Significance of Working Together to Create and Revise a Consistent Achievement Goal Chart: Focusing on Teachers' Narratives

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The IAFOR International Conference on Education in Hawaii 2023 Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

Japan's Ministry of Education and boards of education in each prefecture have been emphasizing collaborative activities between elementary, junior high, and high schools. However, it has been pointed out that collaboration between schools has not progressed very well. This may indicate the need for collaborative activity research in English education between different school types is greater than ever. Yamamoto (2019) conducted an interview survey of teachers who initiated a collaborative project in English education of a private school cooperation in western Japan (the first-generation teachers). He found out that what they seek is a "lean connection" and that setting consistent achievement goals is essential in connecting education of different school types. The project has continued, although the core members have changed. Based on Yamamoto (2019), the presenter set the following research questions and conducted interviews in 2021 to compare the attitudes of the second-generation teachers at elementary, junior high, and high school with those of the first-generation teachers. (1) Do the second-generation teachers have different mindsets from the firstgeneration? (2) How have collaborative activities centered on creating and revising a consistent achievement goal chart affected them? The results show that, unlike the first generation, the second generation has a more concrete and multifaceted perspective in their awareness of lesson planning, student understanding, and self-examination. The results also suggest that collaborative efforts centered on the goal chart have functioned as an opportunity for teacher development, fostering an awareness of collaboration among different school types and improving the quality of information exchange.

Keywords: English Education, Consistent Achievement Goal, Elementary and Secondary School Collaboration

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Introduction

In Japan, English education in elementary schools has been one of the required subjects since school year 2020. Before this movement, many prefectural boards of education established policies and goals to promote collaboration among elementary, junior high, and high schools regarding English education. Moreover, they started to carry out projects to promote such collaboration. The importance of promoting inter-school English education collaboration among different school types is generally recognized. For example, the percentage of prefectures with "established policies or goals to promote collaboration among different school types" is 63.8, 31 prefectures out of 47. Furthermore, 87.2% of 41 prefectures answered that they are doing some projects in practice to promote inter-school collaboration on English education (Zenkoku todofuken kyoikuiinkai rengokai, 2018).

According to the 2017 Japan Ministry of Education survey, 12.5% of high schools nationwide responded that they are collaborating with elementary schools, and 27.5% responded that they are collaborating with junior high schools. In contrast, the figure for elementary and junior high school collaboration is 81.2%, which is considerably higher than for elementary and high school collaboration (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2017). This is thought to be due to the municipality in which the schools are located. Most elementary and junior high schools are established in the same city. In recent years, some schools have been established as integrated public elementary and junior high schools or compulsory education schools. 81.2% indeed seems high, but the rate was already 70.0 in the 2009 survey (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2009). This means that their collaborative activities have not suddenly become more active in recent years.

Based on Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (2017), let us look at specific forms of collaboration between schools. The bar graphs below show the responses to the question about what kind of activities high schools do with junior high schools. The most common activity is "teachers' class observation," followed by "teachers' joint workshop on a specific theme" (Figure 1, left). Many of the activities between elementary and junior high schools are class observations followed by discussions (Figure 1, right).

Class Observation 24.8% Class Visit 72.6%

Joint Workshop 15.9% Discussion after Class Visit 57.2%

Joint Curriculum 13.0%

Figure 1: Collaborative activities

Source: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (2017)

In sum, so far, cooperation among different school types in English education is considered necessary nationwide, and teachers' exchange activities are conducted to some extent. Such actions include class observations and subsequent discussions, information exchange meetings, or joint training sessions.

Review of previous studies

Previous studies in various subject areas, not limited to foreign language education, argue that exchanging information enhances collaboration among different types of schools. Many practices in schools based on this logic have been reported. Naoyama (2013) states that

information exchange and interaction among different schools are essential to reach the first state of collaboration. They shorten the distance in feelings, and the distance in content is shortened through curriculum collaboration. In other words, the process is from information exchange to curriculum improvement. The author does not object to this position. Exchanging information would undoubtedly be necessary. However, Aoyagi (2016), Matsumoto (2013), and others have pointed out that despite these efforts, the reality is that in many schools, collaboration among different types of schools in English education has yet to progress sufficiently. This indicates that further research on collaborative activities is needed to examine what and how to enhance collaboration among schools.

