interesting. (Interest)
8. I am looking forward to the next animal quiz. (Interest)
9. I am excited to see how the other team with react to our questions. (Interest)
10. I understood the "ear quiz." (Skills)
11. I will be able to speak my part in the next animal quiz. (Skills)
12. I feel some anxiety about doing the animal quiz next time. (Skills)**
Questionnaire 2, Given on 2013/12/16
1. Today, I was able to concentrate on preparing for the quiz. (Attention)
2. I was able to concentrate and listen to the other group give their quiz. (Attention)
3. I felt like today's class finished before I knew it. (Attention)
4. I understood the procedures for doing the animal quiz. (Control)
5. My group understood the procedures for doing the animal quiz. (Control)
6. I understood the objective of today's activity. (Control)
7. I enjoyed giving the question for the quiz. (Interest)
8. I enjoyed watching the other group do the quiz. (Interest)
9. I want to do this activity again. (Interest)
10. The topic of the quiz was interesting. (Interest)

11. During the quiz, I could speak my part. (Skills)
12. I could use the expressions "What do you do with ~" and "Which one is ~". (Skills)
13. I could say the names of the animals. (Skills)
14. I could say how the animal noses or ears were used. (Skills)
15. I could understand the other group's quiz. (Skills)
16. I was able to conduct the animal quiz using mostly English. (Skills)
17. My group was able to conduct the animal quiz using mostly English. (Skills)
18. I felt anxiety when doing the quiz. (Skills)**
19. Between our first and second meeting, the other group told me about their quiz.***

* The translation of this item was incorrect and was thus not used for the analysis.
** In the analysis the scale was reversed for these items so "4" would be scored as a "1."
*** This item was not related to flow and not used for the flow analysis

2.2.2 Video, Transcriptions, and Ways of Analysis

The major activities for each lesson were filmed by Iwate University students. There were four major events:

1. Demonstration of the quiz conducted by the teachers
2. Group practice for the quiz
3. One group taking the quiz
4. One group giving the quiz

For the first event, the teacher's way of demonstration was analyzed. For the second to fourth events, video of two of the four groups were chosen for analysis. The researchers followed Erickson's (2006) procedures for analyzing each event. First, an outline identifying the constituents of each event was created. After this, short segments showing the typical patterns of interaction were selected for transcription. It was determined that these segments could demonstrate the nature of the whole event. An outline of the videos and transcriptions were created by using Transana software. The software enabled the researchers to create a timeline of the major constituents of each event.

3. Analysis of the FLA Activities

3.1 Questionnaire Results

The questionnaires were used to estimate the approximate number of students who might have experienced flow in the class. For this study, a student whose average item rating was greater than 1.5 was considered likely to have had a flow-like experience. A total mean score of 1.5 or less indicates that the learner answered "agree" for over half of the items. Therefore, the majority of their perceptions of the activity showed characteristics of flow. Table 3 provides descriptive statistics of the results for each class.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of flow questionnaire results			
Class 1 (N=36) Total Mean Score < 1.5 = 19		Class 2 (N=35) Total Mean Score < 1.5 = 22	
Overall Mean (SD)	1.59 (0.28)	Overall Mean (SD)	1.45 (0.26)
Mean Attention (SD)	1.37 (0.59)	Mean Attention (SD)	1.5 (0.71)
Mean Control (SD)	1.57 (0.62)	Mean Control (SD)	1.39 (0.62)
Mean Interest - (SD)	1.44 (0.62)	Mean Interest - (SD)	1.29 (0.57)
Mean Skills (SD)	1.94 (0.88)	Mean Skills (SD)	1.52 (0.77)

In the first class, 19 of 36 students consistently reported having flow-like mental states. Students were most positive in reporting their *attention* and *interest* in the class and least positive concerning their *skills*. This means that most students perceived the activities as interesting and felt that they were able to concentrate. One of the reasons their *attention* score was so strong is that all 36 students reported that they concentrated on the demonstration quiz given by the teachers (see Table 2, questionnaire 1, item 2). However, they were not as confident in their *skills* as 14 of the 36 students reported feeling *anxiety* about performing the animal quiz in the next lesson (See Table 2, questionnaire 1, item 12). In terms of *control*, 33 of 36 students (21 agree, 12 somewhat agree) reported that they understood what they should do for the animal quiz in the next lesson (See Table 2, questionnaire 1, item 11).