There are few studies dealing with collaborative activities to set achievement goals, which is the focus of this project and research, as a trigger for promoting collaboration. Okazaki (2014) and Okazaki (2016) have addressed the issue of setting achievement goals in English language education. In particular, Okazaki (2016) points out the significance of setting achievement goals together as effective for positive changes in teaching practices and beliefs and for improving collegiality within the English department of a high school.

The author started a project in 2013 with teachers from an elementary school, a junior high school, and a high school. We believed that jointly creating achievement goals that are consistent and connected could be a catalyst for promoting collaboration based on Okazaki's viewpoint. This project aims to create an achievement goal chart that has consistency from elementary school to high school graduation in English communication skills and the educational philosophy of the schools.

Their schools are affiliated with private school cooperation. Collaboration between schools would be challenging even if they are private schools. When they exist as one junior high school or one high school, it tends to have a stand-alone mindset, and in many cases, educational activities are completed at each school. The schools in question have their own entrance exams, and it used to be hard to see what they were doing in each, though they are located close together. The goal chart in Figure 2 is the 2022 edition made through their collaborative work. Based on it, we have also been working on verifying the achievement of the goals and evaluating the students' degree of accomplishment.

Yamamoto (2019) surveyed the attitudes of teachers involved in this project. He interviewed the teachers who started the collaborative project in 2013 (hereafter referred to as "the first-generation collaboration teachers"). In this project, teachers worked together to create a consistent English education achievement goal chart for their junior and senior high schools. From the interviews, Yamamoto (2019) extracted what they sought in the project is a "lean connection (p.12)" and claimed that making a consistent achievement goal chart can be an essential factor in connecting schools of different levels.

The project, initiated to connect a junior high school and a high school, is still ongoing as of 2022; in 2018, an elementary school was added to the project. Moreover, the core teachers of the project have been replaced over the years.