In the second class, more students, 22 of 35, reported having a flow-like experience. Students were most positive about their interest in the activities. Students in particular were interested in listening to the other group's quizzes as 30 students agreed and 3 students somewhat agreed with item 8 in questionnaire 2 (see Table 2). Also, students had a stronger tendency to report

that they understood the procedures of the quiz (*control*). Additionally, they were more positive in their ability to carry out the task (*skills*). Interestingly, their *attention* slightly decreased compared to the first class but remained high.

Although the questionnaire results show that students demonstrated flow-like perceptions of the classes, it should be noted that the "observer's paradox" could have influenced their positive answers. The "observer's paradox" is the psychological phenomenon in which subjects of experiments subconsciously tend to exaggerate their feelings about some kind of treatment to appease the researchers. To determine the extent to which the students' actions matched their responses, we will next analyze their interactions in each class.

3.2 Analysis of Interaction in the Two Groups

This section will describe and compare the primary interaction patterns for Group 1 and 2 in the quiz preparation and quiz giving stages of the lesson.

3.2.1 Analysis of the Tail Group Interaction in Lesson 1: Quiz Preparation

First, each member of the Tail Group chose the animal he/she wanted to do for the quiz. Then, the teacher asked all the students to practice the three key phrases. For the animals and their functions, however, students were only required to practice the animal/function they chose for the quiz.

In the second part of the group activity, the teacher had the students practice in two groups of 5. For each step, she explained in Japanese how to proceed and then had the students practice the step. For this, one group of students gave the quiz and the other listened. The students giving the quiz repeated their part in English with the teacher providing assistance when they did not remember what to say.

After this, the teacher explained all the steps in Japanese one more time, confirming that they understood how to do the quiz. Then, practice was conducted again by the group that had been listening.

The main interactional characteristics for the quiz practice in the Tail Group are shown in the extracts below.

Transcription Key	
T1=Teacher for Tail Group T2=Teacher for Nose Group (( )) = Researcher's description	Tail S, Ss = Students in the Tail Group Nose S, Ss = Students in the Nose Group

Excerpt 1. Explaining procedures in Japanese

1   T1: So, at first... You have to ask ((shows each tail on the big picture))

2   "What do you do with a tail like this?" ((Students do not react.))

3   T1: You have to ask... 他の生徒に聞かないとその質問 ((shows each tail

4   on the big picture))、分かった？ それは first step ((gestures with one

5   finger up)). ((Some students repeat the key phrase "What do you do..." by

6   themselves. T1 then spreads all the small function pictures on the floor.))

7   T1: ((Pointing at a picture)) 機能、これは。Tailの機能。これを覚えなけれ

8   ばならないということです。

9   Tail Ss: Yes

Most of the interactions relating to the explanation of the different steps of the quiz were done in Japanese. At first, T1 tried to explain in English, but the students did not seem to understand, so she switched to Japanese (see 13 and 17).

Excerpt 2. Basic interactions to present new vocabulary

1   ((T1 takes a small picture.))

2   T1: Who is scorpion? Scorpion?

3   ((Two students tell it is them.))

4   T1: So, this is yours. ((Gives the small picture)) This is ((Points at the

5   picture)) sting. To sting. ok? You have to remember it. To sting.

6   ((Students nod.))

7   ((T1 takes the "brush away flies" picture.))

8   T1: Who is giraffe? Who is... the giraffe?

9   ((Two students tell it is them. Students see the card and laugh.))

10   T1: So, a giraffe (Shows each word on the sheet while speaking, then

11   elements in the picture) Brush. Away. Flies.

12   ((Laughs from the students.))

13   T1: You have to remember.

14   ((Students nod.))

English was used for basic interactions for presenting new vocabulary to the learners. T1 used a combination of new words and phrases students already knew such as "Who is ·," and "This is ·." The content was more concrete than that of the previous interaction because they were confirming the names of animals and meaning of action cards that they could see. In these interactions, T1 asked a question, inducing a reaction from the students. In these cases, T1's gestures and actions such as pointing to the cards conveyed meaning too.

Moreover, in the Tail Group, teaching was strongly directive with T1 clearly explaining each step of the quiz and how to behave during the quiz (how to position oneself, how to hold the picture cards, etc.)

T1 immediately had students practice the phrases and each step of the quiz after group work began. Each student had to remember all three key phrases, but only his/her part of the quiz regarding the animal and its function.

3.2.2 Analysis of the Nose Group Interaction in Lesson 1: Quiz Preparation

First, T2 confirmed which groups would give the quizzes together. After that, he taught the animal names and had students repeat them. Then, he taught them the nose functions, making them repeat. He separated the students into their quiz groups and had them practice the key phrases and demonstrated how to use them. Lastly, he demonstrated how the students could teach the new words to the other groups after the quiz had finished.

The following extracts show the primary types of interaction.

Excerpt 3. Adapting practice to the students' interests

1   T2: So, first, ((shows the big picture)) What do you do with a nose like
2   this?
3   Nose Ss: Elephant. Elephant.
4   T2: So… So, which one is elephant?
5   Nose S1, NoseS2: C.
6   T2: C? I think so. C. Yeah, alright. Elephant and ((shows)) what's this?

In the Nose Group, T2 adapted the teaching process to the students' interest at the moment. In lines 1 and 2, T2 was attempting to elicit the function of the nose. However, students answered the name of the animal to which the nose belonged. Consequently, T2 changed the questioning to identifying the animal for each nose. In addition, T2 mainly had all the students practice the phrases and words, without deciding in advance which part each student will be doing during the quiz.

Excerpt 4. Explaining procedures in English

1   T2 ((shows)): So, I'll ask what do you do with a nose like this? Ok? So,
2   when you do a quiz, クイズする時、((inaudible)) What do you do with a
3   nose like this ? Can you say it? What do you do with a nose like this?
4   ((Uses rhythm and gesture))
5   Nose Ss: What do you do with a nose like this?
6   ((Nose Ss repeat after T2 four times.))
7   T2: Ok, good. So… ええと。。。Excellent. So, what do you do... So, you
8   ask the tail group ((gesture)), right? You ask the tail group what do you
9   do with a nose like this?   And... ((gives the big picture to Nose S2)) So,
10   go ahead, please ask. What do you ((gesture)).
11   Nose S2: What do you do with a nose like this?

T2 used demonstrations in English instead of using long explanations in Japanese to explain the procedures (L7 – L10). Most of the interactions relating to the explanation of the different steps of the quiz were done in English (with gestures and sounds without meaning to go with them).

3.2.3 Analysis of the Tail Group Interaction in Lesson 2: Quiz Practice and Quiz

3.2.3.1 Quiz Practice

This time, the students practiced in groups from the beginning. At first, the Tail Group practiced while the other group was listening. As T1 did during the first lesson, she explained the steps one more time. She asked them to help their classmates, and to ask for help if necessary. Then, the Tail Group listened while the other group was giving the quiz.

After the quiz practice, T1 gave them advice on how to speak during the quiz and to be aware that if the other group does not seem to understand the functions or animal names, they should repeat them as the listening group is hearing these words for the first time.

Then, she asked if the students needed another rehearsal and they said yes. After this, they practiced independently with T1 answering questions when needed.

Excerpt 5. Student asking for help

1   Tail S1: これ、何だっけ。。。じゃ、これ。 Which do you... 先生！先生！
2   先生！
3   T1: はい？
4   Tail S1: すみません、これをもう一回教えてください。
5   T1: はい、はい、はい。((She takes the big picture and shows it to the
6   student who is in charge of it)) What do you do …
7   Tail S2: What do you do…
8   T1: With…
9   Tail S2: With…
10   T1: A tail like this.
11   Tail S2: A tail like this.
12   T1: Ok? What do you do with a tail like this ((Tail S2 repeats while she
13   is speaking)). Ok?
14   ((Tail S2 repeats and T1 corrects him.))
15   T1: ええと。 言えない時は友達に聞いてください。
16   ((Tail S2 nods.))