Figure 2: Goal chart 2022 edition

				202	2年度	T-SEE	=Gs	字图	氢英語	教育力	イドライ	ン	小学校	中学校・	高等学	校 到達目標	表[CAN-E	00リスト]	T-SEEGs	学	英語教育力	イドライン)作用	プロジェ	クト
Schools expect our students to learn							English for "Me"						。世界を知るための第一の実施・中分の意義・・・・英語に対して意味的に取り組むために、たくさんの英語にされて優れ観しみます。 - 写像性を立てるための英語・・自分の可能性を立てるために必要な英語のかを身につけます。 - 地勢に覚察するための芸語・・研究へらしま学典別に向けて、人のために心をつかい、進んで聞くために必要な英語のかを身につけます。											
								Eng	glish for "The	e World*			■世界を知る	:めの英語・・・	英語学習を通し	て世界に心を向	け、異文化を呼	理解する態度を	を身につけます。					
		高校3年[H	1		高校2年[G	1		高校1年[F]		中学3年[E]		中 学 2 年 [C)]	4	学 1 年 [C]	1	4	\学 5⋅6年 [B]	小学	3·4年 [A]	
申びのキーワード		Е	nglish fo	r "The W	orld"				English	for "You	r"					Eng	lish for '	'Me"				First Step :	or "The V	Vorld"
段 階 発展 業務におけるものさし 2級以上			基 提			党 展 御2級以上			基 礎 3級~准2級			党 展 4級~3級			基 礎 5級~4級			基礎			導入			
央検におけるものさし 単族レベル: 孫會教	THE THE ST			準2級~2級			単2級以上 高校基礎レベル: 800所			3板~非2板 中学校構造レベル:単原・熟務600務			4級~3級 中学校基本レベル:単語・熟語700語			D級~4級 中学校教科書レベル:単語・熟語900語			小学校教科書レベル:並			*		
Reading		の高い分野の文章	を理解するこ	[GR] まとまり(や、実用的な) ができる。	のある限明文を明文を明文を明文を明文章から必要な作		FRI 簡単な説 から情報を得る	男文を理解する ことができる。	ことや、図や表	ERI 簡単な 必要な情報を することがで	を何や文で書かれ 読み取ったり、要 きる。	たものから、 夏点をとらえたり	[DR]簡単な語 おまかな内容 取ったりするこ	りや文で書かれ Eとらえたり、必 とができる。	たものから、お 要な情報を読み	(CR) 簡単な語句 おおまかな内容 読み取ったりする)や文で書かれ をとらえたり、 うことができる。	たものから、 具体的な情報を	[BR] アルファベ 号、初歩的な単	ペット(大文字・/ 単語を理解する	NOW 1 POR	[AR] アルファベット 号、初歩的な単語を	+**.45	(字) やね ができる
	る。 (300語長文: THR-2] 事字	2級レベルの文章 読み、概要を理解 を2分30秒程度) 新聞などで社会的 単解することができ	収出来事に関	きる。 (300語長文を	2分30秒程度)		きる。 (300語長文を3	分程度)		る。 (250語長文を			る。 (170語長文を:			[CR-1] 教料書レスピードで読み、 る。 [CR-2] 初歩到る や物語を読み、・ ができる。			[BR-1] 簡単なi	単語を発音する	Sことができる。	[AR-1] アルファベッ 発音をすることがで	-თ−⊃02 t&.	⊃ の 文1
				[GR-3] 一般点 チラシ・パンフ ことができる。	引けに書かれた話 レット等から必要	税明的な文章や な情報を得る	(FR-3) 簡単に 情報を得ること	描かれた図やま ができる。	長から、必要な	[ER-3] 基本的 の違いを理解	的な強勢やイント して、倉装するこ	ネーションなど とができる。	[DR-3] 意味/ 量や明瞭さで	容にふきわしく tileすることが	また適切な音できる。	[CR-3]モデルの することができる	発音を求ねても	責極的に書読	(BR-2) モザル) ができる。	の発音をまねて	音換すること	[AR-2] モデルの発 できる。	きまねて音	焼する:
	6.	の高い内容を理解		6.	での情報・説明 ある内容を理解す		(FL)日常生活で 理解することが			Sw.cae.	と話されれば、日 は食的な話題につ えたり、必要な内			括されれば、日 て、おおまかな を聞き取ること		[CL] はっきりと ストーリーについ たり、具体的な性	だれれば、日 て、おおまかな 「報を聞き取る	常的な話題や 2内容をとらえ ことができる。	(BL) 身近で他! 現を理解するこ	単な事柄に関す とができる。	る基本的な表	[AL] 身近で簡単な! 現を理解することが	柄に関する できる。	基本的
Listening	(HL-1) 興味 りのある話さ (講演・講義	・関心のある話題: ・理解することがで など)	に関するまとま きる。	[GL-1] あるトt 会話の中でブ! 容を理解する:	ピックに関するス! レゼンテーション ことができる。	ピーチや日常 を聞き、その内	[FL-1] 日常生; な話を聞いて、 る。	者の身近な話員 その内容を理解	記し関する簡単 解することができ		ウ留守番電話の行 点、情報を正確に					(CL-1) 単語や文 ることができる。	(を聞き分け、)	文字と一致させ	[BL-1] 短い話の	の概要を捉える	ことができる。	[AL-1] ゆっくり、は・ 周りの物を表す簡単 できる。	きり話された な語句を聞き	歌に、