In the Tail Group, T2 helped the students each time they could not remember what they had to say. T2 did a lot of follow-up in Japanese to reassure students who expressed their anxiety toward their ability to remember the quiz process and English phrases. For example, in line 15, T2 is telling the student that if he cannot say his part, he can ask a friend. This time again, most of the explanations were given in Japanese.

3.2.3.2 Quiz (Listening role)

The Tail Group first listened to the other group giving the quiz. During the quiz, they communicated in Japanese for the most part when interacting with the other group. Moreover, they expressed their thoughts in Japanese most of the time (see Excerpt 6, l 11 – l6.). However, they gave answers in English when they knew the answer in English. They answered in Japanese too when the group giving the quiz communicated with them in English. However, they eagerly repeated the animal names given in English (l 6 – l10).

Excerpt 6. Taking the quiz in Japanese
1   Tail S1: A?!かものあし？ かものあしなんっていうの？
2   Nose S1: Japanese, Japanese.
3   Tail S1: ええ、かものあしじゃないの？
4   Nose S2:じゃないの。
5   Nose S1: Yes!
6   Tail S1:まじで？だよね。なんっていうの、かものあしなんていうの？
7   English!
8   Nose S1: Platypus.
9   Tail S1: Platypus? Platypus! Yeahh..
10   Nose S1: Platypus.
11   Tail S1: Platypus.

3.2.3.3 Quiz (Speaking role)

The Tail Group did not have any hesitation about what they had to do. They helped each other when needed, or even took over other group member's roles (l14 and l16). They did some parts that they did not practice but had seen beforehand (l16 – l18), either in the teachers' demonstration or the other

group's performance (providing "hints" and asking for each letter). However, they spoke Japanese for all the interactions outside the pre-determined phrases of the quiz. (11 – 17).

Excerpt 7. Giving the quiz

1   Tail S2 in charge of the big picture ((to Tail S1)): じゃ、いきますか。も
2   う、はじめていいの？
3   Tail S1: いいんじゃね？
4   Tail S2: ええと。
5   Tail S1 ((to Tail S2)): いいよね, ((to Tail S3 and Tail S4)) もういいよ
6   ね。
7   Tail S2 ((to Tail S1 and others)): もういい。いい？
8   Tail S1 ((to Tail S2): もうやれ、やれ。やれって！
9   Tail S2 ((shows big picture)): What do you do... ((a kid from the other
10   group tells the phrase)) うるせい、おまえ！((points at the kid who
11   spoke))
12   Tail S1 ((to the other group)): だまれ。(to Tail S2)いこう、いこう。
13   ((The listening students say something inaudible))
14   Tail S1 ((to his classmate with the big picture)): もうやれ！((to the
15   other kids who were speaking)) もう、だまれ！
16   Tail S2 ((with the big picture)): えっと。。。What do you do its...
17   Tail S1: 違う！((takes the big picture)) What do you do which a tail
18   alike this? ((he gives back the big picture)) Hint 1.
19   Tail S2 : Hint 1. ((shows the function picture)) Break off your tail.
20   Tail S1 ((takes the picture)): Hint 2. Spray. ((gives the big picture to
21   Tail S3))
22   Tail S3: Brush away flies.

3.2.4 Analysis of the Nose Group Interaction in Lesson 2: Quiz Practice and Quiz

3.2.4.1 Quiz Practice

T2 confirmed the groups, then, he showed them how to do the quiz and lastly had them practice. After practice, he let the students decide how to carry out the task by themselves. The group discussed how to carry out the quiz and in which order they should use the key phrases without T2 being present. The below excerpt shows how T2 demonstrated in English how to carry out the quiz.

Excerpt 8. Demonstration of how to present the nose functions in the quiz

1	T2: So, first, you say, what do you do with a nose like this? ((repeats
2	with students four times.))
3	T2: Then we say, hint! We give you a hint! And first hint is... ooh,
4	what's this? ((Shows the picture of a function))
5	Nose Ss: Dig.
6	T2: Everybody?
7	Nose Ss: Dig.
8	T2: Alright. And then…
9	((He reviews the name for each function in the same way as above.))
10	T2: Very good. So, if somebody says underground ってなに? What do
11	you say?
12	Nose Ss: 地下。
13	T2: 地下, that's underground. Very good.

3.2.4.2 Quiz (Speaking)

At first, the group did not immediately begin the quiz but rather discussed the order of procedures they should follow to conduct the quiz. Then, Nose S2 and Nose S1 took the lead and began the quiz. They made a mistake in the order, but succeeded in carrying out the task. Excerpt 9 shows Nose S1 and Nose S2 confirming the order of using the phrases.

Excerpt 9. Giving the quiz

1   Nose S2 ((shows the big picture)): これが誰が持っていてよ。

2   Nose S1: なんってだっけ？あれでいいの？なんだっけ？

3   Nose S2 ((reads the sheet)): What do you do with a nose like this?

4   ((shows a small picture to Nose S1)): じゃーさ、じゃーさ、((inaudible))

5   Nose S1: 機能ってやつってさ、この鼻どういうふうに使うからさ、

6   Nose S2 ((points at the big picture)): あ、これをみせながら、

7   Nose S2: これをみせながら、みんなで、一つで、聞いているね、これの

8   こと。((shows the small picture)) あれ、ちがうんだっけ？

3.2.4.3 Quiz (Listening)

The Nose Group was confused because the group giving the quiz tried to make them guess the meaning of each function card, instead of giving it to them. The Nose Group tried gestures and some words in English to communicate (for example, "catch" in Excerpt 10, 13). In addition, they repeated the new words and phrases by themselves.

Excerpt 10. Taking the quiz

1   Tail S1: What do you do with a tail like this? ((points at the big

2   picture)) C!

3   Nose S2: C? ええっと… "catch" ((gesture)).

4   Tail S1: ((inaudible))

5   Nose S1: つかむ？((gesture))

6   Nose S2: つかまる？((gesture))

7   Nose S1: English.

8   Tail S4: つかまるは英語で？

9   Nose S1: hanguru?

10   Nose S2: なんって、聞いたことがある、なんだっけ？

11   (They look at the sheet.)

12   Nose S3: hangaa!

13   Tail S4: hangaa! ことると。

14   Nose S2: Hang!

15   Nose S1: Hang!

3.3 Comparisons

3.3.1 Use of English

Though English was used for basic interactions between teachers and students in both groups, T1 used far less English than T2.

In the Tail Group, students did not use English to communicate outside the quiz phrases and words, except for one time (For example, in Excerpt 6, 17, Tail S1 asked "English?" when he wanted to know the answer in English), while in the Nose Group, students used English to communicate with the other groups. However, each group showed a genuine interest for saying new words in English, repeating them without being asked to do so.

It should be noted that students tended to be able to remember words and phrases constituted of 3 or fewer syllables, but most of them had difficulty remembering words or phrases longer than 3 syllables. For example, a phrase like "What do you do with a tail like this?" was sometimes spoken as "What do you do which a tail alike this?" or "What do you do it's a tail like this?", which may mean that this sentence is just a collection of sounds they cannot recall properly because it is too long.

3.3.2 Use of Japanese

Both teachers used Japanese for describing procedures but T1 used far more Japanese than T2. Japanese was used too by T1 to reassure students and alleviate their anxiety by providing advice on what to do, for example, when not remembering what to say.

Moreover, when interacting with the other group, the Tail Group used quasi-exclusively Japanese, while the Nose Group used some English. It should be noted that the Nose Group practiced independently mostly in Japanese, in order to figure out the order of the quiz.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

In this section we will review the answers of the research questions and then give our overall conclusions.

4.1 To what extent did the activity we planned promote flow?

The questionnaires show that over half the students reported having flow-like perceptions of the activity. The interaction we have examined can inform us on the possible reasons.

In terms of *control*, students in the Tail Group knew how they should carry out the quiz. They also chose which procedures they would use to conduct the quiz from their practice, the teachers' demonstration, and the previous group's performance. This means that ultimately, they took ownership over how to conduct the quiz. The Nose Group, also, as evident from Excerpt 9, had complete control over deciding how to proceed.