Liotoiiiig	HI -2] PLA	ごやラジオのニュー 1を理解することが	-ス番組を聞い できる。	(GL-2) 相手の ることができる (場所、人数、))意見や説明を関 物徴など)	いて、理解す	(FL-2) 授業やことができる。	研修で先生の打	音示を理解する	[EL-2] 話し合 て、最終的な とができる。	いや説明、ニュー 結論や要点を正し	ースなどを聞い 確に理解するこ	[DL-2] ストー て、概要や要:	ーや説明、客P なを理解すること	内などを聞い cができる。	[CL-2] 食話やイ て、主な内容を見	ンタビュー、説 単解することが	明などを聞い できる。	(BL-2) 英語の しむことができ	音声や基本的 る。	2表現に慣れ親	[AL-2] 英語の含声 しむことができる。	⇒基本的な表	現に使
													[DL-3] ゆっく! ピーカーの話! できる。	と話されれば、 の内容を適切に	ネイティブス 聞き取ることが	[CL-3] 教師や才 よる英語の指示 る。	イティブスピー を理解し、行動	カーのロ頭に けることができ	(BL-3) 授業中 行動することが	用いる教師の打 できる。	音示を理解し、	(AL-3) 授業中用い 行動することができ	教師の指示	を理解
Writing	HWI 日常生 ついてあるも ができる。	はの話題や社会は 程度まとまりのある	ものある味噌に 文章を書くこと	【GW】日常生は とまりのある文	さでのは語につい は単を書くことがで	である程度まできる。	[FW] 興味・関(章を書くことが)) ಐಹಿಕಿಎಟನ್ ಇತಿಕ್ಕಿ	のいて簡単な文		とについて、簡単 、まとまりのある)			とについて、軟 正確に書くこと:		(CW) アルファベ 英文を書くことが いて、教科書や! ができる。	ット・符号や初: できる。また、 弁書などを参考	参的な単語や 身近なことにつ 対こして書くこと	BWJ アルファヘ を使って、簡単 きる。	ペット(大文字・・ な単語を4線上	ト文字)や符号 に書くことがで	[AW] アルファベット を使って、簡単な単	大文字・小文 Bを書くことか	字)やできる
		生活の身近な財長 意見を書くことがで 裏」など)		[GW-1] ID象() 内容を伝える((「学校行事」、	こ残った出来事に 文章を書くことが 「旅行」など)	こついて、その できる。	[FW-1] 興味・II の考えを書くこ				のことや興味のあ くことができる。		[DW-1] 自分の て、教科書や 書くことができ	ことや興味のま (書などを参考) る。	ることについ こして、正確に	[CW-1] 勝まれた たり、簡単な語句 とができる。			BW-1] アルファ 号を使うことが	ァベットの大文: できる。	字小文字や、符	[AW-1] アルファベッ 号を書き写すことが	トの大文字小できる。	文字
	[HM-2]日本 え、それに知 ことができる	や世界が抱える問 する自分の意見り。	題について考 の考えを論じる	[GW-2] 日本4 文を書くことが	や日本の文化についます。 できる。	ついて紹介する	[FW-2] 自分自 介する文章を書	身や身の回りの Kことができる	Dことがらを紹 。	[EW-2] 日常は つなぎ言葉を くことができる とについて、引 ができる。	的な話題について 使って、まとまり 。また、聞いたり 員点や自分の意見	C、簡単な文や のある文章を書 独んだりしたこ 見などを書くこと	[DW-2] 日常的 や文を使って、 ができる。	な話題につい まとまりのある	て、簡単な語句 文章を書くこと	[CW-2] 自分のご て、教料書や絆 ができる。 [CW-3] 日常的パ や文を使って、ま ができる。	とや興味のあ 書などを参考に 2話題について とまりのあるな	ることについ こして、書くこと 、簡単な語句 文章を書くこと	[BW-2] 自分の [BW-3] 身近で ながら書き写す			[AW-2] 自分の名前	を書くことがり	186
Speaking	6.	の高い話題につい)意見を述べたりす			「での出来事につ 伝えたりすること			で簡単な用を見 とについて自分		re6.	ことについてやりと 0ある内容を話す 自分の考えなどを			とについてやり ある内容を話す			についてやりと る内容を話す:			単な事柄につい その考えや気持		[AS] 身の周りの物に答え	関する事柄	こつい きずれ
(Interaction) やりとり (Production) 発表													体調を尋ねる表現などを用いたやりとりがで きる。		[CSI-1] 好きなことや得意なこと、自分や相手 のことなどについて尋ね合うことができる。		(BSI-1) ネイティブスピーカーに朝晩の挨拶や 感謝などを伝えることができる。							
	HSP-1 馴べたことについて、まとまりのある 旅をすることができる。 (5分程度)			(USE-L) 日本や日本の文化について紹介することができる。 (4分程度)			FSP-1] 興味・難らのあることについて、自分 の考えを述べることができる。 (3分種類)			ESP-1) 寺の自分の様子を伝えるスピーチを Li-by, Mu (ナリ株が大リルエンピニウいて、選 身や感を考慮したり、おおまかな内容の接 例や種面を伝えることができる。		IDISH-II 中品や場所を紹介したり、クイズ等 近で日本のおもしろいものを紹介したりするこ とができる。		(CSP-1)自己紹介や身近な人の紹介、また学 収紹介などができる。			(BSP-1) 簡単な協業や基本的な表現 を使い、自分の考えや集持らを表現すること ができる。 (BSP-2) 簡単な文章(G文以上)で自己紹介 をすることができる。							
全な計算機能デェックの場	2字期	2学期	1学期	2字期	2学期	1学期	3学期	2学期	1字期	3学期	2学期	1学期	3字期	2学期	1字期	3学期	2学期	1字期	3学期	2学期	1学期	3字期	2学期	1字)
模試・実力テスト等		校内模試	全国模試①	校内学力テスト	全国模丝2	全国模拟①	表一斉テスト 校内学力テスト	全国模批2	全国模拟①	実テ1月	実テ9・10・11月	美于4-7月	美子1月	実于3月	東テ4月	美子1月	與于3月			単元テスト			テスト	
活動-行事		天理大学 留学生交流会	英語発表会		天理大学 留学生交流会	英語発表会								スピーチ コンテスト		英語交流会					英語交流会			英語文記