In terms of *attention*, both groups remained on task throughout the lessons. Analysis of interaction for both groups shows that they were concentrating on what they had to do, from the beginning to the end of each lesson. For example, in excerpt 7 lines 12-13, we can see that Tail S1 strongly encouraged the listening group to stop talking and pay attention, and the speaking group to do the quiz.

In terms of *interest*, both groups showed a strong interest in new vocabulary in English. For example, they asked their classmates to teach them the English words for the animals and functions. Also, they eagerly repeated them, even without expressly being asked (Excerpt 10, 112 - 115). The content of the lesson could be considered as original and novel to them, so new information succeeded in attracting their interest. Moreover, the nature of the activity (doing a quiz) and the possibility to interact with non-Japanese teachers may have stimulated them.

In terms of *skills*, both groups did not have a passive behavior when giving or taking the quiz. They tried to guess the answers and/or determine the quiz procedures without giving up when confronting difficulties. This could be an indication that the quiz was challenging but not beyond their capacities.

4.2 What were the characteristics of teacher/student interaction in this classroom environment?

In both groups, teacher-student interaction patterns were similar. For example, when providing new words and phrases to the students, both teachers had them repeat many times the target phrases or words. In addition,

most of the interactions were constituted of the teacher asking a question, expecting either an answer from the students or an action. There were only a few questions from the students, and their questions were either to confirm the meaning of a phrase in English or asking for help regarding a phrase in English they could not remember. These questions were asked in Japanese. This shows, however, that students were able to ask questions so that they could understand the necessary content to complete the activity.

In terms of showing how to do the quiz, T1 tended to explain in Japanese while T2 tended to demonstrate in English. Ultimately both groups were able to carry out the quiz in their own ways. In this situation, although most of the students were beginning learners of English, they were able to carry out the task successfully regardless of the language used to teach the quiz procedures.

4.3 What were the characteristics of student/student interaction in this classroom environment?

Though both groups did have little proficiency in English, they tried to interact with each other using simple English (For example, they used words like "English?" when asking for the meaning in English, or "Hint?" when they were asking for information.). However, the Tail Group used mostly Japanese to communicate. It should be noted that most of the student-student interaction observed was done in Japanese. The researchers think that this tendency could be reduced by teaching the students not only the procedures needed for carrying out a task, but the different strategies needed to communicate with each other during an activity. These strategies are, for example, how to ask for more information, or how to show that the interlocutor did not succeed in conveying the meaning of the message.

One more type of interaction observed did not have any direct link with the quiz content itself. This interaction served to regulate the behavior of students taking or giving the quiz. For example, a student of the Tail Group asked the listening group to behave during the quiz using Japanese. In addition, two students in the Nose Group took the lead and negotiated the order of the procedures in Japanese. We can say that both groups used strategies to manage students' actions, behavior, and attitude during the task in order to achieve the goal which was to carry out the task successfully. We

can also say that such strategies were carried out in Japanese.

4.4 Overall Conclusions

The purpose of FLAs is for students to "experience" a foreign language, not learn it. Critics have argued that we cannot expect children to communicate in an L2 if they have no knowledge of it. In this pilot lesson, students learned the meaning of words and phrases in a meaningful situation – their job was to plan and give an animal quiz. Through questionnaire results and analysis of learner interaction, this study showed that many students had flow-like perceptions. It also showed that students could use a mixture of Japanese and English to successfully complete the task. English was used to perform the quiz while Japanese was used to regulate behavior, actions, and attitudes as well as clarify procedures.

The authors recognize that a variety of factors will affect students' flow-like perceptions other than the activity itself. Such factors include the teacher characteristics, school characteristics, time of day, etc. However, in future research the authors would like to compare students' flow-like perceptions in this activity compared to a typical FLA activity based on the standard textbook, *Hi, friends!* We hope that this paper has given the readers some insights as to characteristics of FLAs that can attract student interest and involvement as well as the type of L2 interaction that can be expected in FLAs.

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