In 2022, the author conducted an interview survey to compare the attitudes of "the second-generation collaboration teachers," who are involved in the project currently, with the first-generation teachers.

The activities the teachers are currently undertaking as part of the collaboration project are as follows: collaborative meetings, revising and publishing the goal chart once a year in April, students' English speech and recitation contest, teachers' collaboration workshops, and student visits to different schools and exchange meetings. The meeting is held once a school term, and their main topics are the goal chart, teaching and evaluation methods, joint events, and student situations. The goal chart is distributed to all elementary, junior high, and high school students, English teachers, and other relevant parties.

Research Questions

Here are the two research questions of this study.

- (1) Do the current English teachers involved in collaborative activities have a different mindset from the teachers who initiated the activities?
- (2) How have collaborative activities centered on creating a consistent achievement goal chart affected them?

Interviewees

Let us overview the survey. The researcher interviewed three English teachers, Keiko, Nozomi, and Takuro (Their names are pseudonyms). Keiko is a female elementary school

English teacher in her 30s. Nozomi is a female junior high school English teacher in her 30s. And Takuro is a male high school teacher in his 40s. They are "second-generation collaboration teachers." They were all assigned to be in charge of revising the goal chart in a situation where this collaborative project had already started.

Methods

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in August 2021, which lasted 40-50 minutes each. The researcher compared them with the previous survey results. Data were transcribed, and qualitative content analysis was conducted through coding. The questions were the same as those of the first-generation teachers were asked in the 2019 survey:

- (1) How has your involvement in this project changed your thinking about "goal setting," "collaboration," and your teaching style?
- (2) What is the state of being "collaborative" like?
- (3) What are some of the challenges you face when collaborating?

Results and Discussion

The second-generation teachers had similar views to the first generation-teachers regarding the nature of the collaboration and the challenges they faced. However, the author refers here to the following imposing points. Many narratives suggest that second-generation teachers have more "concrete forms of connection" and "more focused perceptions of the student condition" than first-generation teachers. What are extracted from their narratives are: (a) Specific, multifaceted understanding of students' English language skills, (b) Teachers' perception of their own specific growth, and (c) Recognition that collaboration is being promoted.

(a) Specific, multifaceted understanding of students' English language skills

While the first-generation teachers made relatively abstract comments, such as "collaboration requires lean connections throughout the information (Yamamoto, 2019, p.12)." On the other hand, many of the second generation's narratives were more specific in describing the skills and status of the students. They talked about their reflections on teaching based on the existence of the achievement goal chart, their commitment to collaborative activities, and their recognition of different school types. For example, Nozomi said, "I have come to realize that, for example, this student is not very good at writing, but is very good at presentation." Keiko described her class with the words like, "More and more children are able to respond accurately to questions and instructions." Takuro said, "If I notice that my students are more into on listening, I think I need to cover this part of the course while developing their skills." Moreover, Takuro also said, "I always look at the goal chart and decide what we will do in class. I find out, like, 'Oh, this is where they are expected to reach.'"

(b) Teachers' perception of their own specific growth

After describing their students, all the teachers talked about their own teaching methods and views or beliefs on English language education. Furthermore, all of them talked about the remarkable changes due to their involvement in the project. For example, Nozomi, a junior high school teacher, said, "I have started to pay particular attention to whether my classes are at the appropriate level for new students." Takuro as a high school teacher, reflected, saying,

"I have improved my classes, which tended to focus on explaining grammar, and I have gained a perspective to increase interaction among students." For Keiko, an elementary school teacher, the goal chart seems indispensable to planning her classes. Her words are: "I have come to look at the achievement goal chart and think about what activities are necessary to achieve them."

(c) Recognition that collaboration is being promoted

Though the amount of time teachers spend in face-to-face activities is not that large, elementary and junior high school teachers often expressed an increased awareness that they can share information about different types of schools and that they can cooperate with each other more than the actual amount of time spent. They all spoke positively and favorably about the nature of these collaborative activities. For example, Keiko said, "I really appreciate the collaborative events for students." "It would be nice if other subject teachers had collaborative meetings as well." The following is Keiko's comment. "I am most grateful for the current environment in which we can learn about trends at each facility and revise the goal chart each year." Nozomi said, "I feel like we are working together now."

Conclusion

Regarding the first research question, we can say that second-generation teachers have a somewhat different awareness than first-generation teachers. The first-generation teachers described collaboration in relatively abstract terms, such as "lean connections (Yamamoto, 2019, p.12)" throughout the information. On the other hand, second-generation teachers have a more concrete and multifaceted perspective on teaching, student understanding, and selfexamination. The second research question was how this project is affecting secondgeneration teachers. We could say to this question that collaborative efforts centered on creating the goal chart may be functioning as an opportunity for teacher development for them and other teachers in each school. A school corporation office staff and the author, a university faculty member as a coordinator, also have participated in this project. However, what we are doing is by no means a supervisor-subordinate issue. It is an opportunity for each teacher to develop and improve their skills as a language teacher who belongs to one cooperative unit. The schools in this case study are working together to create a consistent achievement goal chart and are continually revising it and exploring ways to validate it. Previous studies address that setting goal activities is suitable for positive change in teachers, such as classroom practices, their beliefs, and enhancing collegiality within an English department of a school. Based on them, broadening the involvement to different school types should foster an awareness of collaboration among them and improve their quality of information exchange. Finally, the author would like to add that this presentation is based on a case study of one project and is not a "collaborative model of English education" that can be widely generalized.

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